

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



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Ms C Doyle  
Headteacher  
Fossdene Primary School  
Victoria Way  
Charlton  
London  
SE7 7NQ

Dear Ms Doyle

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 25 February 2010 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 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; observation of two lessons; and brief visits to classes during registration and a Key Stage 2 assembly.

#### Achievement in ML

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning ML. Boys and girls, pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are equally well motivated. The overwhelming majority enjoys taking an active part in the lessons. They behave well and sustain their interest in the activities they are set.
- Pupils were observed enthusiastically singing songs in French and German in lessons and in assembly.
- They listen attentively and respond with accuracy to familiar spoken words and phrases.

- Pupils' pronunciation and intonation are satisfactory. Limited use is made of native speaker recordings.
- Opportunities for choral repetition and practice of new language are short because teaching time is limited to 30 minutes for the lesson. As a result, pupils are not always confident and accurate in their pronunciation and use of new language.
- Pupils made satisfactory progress in a French lesson naming classroom objects hidden in a bag. In a German lesson, pupils made sound gains in talking about family members through drawing pictures of their families and presenting them to the class.
- Pupils are introduced to written forms of the new vocabulary they are learning. This is helping to develop their reading and writing skills, although opportunities to discuss sound-spelling links are sometimes missed.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are proud of their ability to speak languages other than English because these skills are celebrated and valued by the school. Pupils show caring attitudes to one another and they respect each other's cultures.
- Pupils are clear that learning a modern language will be useful if they travel abroad and need to communicate with native speakers. They are also clear that it will be helpful for their future economic well-being when they transfer to secondary school or in their future working lives.

#### Quality of teaching in ML

- Relationships are warm and friendly.
- Teachers' knowledge of the language is satisfactory overall for the level at which the pupils are working.
- In some classes, there is some additional challenge for pupils who find learning modern languages easy. However, this is not consistently the case.
- The use of assessment to support learning is limited. Teachers use praise in lessons to acknowledge pupils' efforts. However, there is no consistent system for checking how well pupils are progressing. Information from marking is not used to make clear to pupils how to improve and what the next steps are in their learning.

#### Quality of the curriculum in ML

- Teachers draw on their primary teaching expertise to plan lively and engaging tasks for pupils.
- In addition to a weekly lesson, pupils practise French or German speaking skills during daily registration.
- Pupils in Year 4 last year enjoyed a visit to a local languages centre to practise their French speaking skills. Pupils in Year 6 look forward

enthusiastically to a planned visit to the same centre in May to practise their German.

- The use of computers to support language learning is limited.
- Because modern languages have been introduced recently, planned progression to ensure coverage over the key stage is inconsistent.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ML

- You are supportive of ML. The rationale for introducing ML has been considered carefully, and the introduction and development of the subject features in the school development plan.
- Appropriate actions are identified that reflect sound self-evaluation of the strengths in the ML provision and where improvements are needed. However, many of the planned actions, such as establishing links with a local secondary school and introducing assessments, are not yet complete.
- Although there is some monitoring of provision, the school is not yet monitoring the quality of its work in ML regularly or systematically checking the pupils' progress.

How well the school is implementing entitlement in Key Stage 2

- Pupils learn a language in Years 3 to 6. French is now in its second year and German was started in September 2009.
- The school is working towards an effective model of delivery of languages in Key Stage 2.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that teaching enables all pupils to learn and progress well in ML by ensuring that the quality of provision is consistently good
- using information from marking and assessment to match work consistently to pupils' needs and ensuring pupils know how to improve their work.

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

As I explained previously, 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

Madeleine Gerard  
Additional Inspector