Curriculum aims

Learning and undertaking activities in music contribute to achievement of the curriculum aims for all young people to become:

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

The importance of music

Music is a unique form of communication that can change the way pupils feel, think and act. Music forms part of an individual’s identity and positive interaction with music can develop pupils’ competence as learners and increase their self-esteem. Music brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. As an integral part of culture, past and present, music helps pupils understand themselves, relate to others and develop their cultural understanding, forging important links between home, school and the wider world.

Music education encourages active involvement in different forms of music-making, both individual and communal, helping to develop a sense of group identity and togetherness. Music can influence pupils’ development in and out of school by fostering personal development and maturity, creating a sense of achievement and self-worth, and increasing pupils’ ability to work with others in a group context.

Music learning develops pupils’ critical skills: their ability to listen, to appreciate a wide variety of music, and to make judgements about musical quality. It also increases self-discipline, creativity, aesthetic sensitivity and fulfilment.
1 Key concepts

There are a number of key concepts that underpin the study of music. Pupils need to understand these concepts in order to deepen and broaden their knowledge, skills and understanding.

1.1 Integration of practice

a. Developing knowledge, skills and understanding through the integration of performing, composing and listening.

b. Participating, collaborating and working with others as musicians, adapting to different musical roles and respecting the values and benefits others bring to musical learning.

1.2 Cultural understanding

a. Understanding musical traditions and the part music plays in national and global culture and in personal identity.

b. Exploring how ideas, experiences and emotions are conveyed in a range of music from different times and cultures.

1.3 Critical understanding

a. Engaging with and analysing music, developing views and justifying opinions.

b. Drawing on experience of a wide range of musical contexts and styles to inform judgements.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Performing, composing and listening: Performance, composing and listening are interrelated. Pupils should be encouraged, for example, to develop listening skills through performance and composition activities. Knowledge, skills and understanding in each of these areas should be developed interactively through practical music-making.

Participating, collaborating and working with others: Music is a social experience in which each performer and listener contributes to the whole experience. Music activities help pupils develop as effective team workers and participators by providing opportunities to play a full part in the life of their school or wider community.

Understanding musical traditions: The way we respond to music is determined to a large extent by our culture. We need to learn how and why music is different if we are to appreciate unfamiliar music.

Engaging with and analysing music: This includes engaging with music through performance and listening, and appraising music that covers a range of styles, genres and traditions.

Wide range of musical contexts: Pupils’ awareness and experience of a wide range of music should be broadened through the key processes of performing, composing and listening.
1.4 **Creativity**

a. Using existing musical knowledge, skills and understanding for new purposes and in new contexts.

b. Exploring ways music can be combined with other art forms and other subject disciplines.

1.5 **Communication**

a. Exploring how thoughts, feelings, ideas and emotions can be expressed through music.

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**EXPLANATORY NOTES**

*Combined with other art forms:* This includes music linked to video, film, dance or drama.
2 Key processes

These are the essential skills and processes in music that pupils need to learn to make progress.

2.1 Performing, composing and listening

Pupils should be able to:

a. sing in solo or group contexts, developing vocal techniques and musical expression
b. perform with control of instrument-specific techniques and musical expression
c. practise, rehearse and perform with awareness of different parts, the roles and contributions of different members of the group, the audience and venue
d. create, develop and extend musical ideas by selecting and combining resources within musical structures, styles, genres and traditions
e. improvise, explore and develop musical ideas when performing
f. listen with discrimination and internalise and recall sounds
g. identify the expressive use of musical elements, devices, tonalities and structures.

2.2 Reviewing and evaluating

Pupils should be able to:

a. analyse, review, evaluate and compare pieces of music
b. identify conventions and contextual influences in music of different styles, genres and traditions
c. communicate ideas and feelings about music, using expressive language and musical vocabulary to justify their opinions
d. adapt their own musical ideas and refine and improve their own and others’ work.
3 Range and content

This section outlines the breadth of the subject on which teachers should draw when teaching the key concepts and key processes.

The study of music should include:

a. performance activities in a range of contexts within and beyond the classroom
b. a range of live and recorded music from different times and cultures
c. a range of classical and popular traditions and current trends in music that reflect cultural diversity and a global dimension
d. staff notation and other relevant notations in a range of musical styles, genres and traditions
e. consideration of contextual influences that affect the way music is created, performed and heard
f. the use of music technologies to create, manipulate and refine sounds
g. the role of music and musicians in society, of the music industry and of artistic and intellectual property rights.

Performance activities in a range of contexts: For example, pupil concerts, public concerts, assemblies, rehearsals, formal and informal external events and online performance events.

A range of classical and popular traditions: This should include music from different national and cultural traditions, including the western classical tradition and, for example, folk, jazz, contemporary and 20th century popular music and music for film, television and the stage.

Staff notation: This should include gaining an understanding of, and using, traditional staff notation in a range of musical styles (including contemporary and popular music).

Other relevant notations: Other notations, where relevant to particular styles of music, could include graphic notation, tablature, chord symbols, notation for percussion instruments and lead sheets.

Contextual influences: These include historical, social, national or political contexts; the purpose of different types of music; the roles of performers, composers and audiences; and the influence of developments in technology.

Use of music technologies: This includes the use of ICT and music technologies to control and structure sound in performing and composing activities, and in developing pupils’ own ideas within and beyond the classroom.

Artistic and intellectual property rights: These include rights relating to pupils’ own work and the work of others.

Work with a range of musicians and watch and listen to live musical performances where possible, to extend their musical learning.
4 Curriculum opportunities

During the key stage pupils should be offered the following opportunities that are integral to their learning and enhance their engagement with the concepts, processes and content of the subject.

The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to:

a. develop individual performance skills, both vocal and instrumental, including the use of music technology
b. develop listening and aural perception skills in practical activities, including composing and performing
c. develop creative and compositional skills, including songwriting, arranging and improvising
d. work with a range of musicians and watch and listen to live musical performances where possible, to extend their musical learning
e. work individually, in musical groups of different sizes and as a class
f. build on their own interests and skills, taking on different roles and responsibilities and developing music leadership skills
g. make links between music and other subjects and areas of the curriculum.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

A range of musicians: This could include instrumental tutors, community musicians, professional artists, amateur musicians and pupils from peer groups and other groups in the school. It could also include web-based learning opportunities.

Music leadership skills: These include organising musical activities or events and being the leader or director of a performance.
Music helps pupils understand themselves, relate to others and develop their cultural understanding, forging important links between home, school and the wider world.
Attainment target

**Level 4**
Pupils identify and explore the relationship between sounds and how music reflects different intentions. While performing by ear and from simple notations, they maintain their own part with awareness of how the different parts fit together and the need to achieve an overall effect. They improvise melodic and rhythmic phrases as part of a group performance and compose by developing ideas within musical structures. They describe, compare and evaluate different kinds of music using an appropriate musical vocabulary. They suggest improvements to their own and others’ work, commenting on how intentions have been achieved.

**Level 5**
Pupils identify and explore musical devices and how music reflects time, place and culture. They perform significant parts from memory and from notations, with awareness of their own contribution such as leading others, taking a solo part or providing rhythmic support. They improvise melodic and rhythmic material within given structures, use a variety of notations, and compose music for different occasions using appropriate musical devices. They analyse and compare musical features. They evaluate how venue, occasion and purpose affect the way music is created, performed and heard. They refine and improve their work.

**Level 7**
Pupils discriminate between and explore musical conventions in, and influences on, selected styles, genres and traditions. They perform in different styles, making significant contributions to the ensemble and using relevant notations. They create coherent compositions drawing on internalised sounds. They adapt, improvise, develop, extend and discard musical ideas within given and chosen musical structures, styles, genres and traditions. They evaluate, and make critical judgements about, the use of musical conventions and other characteristics and how different contexts are reflected in their own and others’ work.

**Level 8**
Pupils discriminate between and exploit the characteristics and expressive potential of selected musical resources, styles, genres and traditions. They perform, improvise and compose extended compositions with a sense of direction and shape, both within melodic and rhythmic phrases and overall form. They explore different styles, genres and traditions, working by ear and by making accurate use of appropriate notations. They both follow and challenge conventions. They discriminate between musical styles, genres and traditions, commenting on the relationship between the music and its cultural context, and making and justifying their own judgements.
Level 6
Pupils identify and explore the different processes and contexts of selected musical styles, genres and traditions. They select and make expressive use of tempo, dynamics, phrasing and timbre. They make subtle adjustments to fit their own part within a group performance. They improvise and compose in different styles and genres, using harmonic and non-harmonic devices where relevant, sustaining and developing musical ideas, and achieving different intended effects. They use relevant notations to plan, revise and refine material. They analyse, compare and evaluate how music reflects the contexts in which it is created, performed and heard. They make improvements to their own and others’ work in the light of the chosen style.

Exceptional performance
Pupils discriminate between and develop different interpretations. They express their own ideas and feelings in a developing personal style, exploiting instrumental and/or vocal possibilities. They give convincing performances and demonstrate empathy with other performers. They produce compositions that demonstrate a coherent development of musical ideas, consistency of style and a degree of individuality. They discriminate and comment on how and why changes occur within selected traditions, including the particular contribution of significant performers and composers.