

Cuddington Primary School

Music Essential Learning, Assessment and Skills Progression



CUDDINGTON
Primary School



Respect Collaborate Aspire

Creating Success Together

Music Essential Learning and Assessment Questions

Our Music curriculum is structured around key disciplinary concepts, including **listening, performing, composing, and understanding musical elements such as pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, and structure**. These concepts underpin learning and are revisited from Reception to Year 6, enabling pupils to build knowledge, confidence, and musicality over time.

Through this progression, pupils develop their ability to sing, play instruments, compose, and listen critically to a wide range of music. They explore music from different cultures, genres, and historical periods, developing an understanding of how music is created and performed.

Practical music-making is central, with pupils learning through active participation, applying vocabulary and skills within performance and composition.

By revisiting these concepts and building disciplinary skills, pupils think increasingly like musicians, able to perform, compose, analyse, and evaluate music with confidence and understanding.

Reception		
Essential Learning		
EYFS FRAMEWORK STATEMENTS covered		
Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments, and actions		
Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, nonfiction, rhymes, and poems, and during role play.		
Perform songs, rhymes, poems, and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.		
I've got a grumpy face Row, row, row your boat Reception Nativity	Five fine bumble bees Shake my sillies out.	Down there under the sea It's oh so quiet

I know ... - It is important to have good posture when I sing. - Different ways that I could move to the music to keep in time with the pulse. - A variety of different nursery rhymes To keep in time to a steady beat Play percussion	I know ... - The pulse is the heartbeat of the song. - The names of some of the percussion instruments I have used. - How to use percussion instruments safely and carefully Sing an action song with changes in speed. Play along with percussion instruments. Create a sound story using instruments to represent different animal sounds/movements. Listen to music and respond through movement/dance.	I know ... The names of different instruments and what they sound like. How to listen to sounds and choose an instrument to make a soundscape. I know how to play a soundscape on a percussion instrument using piano (soft) and forte (loud). I know how to sing a song using call and response, singing softly (piano) and loudly (forte). I know how to play an instrument using different dynamics, such as piano and forte.
Assessment Questions		
- Can you show me how we should sit / stand for singing? - What nursery rhymes do you know? Do you know... xx - How could you move to the pulse / beat of the music?	- What is the pulse of the music? - What percussion instruments have you used? How do you use it? - What songs have you been doing this term?	- What instruments do you know? - What kind of sound do they make? - How do you make a loud/quite sound with an instrument?
Essential Vocabulary		
Tier 1: beat, song	Tier 1: instrument, sound, play	Tier 1: loud, quiet, movement
Tier 2:	Tier 2: percussion, shake, tap	Tier 2: tempo, fast, slow
Tier 3:	Tier 3: —	Tier 3: piano, forte, dynamics

Year One		
Essential Learning		
The menu song Christmas Nativity	Football Dawn	Come dance with me Cat and Mouse
I know ... - How to warm up my voice - songs in the musical theatre genre - an untuned percussion instrument - A steady beat helps us sing in tune and with accurate pitch, perform actions and play instruments together. - I can name a folk song and understand that songs have been composed over a period of time. I can accurately copy the leader singing the song Sing songs with a very small range (mi-so), then slightly wider. Include pentatonic songs I can use my voice expressively and creatively by singing songs.	I know ... - A tuned percussion instrument - What a chant is and give an example using rhythm - A piece of music in the classical genre and can name the composer - That different instruments make different sounds and how composers use them to create effects in a piece I can tap a rhythm of my name I can compose a simple word pattern with a melody, creating a repeating ostinato I can keep a simple beat	I know ... - What a rest is in music and what to do while playing - A solo is one person and a duet is with two - The duration of a crotchet(walk) and a quaver (jogging) Listen and copy a rhythm and melody in a call and response song I can control how loud or quiet I play / sing my music (dynamics) Use expression when singing
Assessment Questions		
- How do we warm up our voices? - Can you name an untuned percussion instrument? - Can you name the folk song you have been learning?	- Can you name a tuned percussion instrument? - Can you give me an example of a chant?	- Which is a longer note, crotchet or quaver? - What does a rest mean in music? - What is the difference between a solo and a duet?

• Can you name a song in the musical theatre genre? • How can we make our performance good? •	• Can you name the piece of music in the classical genre that you have been learning? • What instrument might you need to make a...sound.	
Essential Vocabulary		
• Tier 1: voice	• Tier 1: sound, pattern, beat	• Tier 1: solo, rest, note
• Tier 2: pitch, tune	• Tier 2: rhythm, tempo, chant	• Tier 2: duet, rhythm, dynamics
• Tier 3: —	• Tier 3: ostinato, composer	• Tier 3: melody

Year Two		
Essential Learning		
Tony Chestnut Christmas Nativity	Grandma Rap Orawa	Swing a long with Shostakov Tanczmylabada
I know ... • The difference between tuned and untuned percussion instrument. • Make up a call and response pattern and play a melody on tuned percussion instrument. • The importance of a steady beat • What a call and response song is. • The names of some instruments in an orchestra Use my voice expressively and creatively by singing songs.	I know ... • The importance of beat in a song • I know the difference between a quaver (jogging) note and a crotchet (walk) note • I know the notation of a rest and what it means. • The name of instruments in the string family. • That Wojciech Kilar was a composer from Poland in the 1980s. He liked to compose music for films and Orawa (Arva) was the only piece of music he would never change	I know ... • Frederic Chopin was a famous composer from Poland who was famous for his piano music • That folk music is traditional old music passed down for generations – it is often linked to a place of a country. • Dmitri Shostakovich is a famous composer from Russia. • Jazz is a style of music that started in New Orleans in America and includes a lot of improvisation. • Polka and Waltz are types of dances danced to music.

I can improvise a copycat rhythm	Compose rhythms and melodies and using jogging, walk and shh (quaver, crotchet and rests.) Perform actions to songs. Chant and perform a rap rhythmically.	Play an accompaniment on percussion and compose a 4-beat percussion pattern. Recognise a metre of 2 or 3 and use actions in time with the music
Assessment Questions		
• Can you name a tuned and untuned percussion instrument? • What is the importance of a steady beat? • What is a call and response? • Can you name an instrument in an orchestra? • Can you name a progression song that you've been learning? • What makes a good singing performance?	• What different durations of notes do you know? • What do we do when we see a rest in music? • Can you name an instrument in the string family? • Who is Wojciech Kilar?	• Who was Frederic Chopin? • What is folk music? • Who was Dmitri Shostakovich? • What is jazz music? • Can you name any types of Dance linked to your music learning?
Essential Vocabulary		
• Tier 1:	• Tier 1: note, rest, play	• Tier 1: dance, music, move
• Tier 2: melody, improv	• Tier 2: duration, rhythm, structure	• Tier 2: metre, pitch, style
• Tier 3:	• Tier 3: crotchet, quaver, rest	• Tier 3: timbre, orchestra

Year Three		
Essential Learning		
I've been to Harlem Mingulay boat song	Latin Dance From a railway carriage	Fly with the stars Samba with Sergio
I know ... - That a pentatonic scale consists of 5 notes. - The names of some notes (crotchet, quaver, semi-quaver) and their duration alongside time signatures used in songs (3 or 4) - A name a composer from the classical genre. - What a call and response song is and can improvise my own. - That folk songs come from a variety of different palaces around the world and use different instruments Play an accompaniment to a song (tuned or untuned)	I know ... - Cuba is an island. The music is a mix of Spanish melodies and West African rhythms. - There is a variety of genres within Cuban music including: Rumba, Cha-cha-cha, mambo, salsa, bolero and guaguaco. - A crotchet is worth 1 beat. - That 'From a railway carriage' and 'night mail' are pieces of music from the classical genre. Sing the syncopated rhythms in Latin dance and recognise a verse/chorus structure. I can sing a call-and-response song with an invented drone accompaniment. Compose and perform a 4-beat rhythm pattern	I know ... - The names of tuned and untuned percussion instruments used in Samba music. - The duration of crotchets and quavers and make up rhythms using these durations to create accompaniment ideas for the song. - I know that Carnival is important in Brazil and brings different communities together in huge parades. - I know Samba is a style of music from South America. - That Sergio Mender is a Brazilian composer. Sing solo or in a pair in call-and-response style. I can perform as part of a group
Assessment Questions		

• What is a pentatonic scale? • Can you name a type of note that you have learn about? • Can you name a genre of music that you have learned about? • What is a call and response song? Can you give me an example? • Where do folk songs come from?	• What can you tell me about Cuba? • What is the duration of a crotchet? • Can you name me a piece of music in the classical genre?	• Can you name a piece of tuned / untuned percussion? • What is the duration of a crotchet / quaver • What can you tell me about Samba and carnival music?
Essential Vocabulary		
• Tier 1: high	• Tier 1: dance, rhythm, move	Tier 1: drum, beat, group
• Tier 2: pitch, rhythm,	• Tier 2: structure, syncopation, dynamics	• Tier 2: tempo, pulse, percussion
• Tier 3: pentatonic,	• Tier 3: chord	• Tier 3: samba, ensemble

Year Four

Essential Learning

This little light of mine Young Voices	The doot doot song Spain	Global pentatonics Favourite song
I know ... • Features and facts about Gospel music • A name of a piece of music in the gospel genre. • A pentatonic scale • That a bass line is the lowest notes played in music • An instrument used in gospel music Continue to sing a broad range of unison songs pitching the voice accurately and following directions for getting louder (crescendo) and quieter (decrescendo). Improvise on a limited range of pitches on the instrument they are now learning, making use of musical features including smooth (legato) and detached (staccato).	I know ... • A Triad is a chord of 3 notes. • How to sing a swung rhythm lightly and accurately. • Some of the features of Spanish music (flamenco dancing, guitar, rhythmic music) • That the Habanero rhythm originated in Cuba, but I seen in Spanish music • Names of the composer/ inspirations I have studied (Dolly Parton, Jack Johnson,, Lead Belly, Bob Dylan Emmanuel Chabrier) Learn a part on tuned percussion and play as part of a whole-class performance. Play repeating rhythmic patterns. Count musically. Compose a melody.	I know ... • That a pentatonic scale is made from 5 notes. • A crotchet is one beat, a minim is two beats and a quaver is half a beat. • That a major chord sounds happy and minor chord sounds more sad. • Some of the instruments found in typical folk-rock music (Acoustic guitar, drum kit, banjo, double bass, singer, keyboard, harmonica) Sing with expression and a sense of the style of the music. Identify similarities and differences between pieces of music in a folk/folk-rock style. Compare music extracts and understand that the pentatonic scale features in lots of music traditions and cultures. Compose a pentatonic melody.

Assessment Questions

• What does 'Gospel' mean? • Where did Gospel music originate from? • What is a bass line? • Can you name an instrument used in Gospel music?	• What is a triad? • What are some of the features of Spanish music? • Can you describe a swung rhythm.? • What are some of the composers / artist you have looked at this term?	• What is a pentatonic scale? • How many notes are in a triad? • What is the difference between a major and a minor chord? • What instruments might I find in a folk-rock music piece. • What is the duration of a ___ (crotchet minim, quaver)
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Essential Vocabulary

• Tier 1:	• Tier 1: play, pattern, rhythm	• Tier 1: note, sound, music
• Tier 2: harmony, structure, call and response	• Tier 2: chord, phrase, rhythm	• Tier 2: pitch, melody, scale
• Tier 3: pentatonic	• Tier 3: triad, swung rhythm	• Tier 3: major, minor

Year Five

Essential Learning

What shall we do with a drunken sailor Introduction to song writing	Madina tun nabi Epoca	Northwich Sings Kisne Banaaya
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I know ... • A sea shanty needs a steady and strong beat • the difference between a major and a minor triad. • The name of different musical notations (crotchet, quaver, semi quaver) • The names of some songwriters • How to describe the structure of a song. Compose body percussion patterns to accompany a sea shanty. Write these out using rhythm grids. Sing a sea shanty expressively, with accurate pitch and a strong beat. Play bass notes, chords, or rhythms to accompany singing. Understand techniques for creating a song and develop a greater understanding of the song writing process.	I know ... • That Madina tun nabi is an Islamic song. • A drone is a note or a chords that is held continuously throughout most of a piece of music • The argentine tango is a type of music and dance. • That staccato is a short, 'spiky' note and legato is a smooth set of notes. Improvise freely over a drone. Sing a round and accompany themselves with a beat. Play a drone and chords to accompany singing. Listen and copy back simple rhythmic and melodic patterns. • Develop listening skills and an understanding of how different instrumental parts interact (timbre) by responding to each part through movement.	I know ... • That Kisne banaaya is sung in Indian and Pakistan. And is sung in the language of Hindi. • That unison is singing or playing the same notes at the same time • Acapella is unaccompanied singing. Sing a broad range of songs from an extended repertoire with a sense of ensemble and performance. This should include observing phrasing, accurate pitching, and appropriate style Compose a simple accompaniment using tuned instruments. Create and perform my own class arrangement. Sing and play the melody of Kisne banaaya. Sing in a 4-part accompanied with a pitched ostinato (repeating musical pattern)
Assessment Questions		
• What is an important feature of a sea shanty?	• What religion does the song link to? • What is a drone in music?	• Where does your song originate from? • What language is it sung in?

• What is the difference between a major and a minor triad? Which is happy and which is sad? • How long (or what sound or action word) is a crotchet / quaver / semi quaver? • What are the different parts of a song or the structure?	• What is the argentine Tango? How would you describe it? • What is the difference between staccato and legato?	• What does it mean to play in unison? • What is the word to mean singing without instruments or backing? • What makes a good singing performance?
Essential Vocabulary		
• Tier 1: beat, sing, play	• Tier 1: smooth, short, sound	• Tier 1: group, voice, sing
• Tier 2:	• Tier 2: timbre, drone, rhythm	• Tier 2: unison, ensemble, melody
• Tier 3: time signature	• Tier 3: legato, staccato, fusion	• Tier 3: acapella, ostinato, arrangement

Year Six		
Essential Learning		
Hey, Mr Miller Composing for protest	Dona nobis You are everything to me	Exploring identity through song KS2 Production.
I know ... - Instruments that make up a big band (rhythm, brass and woodwind) - What scat singing is. - That a swing rhythm has a bouncy feel. And a march beat is steady. - A song from the jazz genre - That Ethel Smyth was a composer who wrote about rights for women. Compose a protest song. Sing three- and four-part rounds or partner songs, and experiment with positioning singers randomly within the group - i.e. no longer in discrete parts.	I know ... - That Dona nobis Pacem is written in Latin - The texture is the layers in a piece of music: Monophonic – one sound, Homophonic – same sound Polyphonic – many sounds. - An Arpeggio is the notes of a chord played one at a time - A scale is a sequence of notes moving in step up or down. - Some of the features of Disco and soul music Compose an 8-bar piece on percussion, in 3-time and using chords F major and C major. Sing a round accurately and in a legato style. Compare different cover version of a song. Listen and appraise, recognising and identifying key musical features such as rhythm, tempo, timbre, structure, and instruments	I know ... - The different pitch of voices - Soprano Alto, Tenor, Baritone, Bass. - The structure of a pop song. Identify ways songwriters convey meaning: through lyrics, the music, and the performance. Identify different elements of a song's structure. Understand the concept of identity and how you can express that in songs Sing a broad range of songs, including those that involve syncopated rhythms, as part of a choir, with a sense of ensemble and performance. This should include observing rhythm, phrasing, accurate pitching, and appropriate style.
Assessment Questions		
Can you name an instrument in a big band? (rhythm section, brass section, woodwind section)	- What is the texture of the music? - What language is your song written in?	What are the difference pitches of voices you can sing with?

• What is a swing rhythm like? • Can you name a song from the jazz genre? • What can you tell me about Ethel Smyth • Can you describe scat singing?	• What is the difference between monophonic and polyphonic music? • What is an Arpeggio? • What is a Scale? • How would you describe soul and disco music?	• What different parts would you find in a pop song? • What makes a good performance?
Essential Vocabulary		
Tier 1:	• Tier 1: sound, layer, music	Tier 1: voice, perform, song
Tier 2: rhythm, tempo, structure	• Tier 2: texture, melody, harmony	Tier 2: structure, lyrics, style
Tier 3: syncopation, jazz	• Tier 3: monophonic, polyphonic, arpeggio	Tier 3: soprano, alto, tenor, bass

Assessment Approach

Cuddington assesses pupils through performance, composition and discussion within lessons. Staff use this progression grid to judge how well pupils are thinking as musicians, moving from simple participation and description in EYFS/KS1 to confident performance, composition, and evaluation in KS2.

Expected Standard: Pupils can independently demonstrate the 'can' statements for their year group through practical music-making and the accurate use of musical vocabulary.

Skill Area	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Performing (Singing & Playing)	Join in with songs and actions	Sing simple songs with a steady beat	Sing and play with control and expression	Perform with increasing accuracy and confidence	Sing and play as part of a group with awareness of others	Perform in parts with control and expression	Perform confidently in ensembles with accuracy and style
Rhythm & Pulse	Move in time to pulse/beat	Keep a steady beat	Recognise and perform simple rhythms	Read and perform rhythms (crotchets, quavers etc.)	Maintain rhythm in ensemble playing	Use complex rhythms and patterns	Perform and manipulate rhythm with accuracy
Pitch & Melody	Explore high/low sounds	Sing simple pitch patterns	Follow simple melodies	Sing and play melodies accurately	Understand scales and pitch relationships	Use pitch expressively in performance	Perform and compose with accurate pitch and tone
Listening & Appraising	Respond to music through movement	Talk about what they hear	Identify simple features in music	Describe music using vocabulary	Compare different styles and genres	Analyse music using musical elements	Evaluate music using detailed musical understanding
Composing & Improvising	Create simple sound stories	Create simple patterns	Compose simple rhythms/melodies	Improvise and compose short pieces	Structure compositions	Develop compositions with intention	Compose with structure, purpose, and expression
Musical Knowledge	Know basic concepts (beat, instruments)	Know simple musical terms	Understand rhythm, melody, instruments	Understand notation and structure	Understand scales, chords, genres	Understand harmony, texture, structure	Apply knowledge of styles, genres, and theory
Ensemble Skills	Take turns and join in	Perform together in simple groups	Keep in time with others	Play and sing in groups	Maintain own part in ensemble	Perform in harmony/parts	Lead and adapt within ensemble situations
Vocabulary	Use simple words (beat, loud)	Use basic music words	Use subject vocabulary	Use technical vocabulary	Apply accurate musical terminology	Use analytical vocabulary	Use precise evaluative musical vocabulary