

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



16 December 2008

Mr A Rehling  
Headteacher  
Mayfield School  
Pedley Road  
Dagenham  
RM8 1XE

Dear Mr Rehling

### Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme – Music

Thank you for your assistance and hospitality, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on the 09-10 December 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 student is benefiting from your music provision. It also explored the 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 students, discussions with members of the Music Service, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of lessons and extra-curricular activities.

The overall effectiveness of music is satisfactory. There has been some instability in the staffing of the music department but work over the last two years is starting to show improvements in provision. There are strengths in the planning of curriculum content and the systems used to collect information and link class work to homework. However, students do not always make as much progress as they could. The school recognises that there is more still to be done.

## Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in music are satisfactory.

- The number involved in GCSE music has increased and is more in line with the national average. Students make secure progress in Key Stage 4 and achieve standards that are broadly in line with national averages.
- Standards in Key Stage 3 are below expectations. While achievement is satisfactory, as students generally join the school with underdeveloped musical skills, more progress could be made in some lessons. Overall, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to attain at the higher levels.
- There are no students studying music in the sixth form although an enrichment programme is starting to involve some students in musical activities.
- More extra-curricular opportunities have been provided for students but numbers involved are still low and attendance is inconsistent which makes it difficult to raise standards of performance.

## Quality of teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Teachers have developed good relationships with the students and use good classroom management strategies. There are good emerging techniques, such as involving students in developing the assessment criteria and evaluating their work at the end of each lesson, but these do not always have sufficient emphasis on musical outcomes but instead focus on more generic outcomes such as 'do the best you can'.
- Lessons are planned well but the learning objectives are often too broad for students to know what they need to do to provide a better response. Some students are right in wanting more challenge and opportunities to explore music in more depth.
- The method of linking homework to classwork is excellent as students have clear printed details in their homework diaries. There are also good systems in place to collect information about students' progress. The use of audio recordings, however, is underdeveloped.

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

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

- The content of the curriculum is planned well and described clearly. Key words are used effectively in each unit of work but there is insufficient clarity about how expectations increase from unit to unit and year to year. The school is aware of the need to make more use the National Curriculum Levels to help define progress and ensure sufficient challenge and appropriate depth of study for all pupils.

- Students are right in wanting a wider range of resources in the classroom. While there are opportunities to make use of information and communication technology (ICT) these are very limited.
- Extra-curricular activities have been developed and there are now a range of different experiences available. Students enjoy the increased opportunities to perform to others through school events.

### Leadership and management of music

The leadership and management of music are satisfactory overall.

- You are keen for music to play an important part in the school curriculum and the overall evaluation of the provision for music is accurate. You recognise that while there is much that is improving there is still more to be done. For example, the school is exploring ways to encourage and enable more students to benefit from instrumental lessons and involvement in extra-curricular activities. The school recognises that the monitoring of attendance in extra-curricular activities by senior leaders has been insufficient.
- The music department is well managed and good systems have been introduced. All staff work well together. Good links have been developed with the Music Service and specialist teachers provide excellent leadership for lunch time activities. Links with primary schools are at an early stage of development.

### Subject issue: Inclusion

- Class lessons involve all pupils but there is insufficient challenge for the more able. The range of extra-curricular opportunities has been increased and more students are continuing to study music in Key Stage 4. However, numbers involved, including those involved in instrumental lessons are relatively small.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- increasing the clarity of the learning objectives so that students know the quality of work expected and what to do to provide an even better response
- raising expectations and providing more opportunities for students to explore music in depth
- encouraging and enabling more students to benefit from involvement in instrumental lessons and extra-curricular activities.

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

Anthony Knight  
Her Majesty's Inspector