

22 January 2007

Miss T Clarvis
Headteacher
Ormesby Primary School
Henry Taylor Court
Ormesby
Middlesbrough
TS7 9AB

Dear Miss Clarvis

Ofsted survey inspection programme – modern languages

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation during my visit on 18 January to look at work in modern languages. I extend my thanks to your pupils and staff.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, 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 staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, and observation of one lesson.

The overall effectiveness of modern languages was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in lessons. They make gains in knowledge and improve their pronunciation well when the teacher shows them how.
- They learn a good range of vocabulary but do not retain it well.
- Pupils have limited ability to use the words they have learned; for example, they can recite the French alphabet but are slow when asked to spell their name.
- Pupils' pronunciation is satisfactory. However, they have a weak understanding of sound-spelling links.

- When Year 6 pupils write in French it is neat and accurate.

Quality of teaching and learning of modern languages

Teaching and learning are good, with some outstanding features.

- Teachers have great enthusiasm for the subject, and teach lively lessons with a variety of briskly paced activities.
- In Reception and Key Stage 1, teachers use French extensively. In Key Stage 2, English is used at times, but for good reasons.
- New vocabulary is taught in useful contexts; for example, the younger pupils learn French through stories.
- Lessons have a strong emphasis on pupils' active participation, for example through choral repetition, songs, and mime.
- Resources are of good quality and used well.
- Relationships are very good and behaviour is managed effectively.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to contribute in class.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use the language productively.
- Teachers do not regularly assess pupils' understanding in lessons and do not use assessment to improve pupils' learning.

Quality of curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- The time allocated for teaching French is about adequate.
- Teachers do not use the rest of the week to create additional opportunities to practise French.
- There are no planned cross-curricular links; for example, pupils do not do simple arithmetic in French.
- In Key Stage 2, planning for pupils' progress concentrates on vocabulary and not on their ability to manipulate the language.
- The school does not yet have a detailed plan for teaching the classes that consist of mixed year groups.

Leadership and management of modern languages

The leadership and management of the subject are good.

- You and your staff are firmly committed to languages entitlement. This is evident, for example, in the significant investment made to introduce the subject throughout the school.
- Although the improvement plan contains little detail of this development, you have a clear vision and ambitious ideas for the future.
- The school's policy on languages is good. It is clearly written, and expresses suitable objectives for the subject.
- The introduction of languages has been strongly supported by substantial and effective staff development.

- There has been no formal monitoring and evaluation of the subject, but senior managers have a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be improved.

Implementing languages entitlement

The school has made very good progress with this.

- The implementation of languages is based on a sound rationale, which includes the school's drive to build a more creative curriculum.
- The introduction of French to all classes and the close involvement of the local authority and the partner secondary school mean that the school is very well placed to deliver the statutory languages entitlement by 2010.

Inclusion

- All pupils learn French. There is no discernible difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
- Some of the lower attaining pupils make slower progress than their peers in class.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- planning for pupils to make progress in their ability to manipulate the language
- creating more opportunities for pupils to use the language productively
- assessing pupils' progress better and evaluating the impact of this project on their learning.

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

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

Yours sincerely

Derek Neil
Her Majesty's Inspector