

Music – Long-term overview



Following the Kapow Primary Mixed-Age Planning in Years 1/2 and Years 3/4, and the EYFS music curriculum in Reception, pupils experience a broad and progressive music education.

In addition to class music lessons. Opportunities for live performance are regularly provided through school events, assemblies, concerts, productions and community celebrations, allowing pupils to showcase their learning and develop their performance skills. Further music learning opportunities are carefully planned to align with key dates and events within the academic calendar, enriching pupils' musical experiences and fostering a lifelong appreciation of music.

Intent

Curriculum Aims

At Shillington Lower School, we believe that every child is musical and aim to nurture a lifelong love of music through a broad, engaging and inclusive curriculum.

Our music curriculum develops the skills, knowledge and understanding needed for pupils to become confident performers, composers and listeners. Children are introduced to a wide range of musical styles and traditions from around the world, fostering respect, appreciation and an understanding of different cultures and communities.

Through singing, playing tuned and untuned instruments, improvising, composing and listening to music, pupils progressively build their musical skills and confidence. They develop an understanding of the key elements of music, learn how music can be represented through notation, and explore the historical and cultural contexts of the music they encounter.

Music at Shillington Lower School also supports the development of important transferable skills, including teamwork, leadership, creativity, problem-solving, decision-making, communication and performance skills. These experiences help children grow as confident learners and individuals, equipping them with skills that will benefit them both in school and beyond.

National Curriculum

At Shillington Lower School, our music curriculum is built around the five key strands of the National Curriculum:

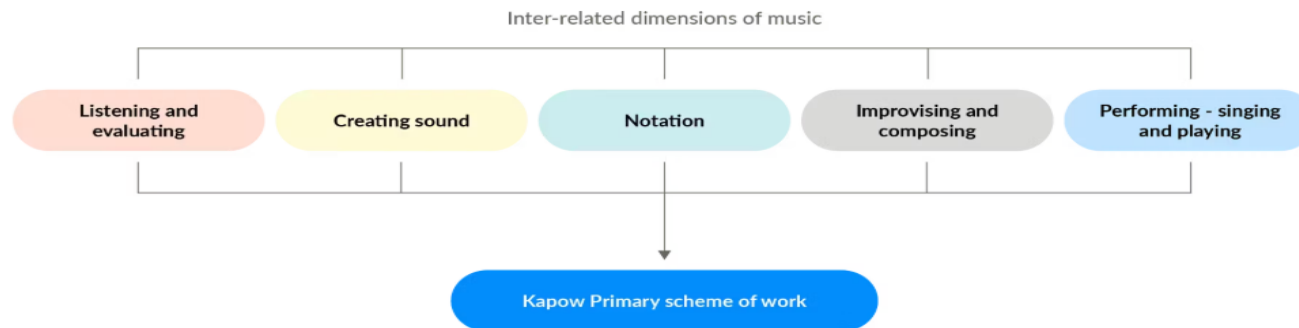
- Listening and evaluating
- Creating sound
- Notation
- Improvising and composing
- Performing through singing and playing

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These strands run through every unit of learning, ensuring a balanced and progressive approach to musical development. Pupils develop their listening skills by exploring and evaluating a wide range of music from different cultures, traditions and historical periods, helping them understand how music is created and the impact it has on listeners.

Children learn to create and control sound through singing and playing instruments, developing technical proficiency, coordination and confidence. Through the study of notation, pupils learn how musical ideas can be communicated and recorded, enabling them to read, compose and perform increasingly complex pieces of music.

Opportunities for improvisation and composition encourage creativity, self-expression and critical thinking as pupils experiment with and organise their own musical ideas. Regular performance experiences provide a meaningful context for applying musical skills, fostering collaboration, resilience and confidence, while helping pupils appreciate the value of working together to achieve a shared goal.



EYFS (Reception)

In EYFS, music is taught through the Expressive Arts and Design curriculum, particularly supporting the Early Learning Goal for Being Imaginative and Expressive. Children develop their musical understanding through singing, exploring sounds, moving to music, performing with others and experimenting with rhythm and melody. These experiences lay the foundations for the knowledge, skills and confidence required for music learning in Key Stage 1 and beyond.

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Continuity of Learning from EYFS to KS1

At Shillington Lower School, our music curriculum provides a seamless transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1. The curriculum is carefully designed to build on the curiosity, exploration, creativity and discussion that are central to EYFS learning, while gradually introducing the more structured approaches expected in Year 1. Key musical themes, knowledge and skills introduced in EYFS are revisited and developed throughout KS1, ensuring continuity and clear progression.

This is supported by the curriculum's five strands—listening and evaluating, creating sound, notation, improvising and composing, and performing—which run consistently throughout the primary years, enabling pupils to build upon prior learning with confidence.

The curriculum aligns closely with the EYFS Early Learning Goals, particularly within Communication and Language, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design, creating strong foundations for future musical learning. Through opportunities for singing, listening, performing, questioning, storytelling and creative exploration, pupils continue to develop important skills such as observation, reasoning, problem-solving and communication.

Adaptive teaching strategies support all learners as they move towards more formal learning, while promoting independence, confidence and a positive attitude towards music as they progress into Key Stage 1.

Progression

At Shillington Lower School, our music curriculum follows a spiral approach, enabling pupils to revisit and build upon key musical knowledge and skills throughout their time at the school. Learning is carefully sequenced so that concepts are revisited with increasing depth and complexity, helping pupils to strengthen their understanding and make meaningful connections. Through regular opportunities to listen, perform, compose and reflect, children develop both their musical skills and an intuitive understanding of music, preparing them to meet the expectations of the National Curriculum.

The progression of skills can be found on the Kapow music platform.

Inclusion and Diversity

At Shillington Lower School, we believe it is important that all pupils see themselves reflected within the music curriculum while also developing an appreciation of cultures and traditions beyond their own. Our curriculum introduces children to a diverse range of musicians, musical styles and traditions from around the world, helping to challenge stereotypes and broaden perspectives.

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Through inclusive resources, thoughtful discussion and the exploration of music within its social, historical and cultural contexts, pupils develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of societies. This approach encourages respect, empathy and curiosity, enabling children to appreciate the connections between different communities and the role music plays in expressing identity, culture and lived experience.

Implementation

Timetabling

Children receive one hours musical learning each week. 40 minutes is a timetabled dedicated music lesson. This dedicated lesson provides pupils with regular opportunities to develop their musical knowledge, skills and understanding through listening, performing, composing and evaluating. Weekly music lessons ensure that learning is progressive and allows pupils to revisit and build upon key concepts over time, developing confidence, creativity and a deeper appreciation of music. In addition, all children participate in at least 20 minutes whole school singing. Musician of the month is used to teach understanding and appreciation of different music genres, styles and artists including those from a range of different times and cultures on a regular basis with daily follow-up in classrooms building children's cultural capital.

CPD

Kapow Primary supports teachers in delivering the Music curriculum effectively through clear and informative CPD videos. These videos are designed to help teachers feel confident in their role by providing guidance on key concepts, teaching strategies and best practices. Kapow Primary also offers Music education webinars throughout the academic year, such as 'Modelling in music' and 'What does assessment in music look like?' Previously held webinars are also available to view on demand.

Unit Structure

Music unit hubs contain all the necessary lesson links, resources and information relevant to the unit being taught. Information on the unit hubs corresponds to all the relevant Music key documents, such as the Progression of skills and knowledge and vocabulary progression. The unit hub also links to useful resources and key documents, suggests units that could build on knowledge or activate prior learning and outlines cross-curricular links.

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Lesson structure

Lessons are structured to ensure all pupils are able to access the learning and succeed.



Recap and recall: Each lesson begins with a short activity revisiting prior learning. This helps reinforce key knowledge, activate long-term memory and create connections between past and new learning.

Recap and recall activities are varied to keep the start of the lesson engaging and fun while still supporting active recall.



Attention grabber: A short, engaging activity designed to hook pupils into the new learning in the lesson.

This could be a thought-provoking question, a quick investigation or an interactive discussion to spark curiosity and enthusiasm for the topic.



Main event: The core part of the lesson, where pupils engage in activities that develop their understanding of the learning objective.

This includes a mixture of teacher modelling, guided practice and independent or collaborative tasks tailored to support all learners.

Wrapping up: A final reflective activity that consolidates learning. This could involve reviewing the success criteria, discussing key learning or applying knowledge in a different context to assess understanding and encourage deeper thinking.

Inclusion and SEND

Our scheme of work is designed to be fully adaptable for pupils with SEND. Every lesson includes an adaptive teaching section, providing clear guidance on how activities can be modified to meet the needs of all learners. Pupils learn in a variety of ways. As such, Kapow Primary Music lessons include a range of strategies to support and challenge every pupil, such as:

- Scaffolding – activities are designed with flexibility in mind, allowing for additional support or challenge where needed.
- Multi-sensory approaches – lessons incorporate different elements to engage all learner
- Clear instructions and structured tasks – ensuring clarity and reducing cognitive load for pupils who benefit from additional support.
- Opportunities for collaborative and independent learning – allowing pupils to work at their own pace while building confidence and independence.

By embedding adaptive teaching throughout, the scheme ensures that all pupils, regardless of their starting points, can access and succeed in their learning. In addition, the step-by-step curriculum design supports pupils with SEND, avoiding sudden jumps in complexity at transition points and allowing for steady, manageable progression.

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Enrichment

Alongside the enrichment through Musician of the Month, the school provides opportunities for pupils to engage with Central Bedfordshire Music hub (inspiring music). Pupils in year 3 enjoy whole class singing which results in participation in a Summer concert as well as year 4 receiving whole class Ukulele instruction.

IMPACT

Formative: Assessment throughout the lesson

Kapow Primary Music lessons include ongoing assessment opportunities, such as questioning, retrieval practice and interactive activities. These enable teachers to assess understanding in real time and adapt their teaching accordingly

Summative: Summative assessment opportunities

Each unit provides an *Assessment quiz*, which allows teachers to measure pupils' understanding at key points. This tool helps gauge how well pupils have retained key knowledge and skills over time.

Evidencing progress

Insight is used to track progress.

Written outcomes

Pupils demonstrate their learning and provide tangible evidence of progress through a variety of activities, including structured written work, annotated diagrams and creative responses in their music journals.

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Pupil voice

Lessons encourage discussion, reflection and verbal explanations. This allows teachers to capture pupils' understanding through questioning, class discussions and recorded responses, supporting a broader view of progress beyond written work.

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	Autumn A	Autumn B	Spring A	Spring B	Summer A	Summer B
Reception	Exploring sound 5 lessons Exploring how to use our voice and bodies to make sounds, experimenting with tempo and dynamic when playing instruments and identifying sounds in the environment.	Celebration music 5 lessons Learning about the music from a range of cultural and religious celebrations, including Diwali, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas.	Music and movement 5 lessons Creating simple actions to well-known songs, the children learn how to move to a beat and express feelings and emotions through movement to music.	Musical stories 5 lessons Moving to music using instructions and changing movements to match the tempo, pitch or dynamics. The children recognise that music and instruments can convey moods or represent characters and play instruments as part of a group story.	Transport 5 lessons Identifying and copying sounds produced by different vehicles using voices, bodies and instruments. The children identify tempo changes and understand how symbols can represent sound.	Big band 5 lessons Exploring what makes a musical instrument and how instruments are grouped into different families. Pupils develop their sense of beat using untuned percussion instruments before performing a song to a small audience.
Year 1 /2 Cycle A 2026-27	My favourite things: Keeping the pulse 6 lessons Learning how to keep a steady pulse, pupils take part in music and movement activities inspired by their favourite things. They move to the beat of the music while expressing and responding to objects and experiences that are meaningful to them.	Snail and mouse: Tempo 6 lessons Using voices, bodies and instruments to listen and respond to different pieces of music, pupils learn and perform a rhyme and song with a focus on tempo. Through the adventures of the snail and mouse, they explore how tempo can help shape a musical story.	Superheroes: Pitch 6 lessons Exploring pitch by identifying high and low notes and listening to contrasting musical sounds. Pupils experiment with combining different pitches to compose a simple superhero melody that reflects the character's personality and actions.	Musical storytelling: Instruments 6 lessons Exploring longer pieces of music, pupils look at how music can tell a story through a variety of instruments. They think creatively, considering how sounds can represent characters, actions and emotions when creating a soundscape to tell the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.	On this island: Singing 6 lessons Identifying how music can represent different environments by singing songs and creating contrasting soundscapes. Pupils use instruments, body percussion and folk songs to evoke the atmosphere of three different landscapes.	Musical me: Pitch 6 lessons Developing pitch awareness through learning the song 'Once a Man Fell in a Well' and recreating its melody using tuned instruments. Pupils connect sounds to specific pitches and begin to understand how simple symbols can be used to represent musical notation.

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Year 3 /4 Cycle B 2026-27	Mountains: Steps and leaps 6 lessons Investigating melody and pitch through using graphic scores to identify changes in pitch by step, leap or repeated note. Pupils compose short melodic pieces inspired by mountain drawings, then experiment with dynamics and movement to bring their musical landscapes to life.	Inspired by India: Musical improvisations 6 lessons Exploring traditional Indian music and the art of improvisation by using the pentatonic scale and simple musical techniques. Pupils create short improvisations and experiment with pitch, dynamics and tempo to express different moods and musical ideas.	Reading rhythms: Patterns and layers (awaiting publication)	Music technology: Introduction to music technology (awaiting publication)	Sounds of China: Scales and structure 6 lessons Composing pentatonic melodies and rhythmic loops to soundtrack a story based on traditional Chinese dragon dance. Describe some features of the dragon dance. Create and layer simple rhythmic loops. Compose a short melody using the pentatonic scale. Make musical choices to show changes in tempo, dynamics and mood. Contribute musical ideas to a group composition. Use layered rhythmic loops and melodies to soundtrack a story	Baroque meets pop: Building harmony (awaiting publication)
Year 1 /2 Cycle A 2027-28	Seaside: Dynamics 6 lessons Exploring the connection between sound and the environment, pupils work together to create a seaside soundscape using percussion instruments, vocal sounds and body percussion. They vary dynamics to create contrasts between loud and soft sounds.	Fairytales: Sound patterns 6 lessons Examining a range of fairytales, pupils identify key moments in each story. They clap and read simple sound patterns linked to different characters, then use these patterns to retell the stories through sound and movement.	Animals: Call and response 6 lessons Developing rhythm and pulse through chanting call-and-response sound patterns and performing with untuned percussion instruments. Pupils create and echo rhythmic ideas while responding to each other's chants to build musical communication and performance skills.	Under the sea: Musical symbols 6 lessons Exploring the depths of the sea through music, movement, musical symbols and tuned percussion instruments. Pupils interpret musical symbols, translate visual cues into sound and use tuned percussion to represent the underwater world.	Space: Contrasting dynamics 6 lessons Developing their understanding of contrasting dynamics, pupils listen to music inspired by planets and use these examples to create their own compositions. They explore how loud and soft sounds can represent the unique characteristics of different planets.	Myths and legends: Structure 6 lessons Investigating musical structure by listening to, analysing and performing a song based on a well-known myth. Pupils identify sections and sound patterns within the music before using voices and instruments to perform short musical phrases that help tell a story.
Year 3 /4 Cycle B	Singing in parts: Loops and layers 6 lessons	Musical motifs: Reading the stave 6 lessons	Reggae rhythms: Playing in a band 6 lessons	Music technology: Loops (awaiting publication)	12 bar blues: Playing in a band (awaiting publication)	Minimalist melodies: Developing patterns (awaiting publication)

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2027-28	Developing vocal technique, confidence and control by singing in rounds and performing musical loops. Pupils build independence, timing and listening skills while collaborating to create layered group performances	Developing an understanding of musical notation by learning how notes move higher and lower on the stave through reading, playing and composing short musical motifs. Pupils apply their understanding by recognising patterns within musical phrases, creating motifs for characters and performing compositions using stave notation.	Discovering reggae through some of Bob Marley's most iconic songs, pupils learn simplified bass lines, basic chords and the concept of the offbeat. Pupils combine these musical elements to rehearse and perform collaboratively in their own reggae bands.			
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