

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



03 December 2008

Mrs V Farby
Headteacher
Kirby Hill CofE Primary School
Kirby Hill
Borough Bridge
York
YO51 9DS

Dear Mrs Farby

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 10 November 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 one lesson in Key Stage 2 and activities in the Reception class and Key Stage 1.

Achievement

- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed. Pupils are confident listeners and respond promptly and appropriately to familiar questions and instructions. Pupils' intonation and pronunciation are very good.
- They are able to match print with sound and meaning and read familiar words and phrases.

- Pupils are beginning to identify patterns in the language and apply them successfully to meet their own needs.
- Pupils have a good understanding of similarities and differences amongst different cultures, not only through their study of French but also as an integral part of the school curriculum.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of why it is important to study modern languages.
- They have very positive attitudes towards learning modern languages. They say that they really enjoy language learning, want to do more and want to learn more languages. They have suggested a French Club, a French achievement board and a French corner in the classrooms. They think language learning is both useful and fun.

Quality of teaching and learning in ML

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use a variety of strategies including information and communication technology (ICT) which engage pupils.
- New language is presented clearly so that pupils rapidly understand and use it successfully themselves.
- Effective questioning both supports and challenges pupils and enables all pupils to succeed in responding.
- Teachers make good use of songs and games to reinforce learning and pupils thoroughly enjoy these activities.
- Pupils are given frequent opportunities to practise informally in pairs and as a result they are confident in speaking in front of the class. However, at present this is largely restricted to rehearsal and opportunities for them to use the languages themselves, creatively or independently of the teacher, to gather and give information are much more limited.
- Teachers use white boards effectively to check progress and understanding in lessons.
- The target languages are usually used effectively in lessons. Pupils benefit from an excellent role model and listening and speaking skills are well developed as a result.
- Assessment procedures involve pupils tracking their own progress and they have a good understanding of how well they are doing. However procedures to record pupil progress in modern languages are at an early stage of development.

Quality of curriculum

- At present pupils learn French in Years 3 to 6.
- The curriculum, based on qualifications and curriculum authority (QCA) schemes of work and the Key Stage 2 framework, is adapted to meet pupils' needs but there is scope to challenge more effectively pupils who have had previous experience of learning French. It ensures continuity and progression from Year 6 to Year 7.

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have one half hour lesson each week from a specialist and this learning is effectively consolidated and extended by class teachers during the week and through pupils' use of interactive ICT programs.
- ICT is used effectively to support and enhance pupils' learning for instance through the use of the Interactive White Board and interactive programmes which can be accessed by the pupils.
- Pupils' awareness and enjoyment of languages is being effectively developed in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 through the use of a variety of languages, including pupils' heritage languages, to answer the register and other incidental use of languages. There is scope to develop this further, for instance, through storytelling, counting rhymes and songs.
- Although text is used effectively to reinforce learning, opportunities for pupils to read for pleasure are limited.

Leadership and management of ML

- You provide very strong support for ML. It features very strongly in school development planning and provision is monitored very effectively.
- There is a clear rationale for ML shared by staff, governors and pupils alike.
- There are plans in place for class teachers to undertake training locally and the school is fully involved in local network groups. This includes support from High schools and the advanced skills teacher (AST) with responsibility for the implementation of ML in primary schools. However these arrangements are in the very early stages at present.
- Links with the receiving High School are at an early stage of development but are being effectively developed through the local network.
- Arrangements for the transfer of assessment information to the High School are being developed effectively in order to ensure continuity, progression and a smooth transition to Year 7.
- ML is included in the school's self evaluation and improvement planning processes.

Implementing languages entitlement

- Implementing entitlement is good.
- There is an effective model of delivery of languages in Key Stage 2 and a clear rationale for it.
- Pupils achieve well in listening and speaking. Teaching and learning are good, lesson content is well designed and this includes some explicit teaching of reading and writing.
- ICT is used effectively to enhance teaching and to support and extend learning.

- Boys and girls are equally well motivated by language learning. Their progress in languages is assessed and recorded in at least listening and speaking, and they are aware of their progress.
- The school makes effective use of its knowledge of pupils' linguistic background to promote languages learning.
- The senior leadership team is very supportive of languages and has planned and implemented effectively its introduction, including very effective monitoring of achievement and provision, and taking relevant action.
- There are also plans, and some action, to secure transfer of assessment information to receiving secondary schools.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- increasing opportunities for pupils to use the languages themselves both creatively and for real purposes
- increasing opportunities for pupils 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