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Mrs L Fenwick  
Headteacher  
Baltonsborough C of E VC Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Fenwick

Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme – Music

Thank you very much for your assistance and hospitality and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 19 June 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 the links you have developed with other schools and agencies, such as the local Music Service.

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: interviews with members of staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of music is inadequate. This is because teaching, the curriculum, and extra-curricular activities do not provide sufficient challenge and as a result pupils do not make adequate progress in music during their time at the school.

#### Achievement and Standards

Achievement and standards are inadequate.

- Pupils in Reception and Year 1 show above average musical ability. They have good knowledge of musical instruments, are able to move and respond to music imaginatively and sing confidently, in-tune and with expression. However, musical

standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are only broadly average and this represents inadequate progress. Composing work is particularly weak.

- Pupils throughout the school are in the very early stages of learning to play the recorder through instruction provided by their class teachers. A good number of pupils receive additional instrumental tuition in and out of school but there are insufficient opportunities for them to use and develop these skills in music curriculum lessons or in extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy singing in the area music concerts and in the end of term events. However, they are right in wanting more variety in their music lessons, particularly more opportunities to play instruments in addition to playing recorders and singing.

### Quality of teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is inadequate.

- Working relationships and behaviour are good in all lessons and pupils show an extremely positive attitude to learning. Whilst teachers are always enthusiastic and encouraging, they do not provide sufficient challenge for pupils or sequenced steps of learning.
- All lessons start with a warm-up activity. However, these activities are often unrelated to the main activity that follows, and therefore do not help pupils make connections in their work.
- Too often, discussions or instructions are not linked to how pupils could improve their work. Opportunities are missed for pupils to record and discuss their own work.
- Work is not assessed, and consequently the school does not hold any information about the standard of pupils' work in music. This means that teachers have limited information to help them plan lessons that are appropriately challenging to the needs, interests and abilities of pupils, particularly the most able and those with additional instrumental skills.

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

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

- There is a two-year rolling programme for each class which includes cross-curricular projects and discreet musical activities. Whilst these programmes give clear guidance about the types of activities to be completed, there is insufficient detail about the specific musical skills and knowledge to be learnt by pupils, particularly in the later years of Key Stage 2. There is no planned differentiation to take account of the mixed-ages within each class.
- Whilst some pupils learn the guitar, clarinet and violin there are no opportunities for them to play these together in school groups. Pupils have opportunities to sing in the end-of-term services and Class 2 participates in the local schools' festival but there is no regular school choir or vocal group.
- Funding for wider musical opportunities has been used this year to purchase whole-class sets of recorders and teaching materials, for use by class teachers. Next year, the school is planning to use this money to purchase further teaching materials and resources for use by the new music coordinator.

## Leadership and management of music

The overall quality of leadership and management is inadequate.

- Throughout this inspection you and your staff were open and honest, and an accurate self-evaluation of music was given. It is recognised that pupils have not made adequate progress in their musical development. However, you and your governors have acted positively by appointing an experienced music coordinator to your staff from September 2008 who has already put improvement plans in place, and you have a clear vision for the importance and place of music in your school. The school, therefore, is well placed to take forward the necessary improvement.
- Prior to this inspection, the school was not aware of national initiatives in music education. However, the school has now registered with the national singing strategy and has details of professional development opportunities to support the new music coordinator and other staff.

## Subject issues: Data collection and partnerships

- The Music Service provides instrumental lessons and organises the annual schools' music festival, which is supported by your school. There are also good links with the local community, including participation in the annual village pageant.
- There is no data on music.

## Inclusion

- Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that everyone is included and able to participate in curriculum lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and there is good support for them in lessons.
- Everyone is encouraged to participate in performance opportunities such as the annual schools' music festival. All pupils are able to apply for instrumental tuition. However, insufficient use is made in class lessons of the advanced skills of pupils who play instruments.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed and agreed, included:

- developing the music curriculum and extra-curricular activities so they reflect the needs, interests, and abilities of pupils and progressively develop their musical skills and knowledge
- making sure pupils are clear about the focus for their learning and what they need to do to improve their work
- collecting information about the progress pupils make so that work can be matched to their learning needs.

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, will be available to the next institutional inspection team, and will 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 cooperation in this evaluation.

Yours sincerely

Mark Phillips  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools