

St Mary's Church of England School



Learn. Grow. Achieve. Flourish.

Music Policy

POLICY: Music Policy

APPROVED BY: Headteacher

APPROVED DATE: July 2026

REVIEW DATE: July 2027

This policy is: non-statutory and

This policy is reviewed: annually

Our School Vision

St Mary's school vision is to embrace a Christian like way of living, learning and teaching.

As a Church of England primary school, we value and are ambitious for all children and are committed to providing a positive, happy, safe and stimulating environment for them to enjoy and excel in their learning; grow in confidence, resilience and independence; achieve their full potential and flourish as individuals.

'I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths' (Proverbs 4:11)

Contents Page

Section	Page Number
Intent: Why do we teach Music?	3
Rationale: What will our children achieve?	3
Implementation: How do we teach Music?	3
Impact: How do we assess the learning?	5
Inclusion	6
Opportunities for Live Music and Musical Events	7
Linked Policies	7
Appendices	7

Intent: Why do we teach Music?

'Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.' (Colossians 3:16)

The intention of music at St Mary's is to develop a life-long love of music in children. 'Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity.' (*Ofsted, Striking the right note: the music subject report, 2023*). Music is also an avenue to develop our spirituality. At St Mary's, we value music, knowing the importance that a music education can have on both the musical and SMSC development of a child.

Rationale: What will our children achieve?

With each successive year, children at St Mary's will increasingly become musicians who:

Learn

- To engage in choral singing and group playing.
- Develop the skills of listening attentively to music.
- Understand basic musical concepts and vocabulary.

Grow

- Show increasing control when singing or playing.
- Apply basic musical concepts and vocabulary.

Achieve

- Understand and engage with music in everyday life.
- Identify different instruments, historical periods and musical traditions.

Flourish

- Seek out extra-curricular music opportunities.
- Feel inspired to maintain musical hobbies and/or careers in the future.

Implementation: How do we teach Music?

At St Mary's we follow Kapow Music, which aligns with the National Curriculum.

Kapow Music Curriculum

By using Kapow, we focus on developing musical skills, knowledge and understanding that children need to become confident listeners, performers and composers. The Kapow curriculum introduces children to inter-generational music from all around the world, teaching children the skills to listen respectfully and appreciate the music of different traditions and communities.

Kapow Primary's Music scheme takes a holistic approach to music, in which the individual strands of Music (see [Appendix 1](#)) below are woven together to create engaging and enriching learning experiences:

- Listening and evaluating
- Creating sound
- Notation
- Improvising and composing
- Performing

Each five-lesson unit combines these strands within a cross-curricular topic designed to capture

pupils' imagination and encourage them to explore music enthusiastically. Over the course of the scheme, children will be taught how to sing fluently and expressively and play tuned and untuned instruments accurately and with control, including using glockenspiels. They will learn to recognise, demonstrate and name the interrelated dimensions of music (see [Appendix 2](#)) - pitch, duration, tempo, timbre, structure, texture and dynamics - and use these expressively in their own improvisations and compositions.

Class Teaching

Each Unit of Work comprises the of strands of musical learning which correspond with the National Curriculum for music.

Kapow Primary's Music scheme of work is built around the following five key areas:

- **Listening and evaluating** – expressing musical preferences; exploring the impact of musical ideas; understanding how effects are created by combining musical elements.
- **Creating sound** – exploring the children's vocal skills; developing skills to manipulate sounds on a range of instruments.
- **Notation** – recognising the basics of musical notation; reading simple rhythmic patterns; developing the foundational knowledge of how staff and graphic notations can communicate music.
- **Improvising and composing** – creating and refining the children's own music through improvisation and notation; experimenting with styles and features; employing musical concepts to add interest.
- **Performing** – using voices expressively; developing instrumental control and expression; performing as part of a group.

Weekly Singing Assemblies

'Singing should be the golden thread through these years' (DfE, *A National Plan for Music Education*, 2022). As well as developing our singing skills through whole class teaching, we also

Weekly 20-minute Singing Assemblies for both KS1 and KS2 ensure that pupils develop their vocal potential through the Key Stages. Each assembly ensures the following principles are applied to ensure good singing practice is developed slowly over time (DfE, *Model Music Curriculum*, 2021):

- **Warm-ups** will help pupils use their voices safely, include vocalising, sirening and simple scales, as well as games to energise pupils.
- **Breathing.** Increasing control of airflow will help pupils to sing longer phrases, adjust dynamics, improve tuning and phrase melodies expressively.
- **Posture.** A relaxed but stable stance (soft knees) sets the body up to produce an unforced but well-focused sound. Pupils, especially younger pupils, will often want to move to the music and this helps to facilitate that.
- **Dynamics.** When appropriate, class singing should include a dynamic range as a key expressive tool. Confident singing will often be loud but need not tip over into shouting.
- **Phrasing** gives shape to melodic lines. Through small dynamic changes, it helps emphasise important syllables and create musical interest in the melody.
- **Context.** Discussing the context in which a song is written, or discussing the meaning of challenging words brings the music to life.
- **Vocal health.** Warming up before singing, staying hydrated, resting voices, particularly when there is lots of singing to do, keeping vocal muscles relaxed.

Rocksteady

Since September 2025, St Mary's has been a Rocksteady School. Led by a trained musician, Rocksteady Music offers engaging weekly in-school band lessons developing musical skills with the opportunity to play a range of instruments, including:

- Drums
- Bass guitar
- Electric guitar
- Keyboard
- Vocals

The Rocksteady Programme is for all children aged 4-11 and is proven to progress musicianship, confidence and teamwork skills with no prior experience necessary. These small group lessons are funded by parents. Each term, Rocksteady Music pupils perform for parents, staff and children.

Rocksteady's inclusive approach helps children find a sense of belonging through new friendships and a shared love for music, whilst boosting social skills, wellbeing and confidence. It is accessible for all children.

Choir Club

Our KS2 Choir Club meets weekly afterschool. Choir Club develops children as singers, musicians and resilient members of the local community. Musically, ensemble singing refined children's pitch matching, and active listening skills, whilst boosting working memory through lyric retention. We develop healthy posture, breath management and control, and vocal projection that directly enhances spoken communication.

The choir builds a profound sense of community, school pride, and resilience; performing collectively reduces anxiety and cultivates the confidence necessary for personal and academic growth. They perform throughout the year, singing at churches, community centers, The Curve and at school. They also take part in national events, such as Young Voices, Wembley in 2026.

Peripatetic Music Teaching

Whole-class recorder lessons in Year 2 introduce the children to the joy of playing a real instrument together. At this developmental stage, the recorder is an ideal learning tool because it is small enough for young hands and produces immediate results, keeping engagement high. Weekly lessons are led by a musician from Slough Music Service.

Through playful, structured group sessions, Year 2 students will develop: controlled breathing techniques; begin to read notation, connecting visual symbols (like basic rhythms and simple notes) with physical finger movements; and play collectively as a class. There are also opportunities for children to perform solos. This culminates in an end-of-year performance for parents, staff and children.

Impact: How do we assess the learning?

By following the Kapow curriculum, children will:

EYFS

In Nursery and Reception, music is embedded within continuous provision and topic-based learning. Children learn through rhymes, songs, chants and simple instruments. The focus is on exploring sound, rhythm, and movement, in line with the Early Learning Goals. Music supports communication, language and physical development, while fostering creativity and joy.

Key Stage 1

Pupils are taught to:

- Use their voices expressively through songs, chants, and rhymes.
- Play tuned and untuned instruments.
- Listen attentively to a wide range of music.
- Experiment with, create, and combine sounds using the interrelated dimensions of music.

Key Stage 2

Pupils are taught to:

- Sing and play instruments with accuracy, fluency, control, and expression.
- Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes.
- Listen with attention and recall sounds with increasing accuracy.
- Use and understand staff notation and other musical symbols.
- Appreciate a wide repertoire of music from different times, cultures, and traditions.
- Develop an understanding of the history of music.

Sequence of Teaching

Each Kapow unit is designed to progress through a clear sequence:

1. Recap and review
2. Listening and appraising
3. Warm-up and skill development
4. Focus on singing, playing, improvising, or composing
5. Performance and evaluation

Lesson Structure

- Recap/review previous learning
- Listen and appraise
- Warm up (voice or instruments)
- Focus activity (singing, playing, improvising, composing)
- Performance and reflection

Assessment for Learning

Assessment is continuous and formative. Teachers observe, question, and review pupil performance throughout lessons, addressing misconceptions in the moment. Kapow's assessment guidance supports teachers in identifying next steps and ensuring progression.

Recordings of performances may be used for self- and peer-assessment. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own work and set personal goals.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Evidence is collected through recordings and reviewed by the subject leader.
- Teachers provide formative feedback during lessons.
- The subject leader reviews assessment data and monitors progression across the school.

Inclusion

Music is deeply inclusive for all pupils. Music lessons provide multiple entry points that allow English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils, neurodivergent learners, and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to participate with their peers. We adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, EAL, and those with musical gifts and talents.

Whether through vocal expression, instrumentation or body percussion, every child can achieve immediate success and artistic expression regardless of their reading or writing capability. This flexible, multi-sensory approach ensures that musical achievement is determined solely by creative engagement, fostering a deeply supportive school environment where diverse cultural backgrounds are celebrated, and no child is excluded due to financial or physical constraints.

Opportunities for Live Music and Musical Events

- Y3 and Eton College Community Engagement (ECCE) programme.
- Choir Club (KS2) performing in school, community, regional and national events.
- Weekly whole-school singing assemblies and worship.
- Performances at Harvest, Christmas, Easter, and other celebrations at St Mary's Church.
- Visits from professional musicians and music projects (e.g. Big Smoke Brass).
- Community engagement (e.g. singing at community centers).
- End of year whole-class Y2 Recorder performance.

Linked Policies

We believe it is essential that this policy identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements connected with this policy. This should be read in conjunction with:

- [National curriculum in England: music programmes of study](#)
- [The power of music to change lives: a national plan for music education](#)
- [Model Music Curriculum](#)
- St Mary's Music Curriculum Map (see [Appendix 3](#))

Appendices

1. Strands of music

The English National Curriculum for music is structured around three core pillars (performing, composing, and listening) which break down into five foundational strands:

- **Singing:** Developing vocal control, fluency, and expression through group and solo singing.
- **Playing (Instruments):** Learning to play tuned and untuned instruments musically, both in solo performances and as part of an ensemble.
- **Improvising:** Creating spontaneous musical ideas and responding in the moment using voices and instruments.
- **Composing:** Structuring and organizing musical ideas, often using staff or other musical notations to record them.
- **Listening and Appraising:** Listening with attention to detail, recalling sounds from aural memory, and understanding the history and cultural contexts of various musical traditions and genres.

2. The Interrelated Dimensions of Music

The Music National Curriculum (2014) mentions the 'inter-related dimensions of music'. These are the following elements of practical musicianship:

- **Pulse** – the regular heartbeat of the music; its steady beat.
- **Rhythm** – long and short sounds or patterns that happen over the pulse.
- **Pitch** – high and low sounds.
- **Tempo** – the speed of the music; fast or slow or in-between.
- **Dynamics** – how loud or quiet the music is.
- **Timbre** – all instruments, including voices, have a certain sound quality e.g. the trumpet has a very different sound quality to the violin.
- **Texture** – layers of sound. Layers of sound working together make music very interesting to

listen to.

- **Structure** – every piece of music has a structure e.g. an introduction, verse and chorus ending.
- **Notation** – the link between sound and symbol.

3. St Mary's Curriculum Map

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
At St Mary's, we follow the Kapow music scheme. All musical learning in this scheme is built around the Interrelated Dimensions of Music: pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre, texture, structure and notation. These dimensions are at the centre of all the learning, repeated to allow for depth of learning.						
EYFS	Exploring sound Exploring how to use our voice and bodies to make sounds, experimenting with tempo and dynamic when playing instruments and identifying sounds in the environment.	Celebration music Learning about the music from a range of cultural and religious celebrations, including Diwali, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas.	Music and movement Creating simple actions to songs, learning how to move to a beat and expressing feelings and emotions through movement to music.	Musical stories A unit based on traditional childrens' tales and songs, where pupils learn that music and instruments can be used to convey moods or represent characters.	Transport Using their voices, bodies and instruments to explore different types of transport, identify and mimic transport sounds and interpret and perform a simple score.	Big band Learning about the four different groups of musical instruments, following a beat using an untuned instrument and performing a practised song to a small audience.
Year 1	Keeping the pulse (Theme: My favourite things) In this unit, children explore keeping the pulse together through music and movement, by exploring their favourite things.	Tempo (Theme: Snail and mouse) In this unit, children use bodies and instruments to listen and respond to pieces of music with fast and slow speeds; learn and perform a rhyme and a song focusing on fast and slow.	Dynamics (Theme: Seaside) In this unit, children make links between music, sounds and environments and use percussion, vocal and body sounds to represent the seaside.	Sound patterns (Theme: Fairytales) This unit uses fairytales to introduce children to the concept of sound patterns (rhythms). They explore clapping along to repeated words and phrases, creating rhythmic patterns to tell a familiar fairytale.	Pitch (Theme: Superheroes) This unit helps the children learn to identify high and low notes and to compose a simple tune to represent a superhero.	Musical symbols (Theme: Under the sea) In this unit, the children combine all the musical concepts learned throughout Year 1 for an underwater-themed performance incorporating instrumental, vocal and body sounds.
Y2 Recorders (Slough Music Service teacher)						

Year 3	Ballads Children learn what ballads are, how to identify their features and how to convey different emotions when performing them. Using an animation as inspiration, children carefully select vocabulary to describe the story, before turning them into lyrics by incorporating rhyming words and following the structure of a traditional ballad.	Creating compositions in response to an animation (Theme: Mountains) Learning to tell stories through music. Listening to music and considering the narrative it could represent. Paying close attention to the dynamics, pitch and tempo and how they change. Creating original compositions to match an animation, building up layers of texture.	Developing singing technique (Theme: the Vikings) The children develop their singing technique. Learning to keep in time and work on musical notation and rhythm, the unit finishes with a group performance of a song with actions.	Pentatonic melodies and composition (Theme: Chinese New Year) Revising key musical terminology, playing and creating pentatonic melodies, composing a piece of music using layered melodies.	Jazz Learning about ragtime style music, traditional jazz and scat singing. Children create a jazz motif using a swung rhythm.	Traditional instruments and improvisation (Theme: India) Children listen to a range of rag and tal music, identifying traditional instruments as well as creating their own improvisations and performing as a class.
Year 4	Body and tuned percussion (Theme: Rainforests) A topic of discovery; children will explore the rainforest through music and be introduced to new musical terms. They will also use a mixture of body percussion and tuned percussion instruments as the children create their own rhythms of the rainforest, layer by layer.	Rock and roll Learning about the origin and features of rock and roll music, pupils learn how to play the Hand Jive and Rock Around the Clock, looking specifically at a walking bass line, before performing a piece as a class.	Changes in pitch, tempo and dynamics (Theme: Rivers) Learning to listen to changes in pitch, tempo and dynamics and relate it to something tangible and familiar. Linking to their geography learning, the pupils represent different stages of the river through vocal and percussive ostinatos, culminating in a final group performance.	Haiku, music and performance (Theme: Hanami festival) This Japanese inspired topic looks at the springtime festival of Hanami, celebrating the fleeting beauty of spring flowers. Children use descriptive vocabulary to create a Haiku, put it to music and add percussion sound effects to bring all elements together before a final, group performance.	Samba and carnival sounds and instruments (Theme: South America) Getting a feel for the music and culture of South America, children are introduced to samba and the sights and sounds of the carnival.	Adapting and transposing motifs (Theme: Romans) Drawing upon their understanding of repeating patterns in music, pupils are introduced to the concept of motifs.
Year 5	Composition notation (Theme: Ancient Egypt) Based on the theme of Ancient Egypt, children learn to identify the pitch and rhythm of written notes and experiment with notating their compositions, developing their understanding of staff notation.	Blues Children are introduced to this famous genre of music and its history, and learn to identify the key features and mood of Blues music and its importance and purpose. They also get to grips with the 12-bar Blues and the Blues scale, and combine these to create an improvised piece with a familiar, repetitive backing.	South and West Africa Children learn 'Shosholozza', a traditional South African song, play the accompanying chords using tuned percussion and learn to play the djembe. They will also learn a traditional West African drum and add some dance moves ready to perform the song in its entirety.	Composition to represent the festival of colour (Theme: Holi festival) Exploring the associations between music, sounds and colour; composing and performing their own musical composition to represent Holi, the Hindu festival of colour that celebrates the beginning of spring and the triumph over good and evil.	Looping and remixing In this engaging topic, children learn about how dance music is created, focusing particularly on the use of loops.	Musical theatre Children learn how singing, acting, and dancing combine to create an overall performance.
Year 6	Dynamics, pitch and texture (Theme: Coast) Exploring 'Fingal's Cave' by Felix Mendelssohn and further developing improvisation and composition skills.	Songs of World War 2 Developing greater accuracy in pitch and control; identifying pitches within an octave when singing and using knowledge of pitch to develop confidence when singing in parts.	Film music Exploring and identifying the characteristics of film music; creating a composition and graphic score to perform alongside a film.	Theme and variations (Theme: Pop Art) Children explore the musical concept of theme and variations and discover how rhythms can 'translate' onto different instruments.	Baroque In the unit, children explore the music and composers of the Baroque Period and investigate the structural and stylistic features of their work.	Composing and performing a Leavers' song Children spend the topic creating their very own leavers' song personal to their experiences as a class.