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Mrs S Osman  
Headteacher  
Donnington Wood CofE Voluntary  
Controlled Junior School  
Winifreds Drive  
Donnington  
TF2 8BH

Dear Mrs Osman

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: music

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 18 March 2010 to look at work in music.

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 all pupils are benefiting from the provision. I also explored the partnerships you may have developed with other schools and agencies to improve continuity and increase opportunity for your pupils.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff; talking to selected pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; visits to four lessons and a choral assembly; and observing a recorder group rehearsal.

The overall effectiveness of music is satisfactory. Music is important to the school and pupils significantly develop their self-esteem and confidence by taking part in concerts and public performances. The school recognises where improvements in provision need to be made and has made effective use of the partnership with the local music service to provide instrumental lessons that they are unable to offer.

Achievement in music

Achievement in music is satisfactory.

- By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are below those expected nationally. This represents satisfactory progress, given the varied

experience of music they have before joining in Year 3. Pupils make better progress in singing than they do in composing work. This is because insufficient opportunities are planned for pupils to develop their creativity in music.

- Overall participation rates in extra-curricular activities are high; however, the school is fully aware of the need to include more boys. Pupils enjoy music, with all of them taking part in the annual school productions.
- No pupils have individual instrumental lessons. To compensate for this, pupils in Year 3 are learning the recorder in class and those in Year 4 are taking part in the class instrumental and vocal programmes delivered by staff from Telford and Wrekin Music Service.

### Quality of provision

The quality of teaching of music is satisfactory.

- Teachers make good use of generic teaching strategies. They have positive working relationships with pupils and, as a result, pupils behave well and do their best in lessons.
- Teachers' assurance when modelling music varies considerably. They listen carefully to pupils' responses and give them encouraging comments. At times, they accept pupils' first answers too readily and do not explore, through rehearsal, how improvements can be made - for example, considering how a piece could be performed more expressively.
- The school recognises that formal assessment processes to measure pupils' progress as they move through the school are at an early stage of development.

### Quality of the curriculum in music

The quality of the curriculum in music is satisfactory.

- There is a broad outline scheme of work. However, the school recognises that some class teachers are more successful than others in the detailed planning of lessons to meet the needs, interests and abilities of all pupils. As a result, the approach to pupils' progressive acquisition of musical skills and knowledge is inconsistent.
- Class music lessons are complemented by weekly whole-school choral assemblies and sessions with a specialist music teacher. Music is also beginning to be included into other lessons as the school adopts a creative approach to curriculum planning, focusing themes that incorporate learning across a range of subjects.
- The choir meets regularly and its members enjoy performing both in school and at venues in the local community.

### Effectiveness of leadership and management in music

The effectiveness of leadership and management in music is satisfactory.

- The commitment to music is clear in the way the school has made the most of opportunities available. National music initiatives have been embraced enthusiastically, especially the whole-class instrumental teaching and singing programmes. This positive approach is welcomed by pupils and teachers who have benefited significantly from working with specialist teachers. You recognise though that there is a need to strengthen the quality of teaching and the curriculum on a day-to-day basis so that pupils can develop and progressively improve their musical skills.
- You recognise that there has not been enough regular monitoring of class music lessons. To improve provision and ensure all pupils receive regular musical experiences of consistent quality, this is a priority. Nevertheless, the school rightly celebrates the benefits music brings in developing pupils' self-confidence and their understanding of local community cohesion.

Subject issue: inclusion

- Senior leaders recognise that music is an important subject in the development of the whole child. As a result, you ensure that all pupils and staff are involved in the annual musical production. However, you are aware of the need to find ways to involve more boys in extra-curricular activities.

Subject issue: partnerships

- Pupils benefit well from using the local church as a regular venue for performances, especially at Christmas and Easter time.
- Partnerships with the Music Service are strong through the 'Music to the 4' whole-class instrumental and vocal teaching project.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that teaching is focused on improving pupils' musical ability by:
  - increasing teachers' musical confidence and knowledge, encouraging them to make more use of modelling and developing pupils' musical response
  - developing an assessment system which measures pupils' musical abilities and then ensuring that information is used to plan activities that extend and challenge them appropriately
- ensuring that lessons give equal importance towards developing pupils' awareness and understanding of all parts of the music curriculum
- monitoring the quality of class music lessons regularly.

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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young  
Her Majesty's Inspector