

A Policy for the Teaching of Music at St. Edmund's Catholic Primary School, Skelmersdale.

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 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 enables children to better understand the world 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 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.

1.2 The aims of music teaching are to enable children to:

- know and understand how sounds are made and then organised into musical structures;
- know how music is made through a variety of instruments;
- know how music is composed and written down;
- know how music is influenced by the time, place and purpose for which it was written;
- develop the interrelated skills of performing, composing and appreciating music.

2 Teaching and learning style

2.1 At St. Edmund's 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 and to 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 how to work with others to make music and how individuals combine together to make sounds. We also teach them musical notation and how to compose music.

2.2 We recognise that there are children of widely different musical abilities in all classes, so we 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 by:

- setting common 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

3 Additional music teaching

3.1 Children are offered the opportunity to study a musical instrument with peripatetic teachers. Peripatetic music teaching is organised by the Local Education Authority's Music Service and this school has chosen to participate in the programme. These lessons are normally taught to small groups of children who have chosen to learn one of a variety of instruments, such as the guitar, violin, cello or flute. This is in addition to the normal music teaching of the school, and usually takes place during normal lessons from which children are withdrawn for the duration of the instrumental lesson.

4 Music curriculum planning

4.1 Our school uses the national scheme of work for music as the basis for its curriculum planning. We have adapted the national scheme so that the topics that the children study in music build upon prior learning. While there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each teaching unit, the planned progression built into the scheme of work means that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

4.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in music in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the music topics studied in each term during the key stage. The music subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. Sometimes the children study music topics in conjunction with other subjects, particularly at Key Stage 1. Through this programme of study we teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum.

4.3 The medium-term plans, which we have adopted from the national scheme, give details of each unit of work for each term. The music subject leader is responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans. As we have some mixed-age classes, we do the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. In this way we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not have to repeat topics.

4.4 The class teacher writes the daily lesson plans, which list the specific learning objectives of each lesson. The class teacher is responsible for keeping these individual plans, and the class teacher and music subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

Our music planning is geared to three aspects of progress:

- 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.

5 Foundation Stage

- 5.1** We teach music in our Nursery and reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the musical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Music contributes to a child's personal and social development. Counting songs foster a child's mathematical ability and songs from different cultures increase a child's knowledge and understanding of the world.

6 The contribution of music to teaching in other curriculum areas

6.1 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.

6.2 Mathematics

Music contributes to the teaching of mathematics in that 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 is mathematically based.

6.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)

ICT is used in music where appropriate. Children use computer programmes to compose music. They also use ICT in music to enhance their research skills through the Internet and CD ROMs. They listen to music on the Internet and they also record their own compositions to send to other schools electronically. Children improve the presentation of their work through the use of ICT.

6.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Music contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, citizenship and health education. Through the common goal of making music, children learn to work effectively with other people and 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.

6.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Listening, creating or performing 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 **St. Edmund's** 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.

7 Teaching music to children with special needs

- 7.1** We teach music to all children, whatever their ability, in accordance with the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties, and our work in music takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

8 Assessment and recording

- 8.1** Teachers 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 may mark the work and make comments as necessary. At the end of a unit of work, the teacher may also make 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. This information will also be useful when compiling the child's Annual Report for parents.
- 8.2** The music subject leader may keep samples of children's work in a portfolio, which s/he uses to demonstrate the expected level of achievement in music for each age group in the school.

9 Resources

- 9.1** 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.

10 The school choir/orchestra and musical events

- 10.1** We believe that music enriches the lives of people, and so we wish to involve as many children as possible in musical activities. We have a school choir which we encourage all children to join. The choir meets on a weekly basis and, although its primary aim is to enable children to enjoy singing together, it also performs in public on a number of occasions throughout the year, for example at the Christmas carol concert.

11 Monitoring and review

- 11.1** The Headteacher and music subject leader are responsible for the standard of children's work and for the quality of teaching in music. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of music, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The music subject leader is responsible for giving the headteacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. The music subject leader has specially-allocated time for carrying out the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

Signed:

Date:

