

Music Policy for St Nicholas Catholic Primary School

Introduction

At St Nicholas Catholic Primary School, we believe that music is a universal language and a vital part of every child's education. This Music Policy outlines the purpose, aims, statutory requirements and practical approaches for delivering high-quality music education at St Nicholas. It is written in accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum for Music, Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework 2019, and relevant statutory guidance including the Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

We aim for every pupil to experience the joy of music through singing, listening, performing, composing and appraising. Music helps children to develop confidence, creativity, self-expression, discipline and a lifelong appreciation of a wide range of musical styles and traditions. Through music, pupils build knowledge, skills and cultural understanding while developing spiritually, socially, morally and academically.

Music is a valued and much-loved part of school life at St Nicholas. We provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that ensures all pupils, including those in mixed-age classes, can access and succeed in music. Our curriculum is enriched through singing, instrumental learning, performance opportunities and exposure to a wide range of genres, composers and traditions.

Aims

The national curriculum for music aims to ensure that all pupils:

- perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of great composers and musicians
- learn to sing and to use their voices
- create and compose music on their own and with others
- have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument
- use technology appropriately
- progress to the next level of musical excellence
- understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated through the inter-related dimensions of music

At St Nicholas, we also aim to:

- develop confident, expressive and enthusiastic singers and performers
- nurture a love of music and open-mindedness towards different musical traditions

- build secure musical knowledge and vocabulary
- support pupils to listen with concentration and discrimination
- enable pupils to compose, improvise and evaluate with increasing confidence
- ensure every child sees themselves as a musician

Statutory and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and should be read alongside the following statutory and regulatory documents:

- National Curriculum in England: Music programmes of study (2014)
- Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework 2019 (EIF), particularly expectations concerning the quality of education, curriculum and pupils' development
- Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to avoid unlawful discrimination and make reasonable adjustments where required
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, alongside the school's wider health and safety procedures

Curriculum Coverage

The music curriculum at St Nicholas provides comprehensive coverage of the statutory programmes of study for Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils are taught to:

- sing and use their voices expressively
- play tuned and untuned instruments musically
- listen with concentration and attention to detail
- improvise and compose music
- understand musical notation
- perform in solo and ensemble contexts
- appreciate music from a wide range of traditions, periods and composers
- develop an understanding of the history of music

The curriculum is sequenced through a progression of knowledge and skills that develops over time across the following areas:

- listening and evaluating
- creating sound
- notation
- improvising and composing
- performing
- inter-related dimensions of music
- musical context and history

Curriculum Implementation

Music Curriculum Model

Music is taught through a carefully sequenced long-term plan that ensures breadth, progression and revisiting of key concepts. The curriculum is planned across two years for mixed-age classes, with clear progression in knowledge and skills.

Year groups follow topics such as:

- keeping the pulse
- tempo
- pitch
- instruments
- singing
- musical storytelling
- musical improvisation
- reading rhythms
- music technology
- scales and structure
- harmony
- global grooves
- soundtracks
- melodies and variation
- lyrics and messages
- band performance
- world music and cultural traditions

The curriculum also includes the Music Spotlight programme, which broadens pupils' musical repertoire and cultural understanding through a whole-school focus each term.

Music Spotlight

Each term, the school has a whole-school musical genre focus to help pupils explore music from a range of historical and cultural contexts.

- **Autumn** - Western Classical Music
- **Spring** - Popular Music
- **Summer** - Traditional Music from around the world

Each week, pupils listen to a sub-genre, composer or artist at different points in the school day, for example:

- in the morning
- during handwriting

- in corridors
- as children enter assemblies

Adults are expected to explicitly name the music being played and help pupils recognise the genre, composer or artist. This supports listening, vocabulary, cultural capital and musical memory.

EYFS Foundations

In Reception, music begins through:

- singing
- rhyme
- rhythm
- listening
- movement
- instruments
- performance

Nursery rhymes form a key part of the Communication and Language curriculum and are revisited regularly to support memory, vocabulary and phonological awareness. A carefully sequenced nursery rhyme spine helps children to develop listening, attention and speaking skills.

Children also take part in class assemblies and singing opportunities, including weekly Key Stage hymn practice as they become settled in school. Music in EYFS supports expression, confidence, early performance and community participation.

Listening and Evaluating

Pupils are taught to listen carefully to live and recorded music, responding to what they hear and developing increasingly secure musical vocabulary. They learn to:

- identify instruments and musical features
- describe mood, tempo, dynamics and pitch
- recognise repetition, pattern and contrast
- express preferences and justify opinions
- make links between music, culture, history and personal experience

Across the school, listening activities include music from a wide range of styles, periods and traditions. Pupils are expected to listen with concentration and curiosity, and to develop a critical but respectful engagement with music.

Creating Sound, Improvising and Composing

Pupils are taught to experiment with sound, improvise short musical ideas and compose music for different purposes. They learn to:

- create simple sound sequences in response to stimuli
- improvise question-and-answer phrases
- use the inter-related dimensions of music to create contrast and mood
- compose with structure, purpose and control
- develop melodic and rhythmic ideas
- use instruments, voice and technology appropriately

From the early years onwards, pupils are encouraged to explore, select, refine and combine sounds. In Key Stage 2, pupils compose more independently, making decisions about pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, structure and instrumentation.

Singing and Performance

Singing is central to the music curriculum and wider school life. Pupils are taught to sing with increasing confidence, accuracy, control and expression. They take part in:

- class singing
- hymn practice
- key stage singing
- performances in assemblies and productions
- choir and wider enrichment opportunities

Pupils are taught correct singing technique, including posture, breathing, clarity and projection. They also learn to perform in solo and ensemble contexts, maintaining their own part, following cues and responding to others.

Performance opportunities help pupils to develop confidence, resilience, teamwork and stage awareness. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate performances constructively and reflect on how to improve.

Notation

Pupils are taught to understand and use musical notation in a progressive way. This includes:

- reading from left to right
- recognising pitch visually
- reading and creating rhythmic patterns
- understanding note values and rests
- working with staff notation

- using graphic scores and other forms of representation where appropriate

Notation supports pupils to record, recall and communicate musical ideas. It is taught as a tool for making music, not as an isolated body of knowledge.

Inter-Related Dimensions of Music

The school teaches the inter-related dimensions of music explicitly and progressively:

- **Dynamics**
- **Rhythm**
- **Structure**
- **Melody, including pitch**
- **Instrumentation**
- **Tempo**
- **Harmony**

Pupils learn that these elements can be combined and changed to create contrast, mood, character and effect. They are taught to talk about music using accurate vocabulary and to make links between what they hear and what they create.

Musical Context and History

Pupils are taught to appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality music from different traditions, cultures and historical periods. They learn that:

- music reflects its social and historical context
- styles develop and change over time
- music technology has influenced how music is produced and shared
- musical traditions are shaped by culture, place and purpose

Through the curriculum and Music Spotlight, pupils encounter music from the Western classical tradition, popular music and traditional music from around the world. This supports cultural capital, openness and respect for difference.

Assessment

Assessment in music is ongoing and carefully built into lessons to support progress over time. It includes:

- targeted questioning
- observation of practical work
- discussion and collaboration
- lesson pause points

- retrieval practice
- use of success criteria
- short reflections at the end of lessons
- end-of-unit assessment quizzes
- audio and video recordings of practice and performance

Assessment helps teachers to identify what pupils know, understand and can do, and to adapt teaching where needed. It also supports the celebration of pupils' developing musical skills over time.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team	Provide strategic leadership, ensure appropriate resources and staffing, and monitor the quality and impact of music provision.
Music Subject Leader	Lead curriculum development; support staff; monitor planning, teaching, performances and assessment; identify priorities; coordinate enrichment and contribute to whole-school improvement.
Class Teachers	Plan and teach high-quality music lessons; assess pupils regularly; adapt teaching; promote singing, listening and performance; and maintain strong home-school links.
Teaching Assistants	Support pupils through targeted intervention, guided practice and scaffolding while promoting independence.
Pupils	Engage positively with music, sing, listen, compose, perform and reflect on their learning.
Parents and Carers	Support musical learning at home, encourage participation and celebrate musical achievement.

Inclusion

At St Nicholas, we are committed to being a fully inclusive school, where all pupils are welcomed, valued and supported to succeed.

Our first approach is always high-quality teaching. The learning objective remains the same for all pupils wherever appropriate, and we focus on identifying and removing barriers rather than routinely lowering expectations.

We support access through:

- breaking musical tasks into small, manageable steps
- providing sentence stems for discussion and evaluation
- using simple success criteria

- guided practice before independent application
- visual cues to support rhythm, pitch and structure
- pre-teaching key vocabulary
- flexible grouping to encourage teamwork and communication
- rehearsal opportunities before whole-class sharing
- adapted recording or practical demonstration where appropriate

Where needed, pupils may demonstrate understanding in different ways, including:

- verbal responses
- practical outcomes
- supported recording
- assistive technology

For pupils working significantly below age-related expectations, learning is adapted so that they remain fully included in the same curriculum experiences, themes and contexts as their peers, while working towards personalised targets linked to their individual needs.

Support is planned and reviewed through the school's graduated approach of assess, plan, do, review.

Enrichment and Cultural Capital

Music plays a vibrant role in enrichment at St Nicholas. Opportunities include:

- choir as an after-school club
- singing in Church during school masses and celebrations
- singing at the local community centre
- singing in local care homes at Christmas
- participation in Church and sacramental events
- an annual desk bell workshop
- opportunities to join the Junior, Girls' or Boys' Cathedral Choir
- events linked to the Diocese of Leeds Music
- radio performances linked to the community and Diocese

These experiences help children to build confidence, enjoy music and contribute to the life of the school and wider community.

Reading Across the Curriculum

Music supports reading in meaningful ways across the curriculum. Pupils read:

- song lyrics
- hymn texts
- instructions

- musical vocabulary

Learning through songs, chants and rhymes strengthens memory, rhythm, rhyme and phonological awareness, supporting early reading development. Pupils are also encouraged to read for information and deepen their understanding of composers, genres and performances.

Professional Development

Staff development is informed by monitoring, assessment and identified curriculum priorities. Professional development supports staff in:

- singing and vocal technique
- listening and appraising
- composition and improvisation
- notation
- music technology
- adaptive teaching
- subject knowledge and curriculum progression

Subject leadership supports colleagues through professional dialogue, modelling, shared resources and monitoring of curriculum implementation.

Monitoring and Review

Music is monitored through:

- learning walks
- book scrutiny where appropriate
- planning checks
- assessment reviews
- pupil voice
- review of recordings and performance outcomes
- professional dialogue

Monitoring evaluates curriculum coverage, consistency, progress, teaching quality and the impact of intervention and enrichment.

The Music Subject Leader coordinates the monitoring cycle and reports findings to senior leaders. Priorities identified through monitoring inform professional development, curriculum development and school improvement.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance, national expectations or school priorities change.

Policy Review

Policy	Music Policy
Academic Year	2026–2027
Subject Leader	Mrs Medley
Review Date	July 2027