

Askwith Primary School

Music rationale

"Children use music to help maintain emotional and social well-being and celebrate culture and community in ways which involve entertaining or understanding themselves and making sense of the world around them. Children should develop their understanding, make musical judgements, apply their new learning, develop their aural memory, express themselves physically, emotionally and through discussion and create their own musical ideas."

Burnard and Murphy, 2017

Intent

At Askwith Primary School, our curriculum offer for music aims to engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and to develop their talents as musicians. We adopt a determined approach so that all children, including SEND, EAL, PP and vulnerable pupils, meet the expected standard in music and have the knowledge required for secondary school. The curriculum builds cultural capital through purposeful exposure to diverse genres and traditions, helping pupils understand music from different countries and cultures. Substantive knowledge is rooted in the interrelated dimensions of music - pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre/texture, structure and notation - while disciplinary knowledge focuses on listening and appraising, singing, playing, improvising and composing with control and expression. The curriculum is ambitious, coherent and aligned with national expectations to ensure all pupils know more, remember more and do more over time.

Implementation

The whole-school long-term plan is organised by year groups and accommodates mixed-age classes. Music is taught weekly for one hour. One genre/unit is taught per term and then revisited later in the year so that key knowledge (musical vocabulary, lyrics, techniques for singing and performing) and skills (singing, improvising, composing, performing) are first taught and practised, then refined. This deliberate spacing and retrieval secure memory of genre-specific melodies, lyrics and note patterns, freeing capacity to hone musicianship. Genres/units are selected from Charanga, a high-quality curriculum programme, and planned in line with the Model Music Curriculum.

Explicit teaching of the interrelated dimensions of music runs across all year groups and is continuously applied when listening and appraising, singing and playing instruments (including composing and improvising). Reading underpins the curriculum: key texts and information are carefully selected for age-appropriateness and made available during daily reading-for-pleasure time to reinforce musical vocabulary and knowledge. In EYFS, music is taught through Expressive Arts and Design, with language- and vocabulary-rich provision that recognises cumulative knowledge building.

Impact

Assessment is both formative and summative to inform teaching and measure progress. Teachers use questioning, retrieval practice and observation to address misconceptions swiftly. End-of-unit assessments evaluate pupils' knowledge and skills in listening, singing and

playing; outcomes feed into termly reviews and future planning. Progress is tracked against a progression document from Reception to Year 6 to ensure prior learning is built upon and gaps are identified early. By the end of KS2, pupils listen and appraise, sing and play an instrument with confidence and fluency; when playing, they read basic stave notation and demonstrate the ability to improvise and compose, preparing them well for secondary music.

Inclusion

Music lessons are inclusive and accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND. Planning and delivery are adapted so every child can engage with and succeed in musical learning. Support may include visual aids, simplified vocabulary, scaffolded parts and additional adult support. Adaptations remove barriers while maintaining high expectations so that equitable opportunities are provided for all pupils to develop musical skills and musicianship.

Personal Development & SMSC

Spiritual development is nurtured through the experience and emotion of performing, listening and composing in a supportive environment. Moral development is fostered through respectful critique of professional and peer performances and discussion of genre contexts, including moral issues historically linked to music (for example, reggae as a response to political oppression in 1960s Jamaica). Social and cultural development are promoted by exploring and appreciating diverse genres and styles and by performing collaboratively for audiences within school and the community.

Leadership & Professional Development

Staff teaching music receive ongoing CPD to strengthen subject knowledge and pedagogy, including training on musical knowledge and principles of cognitive science. The subject leader monitors curriculum delivery through reviews and pupil voice, supports staff and ensures consistency across year groups. Collaborative planning and regular scrutiny maintain high standards and drive continuous improvement.

Enhancements

A rolling programme of enhancements broadens experience and cultural capital across all year groups. Opportunities include peripatetic lessons, in-school and community performances, and participation in collective live events such as Young Voices for Years 5 and 6, enriching musicianship and providing authentic contexts for performance.

Music Improvement Priority 2025-2026

Intent	Implementation
Implement changes to the music curriculum in light of review 2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review 'School Music Development Plan' and make it available on website • All teachers introduced to changes to music curriculum (new essential knowledge overviews, drop in forms, expectations re: written work)

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review timetabling of music lessons/enhancements for each class• Update music rationale• 'Teacher swap' - JF to teach and model music lessons in classes 1, 2 and 4• Monitor music lessons (drop ins and discussions with pupils)• Plan Christmas performance for school choir• Plan whole school concert/performance for end of academic year• Plan whole school music enhancements (re: NY Music Hub) for 2026/2027• Impact ascertained and evaluated |
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Reviewed September 2025