

# The Music Curriculum at Barton Seagrave Primary School

The aims of the National Curriculum for music ensures 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.

At Barton, music is taught using the Kapow platform. The scheme of work ensures that the National Curriculum aims for Music are met through 5 key strands.

Listening and evaluating

Creating sound

Notation

Improvising and composing

Performing - singing and playing

## **Listening and evaluating**

Listening to music is important to develop an appreciation for music but listening with a critical ear also allows pupils to recognise how music is constructed and how it impacts the listener. Listening and evaluating is therefore the precursor to improvising and composing and performing. By exposing pupils to a diverse range of music from various cultures and historical periods, this strand also fosters an understanding of the history of music.

## **Creating sounds**

Learning technical proficiency with an instrument takes time, and the ability to create and control sound is fundamental to making music. This proficiency requires knowledge of specific instruments, including how to hold and play them, as well as the development of fine (and sometimes gross) motor skills and postural awareness. When it comes to singing, controlling breathing and voice modulation to create dynamic contrasts is crucial.

## **Notation**

To compose and perform longer pieces of music, pupils need to understand notation as a means of communicating musical ideas. They will learn that the position of notes on the staff indicates their pitch, and that the symbols used represent the duration of each note or rest. Our aim is for pupils to be able to 'work out' how to read a simple piece of music from a given starting note by applying the principles of staff notation, rather than reading music by sight or simply memorising musical pieces.

## **Improvising and composing**

Improvisation in music involves creating music spontaneously, without prior planning or written notes. This helps pupils build confidence, express themselves freely, and develop flexibility in their musical thinking. Composition tasks require students to plan and structure their musical ideas. This structured approach strengthens their ability to organise thoughts systematically and often use notation to record their ideas.

## **Performing - singing and playing**

Performing provides pupils with a practical reason to hone and apply their musical skills. It promotes group practice and collaboration, as pupils work together to achieve an aim. This experience not only boosts pupils' confidence and self-esteem but also enhances their awareness of themselves and others within the group.

Children are encouraged to use, discuss and reflect upon the inter-related dimensions of music in their lessons.

### **Inter-related dimensions of music**

The inter-related dimensions of music are:

- Pitch
- Duration  
(including pulse and rhythm)
- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Timbre
- Texture
- Structure
- Appropriate musical notation

## **A spiral curriculum**

Pupils return to the same skills and knowledge again and again during their time at school. Each time a skill or area of knowledge is revisited it, is covered with greater depth. Upon returning to a skill, prior knowledge is utilised so pupils can build upon previous foundations, rather than starting again.

## Early years foundation stage

Term	Unit	Description
Autumn 1	Exploring Sound	Exploring how we can use our voice, bodies and instruments to make sounds, and identifying sounds in the environment.
Autumn 2	Celebration Music	Learning about the music from a range of cultural and religious celebrations, including Diwali, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas.
Spring 1	Music and Movement	Creating simple actions to well-known songs, learning how to move to a beat and expressing feelings and emotions through movement to music.
Spring 2	Musical Stories	Moving to music with instruction, changing movements to match the tempo, pitch or dynamics and learning that music and instruments can convey moods or represent characters.
Summer 1	Transport	Identifying and copying sounds produced by different vehicles using voices, bodies and instruments, demonstrating tempo changes and understanding how symbols can represent sound.
Summer 2	Big Band	Learning about what makes a musical instrument, the four different groups of musical instruments, following a beat using an untuned instrument and performing a practised song.

## Year 1

Term	Unit	Description
Autumn 1	Keeping the pulse (My favourite things)	Exploring the concept of keeping a steady pulse together, children engage in music and movement activities inspired by their favourite things. They participate in different activities, moving to the beat of the music while thinking about and expressing their favourite objects or experiences.
Autumn 2	Tempo (Snail and the Mouse)	Using voices, bodies and instruments to listen and respond to different pieces of music, children learn and perform a rhyme and song with a focus on tempo. They focus on the adventures of the Snail and mouse to understand how tempo can shape a musical story.
Spring 1	Dynamics (Seaside)	Exploring the connections between music, sounds, and environments, children aim to represent the seaside. They use percussion instruments, vocal sounds, and body percussion to create sounds like crashing waves, calling seagulls, and rustling sand. They use voices and instruments to practice varying dynamics—showing a contrast between loud and soft sounds.
Spring 2	Sound patterns (Fairytale)	Examining different favourite fairy tales, children discuss the key moments in these stories. They are guided to clap and read simple sound patterns, matching the different characters of the story. Pupils then use these sound patterns to retell the fairy tale, bringing the story to life through sound and movement.
Summer 1	Pitch (Superheroes)	Identifying high and low notes, children use this knowledge to compose a simple tune that represents a superhero. They then listen to different pitches, recognising the difference between high and low sounds. After identifying

		these notes, pupils experiment with combining different pitches to create a melody that represents their chosen superhero.
Summer 2	Musical symbols (Under the sea)	Diving into the unknown, children explore the depths of the sea through music, movement, musical symbols, and the playing of tuned percussion instruments. They engage in activities that allow them to express the mysterious underwater world, such as using their bodies to mimic the movement of sea creatures. They learn to interpret musical symbols to translate visual cues into sounds and play tuned percussion instruments, to represent the wonders of the underwater world.

## Year 2

Term	Unit	Description
Autumn 1	Call and Response (Animals)	Chanting different call and response sound patterns, children progress to creating their own call and response patterns using untuned percussion instruments. They practise rhythm and pulse as they echo and respond to each other's chants, building a strong sense of musical communication.
Autumn 2	Instruments (Musical storytelling)	Exploring longer pieces of music, children look at how music can tell a story through the use of different 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.
Spring 1	Contrasting dynamics (Space)	Developing knowledge and understanding of contrasting dynamics, children listen to different pieces of music that represent planets and use these musical examples to inspire their own compositions. They explore how varying loud and soft sounds can capture the unique characteristics of two different planets.
Spring 2	Singing (On this island)	Learning songs and creating sounds to represent three contrasting landscapes—seaside, countryside, and city—children explore how music can evoke different environments. They sing folk songs to reflect the different environments and use instruments and body percussion to create soundscapes representing one of the environments.
Summer 1	Structure (Myths and Legends)	Exploring structure through listening, analysing, and performing, children engage with a song about a well-known myth to understand its composition. They listen to identify sections, analyse simple sound patterns, and see how these elements tell the story of the myth. Pupils then perform short sound patterns in a simple structure using instruments and voices.
Summer 2	Pitch (Musical me)	Learning to sing and play the song 'Once a Man Fell in a Well,' children learn to connect the melody to specific pitches. They explore how different notes correspond to different parts of the song, using their instruments to recreate the tune accurately. Additionally, they begin to recognise how simple symbols can represent pitch, developing their ability to read and interpret musical notation.

### Year 3

Term	Unit	Description
Autumn 1	Ballads	Learning what ballads are, how to identify their features and how to convey different emotions when performing... Selecting vocabulary to describe a story, before turning it into lyrics following the structure of a traditional ballad.
Autumn 2	Creating compositions in response to an animation (Mountains)	Listening to music and considering the narrative it represents by paying close attention to the dynamics, pitch and tempo and how they change throughout the piece. Creating original compositions to match an animation.
Spring 1	Developing singing technique (The Vikings)	Developing singing technique; learning to keep in time, musical notation and rhythm, culminating in a group performance of a song with actions.
Spring 2	Pentatonic melodies and composition (Chinese New Year)	Using the story of Chinese New Year as a stimulus: revising key musical terminology, playing and creating pentatonic melodies, composing a piece of music in a group using layered melodies and performing a finished piece.
Summer 1	Jazz	Learning about ragtime style music, traditional jazz music and scat singing. Children create a jazz motif using a swung rhythm and play a jazz version of a nursery rhyme using tuned percussion.
Summer 2	Traditional instruments and improvisation	Introducing to traditional Indian music. Learning about the rag and tal, listening to a range of examples of Indian music, identifying traditional instruments and creating improvisations and performing.

### Year 4

Term	Unit	Description
Autumn 1	Body and tuned percussion	Exploring the rainforest through music whilst being introduced to new musical terms. Using a mixture of body percussion and tuned percussion instruments to create rhythms of the rainforest, layer by layer.
Autumn 2	Changes in pitch, tempo and dynamics	Linking to geography learning, pupils represent different stages of the river through vocal and percussive ostinatos, culminating in a final group performance.
Spring 1	Ukelele NMPAT unit (separate to Kapow)	School teachers work in collaboration with NMPAT staff to deliver a ukelele unit. Children learn to play a range of pieces and perform to parents at the end of the unit.
Spring 2	Ukelele NMPAT unit (separate to Kapow)	School teachers work in collaboration with NMPAT staff to deliver a ukelele unit. Children learn to play a range of pieces and perform to parents at the end of the unit.
Summer 1	Samba and carnival sounds and instruments	Introducing samba and the sights and sounds of the carnival. Learning about the traditional sounds and instruments, syncopated rhythms and composing their samba breaks.
Summer 2	Adapting and transposing motifs (Romans)	Drawing upon their understanding of repeating patterns in music, pupils are introduced to the concept of motifs and adapt and transpose motifs and perform them to their peers.

## Year 5

Term	Unit	Description
Autumn 1	Composition Notation (Ancient Egypt)	Identifying the pitch and rhythm of written notes and experimenting with notating their compositions in different ways to help develop their understanding of staff notation.
Autumn 2	Blues	Identifying the key features and mood of Blues music and its importance and purpose. Learning the 12-bar Blues and the Blues scale and combining these to create an improvised piece with a familiar, repetitive backing.
Spring 1	South and West Africa	Learning 'Shosholozza', a traditional South African song, playing the accompanying chords using tuned percussion and learning to play the djembe and some dance moves.
Spring 2	Composition to represent the festival of colour (Holi festival)	Exploring the associations between music, sounds and colour, composing and, as a class and performing their own musical composition to represent Holi.
Summer 1	Looping and Remixing	Learning how dance music is created, focusing particularly on the use of loops, and learning how to play a well-known song before putting a dance music spin on it to create their own versions.
Summer 2	Musical Theatre	An introduction to musical theatre, learning how singing, acting and dancing can be combined to give an overall performance, exploring how music can be used to tell a story and learning about performance aspects.

## Year 6

Term	Unit	Description
Autumn 1	World War 2 Songs (separate to Kapow)	Learning World War 2 songs alongside their history topic. Children perform their pieces as part of their VE Day celebration event.
Autumn 2	Recorders (separate to Kapow)	Using staff notation, children apply skills involving the inter-related dimensions of music.
Spring 1	Theme and variations (Pop)	Exploring the musical concept of theme and variations and discovering how rhythms can 'translate' onto different instruments
Spring 2	Baroque	Exploring music of the Baroque Period (from 1600-1750). Looking at the great Baroque composers and musicians and at the structural and stylistic features of the music that they wrote and performed.
Summer 1	Ukeleles (separate to Kapow)	Using staff notation, children apply skills involving the inter-related dimensions of music.
Summer 2	Composing and performing a leavers' song	Creating their own leavers' song personal to their experiences as a class; listening to and critiquing well known songs, writing the lyrics, exploring the concept of the four chord backing track and composing melodies.