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Mrs D Martindale  
Headteacher  
Christ Church Primary School  
West Bridgewater Street  
Leigh  
Lancashire  
WN7 4HB

Dear Mrs Martindale

### **Ofsted 2010–11 good practice survey inspection programme: music**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils during my visit on 10 December 2010 to look at work in music and particularly the impact of the national 'wider opportunities' initiative, supported through the standards fund.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: discussions with you, the deputy headteacher, pupils, a parent and a senior manager from the local authority instrumental teaching service; scrutiny of relevant documentation; and observations of a Year 4 whole-class instrumental lesson, individual keyboard tuition, and a choir rehearsal.

### **Features of good practice**

- The school has been involved with the national 'wider opportunities' whole-class instrumental initiative since 2006. Teaching is provided through the local authority instrumental teaching service, and complements curriculum work taught by the deputy headteacher. The programme is provided for pupils in Year 4, who learn to play the violin, viola or 'cello'. The school also promotes singing well, which is carefully planned into the whole-school music curriculum.
- Although the whole class instrumental teaching is monitored by staff from the local authority, you recognise that it has not yet been possible for the deputy headteacher to observe this teaching and thus check on the progress made by individual pupils. Observations during my visit suggested that both the school and music service staff would benefit

from working together and sharing their classroom practice, and would also help to raise further the musical standards achieved by pupils.

- The school invests considerable funding to the programme. As a result, music has become important not just for the pupils but also within the local community as parents and carers recognise and appreciate their children's instrumental abilities and talents.
- Leaders recognise that music learning is important to pupils' wider personal development, including their attendance, and their achievement in other subjects. Leaders actively identify musical ability and support pupils in music events, both in local concerts and encouraging them to belong to other organisations - for example, the local authority youth choir. A small number of bursaries are available for families whose financial circumstances make it difficult for parents to afford the cost of individual instrumental tuition, beyond the initial 'wider opportunities' experience.
- Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about playing their instruments and also discovering an aptitude and interest which they had not previously considered. Leaders are rightly proud of the various concerts in which pupils take part and which are carefully chosen for the additional and appropriate musical experiences that they provide.
- Suitable teaching materials are used for the whole-class instrumental tuition. These provide a careful blend of practical instrumental playing with other music games and singing. Although assessment opportunities are provided, leaders recognise that, throughout the school, opportunities for pupils, to use audio recordings to listen to and make improvements to their performances and compositions, are underdeveloped.

### **Areas for further development**

As discussed, provision in the school could be further improved by:

- ensuring that whole-class instrumental teaching is observed by school leaders and that the progress made by pupils and the standards they reach is monitored carefully so that all are appropriately challenged
- using audio recordings more regularly during music lessons throughout the school.

I hope that 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.

Yours sincerely

**Marianne Young**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**