

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



03 August 2009

Mr I Howells
Headteacher
Bassingham Primary School
Lincoln Road
Bassingham
Lincolnshire
LN5 9HQ

Dear Mr Howells

Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme – Music

Thank you for your assistance and hospitality, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on the 25 June 2009. 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.

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 and a rehearsal of the forthcoming school production.

The overall effectiveness of music is good. Pupils enjoy music and contribute much to lessons. Strong leadership has enabled the overall good teaching of music by class teachers.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in music are good.

- Across the school, pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are generally above average. The strong progress made in the Reception Class and during Key Stage 1 is maintained during Key Stage 2.
- Pupils in the Reception class enjoy exploring how sounds can be changed and grouping instruments into the different ways they are played. They sing well together. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils organise sounds and show good aural discrimination. For example, they were able to identify and comment on the dynamic balance of different voices in their own recordings. They sing confidently as a class and in small groups.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their aural skills and their ability to appraise music. All pupils in Year 3 were able to identify and perform different rhythmic patterns using notation as a support and older pupils made good suggestions as to how their musical performances could be improved.
- Pupils in all classes demonstrated exceptional personal development in the musical activities. They always took great care of the musical instruments and worked excellently together. They also respond enthusiastically to being involved in school concerts and productions.

Quality of teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and there were examples of outstanding teaching.

- Lessons are consistently managed well and tasks are planned carefully. Lesson objectives are clear so that pupils always know what they are learning. However, some opportunities were missed to ensure pupils always knew what would make an even better response.
- All staff are making use of effective strategies for teaching music. This was seen clearly in the increasing use of audio recordings of pupils' work. In one of the outstanding lessons, pupils were helped to listen closely to their own small group performances and identify how it could be improved which enabled them to make rapid progress.
- There is a good balance of practical work and instruction, although there were a few occasions when pupils would have benefited from more opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in addition to being asked to provide a spoken response.
- Teachers work well together and teaching assistants provide good support.

Quality of the music curriculum and extra-curricular provision

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

- The curriculum includes a good balance of different musical opportunities. Pupils are being helped to develop their musical skills and musical creativity. They are all involved in performances and enjoy the additional workshops provided by visiting specialists. They also enjoy the increasing use of their audio recordings and are keen to now share these more widely with other classes.
- Effective use is made of a published scheme as the school is aware of the need to ensure that each unit of work is adapted to the needs of the class. The school is also giving appropriate attention to extending the range of regular extra-curricular activities and ensuring that the repertoire selected for public performance is always matched to pupils' musical needs.

Leadership and management of music

The leadership and management of music are good.

- The school has given good support to the development of the music provision. Music has been a recent focus for ongoing school improvement and the subject leader has sensibly been given time to continue to monitor and support staff over the next year. A real success has been the engagement of staff in the teaching of music so that classes are taught well by their class teacher. This success extends to the trainee teachers who also volunteered to be seen teaching music during the inspection.
- Self-evaluation is accurate, the school knows its strengths and what needs further development. For example, good systems are being put into place such as the way the school is beginning to collect and use assessment information. The school recognises that the use of this information needs to be refined and consolidated before the school moves on to the next subject. The progress and involvement of different groups of pupils can then be tracked easily and appropriate actions taken where needed.
- There are good links with the music service and good plans for further involvement in their instrumental programmes.

Subject issue:

Inclusion

- All pupils enjoy music and are given the opportunity to take part in school music events. However, the school recognises the need to encourage more boys to be involved in regular extra-curricular activities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring pupils always know what would make an even better response

- continuing to enable the subject leader to provide support for colleagues
- refining and consolidating the way assessment information is collected and used so that all groups are helped to make progress and benefit from involvement in additional musical experiences.

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