

# Ofsted music subject visits - Guidance from ACE

## **Guidance received from Arts Council England relating to Ofsted Music Subject Visits**

Ofsted has been giving considerable thought about how it can best follow up the findings of the 2012 reports (['Wider Still, and Wider'](#) and ['Sound Partnerships'](#)). Ofsted has also been thinking about how inspectors can best monitor the early impact of the music hubs, which began operating on 1 September.

Ofsted acknowledges that it might be too soon to see significant progress with some of the priorities that were set out in the 2012 reports, such as substantial changes in participation rates between different groups of pupils and significantly better musical teaching. But Ofsted believes also that we should expect, already, to see noticeable improvements in the way that music is managed in schools, particularly by senior leaders and through partnerships with the music hubs. Such improvements, even in the few months since the reports and the hubs' launch, are vital if we want inclusion, the quality of teaching, and the quality of curriculum provision in music education to be significantly better in two or three years' time. School and hub leaders should already be laying firm foundations for these improvements.

So, between January 2013 and July 2013, Ofsted is going to make a series of short subject visits in music that will be sharply focussed on the effectiveness of music subject leadership by subject and senior leaders in schools, and the extent to which the leadership of the local music hub is supporting and augmenting musical teaching and learning in that school. Inspectors will not be reporting individual judgements of the overall quality of achievement, teaching and the curriculum in each school although, of course, they will consider these aspects when looking at the quality of leadership. Ofsted will also refer to our subject specific criteria throughout.

It is important to note that there will be no expectation or assumption made that the local music hub will be providing music tuition in the school; as our partnerships report detailed, we know that schools employ a variety of professionals and organisations for this work. The emphasis will be, therefore, on the way that the music hub augments and supports the school's provision and/or management of music, in a way that is appropriate to the school. Where a school does not have a working relationship with the local hub, Ofsted will still be interested in the way that music is provided, led and managed in that school, and the way that other partners support the school's music work.

Each visit may include the following:

- A curriculum lesson joint observation with the headteacher or nominated senior leader, followed by discussion.
- An individual or small-group instrumental/vocal lesson joint observation with the headteacher or nominated senior leader or a joint observation of a music session provided by a partner such as an orchestra, community music group or arts organisation, followed by discussion.
- Discussion with the headteacher and music coordinator of the school's music development plans, examination results and participation data, the musical progress made by all groups of pupils over time, and discussion about partnership working.
- A meeting with the head of the local music hub or other partner nominated by the school.
- Verbal feedback to the headteacher, music coordinator, and head of the music hub.

Visits will take place to primary, secondary and special schools, including academies.

Ofsted will give schools up to five days' notice of a visit so that arrangements can be made with the music hub or partner organisation.

There will be no inspection grades given to individual schools or music hubs on these visits. Inspectors will, however, offer verbal feedback to the headteacher, music co-ordinator and head of music hub after each visit, unequivocally highlighting strengths seen and areas for improvement. If a visit causes serious concerns inspectors will, as always, report these.

Thank you.

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