

Music Curriculum Rationale

As a Catholic school, our aim is that every child achieves their full potential as an individual made in the image and likeness of God. This encompasses every dimension of the child: spiritual, moral, social, academic, physical and artistic. We believe that knowledge empowers and enables children to feel and be successful, and that this is the entitlement of every child. Our approach to Music is that it should be fun and engaging for all concerned and that every child is born a musician.

INTENT



Alignment to National Curriculum

At St Thomas of Canterbury, we intend a curriculum that is a practical, exploratory and child-led approach to music. We use the Charanga scheme of work which enables children to understand musical concepts through a repetition-based approach to learning. The scheme supports all the requirements of the national curriculum.



End Points

By the end of Y6, all children will have had an opportunity to learn to play an instrument and have been able to express themselves creatively. They will be aware of the understanding and implication of musical components. Children will be able to use elements such as pitch and metre to talk about music and will understand the components of composition. Children will be aware of a wide range of music from different genres and around the world.



Sequencing

Through our music curriculum interrelated dimensions of music weave through the units to encourage the development of musical skills as the learning progresses through listening and appraising, differing musical activities (including creating and exploring) and performing. Children will understand musical concepts through a repetition-based approach to learning. Over time, children can both develop new musical skills and concepts, and re-visit established musical skills and concepts which is part of the spiral curriculum.



Addressing Social Disadvantage

“Music has a power of forming the character and should therefore be introduced into the education of the young”. (Aristotle) There is evidence that music stimulates brain development in children. It provides an outlet for creativity which is crucial for children’s development. High quality music lessons are provided to all children and not just those whose families can afford to pay for music tuition. While music touches the lives of all young people, the disadvantaged can benefit most.



Local Context

Sheffield and our school community are increasingly diverse and our music curriculum reflects this, children are given the opportunity to listen to and reflect on music from a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians. All children are given a chance to engage in learning a musical instrument.

IMPLEMENTATION



Pedagogical Approaches

Teachers follow the charanga step by step lessons, which provide children with opportunities to reflect and talk about their feelings and experiences that music brings to them. Each Unit of Work comprises the strands of musical learning which correspond with the national curriculum for music:

1. Listening and Appraising
2. Musical Activities
3. Performing



Teachers' Expert Knowledge

As with all subjects, teachers are expected to demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge and are supported with regular CPD and clarity in the curriculum map as to learning outcomes from previous year groups.

Learning materials from Charanga and the Sheffield music hub provide teachers with further musical knowledge and support. Musical lessons are provided by trained professionals for viola, guitar and singing. Children have access to the school choir.



Promoting Discussion and Understanding

The way the music lesson is developed allows children to learn about the same musical concepts through different musical activities enables a more secure, deeper learning and mastery of musical skills. Each lesson begins with time to listen and talk about a musical piece and how it makes you feel and why. Each lesson not only plans for new learning but provides opportunities for practice and consolidation.



Knowing More and Remembering More

Knowledge and skills build from year to year and it is important that pupils can remember and use knowledge and skills from previous learning. Effective questioning about children’s understanding of music by the teacher is key to allow pupils to practise new knowledge and to help them make links between new material and prior learning. Opportunities for retrieval practice are included to ensure knowledge is transferred into long-term memory; their performance at the end of each lesson allows children to use their new skills from previous lessons and to revisit concepts and skills from previous years. Teachers understand the importance of developing fluency and automaticity in order for the children to make progress with the more complex task.



Teacher Assessment

Teachers will assess children’s learning using questioning and observations of children’s performances and engagement in the lessons. Teachers can record and upload videos of performances onto the drive.

IMPACT



Approach to Assessment

The approach to assessment is less formal than in core subject disciplines. There is ongoing teacher assessment to ensure that the children are keeping up with the pace of the curriculum and achieving our goals for them as young people. Teachers use formative assessment throughout each lesson. Formative feedback will be given about individual components.



Performance Data

There is no published data for music at primary school. The school tracks foundation subjects very broadly to ensure that pupils are working within the curriculum expectations for their year group. This is reported to parents within the end of year report.



Pupils' Work

Pupils work is practical and can be recorded on video or by teachers’ observations in a class book where appropriate. Children also work towards performances that are shared with parents and the wider school community.



Talking to Pupils

The music curriculum leader talks to pupils in all year groups as part of the monitoring cycle to gauge their attitudes towards the music curriculum, the knowledge, skills and understanding they are retaining, and the wider opportunities that they have been able to experience.

Links / References

Charanga