

Grasslot School

Music Policy

Aims and objectives

Music is a unique way of communicating that can inspire and motivate children. It is a vehicle for personal expression, and it can play an important part in the personal development of people. Music reflects the culture and society we live in, and so the teaching and learning of music enable children to better understand the world that they live in. Besides being a creative and enjoyable activity, music can also be a highly academic and demanding subject. It also plays an important part in helping children to feel part of a community. We provide opportunities for all children to create, play, perform and enjoy music, to develop the skills, to appreciate a wide variety of musical forms, and to begin to make judgements about the quality of music.

Our objectives in the teaching of music are:

- to explore how sounds are made, and can be organised into musical structures;
- to show how music is produced by a variety of instruments;
- to teach how music is composed and written down;
- to examine the relevance of when, where and why a given piece of music was written;
- to develop the interrelated skills of composition, performance and appreciation.

Teaching and learning style

At Grasslot Infant School, we make music an enjoyable learning experience. We encourage children to participate in a variety of musical experiences through which we aim to build up the confidence of all children. Singing lies at the heart of good music teaching. Our teaching focuses on developing the children's ability to sing in tune and with other people. Through singing songs, children learn about the structure and organisation of music. We teach them to listen to and appreciate different forms of music. As children get older, we expect them to maintain their concentration for longer, and to listen to more extended pieces of music. Children develop descriptive skills in music lessons when learning about how music can represent feelings and emotions. We teach them the disciplined skills of recognising pulse and pitch. We often teach these together. We also teach children to make music together, to understand musical notation, and to compose pieces.

We recognise that in all classes, children have a wide range of musical ability, and so we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (not all children complete all tasks);
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, depending on the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children;
- providing specialist support where individual children have particular gifts or talents.

Key Stage One

Our music curriculum ensures our children receive

- increasing breadth and range of musical experiences;
- increasing challenge and difficulty in musical activities;
- increasing confidence, sensitivity and creativity in the children's music-making.

The Early Years

In the Early Years children are taught music through adult led activities and able to explore music, movement and instruments within continuous provision. Music and rhythm feature highly in the day – to – day routines of the Early Years unit can contribute to many aspects of the Early Years curriculum, not just those related directly to instruments and singing within the Expressive Arts and Design strands.

The contribution of music to teaching in other curriculum areas

English

Music contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children develop their language skills through singing songs, with attention to diction, meaning, rhythm and rhyme. They use reference books, and develop research skills, when finding out about the history of music and musicians. Music is also used to stimulate discussion or creative writing. Through working with others in a musical setting, children develop their ability to communicate ideas effectively.

Mathematics

The teaching of music contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. Children who study the structure of music are observing patterns and processes. Talent in music is often linked with talent in mathematics, as the rhythm and structure of music are mathematically based.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Music contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Through the common goal of making music, children learn to work effectively with other people, and to build up good relationships. Music is the basis of many social activities, and has an important role to play in the personal development of many young people. It has a vital role to play in building self-confidence. Participation in successful public musical performances is sometimes one of the most memorable things young people do at school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Creating, performing or listening to music can sometimes be a moving and even spiritual experience. We encourage children to reflect on the important effect that music has on people's moods, senses and quality of life. Children at Grasslot Infant School have the opportunity to encounter music from many cultures and, through their growing knowledge and understanding of the music, they develop more positive attitudes towards other cultures and societies.

Music and ICT

Information and communication technology enhances the teaching of music, where appropriate, in all key stages. Children use computer programs to compose music. They also use ICT to enhance their research skills, whether through the Internet or on CD-ROMs. They listen to music on the Internet, and they record their own compositions to send to other schools electronically. They might experiment with editing voice recordings, which involves the use of a digital sound recorder. Children also use ICT to improve the presentation of their work.

Music and inclusion

At our school, we teach music to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Music forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our music teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Assessment for learning

Children demonstrate their ability in music in a variety of different ways. Teachers will assess children's work in music by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives oral or written feedback, as necessary, to inform future progress. Older pupils are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work. At the end of a unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum level of attainment, and records these grades in their mark book. We use this as the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and we pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

Tapestry is used throughout the school to record and evidence attainment in Music.

Resources

There are sufficient resources for all music teaching units in the school. We keep resources for music in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. The library contains a good supply of topic books and computer software to support children's individual research.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the subject leader and Head Teacher to evaluate the working of this policy.