

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



13 January 2012

Mrs A Coney
Headteacher
Marshchapel Primary School
Sea Dyke Way
Marshchapel
Lincolnshire
DN36 5SX

Dear Mrs Coney

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: music

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 22 November 2011 to look at work in music.

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: discussions with staff, pupils and a representative from Lincolnshire Music Service; scrutiny of relevant documentation; observation of three lessons, two of which were jointly observed with you, an individual instrumental lesson, singing practice for Key Stage 1 pupils and a rehearsal for the Federation Choir Club.

The overall effectiveness of music is satisfactory.

Achievement in music

Achievement in music is satisfactory.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with varied prior musical experiences. Through a mixture of guided learning and child-led sessions, they experiment with instruments and listen to different types of music as well as enjoying musical games. This enables the majority of children to reach the goals expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- When pupils leave school at the age of 11, musical standards in all aspects of music learning are below those normally seen. Pupils are enthusiastic performers and they are encouraged in lessons to make decisions about the music to which they listen. However, their creative work is underdeveloped. Pupils sing in assemblies but class singing is not always a

regular feature. Consequently, pupils' progress as they move through the school is uneven, but overall, broadly satisfactory.

- Different opportunities are taken, where possible, to involve pupils in music events. During these, and during class music lessons, pupils learn to value everyone's contributions and how to improve their team-working skills. A small number of pupils, mostly girls, receive additional instrumental tuition from visiting teachers.

Quality of teaching in music

The quality of teaching in music is satisfactory.

- Teachers work hard to provide music lessons that appeal to pupils, choosing resources and making reference to topical events so that they are engaged in their music making. However, pupils' progress and their musical understanding are, at times, restricted because teachers' subject knowledge is limited or incorrect.
- Occasionally, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' initial answers and musical knowledge and too much time is spent on non-music activities, for example writing and colouring sheets to describe feelings about a piece of music. In some lessons, teachers' verbal explanations dominate; pupils have limited time for practical musical work and to complete tasks that, at times, lack a clear structure and musical purpose. Consequently, although the work is completed diligently, pupils are unsure, at times, what they have learnt musically during the lesson.
- Regular references are made to the purpose of the lesson; pupils' involvement, engagement and completion of tasks are noted regularly. However, because audio recordings are not made, pupils are insufficiently involved in evaluating their work and considering how improvements can be made.
- In singing rehearsals, appropriate attention is paid to improving pupils' vocal production, intonation, diction and performance skills. This work adds significantly to improving the overall quality of pupils' work.

Quality of the curriculum in music

The quality of the curriculum in music is satisfactory.

- This small rural school has three classes, so younger and older pupils, within each key stage, learn together. Music lessons are planned so that they link into the topic chosen for each term. Careful attention is paid so that all National Curriculum requirements are covered. However, because of a lack of resources, pupils' understanding and use of information and communication technology (ICT) as an additional sound source are underdeveloped.
- The school benefits from a good selection of tuned and un-tuned instruments and pupils supplement these in lessons by using their own instruments. Although rehearsal space is cramped, the school makes effective use of facilities within the village hall where performances and

workshops, for example the recent one exploring samba music, often take place. The samba workshop, provided for free, was of very short duration and therefore its impact on pupils' progress and their musical understanding was limited.

- The federation arrangement with nearby small schools is a positive feature; it enables a singing club to rehearse and perform together. Currently, this is the only ensemble that meets regularly and attracts only girls.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in music

The effectiveness of leadership and management in music is satisfactory.

- Pupils' musical capabilities are well known to senior leaders and some benefit considerably from the opportunities given to them to perform before their peers and during the regular school concerts. Music is highly regarded within the school, particularly by senior leaders, as a way to develop and nurture the potential of all pupils.
- Senior leaders recognise that there has been insufficient monitoring of music teaching. Joint observations identified that a structured programme to improve teachers' skills and knowledge is needed to raise standards further.
- The school is to take part in a world music project, run by Lincolnshire music service and which will include three weeks of whole-class instrumental learning. This is designed as a taster activity and, overall, the project will only last for 12 weeks. Enabling pupils to take part will demand a considerable financial commitment for the school. Leaders recognise that consideration must be given to the length of the programme and to reflect on the value it brings to pupils' progress in music.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- improving pupils' progress as they move through the school by:
 - ensuring better use of musical modelling, rather than verbal explanation, in lessons
 - using audio recordings to help pupils learn and be able to make informed musical decisions about their work
 - making sure that all music lessons focus on how much pupils are learning rather than on completing the tasks set for them
 - ensuring that pupils have appropriate opportunities to use ICT during their music lessons.
- conducting an audit of all teachers' musical skills so that appropriate support and training can be given.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop music 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

Marianne Young
Her Majesty's Inspector