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Mr L Wilson  
Headteacher  
Stanley St Peters CofE VC Primary School  
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Stanley  
Wakefield  
WF3 4HS

Dear Mr Wilson

### **Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: music**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 18 June 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 pupils; a meeting with the head of Wakefield Music Service; scrutiny of relevant documentation; and observation of three class lessons and a 'Wider Opportunities' instrumental lesson, an assembly and an extra-curricular choir rehearsal.

The overall effectiveness of music is satisfactory.

### **Achievement in music**

Achievement in music is satisfactory.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities broadly in line with those expected for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. They enjoy singing songs related to their learning. In their singing and playing they demonstrate a developing sense of rhythm but weaker grasp of pitch and tone. Their grasp of pitch in their singing, particularly in middle and lower registers, improves as they move through the school and they have experience of playing a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. By the time they reach Year 6 most achieve expected outcomes.

- Nearly one quarter of all girls participate in the school choir, singing with confidence; however, the involvement of boys is much lower. The proportion of pupils receiving instrumental tuition is broadly satisfactory.
- Music makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal and social development and is a key feature in the school's links with the wider community. For example, parents and carers past and present as well as some members of the governing body take an active part in supporting the school's choir by attending rehearsals and helping with the organising of events.

### **Quality of teaching in music**

The quality of teaching in music is satisfactory.

- Teachers ensure that lessons are well managed and organised, with opportunities for pupils to play instruments. These are occasionally linked to the topics they are studying in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked cooperatively, producing sounds to create a sense of tension in a story they were studying in literacy. However, the effectiveness of this work is often limited by too much verbal explanation rather than teachers and pupils demonstrating what they understand through music. Furthermore, lessons do not always offer opportunities to develop singing.
- Although teachers develop the use of technical vocabulary appropriately, pupils' better progress is limited by teachers' lack of understanding of the progression and development of musical skills and knowledge within lessons and across units of learning.
- Pupils in Year 4 are taught a musical instrument as part of the 'Wider Opportunities' programme. Here the teacher demonstrates his expectations clearly by playing and singing, and pupils are able to respond on a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. However planning for differing ability levels is less well developed.

### **Quality of the curriculum in music**

The quality of the curriculum in music is satisfactory.

- The school's music curriculum follows a published scheme of work which is augmented by other resources. Although teachers plan some links between subjects, music is taught discreetly from other subjects to ensure that pupils experience a range of musical styles, cultures, genres and periods.
- While planning for individual units of learning indicates the areas of musical experience and activity to be covered, it does not give sufficient guidance about the quality of outcomes expected and the next steps pupils should take in their learning. Consequently, weaknesses occur in the systematic development of pupils' musical skills and knowledge. For example, curriculum plans for Years 5 and 6 do not build on the programme of instrumental lessons in Year 4.

- Music is well resourced and accommodated within the school. In addition to the 'Wider Opportunities' programme in Year 4, the school makes use of its community links, visits from musicians, peripatetic teachers and participation in regional singing events to support musical provision in the school.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in music**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in music is satisfactory.

- All those involved in leading and managing music bring much enthusiasm to their roles. You have a clear vision for music and leaders and managers value the subject and recognise, rightly, that music is important to the development of the whole child. The school has fostered a positive relationship with Wakefield Music Service to provide peripatetic music teaching and the 'Wider Opportunities' programme in Year 4.
- The subject leader provides individual support for staff and she is well supported by senior leaders. Systems for monitoring music provision are in place and the school consults with pupils to identify positive aspects of the current music provision and how it can improve.
- The school is honest and secure in its self-evaluation and leaders recognise that the development of teachers' confidence and subject knowledge, in order to ensure good practice in planning and delivering music lessons, needs to be a clear priority in the forthcoming focus on music in the school's development cycle.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- in partnership with Wakefield Music Service, developing the quality of teaching in music by accessing training to enable staff to:
  - develop their understanding of the progression and development of musical skills and knowledge
  - share good practice and model their expectations musically
  - ensure that singing is developed consistently in all lessons
- improving the quality of curriculum planning to ensure:
  - that the development of pupils' musical skills and knowledge is planned systematically within lessons and across units of learning
  - that sufficient guidance is provided about the quality of outcomes expected to clarify expectations and promote better progress.

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

**Adrian Guy**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**