

Music Policy



Introduction

At Bridgewater our policies are regularly reviewed. This reflects current practice within school and all related government guidance and statutory requirements.

The importance of music

Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. A high-quality music education should engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their listening skills, self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. As pupils progress, they should develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon. (National Curriculum 2014)

Rationale

A high quality music education is proven to contribute and accelerate children's learning and development and can add value to numerous areas across the curriculum. For example, a well-balanced music curriculum provides opportunities to promote:

- *spiritual development* through developing pupils' awareness of the power of music to take the listener out of the commonplace and helping pupils use music to express and reflect on their own thoughts and feelings.
- *Moral development* through helping pupils exercise responsibility in the choices and decisions they and others make as part of the creative process, valuing their own and others' work and recognising the effect of music (for example, its uses in advertising and propaganda, and its misuse in sound pollution);
- *social development* through helping pupils share music-making and develop a sense of social cohesion, recognising the value of different contributions and their own responsibility to support and enrich the work of others, and recognising the need for different roles in group performance;
- *emotional development* through releasing endorphins and reflecting on how music makes them feel as well as being able to express themselves both physically and verbally. Music can also be linked to helping and promoting children to self-regulate and have a sense of calm and focus.
- *cultural development* through helping pupils recognise how music influences and reflects the way people think and feel, relating music to the time and place in which it was created and performed, and through analysing, evaluating and reflecting on music from contrasting traditions and identifying how and why some aspects change or stay the same.

Music provides opportunities for pupils to develop the key skills of:

- Language development – exposure to music exposes children to a range of vocabulary and enhances spoken language while singing provides children with opportunities to improve dictation and helps children to speak more clearly.
- Reading – children who have a good understanding of beat and pattern can often develop and encourage early reading acquisition and phonetical awareness.
- Self-esteem – music can provide an avenue for all children to be successful and promotes self-confidence (particularly children with SEN that may find learning within core subjects difficult.)
- Listening – music is proven to strengthen listening skills and this can be applied to all other areas of the curriculum and learning as well as promoting and stimulating memory.
- Motor skills – dancing to music can strengthen and develop motor skills as well as developing and encouraging imagination and creativity.
- Communication skills- through presenting music to different audiences and discussing and sharing ideas with others and reflecting whilst learning.
- Mathematics – listening to music and learning to play an instrument can encourage application of number through recognising pattern, sequence, order and rhythmic relationship.
- ICT skills - using a range of ICT to compose and perform music.
- Teamwork skills – music allows multiple opportunities to collaborate with others through taking different roles and recognising and supporting the different contributions of others in groups and ensemble work.
- Self-reflection skills - improving own learning and performance through appraising their own work, recognising the need for perseverance, developing the ability to use time effectively, and increasing their ability to work independently.
- Problem-solving skills - through achieving intentions when composing and presenting performances to different audiences and in different venues.

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 the great composers and musicians;
- Learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence;
- Understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations.

Music teaching and learning at Bridgewater

'Music is our daily medicine which aids far better communication with others and ourselves.' (Evelyn Glennie OBE, percussionist.)

At Bridgewater we are committed to providing a rich range of musical experiences for our children during their time in school and all children in the school have access to the music curriculum through weekly music lessons delivered by music experts and nationally

acclaimed programs 'In Harmony' and 'Music Partnership North'; we also have a vocal leader who delivers signing within school.

All children within our school have the opportunity to play an instrument and develop their skills either through In Harmony or Newcastle Music Service led workshops. Within early years and Y1, music is taught through a range of percussion instruments during free flow and adult led play, and they also take part in In Harmony sessions. In year two, all children learn to play a string or wind instrument through In Harmony. Once the children reach year three, they are given the chance to change their instrument. They can continue with their string instrument or apply their music knowledge to learn to play a wind or brass instrument and continue this choice into year four with the In Harmony team music teachers. The children form an ensemble, essential for teamwork development as they work toward regular performances throughout the year. In year five and six, the children use their existing ensemble skills to form a symphony orchestra: 'Bridgewater Sinfonia' (year five) and 'Bridgewater Symphony Orchestra' (year six).

Furthermore, to develop the children's singing further there are opportunities for the children from year two upwards to sing in our popular choir, which is led by a specialist singing teacher. Our singing teacher also delivers weekly singing lessons in classes across the school and composes a leaving song and music video with our year six children at the end of the academic year.

Children are given a wide range of performance opportunities throughout the year and regularly perform to parents and within our wider community. In order to promote the love of music, children and parents that are engaged with 'In Harmony' also have the opportunity to listen to the Royal Northern Sinfonia orchestra throughout the year.

There are also a range of music opportunities given to the children after school and during school throughout the year by 'In Harmony' and 'Music Partnership North'.

Progression

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, music is an important part of the curriculum and is planned according to objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals. Musical aspects of the children's work contribute to the 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. Children express and communicate their ideas using songs and musical instruments. The children also have a weekly musicality session delivered by 'In Harmony' in order to develop listening, rhythm and singing skills that progress into year one classrooms.

In Key Stage One, building upon musicality lessons all children listen carefully and respond physically to a wide range of music and begin to learn to play a string instrument (violin, viola, or cello) delivered by accredited 'In Harmony' teachers. Children begin by learning how to correctly hold their chosen instrument and begin learning notes and developing their understanding of notation through signs and symbols. They play musical instruments with increasing control and sing a variety of songs from memory, adding accompaniments and creating short compositions with increasing confidence, imagination and control. They enjoy exploring how sounds and silence can create different moods and effects.

Within years three and four, children further develop their knowledge and understanding within music by choosing the instrument they would like to play. Children begin to read notation whilst playing using music stands with increasing confidence, skill, expression and awareness of their own contribution to a group or class performance. They improvise and develop their own musical compositions, in response to a variety of different stimuli with increasing personal involvement, independence and creativity.

Within upper Key Stage Two, children explore their thoughts and feelings through responding physically, intellectually, and emotionally to a variety of music from different eras and cultures. Children are encouraged to continue their own musical discoveries and compositions and can be creative within their small group lessons. They perform as part of a full-scale symphony orchestra and feel the breadth of emotions obtained during such performances either in the community, in school, or at The Glasshouse International Centre for Music. Children in year six can take an ABRSM Grade exam on their instrument if the teacher and child feel ready. In the last term in year six, all children will receive a written report and 'In Harmony' certificate.

Children in Key Stage Two can join the West Newcastle Junior Orchestra, the after-school provision run by 'In Harmony'. This will lead them onto the West Newcastle Symphony Orchestra for when they leave Bridgewater, a community orchestra who perform all across the region. At the orchestra, children will be able to continue accessing music provision through In Harmony if they choose to. Children are also encouraged to join the 'Step Up' programme at The Glasshouse International Centre for Music for which full bursaries are available for Bridgewater children.

The School Choir

Singing lies at the heart of good music teaching and learning, and we have a thriving school choir made up of children from years two to six. The choir is run by a specialist music teacher, which means that our children have access to a high level of expertise in singing teaching. The school choir is timetabled for one practice per week, and they perform in our school productions as well as going carol singing in the local community and old people's homes at Christmas time. They have frequently engaged with Trust and other local schools and business such as the Concordia project and the Newcastle West Trust's Together concert at The Glasshouse International Centre for Music.

Inclusion

At Bridgewater we recognise that there are children of widely differing musical abilities in all classes and we provide learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. This is done in a variety of ways:

- Using specialist music experts to deliver music lessons.
- Repetition within music lessons in order to develop and deepen learning and provide a learning climate in which all children can be successful.
- 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).
- One to one and small group instrumental tuition through 'In Harmony'
- Providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child.
- Using teachers and teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children within their music lessons.

All staff who teach music are made aware of any children who are on the special needs register and have an Individual Support Plan and this is borne in mind when planning for any particular class.

Resources

In Harmony provides an instrument for every child. We also have a range of tuned and untuned instruments in school as well as access to a loan provision from Newcastle Music Service.

We have access to 'Charanga,' the online music scheme, which provides a wealth of resources to use in class, including many music clips from a variety of times and musical traditions for listening and appraising.

A collection of music books including music express is held in the music cupboard located in our music room.

Assessment

Teachers assess children's work in music by making informal judgements as they observe and listen to them during lessons, the whole school progression of skills in music document helps to inform teachers judgements and next steps and ensures that all children make clear progress throughout their primary school life. Teachers also frequently capture children's progress in lessons using the iPad and book creator app. Furthermore, children who have In Harmony sessions work towards ABRSM graded exams in year six.

Monitoring and Review

The quality and effectiveness of music teaching in school will be monitored by the Head Teacher by learning walks and the Music Coordinator by observation of lessons and through music monitoring time allocated each year within school. The work of the coordinator also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of music, being informed about current developments in the subject and attending or informing staff of all relevant training in the subject.

November 2025

Next review: Spring 2027