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Mrs J Beames
Headteacher
Cherry Orchard Primary School
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Dear Mrs Beames

Ofsted 2011–12 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 5 October 2011 to look at work in 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 without their consent.

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; a visit to the lunchtime French club; and a visit to assembly for the whole school.

The overall effectiveness of ML is outstanding.

Achievement in ML

Achievement in ML is outstanding.

- Pupils love learning languages and are exceptionally enthusiastic and willing to join in with all aspects of the subject. Older and younger pupils work together learning songs in assembly. In class, speakers of a wide range of languages engage in speaking or singing French with good pronunciation and intonation.
- Throughout the school, pupils use French for real communication and the older pupils are starting to write creatively, for example describing dragons as part of a whole-school cross-curricular theme.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the culture of countries where French is spoken. Their broader intercultural understanding is excellent because

the school celebrates the wide range of languages and cultures in the school. They understand and appreciate learning languages not only for practical reasons, but also see how it can help them in other subjects such as mathematics and English.

Quality of teaching in ML

The quality of teaching in ML is outstanding.

- All members of the school community communicate enthusiasm for languages. Teachers have high expectations and inspire their pupils. The specialist teachers of French have excellent subject knowledge and combine their knowledge of both subject and primary pedagogy well.
- Lessons are well planned and identify where the most able will be challenged and where the least able will be supported. Teachers have a very clear understanding of the needs of all their pupils and meet them well, including providing opportunities for those who already speak French to develop leadership skills.
- Learning proceeds at a fast but not frenetic pace, because teachers devise imaginative enjoyable activities with excellent resources, including technology. At every stage, they manage the activities almost exclusively through French with expert skill.
- The school has a well-developed system for assessing pupils' progress regularly. However, during lessons where pupils are required to repeat new language after the teacher, opportunities are sometimes missed to check closely whether every pupil is confident and ready to use the language productively for themselves.

Quality of the curriculum in ML

The quality of the curriculum in ML is outstanding.

- From the moment pupils enter the school, they are given a taste of French in a structured way that lays the foundations for later work. As they move through the school, the progression that is expected in their learning is clearly identified. The programme includes discrete weekly sessions, supported at other times throughout the week, and enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities. For example, in the lunchtime French club, very young pupils enjoyed exploring a French version of The Very Hungry Caterpillar, enthusiastically joining in with the numbers, days of the week and names of food that they recognised.
- Schemes of work are very clear and identify where cross-curricular links will be made. Displays celebrate achievement, develop an understanding of the culture of French-speaking countries and support pupils' recall of vocabulary and structures.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ML

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ML is outstanding.

- You and the other leaders in the school value language learning highly and understand how to support pupils' development of language skills and their intercultural understanding. This common sense of purpose extends to all members of the school community. Consequently, languages have a high profile in the school.
- Provision is monitored regularly and the subject leader uses information on the progress pupils' are making to refine the curriculum and the teaching. This includes carefully checking the progress of different groups within the school so that all make the same excellent progress.
- The governing body takes a keen interest in the subject and members have observed French lessons.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- refining the way teachers use repetition exercises to enable them to check more precisely how well individual pupils have mastered the new language.

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

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector