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Mrs G Harrison  
Headteacher  
St John's C of E Primary School  
Winsford Avenue  
Coventry  
CV5 9HZ

Dear Mrs Harrison

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in Music

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 08 July 2008 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 made included: discussions with members of staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of lessons, assemblies and a choir rehearsal.

Features of good practice observed

- There is an obvious enjoyment of singing demonstrated by the pupils and effectively led and fostered by you. There is determination and commitment by senior leaders to ensure that as many pupils as possible have the opportunity to sing with other pupils and teachers at different venues throughout the city.
- Pupils very much appreciate these events. Together with the regular performances in school, these opportunities contribute well to their personal development.
- The best singing is rhythmically secure, pitch is accurate and pupils' diction is clear. Songs are sung expressively and reflect the story or theme well.
- Pupils enjoy singing in the choir. However, the numbers of boys involved is small and you are rightly actively looking to increase the numbers involved.
- There are pockets of good practice around the school. For example, pupils used classroom percussion and orchestral instruments well to support and provide effective accompaniments for class singing.

However you realise that these examples are not being monitored consistently to ensure that good practice is shared between staff.

- The school has successfully explored how singing can contribute to and support learning in other subjects.

Areas for development

As we discussed, the provision in the school could be further improved by:

- ensuring more systematic development of pupils' singing, and other musical skills, so that there is clear progression between each year group
- using clearly defined learning outcomes in lessons as a basis for assessment so pupils and teachers know how much progress is being made in singing, and other musical, activities.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop music in the school.

As I explained previously, 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.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young  
Her Majesty's Inspector