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Mr R Coy  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Coy

### Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme – Music

Thank you for your assistance and hospitality, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 08 May 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 good. Music is seen as an important subject in your school and is valued by all staff. The regular opportunities for all pupils to perform both in lessons and during other events contribute very effectively to raising their self-confidence and esteem.

## Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in music are good.

- Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a range of music activities. They use a good variety of instruments to recognise and create different sounds.
- Standards, overall, are broadly in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is good. Performance standards, especially when pupils perform in class lessons or during assemblies, are higher than that expected nationally.
- Singing is a regular feature of lessons. However the techniques to develop and improve class singing, for example improving breathing and diction, are not developed consistently during whole school singing practices.
- Music is embedded across the whole school and used to promote and develop pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills. Pupils are confident and keen to 'have a go' and perform in front of their peers.
- The fact that all Year 5 and 6 pupils are in the school choir is testament to the school's philosophy of inclusion. Many other pupils are involved in other ensembles or events during their time at school.
- The school collects information about pupils' musical interests and involvement in instrumental lessons. However, information about their musical progress is less well established.

## Quality of teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.

- All staff demonstrate good enthusiasm and interest for the subject. Relationships are positive and most pupils want to do their best in lessons. They are supportive of each other when working in groups and ensembles.
- Pupils are taught how to recognise different musical styles, and links are made successfully between music and other subjects. Pupils are enabled to express their opinions confidently and describe their work. Occasionally praise is slightly over-generous and pupils do not have enough time to refine, reflect on and improve their work.
- Learning objectives are shared with pupils but too often they are based on the activities to be completed and do not help pupils understand how they can improve the quality of their work.

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

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

- The school has a wide selection of instruments, including an impressive set of Djembe drums, which are used regularly by pupils.

- Learning is significantly enhanced by a wide range of musical activities and workshops for many pupils. These events introduce pupils to many different musical styles and provide good opportunities for them to work with professional musicians.
- Many pupils in Years 2 to 6 are regularly involved in enrichment activities, such as the choir and recorder groups. Pupils speak very enthusiastically of how much they enjoy taking part in all these events. They not only broaden their musical expertise and experiences, but also greatly enhance their personal and social development.
- Teachers plan lessons for their pupils using a published scheme and a range of other materials. However the school is aware of the need to monitor more closely how all teachers adapt them when planning lessons for their classes.

### Leadership and management of music

The leadership and management of music are good.

- All members of the school community, including the governing body, are very supportive of music and work hard to ensure that the subject permeates many aspects of school life. Events are planned specifically to extend pupils' musical horizons, for example Year 5 pupils talked excitedly about how much they had learnt about music and other art forms during their recent work with Creative Partnerships.
- While some monitoring of provision and tracking of progress is undertaken, this is generally on an informal basis. The school is working to refine and standardise the way all teachers assess pupils' work in order to identify their musical ability and track their individual progress.
- You and the key stage leaders work tirelessly to promote music and to provide the best possible high quality workshops for all pupils. The regular school productions are very much valued and enjoyed by both adults and pupils.

Subject issues:

### Partnership Links

- The developing range of arts provision and projects with Creative Partnerships and other primary schools enriches the curriculum, providing good opportunities for many pupils.
- The school is aware that there are insufficient links with the local secondary school.
- The school had no knowledge of, or involvement in, the instrumental and/or vocal programmes funded by the Government.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- adapting the scheme of work to ensure that pupils' musical skills are developed systematically
- identifying more clearly and precisely what pupils are expected to learn, as opposed to do, in lessons
- refining and standardising the way information about pupils' musical progress is collected and recorded.

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

