

Music long-term knowledge growth

Rationale for content sequencing



Nursery				
In Nursery, we provide a playful and interactive introduction to the world of music. Our curriculum focuses on developing essential skills and igniting a love for music. Children explore rhythm by moving and clapping to music, enhancing their coordination and sense of pulse. They also engage in activities that encourage them to remember patterns, actions, and rhythms, supporting memory and cognitive development. Pitch-matching becomes an exciting part of their musical journey as children explore their singing skills. They learn to find their voices and match them with various pitches, opening the door to musical expression. Rhymes, songs, and stories play a central role, enhancing language development and sparking creativity. Playing and responding to music are emphasised, helping children connect emotionally with the art form. Through these activities, Nursery children build a repertoire of songs and rhymes, fostering future reading and comprehension skills. Our music curriculum ensures that children have a joyful introduction to music, nurturing their love for sound and rhythm.				
Movement and Rhythm	Awareness Pitch and Melodic	Awareness Singing Familiar Songs	Collaborative Music and Group	Participation Creative Expression
• Children can clap and move to the beat of songs or music, showcasing coordination and an internal sense of rhythm.	• They can sing pitches in a suitable range for their age that match another person, showing the beginnings of pitch awareness and imitation skills.	• Children can remember and sing entire nursery rhymes and songs, demonstrating an ability to recall and reproduce familiar tunes	• They can create their own songs or improvise around familiar tunes, demonstrating early creativity in music.	• Children can identify and imitate melodic shapes in familiar songs, such as recognising when a melody moves up and down.
Reception				
In Reception, we continue to nurture children's love for music while building on the foundations established in Nursery. Children explore rhythm by moving, singing, and playing instruments, further developing their coordination and rhythmic understanding. They learn to recall patterns, actions, and rhythms more systematically, enhancing memory and cognitive abilities. Pitch-matching becomes a refined skill as children explore singing in greater depth. They confidently find their voices and match pitches, preparing them for advanced musical exploration. Rhymes, poems, and songs, both old and new, continue to enrich language development and stimulate creativity. Playing and responding to music remain central aspects of our curriculum. Children deepen their connection to music by exploring how it makes them feel and noticing patterns within it. They learn to describe the music they hear, enhancing communication and language skills. Singing, listening, and playing together are core elements of our curriculum. Children explore the sounds of various musical instruments, fostering an appreciation for diverse musical worlds. Our goal is to provide Reception children with a vibrant and engaging music education, preparing them for a lifelong journey of musical discovery.				

Movement and Rhythm		Awareness Pitch and Melodic	Awareness Singing Familiar Songs	Collaborative Music and Group	Participation Creative Expression
• They are becoming more attentive listeners, recognising and describing patterns within music, fostering an ability to engage with different musical experiences		• Reception children can engage with rhymes, poems, nursery rhymes and songs, expressing their feelings and thoughts through music, enhancing language skills	• Children are increasingly confident in singing and can match their voices to different pitches, displaying improved vocal control and pitch-matching abilities.	• Children can work together in singing, listening, and playing musical instruments, showcasing their ability to participate in group music-making.	• They can recall, imitate, and tap out rhythmic patterns set by others, demonstrating memory and rhythm awareness.
Year 1					
In Year 1, the focus is on building fundamental musical skills through explorative play and creative activities. Pupils engage with music by developing their sense of pulse and rhythm, learning to move and clap in time with a steady beat. They also begin to understand basic pitch differences by comparing high and low sounds. Singing and performing are introduced, encouraging pupils to respond to simple visual directions such as loud, quiet, stop and start and to use percussion sounds for storytelling. Composition and improvisation activities involve creating simple rhythms and sounds, often inspired by everyday experiences.					
Musicianship: Pulse & Rhythm		Musicianship: Pitch Singing &	Singing & Performing	Instrumental Performance	Composition & Improvisation
• Maintain a steady beat by clapping, tapping, or moving in time to the music. • Mimic short rhythmic patterns accurately when led by the teacher. • Begin to recognise rhythmic notation symbols like crotchets and quavers, via graphic notation, dot notation and stick notation.		• Differentiate between high and low sounds in familiar songs and everyday sounds. • Sing simple songs with a small pitch range, accurately hitting pitches like mi-so. • Explore basic pitch notation symbols and their association with pitch.	• Sing simple songs, chants, and rhymes from memory collectively and at the same pitch. • Follow visual directions (e.g. start, stop, loud, quiet) and musical cues while singing. • Participate in basic call-and-response songs to control vocal pitch and accuracy.	• Play untuned instruments (e.g. percussion) in a classroom setting with a steady beat. • Demonstrate basic coordination when using classroom instruments like shakers and claves. • Begin to explore playing simple rhythms or melodies on tuned instruments (e.g. glockenspiel) with guidance.	• Engage in creative musical exploration through vocal improvisation. • Start to create short musical sequences and sound effects in response to stimuli.
Year 2					
Year 2 continues to nurture pupils' musical development by expanding on the foundations laid in Year 1. They refine their understanding of pulse and rhythm, explore changing tempo, and learn to recognise the beat in different pieces of music. Pitch exploration advances with more singing practice, focusing on a wider pitch range and dynamics. Pupils also start to follow symbols and pictures to guide their singing and playing, including stick notation and dot notation. Composition and improvisation become more structured, with pupils creating musical patterns and using basic notation.					

Musicianship: Pulse & Rhythm	Musicianship: Pitch	Singing & Performing	Instrumental Performance	Composition & Improvisation
• Maintain a steady beat and adjust the speed of the beat in response to music. • Play copycat rhythms accurately and perform short repeating rhythm patterns. • Demonstrate an understanding of rhythm notation, including crotchets, quavers, and crotchet rests, represented with stick notation.	• Compare and contrast high and low sounds in various contexts, including music and everyday sounds. • Sing songs with a slightly wider pitch range of do-so. • Follow simple dot notation pictures and symbols to guide singing and playing melodies.	• Sing songs regularly with a pitch range of do-so with increasing vocal control. • Understand and demonstrate dynamics (loud/quiet) and tempo (fast/slow) while singing. • Sing short phrases independently within a singing game or short song.	• Play untuned instruments (e.g. percussion) with increased coordination and rhythm accuracy. • Play short pitched patterns on tuned instruments (e.g. glockenspiels). • Begin to play familiar melodies on tuned instruments with guidance and notation.	• Engage in creative musical exploration through vocal improvisation. • Start to improvise short question and answer phrases. • Begin to create and explore rhythmic and melodic patterns.
Year 3				
Year 3 marks a transition to a more structured music curriculum. Pupils continue to refine their musicianship skills by walking, moving, or clapping to a steady beat, maintaining coordination, and performing actions to songs and rhymes. Pitch exploration advances with more complex singing games and pitch recognition through dot notation. Pupils become more independent in responding to pitch changes in short melodic phrases. They also begin to explore basic musical notation and symbols through the introduction of the stave. Pupils are introduced to the recorder and begin to develop the skills needed to produce a clear, controlled sound, learning to play simple notes and melodies while developing an understanding of rhythm, pitch and basic notation.				
Musicianship: Pulse & Rhythm	Musicianship: Pitch	Singing & Performing	Instrumental Performance	Composition & Improvisation
• Read and perform simple rhythms confidently with note values such as crotchets and paired quavers. • Maintain a steady beat and adjust the speed of the beat in response to the music or a leader.	• Begin to read and perform pitch notation within a limited range (e.g. C–G), recognising higher and lower pitches. • Interpret and perform music with basic dynamics markings.	• Sing a widening range of unison songs of varying styles and structures, with tunefulness and some expression. • Perform simple actions and sing in time to action songs	• Learn how to produce a good, clear sound on the recorder and play notes with care and control. • Understand the difference between singing and chanting. Recognise the notes B, A and G on the stave and play them on an instrument. • Recognise the notes B, A, G and E on the stave and play them accurately. • Recognise the symbols for a crotchet, minim, quaver and semibreve, and understand how many beats each note	• Begin to improvise on a limited range of pitches using simple musical features. • Create short musical responses using limited note ranges in improvisation. • Experiment with creating structured musical ideas, incorporating basic repetitions and contrasts.

			represents. • Read and follow simple staff notation within a small range of notes. • Perform simple melodic songs using the recorder or another melodic instrument. • Play simple melodies with increasing accuracy, maintaining a clear sound and steady pulse. • Take part in ensemble playing, performing a simple melody or accompaniment part, such as an ostinato, within a group or class. • Explore improvising and composing simple musical ideas using a small range of notes and rhythms. • Understand that different notes have different lengths/beat values and use this knowledge when reading and performing music.	
Year 4				
In Year 4, pupils delve deeper into musical concepts, building on the musical and instrumental skills developed through learning the recorder in Year 3. They become more proficient in reading notation, distinguishing between different note durations and pitches. Singing expands to include a larger pitch range, harmonies, and vocal expression. Through Enfield Music Service, pupils are introduced to the clarinet, building on their previous experience of playing the recorder to develop their breath control, fingering, listening and ensemble skills. They learn to produce a clear sound, read basic notation, and perform simple melodies as part of their class and ensemble work. Instrumental performance becomes more sophisticated, with pupils playing melodies and accompaniments on tuned percussion or melodic instruments. They also engage in ensemble playing, developing their ability to listen and respond to others. Composition work includes creating melodies with rhythmic variety and experimenting with sequences and pentatonic phrases.				
Musicianship: Pulse & Rhythm	Musicianship: Pitch Singing &	Singing & Performing	Instrumental Performance	Composition & Improvisation

• Accurately read and perform rhythms with a range of note values, including minims, crotchets, paired quavers, and rests. • Read and play short rhythmic phrases at sight from prepared cards, using conventional symbols for known rhythms and note durations. • Understand and apply knowledge of different metres in 2, 3 or 4 time.	• Confidently read and perform pitch notation within a range of do-so (e.g. C–G). • Begin to demonstrate an understanding of clefs and the stave.	• Sing a broad range of unison songs with the range of an octave (do–do), pitching the voice accurately and following dynamics. • Perform actions confidently and in time to a range of action songs. • Sing rounds and partner songs in different time signatures.	• Have the opportunity to learn the clarinet or saxophone through Enfield Music Service, developing increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression. • Identify the main parts of the instrument and learn to assemble and disassemble it correctly, including positioning the reed. • Develop good posture, breath control and technique to produce a clear, controlled sound. • Read and respond to simple musical notation, recognising notes, note values, quaver notes/rests and basic musical symbols. • Play simple melodies using a small range of notes, progressing from 2–3 notes to 4–5 notes, and copy short melodic phrases. • Perform melodies and accompaniments in ensemble contexts, maintaining their own part and responding to others. • Explore dynamics, tempo, timbre and rhythm, and use these expressively when performing. • Improvise and compose simple musical ideas using basic rhythms and a selected range of notes, including pentatonic patterns. • Sing expressively and explore vocal effects, drones and simple accompaniments. • Listen to and respond to a wide range of live and recorded music, developing	• Combine known rhythmic notation with letter names to create short pentatonic phrases using a limited range of 5 pitches, suitable for the instrument being learnt, then sing and play these phrases as self-standing compositions. • Begin to understand the difference between major and minor.
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			an understanding of how music is created, performed and communicated	
Year 5				
Year 5 focuses on refining and developing musical skills. Pupils read notation confidently, interpret rhythmic scores, and expand their pitch notation range. Singing becomes more expressive and harmonious, with an emphasis on phrasing, style and performance. As part of their preparation for a large Voice in a Million (VIAM) concert, pupils learn and discuss the lyrics of selected songs, developing their understanding of the music and preparing to perform confidently as part of a large ensemble. Instrumental performance evolves as pupils play melodies across a broader range, engage in ensemble playing, and develop their ability to play by ear. Composition and improvisation work advances, with pupils extending their improvisation skills and creating music with multiple sections, exploring character, atmosphere and environment.				
Reading Notation: Pulse &	Rhythm Reading Notation: Pitch	Singing & Performing	Instrumental Performance	Composition & Improvisation
• Confidently read and perform rhythms with a wide range of note values, including semibreves, minims, crotchets, quavers, semiquavers and crotchet rests. • Read and play short rhythmic phrases at sight from prepared cards, using conventional symbols for known rhythms and note durations. • Understand and apply knowledge of different time signatures (e.g. 2/4, 3/4, 4/4).	• Confidently read and perform pitch notation within an octave range (e.g. C–C). • Begin to develop sight reading skills by recognising short melodies to play and perform from the stave.	• Sing a broad range of songs from an extended repertoire, including songs selected for Voice in a Million (VIAM), with a strong sense of ensemble and performance, observing phrasing, accurate pitching and appropriate style. • Sing three-part rounds, partner songs, and songs with verses and choruses, developing confidence, vocal blend and awareness of other parts in preparation for performing as part of a large ensemble at Voice in a Million (VIAM).	• Play a melody following staff notation written on one stave and using notes within an octave range (do–do). • Begin to understand how triads are formed and play them on tuned percussion, melodic instruments or keyboards. • Perform simple, chordal accompaniments to familiar songs.	• Improvise freely over a drone, creating musical shapes and character using tuned percussion and melodic instruments. • Compose melodies made from pairs of phrases, in a key suitable for the instrument chosen, enhanced with rhythmic or chordal accompaniment. • Compose music with contrasting elements to evoke specific atmospheres, moods, or environments.
Year 6				
Year 6 represents the pinnacle of Key Stage 2 music education. Pupils are proficient in reading notation and confidently perform complex rhythms and pitches. Singing reaches a high level of ensemble and performance, and instrumental performance is advanced. Composition and improvisation skills expand further, with pupils creating music with multiple sections and experimenting with mood and expression. The units at the end of Year 6, allow them to showcase their musical growth as they prepare for Key Stage 3, where they will explore more advanced musical concepts and experiences. Each year builds upon the skills acquired in the previous year, providing a comprehensive musical education that prepares pupils for more advanced musical exploration in the next stage of their education				

Reading Notation: Pulse &	Rhythm Reading Notation: Pitch	Singing & Performing	Instrumental Performance	Composition & Improvisation
• Confidently read and perform rhythms with a wide range of note values, including semibreves, minims, crotchets, quavers, semiquavers and their equivalent rests, fluently interpreting rhythm patterns and note durations. • Sight-read and perform intricate rhythmic phrases and rhythms from prepared notation, confidently maintaining accurate timing and rhythm throughout, in an ensemble of up to 4 parts.	• Fluently read and perform pitch notation within an octave range (e.g. C–C). • Interpret and perform music with dynamics and articulation.	• Sing a broad range of songs, including those with complex rhythms and harmonies, with a strong sense of ensemble and performance. • Perform three- and four-part rounds, partner songs, and songs with intricate structures..	• Play complex melodies and accompaniments following staff notation, utilising a wide range of notes within an octave (do–do), whilst contributing to the interpretation and expression of the music. • Accompany melodies using block chords or a bass line using keyboards, tuned percussion or melodic instruments. • Demonstrate proficiency in playing by ear, copying longer phrases and complex melodies on tuned instruments.	• Extend improvisation skills through working in small groups to create music with multiple sections, repetition, and contrast. • Compose melodies made from pairs of phrases, in a major or minor key suitable for the instrument chosen, enhanced with rhythmic or chordal accompaniment. • Plan and compose an 8- or 16-beat melodic phrase using the pentatonic scale and incorporate rhythmic variety.