

Music Curriculum

Purpose of Study

At SS John Fisher and Thomas More, we believe that music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. We intend to provide a high quality, broad and balanced music education, which inspires pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, thereby increasing their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. We hope to foster a lifelong love of music through singing, playing instruments, listening to and appraising music, composing and performing.

Rationale

Our Music curriculum is designed to ensure the progressive development of musical concepts, knowledge and skills. It reflects the culture and society that we live in. It is intended to support the teaching of the seven musical elements: Pitch, Duration, Dynamics, Tempo, Timbre, Texture and Structure.

In EYFS & KS1, children learn about these elements through the Manchester 'Music in the Classroom' programme. In Years 3 & 4, children are given the opportunity to learn an instrument (Djembe drum, ukulele and guitar) as well as further their singing skills through a national singing programme. In Years 5 & 6, children begin to develop their compositional skills through the Manchester programme. They also have opportunities to further talents in after school clubs such as our prestigious school choir.

Implementation:

Each week every child receives 30 minutes discretely taught music either by the class teacher or specialist music teacher. This is taught through a skills-based curriculum in Term 1, enabling the class teacher to embed the musical skills appropriate to the age group. In terms 2 and 3, music is taught through topic where appropriate, alongside the continued development of musical skills.

There are four main steps in the progression of music in our school:

Starting Out: EYFS

The children will experience music in a holistic way and explore the world of sounds in many aspects of their learning. They will listen and respond with enjoyment to songs, music and rhymes. They will also become familiar with classroom instruments and the discipline and routine of the music lesson.

Feeding In (Part 1): Years 1 and 2

Children will develop specific skills in handling their voices and instruments. They will begin to use tuned percussion and identify the names of classroom instruments. They will respond physically when performing, composing and appraising music and will be able to identify pulse and rhythm in a song or piece of music. Working to develop these skills, they will explore the musical elements and gain an understanding of how music works.

Whole class music tuition: Years 3 and 4

The key musical elements will be taught through the whole class instrumental tuition programme. The children will learn how to play an instrument each term. They will have class drumming, ukulele and guitar lessons in Year 3.

In Year 4, children will have the opportunity to develop their choral singing skills through the Shrewsbury Diocese singing in schools project. This will build on key skills taught in Key Stage 1.

Feeding In (Part 2): Years 5

The children will continue to develop specific skills in handling their voices and instruments. They will identify repeated patterns in a variety of music (Ostinato), and will compose their own ostinatos and melodies, working in pairs. The children will record their compositions using informal symbols. They will be able to identify melodic phrases and play or sing them by ear, thus increasing their aural memory. They will begin to sing expressively with awareness and control, using a wider vocal range. They will also begin to understand how mouth shapes can affect vocal sounds and can sing in tune.

Taking Off: Year 6

Having gained basic skills and understanding, the children will be able to work independently, focusing on specific composing techniques, evaluating their own and others' performances and directing performances. They will play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression. The children will be able to sing a round in two parts, identifying the melodic phrases and understanding how they fit together. They will then move from informal methods of recording music to using and understanding the staff and other musical notations. They will appreciate and understand a wide variety of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians. The children will also begin to develop an understanding of the history of music.

Impact:

At SS John Fisher and Thomas More, children are learning to work both independently and as part of a group, ensuring that skills of resilience, co-operation and teamwork are promoted in the study of music.

Performance is at the heart of our musical teaching and learning. Pupils have the opportunity to participate and share their musical skills in a range of performances during their school 'career'. These include nativities (EYFS & KS1), class performances and a Leavers performance (Year 6).

We have a well-established school choir led by a specialist music teacher. Pupils from Years 2 - 6 are invited to join and sing in the school choir which rehearses weekly after school. Through participating in the choir, the children have the opportunity to perform at a variety of events and venues, both local and further afield such as Manchester Cathedral, Manchester Town Hall, The Bridgewater Hall and The Hidden Gem Church. Parents are invited and welcomed to watch all of these performances both inside and outside of school.

In our school, we measure the impact of our music curriculum through the following methods:

- Summative assessment of pupil discussions about their learning.
- Summative assessments are analysed on a termly basis using the school's own band tracker 1-5 to inform and address any trends or gaps in attainment.
- Interviewing the pupils about their learning (pupil voice)
- Audio and video clips of compositions/singing/playing
- Children's own self-assessment of their learning
- Performances and community engagements
- Opportunities to perform outside of school, within our local and wider environment.