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Mr N Blakeley  
Ossett South Parade Primary School  
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Dear Mr Blakeley

Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme – Music

Thank you for your assistance and hospitality and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 06-07 February 2008. At the end of the inspection I fed back my judgements and this letter is to confirm my findings.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on the extent to which every pupil is benefiting from your music provision. It also explored any links you have developed with other schools and agencies.

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 unless to highlight exceptional practice. In such circumstances the school would be contacted prior to publication to agree the exact wording. 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: discussions with members of staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of lessons, ensembles and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of music is satisfactory. The school is working hard to identify and bring together the various ways in which music is used to support other subjects within the school, especially the various rhythmic activities which help to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.

## Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in music are satisfactory.

- Pupils achieve broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. This is satisfactory progress given their attainment on entry to the school.
- Pupils enjoy the music lessons. They co-operate well together, sharing ideas and suggestions about how to improve or develop their compositions. While progress is often good as a result of this co-operation, not all lessons provide sufficient challenge for pupils to make more than satisfactory progress overall
- Rhythmic skills are developed throughout the school. Pupils taking part in the instrumental programme showed that they can maintain their parts successfully even when the rhythm patterns are more complex.
- Singing is a regular part of music lessons and one of the daily assemblies. Pupils are able to sing rounds successfully with good control of intonation and diction.
- Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a range of musical activities. They use instruments well and recognise how sounds can be put together successfully.
- Although only a small number of pupils have instrumental tuition within and outside of school, a larger number have the opportunity to perform in school music events.

## Quality of teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- All staff display good enthusiasm and interest for the subject. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils are well aware of classroom routines and their teacher's expectations when using musical instruments. Pupils are given the confidence to express their opinions and in the best lessons are helped to plan and evaluate their work effectively.
- When teaching challenges and enables the pupils to develop their musical skills systematically, then progress is often good. For example, a small group of pupils enjoyed adding a musical introduction and rhythmic patterns to help them learn how to remember their times tables.
- However progress is less when tasks are not made clear, do not build on previously learning or when a lack of subject knowledge means that individual pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to help them reach higher attainment levels.

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

The overall quality of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is satisfactory.

- The curriculum for music is under review. This is because the school is aware of the need to adapt the published scheme, which is used by most teachers, more closely to the needs of each class and to ensure that pupils' musical skills are taught and developed systematically. At present there is no clear overview to make certain that all aspects of the music curriculum are taught progressively.
- Teachers make good use of musical activities and resources to support learning in other subjects. Pupils are also encouraged to listen to a wide variety of music which helps to broaden their musical horizons.
- The school makes every effort to encourage and enable pupils to take part in concerts. While a small number of pupils receive instrumental lessons the subject co-ordinator is working hard to encourage and enable more to be involved.
- Resources for music are very good and pupils benefit from the attractive displays of instruments and musical information in their classrooms.

## Leadership and management of music

The leadership and management of music are satisfactory.

- You and the subject co-ordinator are sensibly undertaking an evaluation of the provision. At present the time available for this work is limited but more time is to be made available to allow monitoring of the work being done by all staff throughout the school. Priorities for action are being identified as well as plans to develop music provision further.
- Music is seen as very important to the development of the whole child. Parents are becoming more involved and supportive of their children's involvement in musical events.
- Assessment is not a consistent part of learning and as a result it is not possible to track easily an individual pupil's progress. Some identification of pupils' musical ability and progress does take place but is not done consistently.

## Subject issues:

### Partnership Links

- Plans are in place for the pupils involved in the instrumental programme to take part in a concert organised by the music services, with children from other schools.

- The school is aware that there are insufficient links with the local secondary school and plans to investigate how contacts can be made.

#### Inclusion

- The school is aware that there is insufficient data about pupils' musical progress. This means that it is not possible to easily identify pupils who would benefit most from support or from extension.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- completing the audit of provision for music within the school
- refining and developing the scheme of work to ensure that pupils' musical skills are developed systematically
- developing and implementing a system of recording and assessing pupils' musical progress so pupils always know how to improve their work.

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

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

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

Marianne Young  
Her Majesty's Inspector