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Mrs L Leveridge  
Headteacher  
Lawford Church of England Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Leveridge

#### Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme – Music

Thank you for your assistance and hospitality, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on the 23 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 performances by the school orchestra and senior choir.

The overall effectiveness of music is outstanding. All pupils really enjoy music and gain considerable benefit, both musically and personally, from a range of quality musical experiences and opportunities provided by the school. Staff are supported excellently and are deeply committed to ensuring all pupils are involved in music making. There is a clear vision for music which ensures the

broader contribution of music as an essential personal, social and cultural experience is at the heart of the school's provision for music.

## Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in music are outstanding.

- Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. They enjoy exploring sounds and show increasing awareness and control of pitch and sense of pulse.
- Pupils build on the firm foundations established in Key Stage 1 and make excellent progress during Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 sang in two parts confidently and musically. They quickly learned rhythmic patterns which they performed enthusiastically in the school orchestra: an ensemble that includes all pupils from Year 6 and some from Year 5. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 4 responded excellently to creative tasks and pupils in Year 3 achieved a high quality whole class performance of an Indian raga.
- The many pupils who have additional instrumental lessons perform to a high standard and use these skills well in class lessons. Many are also involved in the good range of regular extra-curricular activities. The senior choir sang excellently with style and musical understanding.
- The personal development of pupils through music is outstanding as the school ensures that the pupils who would benefit most are encouraged and enabled to be involved in all the musical opportunities available.

## Quality of teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Lessons are organised effectively and tasks explained well. Teachers and pupils clearly enjoy the opportunities to make music.
- Pupils' imagination is skilfully stimulated such as when pupils in Year 4 were helped to imagine the firebird by the teacher setting the scene and opening a bird cage as Stravinsky's Firebird music was played. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were cleverly inspired to perform a raga to the best of their ability in order to evoke the atmosphere intended. This lesson was a model of how music can help promote pupils' spiritual development.
- Good use was also made of recordings as when pupils in Year 6 listened carefully to a recording of a song they were singing to identify features they could use to improve their own performance – which they did very successfully.
- All pupils made at least good progress but a few opportunities were missed to challenge pupils further by making sure they always knew what would make an even better response. This area for further development was confirmed by the most musically experienced pupils who said that while they were always very happy to help others in the class they would like to be stretched a bit more.

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

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

- Pupils are rightfully very appreciative of the emphasis the school places on music and enjoy the many opportunities given to them. These include regular musical experiences as part of the constantly developing curriculum and the many additional opportunities such as performances by visiting musicians and the developing musical links with a school in Africa.
- Pupils are also right in describing the balance of experiences as being perfect. A well planned programme ensures all develop their creative, performing and listening skills. They also were keen to show how singing songs based on mathematical and scientific facts had really helped them to remember important information in other subjects.
- Audio and video recordings are used well as a record of previous work and the school has excellent plans to use these to further develop teachers' shared understanding of musical expectations for each year.

## Leadership and management of music

The leadership and management of music are outstanding.

- You provide excellent leadership for music and have empowered and supported staff so they have increasingly discovered the pleasure of teaching music as part of an exciting and stimulating curriculum. This has been done as a part of ongoing staff development so that all teachers in the school gain the expertise and confidence to teach the whole national curriculum. This approach provides an excellent example for other schools to replicate.
- You have also gained the respect of pupils who welcome the importance given to music and the way all are encouraged to be involved. As one pupil said 'The headteacher rocks'.
- Good links have been established with other schools and the local music service. Effective use had also been made of other opportunities such as the range of workshops. All pupils involved in wide range of concerts.
- Music has been the focus for school development recently and the impact of this focus is clearly seen, for example, in the excellent development of how music is assessed. Maintaining the focus on music for a short while longer will enable this system to be refined further so that it can become an easily used, and thus integral, part of the strategies teachers use to maintain and develop the impact of music in this school.

Subject issue:

Inclusion

- Inclusion is excellent. The school ensures that all groups are involved by providing extra support and encouragement where this is required.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring pupils always know what to do to improve their work
- refining the assessment procedures further so that they become an easily used, and thus integral, part of the effective strategies used by teachers when teaching music.

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