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Mrs P Tumelty  
Headteacher  
St Pius X Catholic Primary School  
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LA14 4AA

Dear Mrs Tumelty

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 13 November 2007 to look at work in modern languages (ML).

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.

Schools are expected to provide an entitlement for all pupils in Key Stage 2 to learn a modern language by 2010. As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on the progress the school is making towards entitlement.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, and observation of parts of six lessons and a registration activity in the Reception class.

Achievement and standards

French is taught in all year groups. Standards are above average. Progress made by the pupils overall is good.

- Pupils listen well and respond to the teachers' instructions and questions in French, for example when playing games and responding to greetings.
- They recall words from previous sessions well.
- Their pronunciation and intonation are very good.

- Children identify patterns in the language from text and incorporate what they have learned in their own speaking and writing.
- They are keen to speak and participate in oral activities. Some older pupils hold short conversations in French, developing social as well as language skills.
- Children in the Reception class are very proud of their achievement in recognising and responding to greetings and counting in French.
- All children are keen to participate in speaking activities in lessons and view learning languages not only as an important skill but also as fun.
- Importantly, pupils are very excited about their current language-learning and are keen to learn more.

#### Quality of teaching and learning in ML

- The subject knowledge of teachers teaching French is good.
- Teachers know their pupils well and are keen for them all to succeed in languages.
- Pupils particularly enjoy learning through songs and games.
- Pupils enjoy speaking activities and they say they would like to do more of this. Opportunities for them to do this independently of the teacher are limited at present.
- French is used very effectively in lessons and questioning enables all children to respond successfully. Able linguists are effectively challenged to interpret some unfamiliar language for others.
- Teachers develop pupils' social skills and intercultural understanding effectively, as well as their language skills.
- Teachers monitor individual pupils' learning and give lots of praise; they have a good idea of how well pupils are doing. Additional staff give very effective support to individual pupils.
- There is scope to develop the reading of short texts for pleasure and to increase pupils' range of language in speaking and writing.

#### Quality of curriculum

- The school is offering all pupils, from Reception to Year 6 the opportunity to learn French.
- Children have regular sessions for learning French and the time devoted to this increases as children progress through the school.
- In the Reception class children are learning to count and say basic words and phrases in French. They are gaining a good understanding of learning languages and are proud of their achievement.

#### Leadership and management of ML

- There is a clear rationale for the introduction of languages into the school. Schemes of work link very effectively with those in Key Stage 3 and are closely linked to the Languages Framework for Key Stage 2.

- There is outstanding collaboration with the receiving high school both in curriculum planning and in developing effective learning strategies.
- Assessment procedures are excellent, involve children in evaluating their own work and tracking their progress, and ensure continuity and progression in the next stage in learning.
- Appropriate resources have been purchased.
- You provide very strong support and modern languages are included in the school development plan.

### Implementing languages entitlement

- Progress towards the implementation of languages entitlement is outstanding.
- The school has made excellent use of all external support available, especially that from the high school.

### Inclusion

- This is a strength.
- All pupils are involved in learning French, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- There is a collective determination to make the initiative successful.
- Both boys and girls are keen to learn languages.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- the celebration of the heritage languages of children within the school and development of children's awareness of differences and similarities between languages
- increasing opportunities for pupils to use the languages themselves and for real purposes and to read for pleasure.

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

Judith Tolley  
Additional Inspector