

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



26 November 2008

Mrs J Wedlinscky
Headteacher
East Ardsley Primary School
Fall Lane
East Ardsley
Wakefield
WF3 2BA

Dear Mrs Wedlinscky

Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme – Music

Thank you for your assistance and hospitality and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 05 November 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, observation of lessons, instrumental lessons, an assembly and enrichment activities.

The overall effectiveness of music is satisfactory with areas of strength. Pupils are motivated and music makes a strong contribution to developing their self-esteem and confidence. The support the school gives to music is rightfully recognised by the Artsmark Silver award. The school also holds the Stephen Lawrence Educational Standard Level 2 award.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in music are satisfactory overall with good features.

- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. They respond well to a well chosen variety of songs and music activities. Children happily perform to their class mates and follow instructions carefully.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make steady progress and achieve standards which are slightly below expectations at the end of Year 6. Most are able to sing in tune and have developed a secure sense of pulse and rhythm. There are opportunities for pupils to create their own musical ideas but this does not happen uniformly across the school.
- Everyone participates in the school productions which are welcomed and valued by pupils. However, pupils are rightly disappointed that the start of music clubs has been delayed this term.
- All pupils have equal access to instrumental tuition. However, insufficient use is made in some class lessons of the advanced skills of pupils who receive additional instrumental lessons.

Quality of teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features.

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Sensible use is made of asking pupils to 'show the class' so that children can respond musically. Good use is also made of traditional songs which link singing and movement to help children develop their understanding of pulse.
- Most lessons are prepared thoroughly and pupils understand what they are to do in lessons but are not always clear what they are to learn. In the best lessons, pupils are able to make musical decisions and contribute to group compositions. They also learn how to internalise sounds and predict the pitch of a well known song before singing it together. In these lessons, progress is good and all pupils are actively engaged in music.
- Teachers have developed good relationships with their classes and work is managed well. However, much of the work is aimed at the whole class and so pupils, especially the more able, are not always given effective challenge. In a few lessons specific musical weaknesses are identified, for example inaccuracies when singing particular parts of a song, but pupils are given insufficient time to rehearse these parts and so make secure improvement.

Quality of the music curriculum and extra-curricular provision

The overall quality of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is satisfactory with particular strengths in the variety and range of experiences provided.

- The curriculum, which uses a mixture of published schemes, has been recognised by the school as needing further modification so that it matches the needs of all pupils more effectively and develops their musical skills systematically. Despite including a good range of different activities in music lessons, teachers do not always make clear which musical skill is to be developed.
- The curriculum is successfully enhanced by workshops with professional musicians and visits to concerts. Several workshops introduce pupils to a breadth of art forms which successfully expand their knowledge and understanding of different musical styles and cultures.
- All pupils in Year 3 are benefiting from learning the ocarina and the school has identified the need to expand the range of opportunities for pupils to learn different instruments.

Leadership and management of music

The leadership and management of music are satisfactory with strengths, particularly in the way staff work together and their commitment to music.

- All staff, including the governing body, is strongly committed to music. Firm foundations have been created and the school's recent self-evaluation and helpful improvement document, identifies how provision for music should be improved. Some aspects are already in place but it is too soon to evaluate their impact, for example, the closer monitoring of the progress being made by pupils both in lessons and across the key stages.
- The school is aware of the need to develop a system of assessment so that pupils know how well they are doing and all teachers have clear information about individual pupils' progress.
- Many staff have good music skills, they enjoy teaching music and work well together planning learning and music activities. You recognise that subject leadership is still developing and appropriate continual professional development (CPD) has been undertaken.

Subject issues:

Partnership Links

- The good links between your school and the cluster primaries and secondary school enables pupils to perform regularly together.

- Good links have been developed with the music service.

Inclusion

- Inclusion of all learners is important to the school. All arts subjects are valued and, as a result every opportunity is taken to access external funding to support workshops and visits to music events. The school is actively looking at ways to run music clubs regularly and to increase the proportion of older boys involved.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:-

- developing a system to assess and collect more information about pupils' progress
- ensuring that teaching and learning meets all pupils' different abilities so that they are all given work that is hard enough for them
- refining further the curriculum to ensure pupils' musical skills are developed systematically.

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