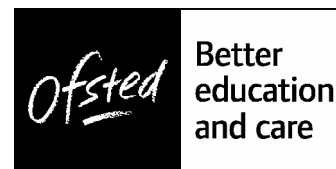


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15 March 2007

Mr Gregory Hughes  
Headteacher  
St Hugh's Catholic Primary School  
Woodfield Avenue  
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Dear Mr Hughes

Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme 2006/7 – Music

Thank you for your assistance and hospitality, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 01 February 2007. At the end of the inspection I fed back my judgements and this letter is to confirm my findings.

The purpose of this inspection was to evaluate the provision of music in Key Stages 1 and 2 at your school. The visit provided much useful evidence for the next Ofsted review of music and the wider evaluation of developments in these subjects. Your school will not be named in any publication without your permission and most evidence will be used at a general level, to identify trends and issues for development.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of four lessons, one instrumental lesson and three extra-curricular activities.

Achievement and standards

Overall, achievement and standards are outstanding.

- Standards in Key Stage 2 are well above average overall while the standard of singing is exceptionally high. Pupils sing accurately and musically with clear diction and good tone quality. Their breathing and sense of phrasing reflects the careful attention to detail on which the teaching insists. Instrumental skills are also well above average and in class, pupils play their own compositions with control and a good sense of ensemble. Year 6 are creating some imaginative approaches to both lyrics and music in their Blues style compositions.

- At Key Stage 1, standards are also well above expectations. Pupils in the Infant choir sing with a good sense of pitch and rhythm. In class, pupils can distinguish between pulse and rhythm and improvise rhythms accurately.
- Music is making an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are exemplary, and music making is characterised by enthusiasm and a purposeful buzz of activity. Pupils take pride in their involvement in music and cooperate sensibly in group work, listening and responding generously to each other's ideas.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in their instrumental lessons and in the extra-curricular activities. The junior choir richly deserves its success in the BBC Radio 3 Choir of the Year competition. High proportions of pupils take part in extra-curricular clubs, and the number receiving instrumental tuition is also high.

### Quality of provision

The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some outstanding aspects.

- In both key stages, teaching is confident, ambitious and challenging. A strong focus on practical work ensures pupils make good progress in developing both their performance and composition skills. Pupils respond with gusto to the activities and good relationships and an infectious enthusiasm are characteristic of the learning. At its best, teaching is inspiring, with a close attention to musical detail and expressiveness.
- An impressive feature of the teaching throughout the school is the extent to which all class teachers are involved, relying on the music subject leader for support and guidance only. However some teachers need help in structuring their lessons to ensure pupils move more confidently step by step. Learning often moves at a rapid pace, but sometimes the teaching fails to consolidate skills learnt before moving on. Planning is carefully geared to the needs of individual pupils and work is carefully assessed to ensure progression. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning.

### Quality of the music curriculum and extra-curricular provision

The curriculum is outstanding.

- Pupils experience a well balanced and broad range of musical experiences in both the taught curriculum and in extra curricular activities. The use of a published scheme provides confidence for class teachers and ensures skills are taught progressively. Cross-curricular links are well developed, and pupils have excellent opportunities for

enriching their musical experience in extra curricular clubs. Singing in either one of the choirs is regarded as a privilege and honour.

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- Inspirational leadership of the subject has ensured that high standards have been maintained since the last inspection and overall provision has continued to improve. There is a clear understanding of music's value, shared by all teachers and the contribution music makes to the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Monitoring is thorough and involves senior staff, governors and other staff. It has led to a realistic self evaluation of the quality of provision. A closer relationship between the issues identified through monitoring and the subject improvement plan would help ensure continuing improvements.

## Subject issues

- Assessment and the use of data are good. Pupils' progress is carefully assessed at the end of each unit of work and assessments against National Curriculum levels are made half yearly. These are used effectively to check individual pupil's progress. Data from Year 6 assessments are helpfully passed on to receiving secondary schools.
- The school works effectively in partnership with others to extend and enrich its music. Good links with the county music service in particular enable a high proportion of pupils to learn instruments with visiting specialist teachers. However, the school has not yet tapped into the opportunities provided for whole class instrumental tuition offered through the Wider Opportunities scheme.

## Inclusion

- The school is committed to ensuring music touches every child. Even those pupils who fail to pass the audition into the school choir nevertheless speak warmly of the impact music has on them. High numbers of pupils are involved in music, either through singing or instrumental playing, and all pupils are involved in the annual musical play.

## Overall effectiveness of the subject

- The overall effectiveness of music is outstanding, and is a strength of the school. Music makes a distinctive and valuable contribution to the school and pupils' personal development.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- giving teachers additional support to ensure lessons are structured more carefully to allow pupils the opportunity to consolidate their skills step by step
- reviewing the cycle of monitoring and review to ensure issues raised through monitoring are the focus for the subject improvement plan.

I very much hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop music in your school.

A copy of this feedback will be sent to your local authority and will be available to the next institutional inspection team but it will not be published.

In 6-12 months after the inspection visit, we would like to gather information on the impact of this inspection on the improvements in this subject in your school. To this end you may be contacted by telephone or sent a questionnaire to complete. We appreciate your co-operation in this evaluation.

Yours sincerely

Tony Shield  
Additional Inspector