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Mrs Pat George  
Headteacher  
Little Houghton Church of England Primary School  
Lodge Close, Lodge Road  
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Dear Mrs George

Ofsted survey inspection programme – modern languages

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 20 November 2006 to look at work in modern languages (ML).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of modern languages, the visit had a particular focus on implementing languages entitlement.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with you and learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of children's work and observation of one lesson.

Little Houghton is a small school with 87 pupils that has begun to teach French to pupils in Years 3 and 4 this term. The overall effectiveness of ML was judged to be good given this starting point.

Standards and achievement

Standards and achievement are good

- Pupils made good progress in the lesson observed, consolidating their knowledge from previous lessons and demonstrating good prior attainment.

- Pupils' pronunciation and understanding were good and they already use good strategies to aid their understanding of text such as drawing on cognates.
- Almost all pupils listened well and responded enthusiastically.
- Sound spelling links are not yet developed at this early stage.
- Pupils enjoy learning French, both in class and at the French Club, and show some understanding of how useful it can be to them later on.

### Quality of teaching and learning in ML

Teaching and learning, given the starting point, are good.

- Teaching in the lesson observed enabled pupils to begin to learn how to learn a language; it gave them strategies for understanding and for memorising the language.
- It provided appropriate challenge and gave pupils a sense of achievement, for example in being able to recite a complete rhyme, and understand a simple story.
- Adaptation of the scheme of work to provide for the necessary group and individual work in such a large class is at a very early stage, and the principal learning objective or outcome for each lesson is not yet devised.
- So far the interactive whiteboard is used by teachers and pupils, who enjoy this, but there is no individual pupil use of computers for learning French.
- Assessment is at a very early stage and so far it is informal through praise and the teacher making notes at the end of each lesson regarding progress, including that of individual pupils.
- A learning support assistant provides help to pupils who need it.

### Quality of curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- Year 3 and Year 4 pupils learn French for one 30 minute lesson a week supplemented by some classroom activities. This is a brief period in which to accomplish the scheme of work chosen.
- The school is using an external scheme of work which is provided with the training offered by the Local Authority (LA). This provides a variety of interesting and enjoyable activities in all four skills for each year group in Key Stage 2. There are good resources attached to the scheme which are supplemented through the LA training.
- Adaptation of the scheme to fit the nature of the vertically grouped classes in the school is under discussion for next year so that pupil progression is provided for.
- The French Club that takes place after school is well attended and children spoke eagerly about their work there. They were able to hold a simple conversation in French, ask me how I was without prompting, and then respond to questions about weather and pets, two of their recent topics.

## Leadership and management of ML

Leadership and management are good.

- You provide strong leadership and are committed to introducing French across Key Stage 2.
- You attend the LA training yourself and are currently teaching the Year 3/4 class but you have firm plans in hand to extend the training to another member of staff and to ensure that Years 5/6 begin French in 2007.
- Planning and preparation time are being used creatively.
- There is a suitable school policy for ML, and an action plan along similar lines as those for other subjects, but ML does not yet feature in the School's Self Evaluation Form (SEF).
- You have planned for the introduction of monitoring and assessment and are taking advice from the LA about carrying this out.

## Implementing languages entitlement

Implementing languages entitlement is good, even at this early stage.

- The school has chosen an effective model of implementation and already more than half of Key Stage 2 pupils learn French.
- Both boys and girls have positive attitudes.
- There is good planning and a good awareness of the monitoring and assessment which needs to be put in place.
- The school is well supported by the LA.

## Inclusion

- All pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn French.
- Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well in class.
- Almost all pupils' home language is English, but account is taken of those who do speak another language so that this is celebrated or used for illustration.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring that the learning outcome for each lesson is made clear
- building in more group and individual work as the scheme progresses
- increasing the amount of time available for teaching French
- including in the SEF an evaluation of how far the school is in implementing languages entitlement.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop languages in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Pam Haezwindt  
Her Majesty's Inspector