

MUSIC CURRICULUM DESIGN

"WHERE WORDS
FAIL,
MUSIC SPEAKS"

- HANS CHRISTIAN
ANDERSON



KNOWING



BECOMING



FEELING



Music is a universal language which embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. We want our children to develop their talent as musicians and find a love for both creating and listening to music. We recognise that our mobile pupils arrive with huge variations in the depth of their previous musical education and are often with us for a short time only - as a result we know that a deep mastery of one particular instrument is not likely to be possible to achieve in school. Therefore, through the use of an adapted scheme of learning (Kapow Music), we seek to ensure children gain an understanding of what music is, and the core transferrable knowledge which can be applied to both listening & performing a range of instruments, including the human voice. We want to encourage children to develop their curiosity for global music - teaching children to respect and appreciate the music of all traditions and communities. The scheme revisits key concepts cyclically over the years, enabling pupils who join part way through the key stage to still cover all aspects.

Our pupils build knowledge across four key domains: listening, performing, composing, and the history of music. A fifth aspect - the inter-related dimensions of music - teaches the 'building blocks' of music: pitch, pulse, dynamics, notation etc. These components transect all other domains and are taught within context of these. This is because, before we ask children to undertake complex tasks such as performance, these individual elements need to be taught separately as small steps. If secure with these individual components, automaticity and fluency is developed and cognitive load is reduced. The curriculum therefore returns frequently to core knowledge e.g. by recapping taught vocabulary, concepts or techniques before learning new content which builds on this. Most of this knowledge falls into the categories of declarative knowledge (facts such as keys, chords, musical culture etc.) or procedural knowledge (note names, dynamics, tempo, techniques etc.). By equipping children with such knowledge, they are able to analyse, perform, construct and, importantly, deconstruct music appropriately.

Music begins in the Early years setting and is an integral part of the children's learning journey. Rhyme and rhythm are utilised through the learning of phonics, and maths. Singing and music making opportunities are used to embed learning and develop musical awareness to demonstrate how music can be used to express feelings. These form the building blocks for progression in KS1 and 2, as children develop more formal learning through the Kapow scheme. Children are given opportunities to practise techniques and rehearse them before performing for peers in lessons. Wider opportunities to link music and drama through plays and productions are also provided to children - including collectively (e.g. choirs) or individually (as soloists). Some pupils also take up the opportunities for private lessons with local peripatetic teachers; this is rare however, largely linked to our context and mobility - there are often long waits for the availability of these services. Becoming musically literate at Leeming is not only about performing or writing music however. It is also about becoming a great listener - both technically and expressively. This also offers scope for wider cultural development - studying music from other countries and eras and becoming aware of the social and symbolic functions of music, and pupils' own opinions and responses.

Music, perhaps more than any other subject, has the capacity to move our emotions. The sadness of a minor melodic line, the drama of a great orchestral work or the exhilaration of a rock anthem are all perfect examples of this. Through our music lessons, we help pupils to tap into the ways in which music stirs our heart - either reflecting or even shaping our feelings. We also cover this element in other subjects - such as the place of music in worship (RE), or its calming effects (PSHCE). We know that music can be a vehicle to increase pupils' self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. A child who may never shine in maths or on the football pitch can move an audience to tears with a song. Much of the tacit knowledge of music is reflected in our feelings - our youngest pupils can describe how a song makes them feel, without necessarily having the technical language to describe why this is so. Frequent exposure to music is key to developing this tacit knowledge, and we seek to achieve this encultured learning through discrete lessons as well as embedded practice across school (e.g. assemblies, special event days, performances and concerts).

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

"We care, we respect, we do our best"