



SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF MUSIC



“Music education opens doors that help children pass from school into the world around them – a world of work, culture, intellectual activity, and human involvement. The future of our nation depends on providing our children with a complete education that includes music.” – Gerald Ford

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INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the teaching, organisation and management of music taught and learnt at Shobnall Primary & Nursery School.

The document has been drawn up as a result of staff discussion and its implementation is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the music subject leader.

The main purposes of this document are:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils.
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject.
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school.

VISION

At Shobnall Primary School, our vision is for our pupils to receive a high-quality music education which engages and inspires pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians. Our children will display an increase in their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. They will develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon. They have a passion for and commitment to a diverse range of musical activities!

PRINCIPLES

| | |
|------------|--|
| REPertoire | We ensure our pupils have a rapidly widening repertoire which they use to create original, imaginative, fluent and distinctive composing and performance work. They have a musical understanding underpinned by high levels of aural perception, internalisation and knowledge of music, including high or rapidly developing levels of technical expertise. |
| RANGE | Our children have an excellent understanding of how musical provenance – the historical, social and cultural origins of music – contributes to the diversity of musical styles. They have a very good awareness and appreciation of different musical traditions and genres. |
| RECOUNT | We believe our pupils should have the ability to give precise written and verbal explanations, using musical terminology effectively, accurately and appropriately. |

THEORY UNDERPINNING OUR PRACTICE AND PRINCIPLES

Music is more than a subject – it surrounds us, fuels our emotions, is engrained in every culture and is necessary to human existence and navigating life. Skills that can be learnt and fostered within the music curriculum are diverse and can be used everywhere; listening skills, collaboration, concentration, self-control, time management, problem-solving, patience, adaptability, just to name a few. Music has no boundaries and can transport you to another world. It has no bias and favours no-one. Our curriculum and musical ethos allows everyone to participate – collaborative musical experiences such as our singing assemblies enables all

children, irrespective of ability, age, beliefs or friendships to come together, share a creative process and perform together.

Our vision and passion for music is supported and underpinned by The Department for Education (2021) who state that, '*Music is all around us. It is the soundtrack to our lives. Music connects us through people and places in our ever-changing world. It is creative, collaborative, celebratory and challenging. In our schools, music can bring communities together through the shared endeavour of whole-school singing, ensemble playing, experimenting with the creative process and, through the love of listening to friends and fellow pupils, performing. The sheer joy of music making can feed the soul of a school community, enriching each student while strengthening the shared bonds of support and trust which make a great school.*'

As a school we scrutinised the best research available and we have determined that our **definition of learning** is a **change to the long-term memory**. This means that the way we implement our curriculum maps involves repetitive teaching of the key concepts or the 'big' ideas. Each unit has built in practise, retrieval and reinforcement of the key concepts to ensure knowledge sticks in the long-term memory. For learning to stick in the **long-term memory** we teach musical knowledge in meaningful contexts and in a connected way.

Long-term memory within music involves three main areas:

1. **Tacit** memory, where knowledge gained through experience that are often difficult to put into words are stored.
2. **Procedural** memory where procedures such as note names on the treble clef are stored. Procedures, once fluent, become automatic and are referred to as non-declarative.
3. **Declarative** Knowledge underpins advanced thinking and is the presence of knowledge in the long-term memory and relates to the memorisation of key skills and information that then allows the conscious mind to process more complex concepts.

Both semantic and episodic memory involve conscious thought and are therefore referred to as declarative.

We have used the research around **cognitive load** and how children learn most effectively, to determine our approach to implementing the curriculum. Research has shown that If you teach children too many new concepts at once their short-term memory becomes overloaded and none of the knowledge will stick and move into the long term. We take an approach of **spacing** out new knowledge combined with interleaving and plenty of retrieval practise to ensure learning sticks. With **repetition, interleaving and retrieval**, research we use suggests that the more often children have to remember knowledge the more likely it just to be cemented into the long-term memory.

For children to be successful musicians they must engage with the different classes of knowledge (Tacit, Procedural and Declarative) which will result in pupils using both their conscious and unconscious minds. Automated low-level processes, known as procedural knowledge, allows children to free their mind of mundane considerations and allows focus on the musical quality in performing and composing. For example, knowing the note names, which right hand finger to play with, the tempo and dynamics will avoid cognitive overload and support musical fluency. This then allows the tacit knowledge to come through within their musical performance, in which they can express their emotions and truly perform.

Musical education is underpinned by three pillars, and for progression to occur, pupils must develop musically across the three pillars that interrelate in musicianship;

Technical: Technical development is necessary for pupils to translate their intentions successfully into sound. This will often involve instrumental playing or singing but, if the resources are available, may also focus on musical technology.

Constructive: This refers to knowledge of how musical components come together both analytically and in creative process.

Expressive: This focuses on the more indefinable aspects of music: quality, meaning and creativity.

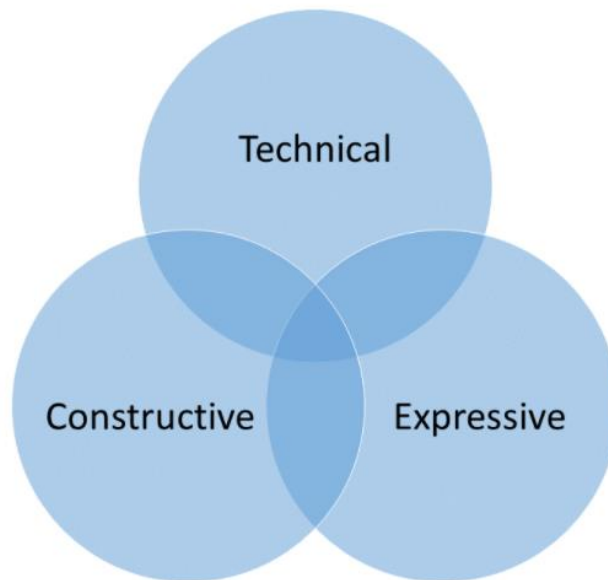


Table 2

| Technical | Constructive | Expressive |
|---|--|---|
| - Competence in controlling sound (instrumental, vocal or with music technology) - Use of a communication system, such as staff notation or guitar tab | - Knowledge of the musical elements/interrelated dimensions of music - Knowledge of the components of composition | - Musical quality - Musical creativity - Knowledge of musical meaning across the world and time |

Ofsted, Research Review Series: Music. (2021)

It is these 3 pillars that our curriculum is built upon. Within each unit of the curriculum the children have the opportunity to progress through the musical activities of performing, composing and listening/appraising.

INTENT

Curriculum drivers shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high-quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities:

- Diversity – We believe in developing pupils’ understanding of British values and celebrating our unique and diverse community.
- Dreams – We promote ambition, high aspirations and foster pupils’ capacity to see the possibilities within the world today.

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- Decisions – We encourage our pupils to make the right choices in order to stay safe, healthy and happy.

Cultural capital gives our pupils the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.

Curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for pupils to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.

Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics and threshold concepts. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied. Threshold concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, pupils return to the same concepts over and over, and gradually build understanding of them.

For each of the threshold concepts, three milestones (each of which includes the procedural and semantic knowledge pupils need to understand the threshold concepts) provide a progression model.

Knowledge categories in each subject give pupils a way of expressing their understanding of the threshold concepts.

Knowledge webs help pupils to relate each topic to previously studied topics and to form strong, meaningful schema. Cognitive science tells us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for pupils to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding, they must first master the basics, which takes time.

Within each milestone, pupils gradually progress in their procedural fluency and semantic strength through three cognitive domains: basic, advancing and deep. The goal for pupils is to display sustained mastery at the advancing stage of understanding by the end of each milestone and for the most able to have a greater depth of understanding at the deep stage. The timescale for sustained mastery or greater depth is, therefore, two years of study.

As part of our progression model we use a different pedagogical style in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. This is based on the research of Sweller, Kirschner and Rosenshine who argue for direct instruction in the early stages of learning and discovery-based approaches later. We use direct instruction in the basic domain and problem-based discovery in the deep domain. This is called the reversal effect.

Also as part of our progression model we use POP tasks (Proof of Progress) which show our curriculum expectations in each cognitive domain.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our curriculum design is based on evidence from cognitive science; three main principles underpin it:

- Learning is most effective with spaced repetition.
- Interleaving helps pupils to discriminate between topics and aids long-term retention.
- Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength.

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In addition to the three principles, we also understand that learning is invisible in the short term and that sustained mastery takes time.

Our content is subject specific. We make intra-curricular links to strengthen schema. Continuous provision, in the form of daily routines, replaces the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum and, in other cases, provides retrieval practice for previously learned content.

Music is taught by peripatetic and class teachers for a minimum of one hour a week. Music may be taught in 'blocks' but will equate to approximately 8 hours of lesson time each half term.

Cross curriculum outcomes are planned for where applicable and many of the genres and topics taught within the music curriculum link with the year groups overall termly topic. Music is a powerful way of creating a human emotion and memorable experiences are strong predictors of life-long musical learning and memories. Therefore, the music curriculum is enriched in numerous ways, including two choirs, Hot House Music 1:1 lessons, whole-school singing assemblies, trips to the pantomime, school productions and 'Music spotlight' sessions each week. Planning is informed and by the national curriculum's objectives and supported by Chris Quigley's Milestone statements. In addition, the recent publication of the Model Music Curriculum has informed additional musical listening opportunities facilitated in 'Music Spotlights'.

IMPACT

As learning is a change to long-term memory, it is impossible to see impact in the short term. We do, however, use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practice. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long run.

We use lesson observations to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.

Pupils attainment and progress in music is measured against the objectives set in the national curriculum and recorded by teachers using Classroom Monitor to inform parents and future teaching and learning activities.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN MUSIC

Effective teaching ensures that pupils retain knowledge they have learned in the long term. This is supported by opportunities to revisit and practise with prior knowledge. Pupils are more likely to retain knowledge when they have engaged analytically with the content they study. Teachers can support learning through clear exposition, which takes into account what pupils already know and understand. A good music education is underpinned by robust, direct and incremental teaching that provides knowledge of music's technical and constructive aspects. These are often reflected in our lessons and will include:

- **Teaching for memory** - evidence suggests that teachers can support pupils' long-term learning by drawing attention to particularly important terms and expressions, precise phenomena and broader frameworks in their teaching.
- **Recall** - recalling previously taught content (retrieval practice) and revisiting content in lessons (spaced practice) have also been shown to be effective in securing pupils' knowledge over time.
- **Clear exposition that considers pupils' prior knowledge** - teachers' exposition is likely to be most effective when it is clear and carefully designed to account for pupils' existing knowledge.

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- **Musical modelling** – teacher (or expert) performance provides a total image of what is desired either vocally or instrumentally.
- **Physical modelling** – includes facial expressions, physical gestures, formal conducting.
- **Secure subject knowledge** - teacher's musicianship, confidence and understanding of the musical curriculum is paramount to the success of the curriculum.
- **More music, less talk** – the best music lessons have musical sound at their centre. A variety of musical instruments, including body percussion and voice are used to develop musicality.
- **Musical vocabulary** – The correct terminology is used and embedded in every lesson to support the children's understanding and enable them to further their own musicality.
- **Transcription** – Whether through symbols, staff notation or electronic recordings, music should be recorded in some way.

SUPPORTING PUPILS IN MUSIC, INCLUDING PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

We recognise that in all classes children have a wide range of ability in music, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children. The specific curriculum adaptations that some pupils are highly contextual and there is no one-size-fits-all set of solutions. It is also the case that some pupils with SEND may have enhanced musical perception, just as evidence suggests that some children who are blind may have enhanced working memory.

All pupils are entitled to a broad music curriculum. Any adaptations made to support pupils' learning in music usually should not be to the overall curriculum content but rather to how the content is taught. In the case of pupils with the most complex learning needs, there may be occasions when it is appropriate to modify the curriculum. However, this will be the exception.

Some planning for pupils with SEND will occur in careful decisions about curriculum delivery, with research suggesting the importance of:

- breaking down tasks
- reducing the burden on working memory
- the use of appropriate supportive routines
- combining learning modes to enhance clarity/accessibility
- adapting materials to ensure a good but achievable level of challenge

PROMOTING KEY SKILLS IN MUSIC

Through our teaching of music, we provide opportunities for pupils to develop the key skills of:

- **Performance**, through a variety of genres and instruments, children have the opportunity to perform in small ensembles, large choirs and solos. Within these performance opportunities the children develop skills such as presence and self-confidence.
- **Transcription**, whether it is symbols, notes on a staff or electronic notation, children learn how music can be communicated in various ways.
- **Composition**, children learn how to blend all aspects of learnt music to create their own sounds and music.
- **Description**, within the music curriculum the children have ample opportunities to analyse a variety of genres of music and describe the pieces of music in a variety of ways. The children learn how to include a range of subject specific vocabulary within their work.
- **Communication**, through working with others to create a piece of music, appraising a piece of music, discussing how music makes you feel.

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- **Co-operation**, through working in ensembles to compose and perform, either in small groups in class or in larger cross-class choirs.
- **Improving their own learning and performance**, through reviewing their work at regular intervals, setting targets for improvement and assessing their achievement.
- **Problem-solving**, whether performing a passage, interpret a specific score, or even find the motivation to compose, when they hit roadblocks like this, the children need to find a unique and creative solution, like watching a tutorial, doing some research, consulting an expert, or asking a friend.
- **Thinking skills**, are used throughout all areas of the musical curriculum. Whether it is deciding how best to perform a piece of music, to describing the emotions a piece of music evokes, thinking skills are essential.
- **Dexterity**, motor skills for music is as an important component in controlling and understanding sound. Through using a variety of instruments children will gain dexterity and improve their fine-motor skills and co-ordination.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Music can be a way of exploring, communicating and responding to experience. Making music with others can be a social experience whether this be parent-baby/carer-baby exchanging coos, or two or more children making music with pots, pans or traditional instruments. This interaction with others, whether this be with one other person or a group, is personal to each individual and is often an expression of feelings. All vocal communication is comprised of musical elements such as pitch, rhythm and timbre, demonstrating that musicality is an intrinsic part of being human. Music should be seen as a core component of children's learning and should be shared with young children to ensure they have broad, balanced and rounded experiences in early childhood and beyond.

Being Imaginative and Expressive:

- Sing in a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with the music.

Speaking:

- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences.

Listening, Attention and Understanding:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.

KEY STAGE 1 AND KEY STAGE 2

The national curriculum for music aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians.
- Learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence.

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- Understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations.

This is facilitated through our bespoke music scheme. The same topic is taught within all year groups within the same term. The topics are as follows:

Autumn 1: Where did it all begin? The voice and singing!

Autumn 2: Classical

Spring 1: Jazz and Blue

Spring 2: World Music

Summer 1: Soundtrack, stage and screen.

Summer 2: Popular/ Where is music going?

Within each topic, each year group focuses on a different aspect of that genre. The skills learnt from the previous year are built upon, so that by Year 6 the children have a comprehensive understanding of 6 of the key genres of music. The rationale for this choice of a vertical curriculum is due to the fact that the Ofsted Research Review for music states that musical activities are often vertical, which is hard to manage in a system that works mostly horizontally.

The lessons are designed to be interactive, engaging and allow opportunities for the four key elements to be explored within every genre (composition, transcription, performance and description). Our bespoke music scheme enables the children to see the progress they are making and allows them to take ownership and pride of their learning.

In addition to this, one half-term is dedicated each year to learning and playing recorders as research shows that shallow encounters with lots of instruments will limit pupils' musical outcomes to the most mechanical and least expressive level. This means that a narrower more in-depth knowledge of one instrument will help to improve the expressive quality of pupils' sound production.

PLANNING AND RESOURCES

We use the National Curriculum scheme of work as the basis for our planning in music. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we plan progression into the scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school. We carry out curriculum planning in music in three phases (long term, medium term and short term). The long-term plan maps the music topics studied in each term during each key stage. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study. The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each music lesson (short-term plans), often in the form of a flipchart or presentation. These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, although he or she and the subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

Plans are stored on the staff shared drive for monitoring purposes and ease of access for the teachers and music subject leader. There are sufficient resources for teaching all music units in the school. They are located in the shared resource area.

CROSS-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Staff are encouraged to develop cross-curricular links with music and other subjects to provide a relevant and meaningful curriculum for pupils.

English

Through the appraisal of music and the development of knowledge of composers in fact files children have the opportunity to write at length. Vocal performances and spoken language taught in the music curriculum also have strong English links.

Mathematics

The teaching of music has some mathematical elements linked to counting and number patterns, including keeping time.

History

Within their learning of different genres of music, the children are exposed to a variety of composers. These composers are often researched by the children, including the history of the genre and its cultural significance.

P.E.

The children are encouraged to move to music in a variety of ways. This may include gross motor skills, such as running, skipping jumping or fine motor skills like using instruments.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education

In our teaching of music, we also contribute to the development of the children's personal, social, health and economic education through discussing feelings evoked by a piece of music, as well as the differing economic status of the world around us.

Computing

Wherever appropriate we use computing to enhance our teaching of music. The children use ICT in a variety of ways, such as listening to songs, finding information on the Internet and using music programmes such as Garage Band to enhance our composition/transcription.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. Key musical knowledge is taught to enable and promote the development of children's musical skills. Assessment is supported by use of the following strategies:

- Observing children at work, individually, in pairs, in a group and in class during whole class teaching.
- Using differentiated, open-ended questions that require children to explain and unpick their understanding.
- Providing effective feedback, including interactive marking through green pen questions where appropriate, to engage children with their learning and to provide opportunities for self-assessment, consolidation, depth and target setting.
- Book moderation and monitoring of outcomes of work, to evaluate the range and balance of work and to ensure that tasks meet the needs of different learners, with the acquisition of the pre-identified key knowledge of each topic being evidenced through the outcomes.
- Use of Proof of Progress (POP) tasks.
- Use of KWL grids ('what I know already, what I want to know and what I have learnt') throughout a unit, alongside specific and measureable learning objectives for each lesson.

Pupils attainment and progress in music is recorded by teachers using Classroom Monitor to inform parents and future teaching and learning activities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

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We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning music. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, teachers should be aware of health and safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken prior to activities, to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for all pupils. Before undertaking a field trip, teachers are encouraged to visit the proposed area of study and fill in a risk assessment form. Further information can be found in the Health and Safety and Wellbeing Document and Educational Visits Document.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

We seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to them and respecting them;
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers;
- sharing information about concerns, with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

See Safeguarding and Child Protection Document for further information.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the music subject leader:

- to support colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in music and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- to develop, implement and review an action plan for music;
- to monitor music throughout the school;
- to encourage staff to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils;
- to develop valid activities, appropriate for children at different stages of development, which enable pupils to progress in the subject.

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in music is the responsibility of the music subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

This document will be reviewed at least every three years.