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Mrs K Slack
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Slack

Ofsted survey inspection programme – modern languages

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit with Elaine Taylor HMI on 1 October 2009, to look at work in modern languages (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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of three lessons and part of an assembly.

Achievement in primary languages

- Pupils achieve very well in Spanish across Key Stage 2. They also achieve very well in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils love learning languages. They know why it is important to do so and it contributes exceptionally well to their personal and social development.
- They listen and respond well to their teachers. They are very willing and confident speakers, with good pronunciation and intonation. They are particularly good at matching sounds and spellings. They can manipulate

language from early in Key Stage 2 because emphasis is put on this by their teachers.

- They read words and sentences from early in their learning and enjoy story books and drama.
- Simple writing is built into their learning from Year 3 onwards and, by Year 6, some pupils can create some complex sentences using models.

Quality of teaching of primary languages

- Teachers know their pupils very well and ensure that they are well catered for, so that all achieve well by the end of lessons. Lessons are differentiated both in terms of planning, home-made resources and by using additional adults in class well.
- An appropriate amount of Spanish is used by teachers, so that pupils have good exposure to it.
- Lessons are very active. They are fun but a lot of hard work is put in and pupils say that this is what they like about them.
- Activities are purposeful.
- Knowledge about language and language learning strategies are built into lessons.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 said they used information and communication technology to present work or make booklets, sometimes linked to geography. In one lesson, a teacher used the interactive whiteboard to present structures, but more use could be made of it.
- It is clear that teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons and make adjustments for individuals where necessary. Further assessment is in the form of 'can do' statements which pupils say are helpful particularly when teachers go over the statements with them individually and they get a feel for their own progress. Pupils' performance is not yet monitored, nor performance in Year 6 transferred to secondary school, but a transition project is underway.

Quality of the curriculum in primary languages

- Medium-term planning is excellent, based on the QCA schemes of work and the Key Stage 2 framework but tailored to the school and its pupils. It meets pupils' needs very well and clearly contributes to their enjoyment and progression.
- Time for learning languages each week is very good, including times outside the discreet lesson.
- The school provides opportunities beyond the timetable to take part in language events such as The European Day for Languages and a Spanish Day, and there are links with a Spanish school. Pupils have the opportunity to sing in Spanish in the choir. There are also links to a recycling project and some developments with science and mathematics in Year 5.

- Pupils were hesitant when asked about intercultural awareness, although older ones knew where Spanish was spoken in the world and some events which took place in Spain. The coordinator recognises in her planning that this is an area to develop further.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in primary languages

- This is outstanding both at senior leadership and subject coordinator level.
- Spanish pervades the school alongside the other languages of pupils and the community.
- Planning has ensured that Spanish has been introduced across Key Stage 2, as well as further down the school and it is now in its fourth year. The displays across the school and in every classroom demonstrate the progress pupils make through to Year 6.
- The coordinator leads the way and sets an excellent example of practice.
- The ML policy is good. The audit is accurate and informs the development plan in which there are well-chosen priorities.
- There is some informal monitoring but it is at an early stage.
- The school supports teachers' professional development very well and almost all staff have attended initial lessons in Spanish. About half have gone beyond this, including one who has attended an intensive course in Spain. Staff are very committed to Spanish across the school.
- The school has joined a national transition project this term which will help staff to plan and implement transition from Year 6 to Year 7. You are committed to ensuring that your pupils do not 'start again' in Year 7 and have made good links with secondary schools.
- Resources are good.
- Spanish lunches for parents and their children, which are very well attended, and the offer of Spanish classes for adults, make good contributions towards community cohesion.

Progress towards entitlement in Key Stage 2

Progress towards entitlement in Key Stage 2 is outstanding. All pupils in Key Stage 2 learn a language and progression from Year 3 to Year 6 is good. Both boys and girls are very enthusiastic. There is a very strong drive to ensure all groups and individuals achieve as well as they can. The school has worked hard to provide a good model of language learning. Its emphasis on professional development and support for all staff underpins its sustainability. The school and its community are committed to learning Spanish across the school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- considering how assessment could be improved to inform teaching and provide a baseline for secondary school provision

- introducing more formal processes for monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

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

Pam Haezwindt
Her Majesty's Inspector