

St Mary's CofE Primary School



Music Curriculum Overview

Statement of Intent:

At St Mary's, our Music curriculum inspires every child to discover the joy of music, express themselves creatively and develop the confidence to perform. We nurture curiosity and appreciation of music from different cultures, traditions and periods of history. From Early Years to Year 6, children develop as listeners, singers, instrumentalists, improvisers and composers. Through making music together, pupils learn to listen carefully, respect others' contributions and show courage in sharing their own ideas. Regular opportunities to rehearse and perform help every child take pride in their achievements and shine brighter and brighter.

Aims:

Our curriculum combines exploratory music-making in the Early Years, Charanga in Years 1 and 2, and a progressive programme of instrumental and vocal experiences in Key Stage 2. We aim to develop pupils' understanding of pulse, rhythm, pitch, musical structure, notation and expression; enable them to sing, play, improvise, compose and perform; and broaden their appreciation of composers, performers and musical traditions. The curriculum is inclusive and ambitious, giving every pupil the opportunity to participate in shared musical experiences and develop confidence, creativity and musical independence.

How Music is taught at St Mary's:

In Nursery and Reception, music grows through songs, rhymes, movement, listening, instruments and imaginative play, in line with the EYFS curriculum. Years 1 and 2 follow Charanga units that develop listening, singing, instrumental playing, improvisation, composition and performance. Years 3 and 4 learn recorder, including reading musical notation and improvising; Year 5 learns djembe drumming, including rhythmic improvisation; and Year 6 begins with choral singing for Young Voices before learning ukulele chords C, Am, F and G, singing while playing and composing original music for a concert. Key Stage 2 pupils perform in termly concerts.

Musical learning extends beyond lessons. Every Friday, pupils listen to and discuss a different piece, considering the composer or performer, genre, date or period and their own response. Music Monday welcomes children with a wide range of music and pupil requests. Songs and hymns in collective worship and assemblies provide frequent opportunities to sing together. Music Friday is a planned listening opportunity; Music Monday and wider school singing contribute to a rich musical culture.

Long Term Overview

Year	Teaching sequence and experiences	Approach
Nursery	Songs, rhymes, body sounds, instruments, movement and musical exploration embedded across the year	EYFS expressive arts and design; communication and language
Reception	Songs, rhymes, movement, instruments, celebrations, dance and performance embedded across the year	EYFS expressive arts and design; communication and language
Year 1	A1 Hey You! · A2 Rhythm in the Way We Walk / The Banana Rap · Sp1 In the Groove · Sp2 Round and Round · Su1 Your Imagination · Su2 Reflect, Rewind and Replay	Charanga
Year 2	A1 Hands, Feet, Heart · A2 Ho, Ho, Ho · Sp1 I Wanna Play in a Band · Sp2 Zootime · Su1 Friendship Song · Su2 Reflect, Rewind and Replay	Charanga
Year 3	Recorder across the year: introductory pieces (including B Groovy), developing notes and notation, melodies, improvisation and concert performance	Instrumental programme
Year 4	Recorder across the year: extending note range, notation, fluency, improvisation and ensemble performance; repertoire includes Pineapple Punch, Mr Cool, Crazy Days and Movie Buster / Curtain Raiser	Instrumental programme
Year 5	Djembe drumming throughout the year: technique, rhythmic patterns, improvisation, ensemble work and termly performance	Instrumental programme
Year 6	Autumn 1: choral singing and Young Voices preparation · Autumn 2: continued choir/performance and transition to ukulele as scheduled · Spring–Summer: ukulele C, Am, F, G; sing and play; original compositions for concert	Choir and ukulele

Across all year groups: Music Friday listening and discussion; Music Monday arrival music; songs and hymns in worship and assemblies. KS2 termly concerts.

Progression of substantive knowledge, disciplinary skills and vocabulary

Nursery

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Listening and responding	Sounds can come from voices, bodies, instruments and the environment.	Notice, imitate and respond to contrasting sounds; move in response to music.	sound, loud, quiet, fast, slow, listen
Singing and playing	Songs and rhymes have repeating words and sounds.	Join familiar songs; explore instruments and sound-making actions.	song, rhyme, beat, shake, tap
Creating and sharing	Sounds can be chosen to express an idea or feeling.	Explore sound combinations; join simple group musical play.	make, choose, repeat, perform

Reception

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Listening and responding	Music can be different in speed, volume and mood; different traditions use music in celebrations.	Listen and describe simple contrasts; respond through movement and talk.	pulse, rhythm, pitch, high, low, tempo
Singing and playing	Songs have melodies and repeated patterns; instruments produce different sounds.	Sing familiar songs, keep a simple pulse, copy patterns and use instruments with care.	melody, instrument, pattern, sing

Creating and sharing	Sounds can be organised into simple sequences.	Create and repeat sound patterns; perform with others and respond to a leader.	sequence, repeat, perform, audience
----------------------	--	--	-------------------------------------

Year 1

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Listening and musical understanding	Music has pulse, rhythm and pitch; styles and instruments sound different.	Identify a steady pulse; respond to hip-hop, reggae, blues, Baroque, Latin, Bhangra, folk, funk and pop.	pulse, rhythm, pitch, style, instrument
Singing and playing	Songs can be sung or rapped; instruments can play notes with a song.	Sing in unison, follow a leader, play differentiated tuned parts.	unison, rap, note, melody
Improvising, composing, performing	Improvisation is making music in the moment; composition organises musical ideas.	Copy and invent short rhythms; improvise with one or two notes; make simple melodies; perform.	improvise, compose, audience, performance

Year 2

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Listening and musical understanding	Pulse differs from rhythm; songs have styles, verses or response sections.	Listen and discuss Afropop, rock, reggae, pop and classical music; copy increasingly varied patterns.	pulse, rhythm, pitch, genre, response
Singing and playing	Unison singing requires shared timing; tuned parts use named notes.	Sing confidently with warm-ups; play parts in time; follow musical instructions.	unison, warm-up, tuned, tempo

Improvising, composing, performing	A musical phrase can be varied; melodies can be written down and refined.	Improvise using one or two notes; compose using small note sets; perform and reflect.	phrase, improvise, compose, melody, dynamics
------------------------------------	---	---	--

Year 3

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Recorder technique and knowledge	Pitch changes with fingering; breath control affects tone; notes can be represented on a stave.	Play introductory melodies, including familiar B/A/G material where taught; control breath and articulation.	recorder, fingering, breath, pitch, stave
Notation and ensemble	Written notes and rhythmic values guide a performance; pulse keeps players together.	Read and play taught notation; rehearse with others and maintain a shared beat.	crotchet, minim, rest, bar, pulse
Creativity and performance	A short melodic idea can be answered or varied.	Improvise using learned notes; contribute to concert performance.	improvise, phrase, ensemble, performance

Year 4

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Recorder technique and knowledge	Different fingerings create a wider pitch range; articulation and breath influence musical expression.	Play a broader repertoire with greater fluency and control.	articulation, tone, fluency, melody
Notation and ensemble	Notation communicates pitch, rhythm and musical direction.	Read increasingly complex taught notation; maintain accurate entries and endings.	notation, time signature, tempo, dynamics

Creativity and performance	Musical ideas can be shaped into phrases and interpreted expressively.	Improvise melodic responses; rehearse and perform recorder pieces together.	phrase, expression, rehearsal, ensemble
----------------------------	--	---	---

Year 5

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Djembe technique and knowledge	Different playing techniques produce contrasting drum tones; repeated patterns build rhythmic music.	Use appropriate hand techniques and maintain a steady beat.	djembe, bass, tone, slap, pulse
Rhythm and ensemble	Rhythmic layers and call-and-response depend on listening and timing.	Perform repeated patterns, respond to cues and coordinate parts in an ensemble.	ostinato, call and response, rhythm, layer
Creativity and performance	Improvised rhythms can answer or contrast with a given pattern.	Improvise rhythmic ideas; rehearse and perform in termly concerts.	improvise, syncopation, ensemble, performance

Year 6

Musical strand	Substantive knowledge: know and understand	Disciplinary skills: do and apply	Vocabulary
Choral singing	Choir singing depends on listening, diction, breath control and shared musical expression.	Rehearse Young Voices repertoire; sing with confident phrasing and attention to a conductor.	choir, diction, phrasing, harmony, conductor
Ukulele technique	C, Am, F and G chords are combinations of notes; strumming provides rhythmic accompaniment.	Finger and change between C, Am, F and G; strum in time and sing while playing.	ukulele, chord, fret, strum, accompaniment
Composition and performance	A composition can combine chords, rhythm, structure and expressive choices.	Create, rehearse, refine and perform original ukulele compositions at the concert.	chord progression, compose, structure, refine, perform

National Curriculum alignment

Phase	Statutory curriculum focus	Where evidenced at St Mary's
EYFS	Expressive Arts and Design: explore sound, sing songs, make music and perform; linked language and movement	Nursery and Reception songs, rhymes, instruments, movement, celebrations and performances
KS1	Use voices expressively; play tuned/untuned instruments; listen with concentration; experiment with and combine sounds	Charanga Years 1–2 across singing, games, playing, improvisation, composition and listening
KS2	Sing and play with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression; improvise and compose; use notation; listen closely; appreciate music and musical history	Recorder notation and improvisation; djembe improvisation and ensemble; choir; ukulele composition and performance; weekly Music Friday