

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



8 March 2012

Mr L Reilly
Headteacher
Bourne Academy
Edinburgh Crescent
Bourne
Lincolnshire
PE10 9DT

Dear Mr Reilly

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: music

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 21 and 22 February 2012 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: interviews with staff and students; a meeting with the head of Lincolnshire Schools' Music Service; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of learning and teaching in eight class lessons, a vocal tuition lesson, and an extra-curricular vocal ensemble.

The overall effectiveness of music is satisfactory.

Achievement in music

Achievement in music is satisfactory.

- Standards in Key Stage 3 are broadly average. Strengths are in the development of keyboard skills, but equally weaknesses exist in the development of singing and in using information and communication technology (ICT) to create and manipulate musical sounds. A strong emphasis is on music from the Western European classical tradition and, although students' breadth of knowledge about different kinds of music is developed in Year 9, aspects of world music do not feature strongly in students' musical choices and thinking. Overall, Key Stage 3 students make satisfactory progress, given their prior musical abilities and experiences.

- The proportion of students who continue with music in Key Stage 4 is in line with the national average. In 2011, GCSE music results were broadly average. Although results have fluctuated and were stronger in 2010, analysis of students work, the school's own assessment information, and observations in lessons suggests that current Year 11 students are making satisfactory progress.
- The very small numbers of students who take A Level are making satisfactory progress and attain average standards. No students currently in Year 12 are taking A-level courses.
- Overall, the proportion of students benefitting from additional instrumental tuition is lower than should be expected. For these students, music makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development. The teachers' efforts are valued by the students. During musical activities students show appropriate levels of cooperation and behaviour. Concerts, musicals and community events are well regarded.

Quality of teaching in music

The quality of teaching in music is satisfactory.

- Lessons are well ordered and students are clear about the tasks that they are expected to complete. Working relationships and behaviour are positive in all classes and students cooperate well.
- Where teaching in music is stronger, teachers ensure that all children have the opportunity to play and/or sing as a focus of the lesson. However, too often there is overuse of verbal direction, questioning and talking rather than giving students opportunities to demonstrate through music what they have understood.
- Students are set tests as they begin Key Stage 3 and work is assessed regularly. However, these assessments tend to focus on students' acquisition of knowledge rather than development of their musical skills and responses. Consequently, too little account is taken of their different starting points or prior musical development and abilities during lessons.

Quality of the curriculum in music

The quality of the curriculum in music is satisfactory.

- The time allocation and curriculum content for Key Stage 3 are sufficient to promote a satisfactory breadth and depth of coverage. However, insufficient planning is in place for the development of singing or the musical use of ICT across the key stages. Schemes of work do not indicate how musical skills are progressively built on within and between units of work. The school has recognised this and begun to review the curriculum in Key Stage 3.
- Schemes of work for Key Stage 4 indicate what is to be taught and ensure that the main points of the syllabus are covered. However, they do not indicate how additional material is to be included or how ICT is to be used

to ensure that lessons meet students' needs and that they make better progress.

- The music teachers, supported by other musicians on the staff and teachers from Lincolnshire schools music service, provide extra-curricular activities, although the proportion of students taking up these activities is lower than might be expected. A reasonable range of ensemble activities is available, including a choir, band and samba drumming group.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in music

The effectiveness of leadership and management in music is satisfactory.

- Leaders and managers share a commitment to music and its role in the life of the school. Senior leaders are open and receptive in understanding what needs to be done to improve provision further. For example, the school has reviewed the allocation of time and plans to increase these in the next academic year. While there are strengths in aspects of the school's music provision, the school's evaluations of the effectiveness of teaching, learning and the curriculum are slightly overgenerous.
- Although accommodation is limited, classrooms are kept in good order. Administration of examination requirements is organised, but more is to be done in curriculum planning and the development of teaching if students are to make better than satisfactory progress.
- The school uses instrumental tuition from Lincolnshire Schools Music Service. Communication is effective with the peripatetic staff and they give their time to support the school in concerts.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- improving students' progress by ensuring that assessments of students' musical skills and attributes are used to inform sequences of learning and adjust lessons
- improving the quality of curriculum planning, particularly in Key Stage 3 to ensure that:
 - the development of students' musical skills is planned systematically as they move through the school
 - sufficient and regular opportunities are planned to improve singing, to play a variety of instruments and to make musical use of ICT.

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.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy
Her Majesty's Inspector