

Music at St Margaret's

We deliver an enjoyable, skills-based curriculum, which allows all children to make progress from individual starting points, and to provide an extensive range of enrichment opportunities to further develop a love of music.

Our Curriculum

At St Margaret's, our curriculum is driven by the careful sequencing of knowledge and skills. This structured approach allows children to gradually build key skills, develop conceptual understanding, and grow as confident musicians. We use the Sing Up scheme as the foundation for our curriculum, adapting it to meet the specific needs of our school's context. Sing Up Music is a complete online primary music curriculum resource for nursery to Year 6. It supports a creative and active musical approach to lessons, connecting singing and playing, composing and improvising, listening and appraising. Where necessary, we make further adaptations to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all learners. These adjustments are informed by ongoing monitoring, assessment, and, where applicable, individual support plans and EHCPs.

Music is taught through carefully planned units across the academic year. Each unit is thoughtfully sequenced to help children develop a deep understanding of musical concepts, while also making meaningful connections with other subjects to enrich their learning.

EYFS

Throughout this year, children work towards the Early Learning Goals for 'Being Imaginative and Expressive' within the area, 'Expressive arts and design.'

During the pupils' year in reception they will:

- Listen carefully to rhymes and songs, paying attention to how they sound
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs
- Create collaboratively, sharing ideas, resources and skills
- Combine different movements with ease and fluency
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and try to move in time with music
- Listen attentively, move to and talk about music, expressing their feelings and responses
- Sing in a group or on their own, increasingly matching the pitch and following the melody
- Explore and engage in music making and dance, performing solo or in groups
- Play instruments with increasing control to express their feelings and ideas

Sequencing: Our journey through Music

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, children listen carefully and respond physically to a wide range of different kinds of music. They play musical instruments and sing a variety of songs from memory, adding accompaniment and creating short compositions, with increasing confidence, imagination and control. They explore and enjoy the way sounds and silence can create different moods and effects.

Year 1

In Year 1, children develop key musical skills such as keeping a steady beat, recognising pitch and rhythm, and understanding musical structure. They learn through singing, listening, composing, and playing instruments like tuned percussion. Creative expression is encouraged through movement, drawing, and storytelling. Units such as *Aquarium* introduce children to orchestral textures and mood; *Football* explores rhythm and ostinato through chant and body percussion; *Colonel Hathi's March* brings in character and tempo through playful marching songs; and *Musical Conversations* helps children explore call-and-response and musical dialogue. These units support musical growth while encouraging creativity and confidence.

Year 2

In Year 2, children experience a wide range of musical styles and develop essential skills in singing, rhythm, and composition. They enjoy lively and engaging units such as "Tony Chestnut", which uses body percussion to build coordination and timing, and "Grandma Rap", which introduces rhythm and rhyme through spoken word. In "Swing Along with Shostakovich", pupils explore swing rhythms alongside classical music, gaining an appreciation for the work of composer Dmitri Shostakovich. A particularly creative unit focuses on composing music inspired by birdsong, where children listen to and respond to pieces such as "The Lark Ascending" by Vaughan Williams and "The Cuckoo" by Benjamin Britten. This unit encourages children to explore pitch, dynamics, and texture, using instruments and their voices to mimic and interpret the sounds of nature.

Alongside the SingUp Curriculum, each child has one term of violin tuition within a group of no more than 20 children. This is provided by Durham Music Service.

Key stage 2

During Key Stage 2, children sing songs in parts and play instruments with increasing confidence, skill, expression and awareness of their own contribution to a group or a class performance. They improvise and develop their own compositions in response to a variety of different stimuli, with increasing personal involvement, independence and creativity. They explore their thoughts and feelings through responding physically, intellectually and emotionally to a variety of different kinds of music from different times and cultures. In years 3, 4 and 5, children spend one term learning the ukulele.

Year 3

Year 3 Music begins with a term of ukulele tuition, taught by an independent provider. Children learn basic technique including both individual notes and simple chords. This is then built upon in Year 4 and 5.

In Year 3 of the Sing Up music curriculum, children build on their musical foundations by exploring rhythm, melody, and ensemble work through a variety of engaging units. In "I've Been to Harlem", pupils sing in a round, learning to maintain their part while listening to others, and explore pentatonic melodies and ostinato patterns to enrich their understanding of musical texture and structure. "Chilled Out Clap Rap" continues to develop rhythmic skills through body percussion and spoken word, encouraging creativity and coordination. The unit "Just 3 Notes" focuses on melodic composition using a limited pitch range, helping children to create expressive music with simple tools. In "Samba with Sergio", pupils dive

into the vibrant world of Brazilian samba, learning about percussion instruments, syncopated rhythms, and ensemble performance. These units encourage active listening, improvisation, and performance, helping children grow in confidence and musical fluency while enjoying music from a variety of cultures and traditions.

Year 4

In Year 4, children continue to expand their musical skills through a variety of exciting and challenging units. In "The Pink Panther", pupils explore jazz-inspired melodies and syncopated rhythms, learning to play and perform with character and style. The unit "Global Pentatonics" builds on their Year 3 knowledge of the pentatonic scale, introducing them to how this five-note scale is used in music from around the world, including Chinese, African, and Celtic traditions. This progression helps children understand how musical ideas can be shared across cultures while developing their improvisation and composition skills. In "Favourite Song", children learn to sing and play using chords such as C major, F major, and G major, gaining confidence in harmony and accompaniment. These units encourage creativity, ensemble performance, and musical expression, helping children grow in confidence and musical fluency while enjoying music from a variety of cultures and traditions.

Children spend Spring Term having whole class ukulele lessons which build upon their knowledge from Year 3.

Year 5

In Year 5, children explore a wide range of musical styles and traditions, developing their skills in rhythm, melody, harmony, and ensemble performance. In "What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor?", pupils dive into the world of sea shanties, learning about their historical context and singing in unison with strong, rhythmic phrasing. The unit "Madina Tun Nabi" introduces children to Islamic devotional music, encouraging respectful listening and performance of music from different cultures. In "Building a Groove", pupils experiment with layering rhythms and creating their own grooves using body percussion and instruments, developing a deeper understanding of structure and texture in music. The unit "Época" introduces the passionate and dramatic style of Argentine Tango, allowing children to explore expressive performance and contrasting musical moods. These units help pupils refine their musical skills while broadening their appreciation of global musical traditions and genres.

Children finish Year 5 with a term of ukulele tuition, further building on the skills learnt in Years 3 and 4.

Year 6

In Year 6, children engage with thought-provoking and musically rich units that bring together the musical skills and knowledge they've developed throughout their primary years and challenge their creativity, performance skills, and cultural awareness. In "Hey Mr Miller", pupils explore swing music and vocal harmony, learning to sing in parts and appreciate the style of big band jazz. The unit "Composing for Protest" encourages children to think critically about music as a tool for social change, using lyrics, rhythm, and structure to express powerful messages and emotions. In "Race", pupils reflect on themes of identity and equality through music, exploring how songs can communicate personal and collective experiences. The unit "Ame Sau Vala Tara Bal" introduces children to traditional Gujarati music, expanding their understanding of global musical traditions and encouraging respectful listening and performance. These units consolidate skills in singing, composing, listening, and performing, and represent the culmination of their musical journey through primary school—preparing them for further musical exploration in secondary education and beyond.

	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Year 1	Menu Song	Colonel Hathi's March Magical, musical aquarium	Football	'Dawn' from Sea interludes Musical Conversations	Dancing and Drawing to Nautilus Cat and Mouse	Come dance with me
Year 2	Tony Chestnut	The Carnival of the Animals Composing Music inspired by birdsong	Grandma rap	Orawa Trains	Swing along with Shostakovich	Charlie Chaplin Tańczymy labada
	Little Fingers Violin – each child has 1 term of violin tuition					
Year 3	Whole Class Ukulele		I've been to Harlem	Chilled out clap-rap	Just 3 Notes Samba with Sergio	Fly with the stars
Year 4	This little light of mine	The Pink Panther Composing with colour	Whole class Ukulele		Global pentatonics The horse in motion	Favourite song
Year 5	What shall we do with the drunken sailor?	Why we sing Songwriting	Madina Tun Nabi	Building a groove Epoca	Whole class Ukulele	
Year 6	Hey Mr Miller	Shadows Composing for protest	Dona Nobis Pacem	You to me are everything Twinkle variations	Race Exploring identity through song	Ame sau vala tara bal

Monitoring and Assessment

Assessment in music plays a vital role in nurturing children's creativity, musical understanding, and confidence. Rather than focusing on formal testing, assessment in music often involves observing students' participation, listening skills, performance, and ability to express musical ideas through singing, playing instruments, or movement. Teachers use formative methods such as peer feedback, self-assessment, and reflective discussions to gauge progress and encourage personal growth. By creating a supportive environment where children feel safe to explore and take risks, assessment becomes a tool for celebrating individual achievements and guiding future learning, rather than simply measuring outcomes.

A particularly powerful tool is the use of videoed snapshots of learning—short recordings of students engaged in musical activities throughout the year. These clips provide a rich, visual record of development over time, allowing teachers and pupils to reflect on progress, celebrate achievements, and identify areas for further growth.

At the end of each unit of study, pupils are assessed against the skills taught. Teachers make a summative judgement of each pupil's attainment, recording whether they are working below, at, or above the expected standard in relation to the unit's objectives. This information informs future planning and supports targeted intervention where needed. By the end of the academic year, teachers determine whether pupils have met or not met the expected standards in each area.

Monitoring is carried out by:

- Pupil voice is carried out twice a year to gather feedback on understanding and engagement
- Teacher questionnaires to identify any training needs
- Work scrutiny by subject coordinator which involves analysis of children's work, recorded on SeeSaw