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Mrs C Moore  
Headteacher  
Duston Eldean Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Moore

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: modern languages (ML)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 26 November 2009 to look at work in ML.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on how well the school is implementing entitlement in Key Stage 2.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included interviews with staff and two groups of pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of four lessons.

#### Achievement in primary languages

- Pupils achieve well in French across Key Stage 2.
- Pupils enjoy learning languages. They can give reasons why it is important to do so and it contributes well to their personal and social development.
- Pupils listen and respond well to their teachers. They are very willing speakers with good pronunciation when repeating phrases for their teachers and reciting rhymes. They are less confident when interacting with each other in more natural exchanges.
- They have a good understanding of simple grammatical functions and can explain differences between French and English.
- They are starting to read words and sentences with confidence.

- Writing is given less prominence in lessons and, consequently, this is the weakest of their skills.

#### Quality of teaching of primary languages

- Teaching of French is consistent across the school.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory and all have the resources to introduce models of native speakers into their lessons. Pupils are helped to respond to simple commands through games and mime.
- As their confidence develops, teachers increasingly adapt the scheme of work to meet individual needs.
- Lessons contain a good range of activities and some very useful strategies for language learning to help pupils develop as independent learners. Too few activities develop pupils' creative use of the language in genuinely communicative tasks.
- Teachers make excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) through interactive whiteboards, but there is little use made of ICT by pupils.
- Attainment is assessed through 'can do' statements which pupils say are helpful.
- Pupils' progress is not yet monitored and shared with secondary schools, although Year 6 pupils complete projects which they take with them.

#### Quality of the curriculum in primary languages

- Time for learning languages each week is good, including time outside of the discrete lesson.
- Helpful displays in classrooms support language acquisition, and other languages are promoted well around the school.
- Medium-term planning is satisfactory, based on the Key Stage 2 Framework. It meets the needs of pupils and contributes well to their enjoyment. As children continue to progress, opportunities will need to be built in to challenge more able language learners.
- The school provides some opportunities beyond the curriculum for pupils to take part in language events such as The European Day for Languages.
- There are limited links across the curriculum at present.

#### Effectiveness of leadership and management in primary languages

- The ML coordinator is skilled and committed to developing languages and this expertise is increasingly recognised across the cluster of local schools.
- The ML policy is good. The development plan highlights appropriate areas for development, but does not include specific details regarding the development of teaching.

- Careful strategic planning has ensured that French has been successfully introduced across Key Stage 2 delivered by class teachers.
- Some monitoring of teaching has been undertaken by you and the subject leader. The school supports teachers' professional development well but there is scope for a greater focus on strengthening teachers' ability to conduct more of the lesson in French.
- Governors provide good support for the development of ML in the school.

#### Progress towards entitlement in Key Stage 2

Progress towards entitlement is good. An effective model for the delivery of ML has been set up and pupils are making good progress. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 study French. Boys and girls are motivated equally well and enjoyment is high. Language learning is actively promoted across the school. You and other leaders in the school are strongly committed to the further development of the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- strengthening medium-term planning by including clearer opportunities to stretch and challenge more able pupils
- ensuring teachers devise more opportunities for pupils to use French for real communication
- developing a consistent process for assessing and recording the progress pupils are making.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop ML 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor  
Her Majesty's Inspector