

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

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



3 November 2009

Mrs J Young  
Principal  
Netherhall Learning Campus High School  
Netherhall Avenue  
Huddersfield  
HD5 9PG

Dear Mrs Young

### **Ofsted 2009–10 survey inspection programme – music**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 16 and 17 October 2009 to look at work in music.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of music, the visit had a particular focus on the extent to which all students are benefiting from the provision. I also explored the partnerships you have developed with other schools and agencies to improve continuity and increase opportunity for your students.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation and analysis of students' work. Three lessons, a choir rehearsal and peripatetic lessons were observed.

The overall effectiveness of music is outstanding. Exceptionally well-planned lessons, an exciting and innovative curriculum together with excellent leadership ensure an inclusive approach to music making in the school.

### **Achievement in music**

Achievement in music is good.

- Standards attained by students in the 2009 BTEC examination were above that found nationally. Almost half of the student population take courses in Key Stage 4 that involve music; overall these students make good

progress. However, the school has correctly identified increasing the proportion of the highest grades as a priority.

- By the end of Key Stage 3, standards in all areas of music are in line with those found nationally. This represents good progress given students' starting points in Year 7.
- A high proportion of students are involved in instrumental lessons and extra-curricular activities. However, the school recognises the need to further increase the involvement of boys.
- Students have very positive attitudes to their music making and collaborate very well in group and whole-class activities. They greatly appreciate the musical opportunities provided for them and recognise the work done by their teachers. Their views were summed up by one student; 'when the teachers give you something for free, [instrumental lessons], it's nice to give something back to them'.

### **Quality of provision**

The quality of teaching of music is outstanding.

- Students learn well because teachers have high expectations of what they can and should do.
- Teachers identify clearly what students are intended to learn and plan well-sequenced learning activities. Students are enabled to reflect on and to evaluate their work carefully and so can identify clearly what they need to do to improve.
- Assessment is fully integrated into lessons. Students benefit well from teachers' helpful comments in their books together with the encouraging suggestions made during practical work.

### **Quality of the curriculum in music**

The quality of the curriculum in music is outstanding.

- The curriculum is balanced very well and includes an excellent range of musical styles. It meets students' needs fully and, at all stages, helps to prepare them for further musical study. The school no longer offers a GCSE music course in Key Stage 4, but students are able to follow BTEC courses in expressive arts from Year 9, and also the Creative and Media Diploma, with a significant focus on music in Years 10 and 11. This development is welcomed by students and enables many more to continue to study music beyond Year 8.
- The wide range of instrumental lessons and the exceptional number of opportunities provided for students to make music together are significant strengths of the curriculum.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management in music**

Leadership and management of music are outstanding.

- The head of department leads by example, providing energy and drive to promote the best possible musical experiences for all students. Teachers work very well as a team and give generously of their time.
- Documentation is exceptionally thorough and informative. National initiatives are embraced very well. The head of department has successfully led curriculum changes and developed very good links with other schools, especially within the campus federation.
- There is a clear vision for music which is supported enthusiastically by members of the senior management team, who closely monitor the work of the department to provide very good support and necessary challenge.
- The school has made very effective use of specialist-status funding and other monies to make significant improvements in facilities and resources for music. Free instrumental tuition is provided for all students.

## **Subject issue – Inclusion**

- The school provides a relevant and dynamic curriculum that engages all students. The broad range of extra-curricular activities and free instrumental tuition complement and extend this provision for students of all abilities.
- The school maintains detailed records of involvement and achievement in music which enables it to evaluate well its success in ensuring that all students benefit fully from the music provision.

## **Subject issue – Partnerships**

- The school maintains very strong partnerships with a number of different organisations and educational establishments including Huddersfield University. As a result, students training to be music teachers are included very effectively within the music department.
- Links with local primary schools are established very well both through curricular provision and also through involvement in concerts at Netherhall High School.

## **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- ensuring that the proportion of students attaining the highest grades is increased
- developing ways to further increase the number of boys involved in music activities.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop music in the 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

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