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Mrs J Tarr
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Tarr

Ofsted survey inspection programme – modern languages

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and those of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 02 July 2008 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 implementing languages entitlement.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of two Key Stage 2 lessons and some time spent in a Key Stage 1 lesson.

Context

Fulford is a very small, rural primary school with an all white population. Its classes are vertically grouped. Spanish has been taught in Key Stage 2 since the summer term of 2007. It is taught by a visiting teacher who is engaged by the local cluster of schools. Key Stage 1 pupils also benefit from a short 25 minute lesson each week.

Achievement and standards

- Progress in lessons observed was good. Pupils listened attentively and responded well. They understood instructions in Spanish.
- Pupils showed confidence because the visiting teacher knows the children well and the atmosphere for learning is encouraging so they feel able to take risks.
- Pronunciation and intonation are good due to intensive work on this for newly introduced language items.
- They are developing some knowledge of the Spanish language such as an understanding of gender.
- Pupils read words and phrases from worksheets and home made resources; for example Years 3 and 4 read items on shopping lists in order to acquire them for their shopping bags from a food stall set up in the classroom. This led to them presenting what they had 'bought' orally to the rest of the class.
- Pupils work creatively when given opportunities to do so. For example, Year 6 pupils worked in groups for a short time deciding how to present a weather forecast and, when they came to the front of the class to do so, some groups had found ways of saying more than just the weather, introducing themselves and finishing off the presentation with aplomb.
- Pupils copy-write accurately and some can write simple phrases.
- All groups are encouraged to achieve well. A Year 2 boy with severe autism and behavioural difficulties was helped very well by the teaching assistant and showed understanding of the lesson using his mini whiteboard.
- Pupils are learning something about Spain in their lessons but it is not as widely developed as it could be.
- Both boys and girls are very positive about learning Spanish and know why it is important to do so. Overall, they enjoy it and it contributes very well to their personal development.

Quality of teaching and learning in ML

- Overall subject knowledge and teaching methodology are good. Lessons are well-planned, including for different abilities, and challenging in a supportive atmosphere which makes for good progress.
- Pupils are not encouraged as much as they could be to speak without recourse to written words or worksheets.
- Reading and writing are at a very early stage of development.
- The teaching assistant is employed very well in lessons, working in tandem with the teacher, and is key to ensuring some pupils make the progress they do.
- Assessment is very informal. The teacher knows pupils well in this small school and the progress they are making but this is not yet

recorded. The teacher felt that should it be required she could construct profile of each Year 6 pupil to pass to the secondary school.

Quality of curriculum

- All Key Stage 2 pupils have a 50 minute Spanish lesson once a week. It is currently taught during teachers' planning and preparation (PPA) time.
- Planning is now based around the new QCA schemes of work with lesson plans derived from the unit topics. There is no school scheme of work for languages; the school is aware that this now needs to be developed for the coming year.
- School resources for teaching are limited: for example, there are very few books to develop reading skills and reading for pleasure.
- From September 2008 ML will become part of the school's newly developed creative curriculum.
- There is an International Week held after the Standard Assessment Tests to raise cultural awareness. With the other primary cluster schools Year 6 attend an International Day at the local secondary school where they experience an assortment of languages including Russian.

Leadership and management of ML

- You have supported the introduction of ML into the school well, joining with the local cluster, meeting with it regularly, and funding the employment of the visiting teacher this financial year.
- You are aware of the current strengths and weaknesses of provision and have taken the decision that PPA time will no longer be used for ML as teachers need and wish to be part of the initiative and work with the visiting languages teacher so that they can both follow-up and teach some language. The language teaching assistant is already booked on a series of local authority language teaching and learning courses for next term and you are booked on appropriate management courses.
- Whilst you are the current languages co-ordinator, from September a new teacher will be in place who will eventually take over the role.
- ML features prominently in school improvement planning and is listed as a key priority for development in the school. The action plan is brief but pertinent and appropriately financed.
- The school policy for ML is sound but still in draft and certain elements are aspiring rather than operational.
- Governors and parents are supportive and pupils' language work is reported to parents.
- You have observed the visiting teacher teach early in the initiative but there is no formal monitoring and evaluation built into the development of ML yet.

- The secondary school is aware of the school's provision in Spanish through its attendance at cluster meetings but there is no formal transfer of information about what it has covered or individual pupil data.

Implementing languages entitlement

- Progress towards implementing entitlement is good.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- helping pupils to speak more without recourse to written support
- developing reading through introducing more books, for example stories and non-fiction, and helping pupils to develop reading strategies
- developing a languages scheme of work taking into account the school's circumstances (for example: mixed age classes) and the five strands of the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages
- developing more formally assessment, monitoring and evaluation, and the transfer of information to the secondary schools.

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 Haezewindt
Her Majesty's Inspector