



Music Curriculum Overview

Our department's vision

At Reach, our all-through music curriculum strives to harness a love and understanding of music in all children. We want every child to feel creative, confident and inspired to communicate in the international language of music. This will allow them to be well-rounded individuals, who have a range of high-quality vocational skills and experiences to draw upon in the future.

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What knowledge have we selected in our curriculum and why?

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1. Knowledge-rich:

Our body of knowledge is based on the three pillars of progression: technical, constructive and expressive. Technical comprises performance and music notation, starting with an understanding of rhythm and melody, and developing into sight reading. Constructive comprises musical elements such as tempo, dynamics, structure, pitch, texture and harmony. It also refers to composing which is where pupils are asked to improvise and create original pieces of music based on their previous knowledge. Expressive refers to the technique, particularly the skills required to play a specific instrument. Part of Expressive is creative output which gives pupils the chance to explore and experiment, whilst refining their listening and aural skills.

The music curriculum is organised into projects, where each unit is carefully designed to include specific genres and their unique features. Each lesson includes a Do Now, a Listening Activity with pre-taught vocab, Theory, a Practical element and Singing. When we present pupils with a new genre, artist or song, we expose them to the relevant history of that particular type of music, linking it to the technology used at that time, as well as relevant geographical/historical events.

In Secondary, pupils use booklets to gain a more thorough understanding of the historical context and integrate musical theory with practice. The booklets also expose children to the more technical aspects of music and technology allowing them to build up the skills used to compose, perform and record an original piece of music.

2. Backwards planned:

Our curriculum is backwards planned to promote and ensure pathways to GCSE and A-level study remain open. By progressing through our curriculum, pupils can become proficient musicians capable of demonstrating their understanding of the relationship between theory and practice independently.

We have adapted our units to build upon previous knowledge, ensuring that musical elements are explored incrementally to provide a solid understanding of how melody, harmony and rhythm come together to create music.

We teach primary pupils the musicianship skills needed to perform and compose as part of an ensemble while starting to explore their individuality and unique expression. We continue to build on the fundamental pillars of progression to enable secondary students to express themselves as solo artists, whether they choose to be performers or more focused on production and songwriting.

3. Carefully resourced:

We carefully balance the need to mix the practical use of instruments with the use of Music technology, with particular attention to ensuring pupils learn using industry-standard tools and resources. Our units are adapted for each cohort: they build on the National Curriculum specification, they are influenced by the Ark Music Programme, and they build to use DAW software such as GarageBand, which is specifically designed to enrich the learning experience of all of our pupils.

Teachers are continuously trained and aligned with the need to keep a consistent vocabulary and approach throughout the curriculum. At Reach, oracy is of paramount importance. Therefore, all lessons include the teaching of tier 3 vocabulary where teachers specifically select key terminology and provide continuous practice and repetition of the definitions. We provide students with 100% knowledge organisers to enable them to prepare, recall, and revise the unit content.

4. Aspirational, inclusive and diverse:

Our music curriculum has high, aspirational expectations baked in: we expect all of our pupils to learn and build fluency in musical notation, to recall key contextual knowledge about the Music we learn about, and to perform increasingly complex pieces of music. We know that the opportunity to experience music as a unique communication tool

meets the needs of our pupils, given our specific context. A range of pedagogical tools (visualisers, Macs, recordings) are used in conjunction with a selection of instruments that give each pupil the chance to practice and experience creative process in controlled circumstances.

Teachers deliver carefully planned lessons that take into account the range of pupils' previous musical experience and knowledge, supporting all pupils in gaining the knowledge necessary to become musical performers. Similarly, the progressive nature of the curriculum challenges all children to excel and inspire them to become confident musicians without compromising on creativity and individuality.

We pay special attention to the fundamental aspect of cultural diversity. Units are delivered focusing on a rich variety of musical genres, styles and traditions and the knowledge needed to appreciate music in all its forms. Our values are supported by the many activities associated with the curriculum, especially Show Courage and Have Fun. Students are encouraged to participate and perform in front of increasingly wider audiences to find confidence and joy in self-expression. This is complemented by opportunities to experience and perform music in all its forms, by participating in singing and music assemblies, enrichment and shows.

5. Rigorously assessed:

Our assessment is made up of three parts: responsive teaching, retrieval practice and formal assessment.

In lessons, we are responsive to in-lesson retrieval during the Do Now and to our questioning/observations of pupils in lessons. Feedback is highest leverage at the point of error; we intend to uncover misconceptions and address them.

We use regular, low-stakes quizzing of key knowledge in every lesson; allowing us to seek gaps in prior knowledge and plug them. Data from these assessments allows us to adjust the content we ensure pupils retrieve and adapt our centralised resources to reflect the needs of the cohort and best guide them through our ambitious curriculum.

At the end of each unit, we have formal assessments to gather essential data that is used to discuss the progress of pupils and reflect on the design and delivery of our curriculum.



6. Regularly evaluated and reflected upon.

Through practices like subject management, designated department meeting periods, and Pupil Progress Meetings following official assessments, we consistently review and evaluate our curriculum. This includes assessing its design, the resources supporting it, its execution, and the outcomes it produces. If we see areas of improvement, we either make immediate alterations or make a note for adjustments in the upcoming academic year.

Moreover, our internal coaching system allows us to maintain ongoing reflection. Within this system, each teacher is given a weekly action step aimed at refining their curriculum delivery.

Subject leads and directors of departments use drop-ins to ensure the delivery of consistent excellent teaching, high-quality lesson plans, and feedback on any reflection in line management meetings to ensure the achievement of our music vision. Alongside this, we deliver CPDs led by experts to align objectives and implementations in the curriculum for all key stages.

We recognise the importance of keeping students at the centre of everything we do and to achieve that we run Pupil Voice every term and gather QLA to evaluate the success of our approach.



Curriculum Plans

These are the primary projects and Units that alternate on a half-term basis throughout the academic year:

Year 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Nativity2. Traditional Western Music3. Music from the continent of Africa
Year 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pop Music2. Blues music3. Country and Western
Year 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gospel2. Pop Music3. Musical theatre
Year 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pop Music2. Music from the Continent of Africa3. Music from the Continent of South America
Year 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Multiple Genres -YoungVoices2. Multiple Genres -YoungVoices3. Chosen by class -YoungVoices
Year 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reggae2. Rock3. Hip Hop

Year 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Body percussions: Bring Me Little Water Sylvie2. Keyboard skills (Pentatonic): Amazing Grace
Year 8	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Djembe: KuKu2. Hip Hop (Music Tech): Original Composition
Year 9	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Keyboard Skills: Pop2. Film/Game Music: Original Composition



Curriculum Maps

Secondary Curriculum	
Year 7	
Body Percussions	Keyboard Skills (Pentatonic)
<p>Skill progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singing: Pupils can sing with a secure sense of pitch and melodic shape. Pupils can perform as a whole class or small ensemble, maintaining their part and listening to each other • Instrument:: Pupils can play 4 beat patterns leading to more complex 2 bar rhythms using both beatboxing and body percussion 	<p>Skill progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singing: Pupils can pentatonic melodies with a developing sense of pitch and using dynamics to maintain the appropriate musical shape • Instrument:: Pupils can play pentatonic melodies using two hands with accuracy, fluency and expression
Year 8	
Djembe	Hip Hop (Music Tech)
<p>Skill progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instrument: Pupils can play a variety of 'response phrases' and ostinati on the djembe (bass, tone and slap) with fluency and accuracy. Perform with increasing confidence and control. • Composing: Develop and refine new phrases/rhythms to replace those found in each section of the study piece combining rhythm and sonority in interesting ways 	<p>Skill progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singing: Pupils can add a rap part to the existing backing track • Instrument:: Pupils can compose a backing track with drum, bass and chord progression and record it using a DAW
Year 9	
Keyboard Skills - Pop	Film / Game Music
<p>Skill progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singing: Pupils can more complex melodies with a developed sense of pitch and use of dynamics to maintain 	<p>Skill progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording: Pupils can use a variety of techniques to capture different ideas that allow them to portray a specific



<p>the appropriate musical shape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Instrument:: Pupils can play melodies using two hands and more complex scales with accuracy, fluency and expression	<p>mood. Pupils can structure musical ideas according to the narrative and use of technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Composing: Pupils can compose an underscore that reflects the mood/atmosphere of a film clip
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