Progression of Skills: Music

By the end of Key Stage 1, children will have developed a secure foundation in musical knowledge and skills, becoming confident, creative and enthusiastic young musicians. They will explore and create simple musical patterns, recognise and describe pitch, tempo and dynamics, and develop their ability to sing, listen and perform. Children will begin to use musical vocabulary to express their ideas, preparing them to compose, perform and appreciate music in greater depth in Key Stage 2.

By the end of Key Stage 2, children will have developed secure musical knowledge and skills, becoming confident, creative and independent musicians. They will compose, perform and improvise music using a range of instruments, musical notation and techniques. Children will confidently use musical vocabulary to evaluate performances, make informed musical judgements and refine their compositions, preparing them to appreciate, create and perform music with greater independence at secondary school.

	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Autumn	Me My Stories	My Musical Heartbeat and Nativity	Pulse, Rhythm and Pitch	Writing Music Down And Playing in a Band	Whole Class Ensemble Teaching from Music Service -Djembe	Melody and Harmony in Music and Singing and Playing in Different styles.	Music and Technology and Develop Ensemble skills
Spring	Everyone Our World	Exploring Sounds and Learning to Listen	Inventing a Musical Story and Recognising Different Sounds.	Compose using your imagination and Exploring Musical Styles	Whole Class Ensemble Teaching from Music Service -Ukelele	Composing and Chords and Enjoying different styles.	Creative Composition and Musical Styles
Summer	Big Bear Funk	Having Fun with Improvisation and Performing.	Exploring improvisation and Performing	Enjoying improvisation and Performing	Whole Class Ensemble Teaching from Music Service -Vocals	Freedom to Improvise Leavers Production	Improvise with Confidence Leavers Production

1. Singing and vocal development

Skill strand	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Singing songs and chants	I can join in with familiar songs, rhymes and actions.	I can sing familiar songs and chants, following the group.	I can sing a wider range of songs and singing games with clear words.	I can sing songs with an accurate melodic shape and steady pulse.	I can sing more complex songs with increasingly accurate pitch and rhythm.	I can sing confidently with clear diction, expression and phrasing.	I can sing accurately and expressively, including a harmony or independent part.
Pitch, melody and intonation	I can copy simple high and low vocal sounds.	I can copy short sung phrases and recognise high and low notes.	I can follow the rise and fall of a simple melody.	I can follow a melody's contour and sing with growing accuracy.	I can keep my pitch when singing alongside another part.	I can sing longer melodic phrases with reliable intonation.	I can maintain a harmony line while listening to another melody.
Pulse, rhythm and vocal control	I can move or clap along to a steady beat.	I can sing or chant with a shared steady beat.	I can keep the pulse during a singing game and change speed when directed.	I can keep my part in time with a group and respond to cues.	I can maintain a rhythmic vocal part against another pattern.	I can control dynamics, breathing and phrasing to suit a song.	I can control dynamics and phrasing while maintaining an independent part.
Ensemble and rounds	I can sing with other children and take turns.	I can join in a class performance and start and stop together.	I can lead or teach a simple singing game to others.	I can sing confidently in a group and listen to other performers.	I can sustain my own part within a layered vocal performance.	I can hold a part in a two-part round and recognise its harmonies.	I can sing a two-part round or harmony independently and balance with the group.

2. Playing instruments and performance

Skill strand	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Exploring instruments and timbre	I can explore the different sounds instruments make.	I can select and play tuned and untuned instruments to make different sounds.	I can choose instruments to create an intended sound or effect.	I can use tuned and untuned percussion with increasing accuracy.	I can select instruments and techniques for a particular musical effect.	I can use timbre deliberately to support a musical arrangement.	I can choose and control instrumental sounds to achieve a clear musical intention.
Pulse and rhythmic accuracy	I can tap or shake an instrument in time with music.	I can play a simple steady beat and follow start/stop signals.	I can repeat a short rhythm and set a tempo for others.	I can perform repeated rhythmic patterns with a steady pulse.	I can maintain a rhythmic pattern alongside different parts.	I can play an accompaniment accurately with rhythmic control.	I can perform more complex rhythmic parts with accuracy and confidence.
Melody and tuned instruments	I can explore different pitched sounds.	I can play a short sequence of pitched sounds with support.	I can copy and play simple melodic patterns on tuned percussion.	I can play a simple melody using a small set of notes.	I can perform melodies and accompaniments using a pentatonic scale.	I can play melodic parts with increasing accuracy and fluency.	I can play a more demanding melodic part with rhythmic and dynamic control.
Ensemble and accompaniment	I can play alongside others and respond to a signal.	I can play with others and follow simple musical instructions.	I can perform a short group piece and help decide how it should sound.	I can add a simple drone or ostinato to accompany a melody.	I can combine instrumental layers and keep my part steady.	I can sustain a drone or melodic ostinato beneath singing.	I can perform an independent instrumental part and balance it with the ensemble.
Performance expression	I can show loud, quiet, fast and slow through music-making.	I can play loudly or quietly and change tempo when asked.	I can select dynamics and tempo to suit a performance.	I can perform with control and awareness of others.	I can shape a performance through changes in dynamics and texture.	I can perform fluently with attention to mood, phrasing and occasion.	I can perform confidently, expressively and with sensitivity to the audience.

3. Listening and appraising

Skill strand	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Focused listening and recall	I can listen to short pieces and say what I notice.	I can listen carefully and identify changes in sound.	I can remember and describe sounds or patterns I have heard.	I can recall simple rhythmic and melodic patterns by ear.	I can listen for separate musical layers and how they fit together.	I can recognise recurring patterns and changes in musical texture.	I can listen critically and explain how parts combine to create an effect.
Inter-related dimensions	I can describe music as loud, quiet, fast, slow, high or low.	I can identify pulse, tempo and changes in volume or pitch.	I can describe duration, timbre, tempo and dynamics in familiar music.	I can recognise how pitch, pulse, rhythm and dynamics affect a piece.	I can describe how texture, structure and timbre shape music.	I can analyse musical features including repeated rhythmic patterns.	I can explain how musical dimensions work together to convey meaning.
Musical styles and traditions	I can enjoy songs and music from different places.	I can listen to different songs and say what I like.	I can notice similarities and differences between musical examples.	I can describe features of music from different traditions.	I can compare musical styles and identify distinctive features.	I can recognise how context or genre influences musical choices.	I can discuss how musical traditions and historical or social context shape music.
Expressing responses	I can respond to music through movement, words or pictures.	I can describe how a piece makes me feel.	I can explain a preference using simple musical words.	I can describe the mood created by particular musical choices.	I can give reasons for how a piece creates its intended effect.	I can support musical opinions with examples I hear.	I can evaluate music using precise vocabulary and evidence.

4. Creating, improvising and composing

Skill strand	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Exploring and selecting sounds	I can experiment with sounds and choose my favourites.	I can choose and order sounds to represent an idea or image.	I can combine sounds and change them for a particular effect.	I can select sounds and sound effects to tell a story.	I can combine contrasting timbres and layers for a purpose.	I can choose sounds and structures to communicate an intention.	I can select and organise sounds sensitively for an intended audience and effect.
Improvisation	I can make up short sound patterns with my voice or instruments.	I can invent a short response to a musical idea.	I can improvise a short rhythmic pattern over a steady pulse.	I can improvise short phrases using a limited set of notes.	I can improvise using rhythmic and melodic ideas within a group.	I can vary an improvised idea through changes in pitch or rhythm.	I can improvise confidently while responding to the music around me.
Rhythm and duration composition	I can make a pattern of long and short sounds.	I can create a short sequence of long and short sounds.	I can create and repeat rhythmic patterns with a strong pulse.	I can combine repeated rhythmic patterns into a short piece.	I can compose longer rhythms using rests and several layers.	I can create and refine contrasting rhythmic patterns.	I can compose complex layered patterns and maintain my own part.
Melody and song-writing	I can make up a simple sung phrase.	I can invent a short tune or vocal response.	I can make up a simple singing game with words and actions.	I can compose a short melody using a limited note set.	I can use notes from a pentatonic scale to create a melody or song.	I can compose a melody that fits lyrics and communicate their meaning.	I can compose and refine a song in which lyrics, melody and structure work together.
Structure, texture and arrangement	I can put two sound ideas together.	I can organise sounds into a beginning, middle and end.	I can arrange repeated patterns and contrasts in a group piece.	I can combine melody with a drone or ostinato.	I can structure a longer piece using several layers of sound.	I can organise sound sequences and accompaniments to create contrast.	I can arrange multiple musical layers with a deliberate structure and balance.
Recording, refining and technology	I can show my musical idea through a picture or movement.	I can use pictures or symbols to remember my sound sequence.	I can record a short composition with simple symbols and suggest changes.	I can record musical ideas and improve them after listening.	I can record a composition and refine it using feedback.	I can use available recording or digital tools to develop musical ideas.	I can evaluate, edit and present a composition using appropriate notation or technology.

5. Understanding musical knowledge and notation

Skill strand	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Pulse, rhythm and pitch vocabulary	I can use words such as beat, fast, slow, high and low.	I can identify a steady pulse and a simple rhythm.	I can explain the difference between pulse and rhythm.	I can identify melodic patterns and repeated rhythmic ideas.	I can use musical vocabulary to explain rhythm, pitch and tempo.	I can explain how rhythmic and melodic patterns shape a piece.	I can use precise vocabulary to explain complex musical relationships.
Graphic and staff notation	I can make marks or pictures to represent sounds.	I can follow simple pictures or symbols for musical sounds.	I can use graphic symbols to record and play a short pattern.	I can begin to follow simple staff notation alongside graphic scores.	I can read and use a limited range of staff notation for familiar patterns.	I can use staff and other notation to support performance and composition.	I can read, interpret and use suitable notation to perform and record musical ideas.
Musical history and context	I can recognise that people make music in different ways.	I can talk about music and musicians I have heard.	I can compare music by different performers or makers.	I can recognise that music comes from different times and traditions.	I can describe how musical styles relate to people and places.	I can explain some historical or cultural influences on music.	I can discuss how lyrics and musical choices reflect social and cultural context.
Reviewing and improving	I can say what I enjoyed about making music.	I can say what went well in a musical activity.	I can suggest one way to improve a performance or composition.	I can listen back and make a change to improve my work.	I can explain how changes improve the intended effect.	I can use feedback to refine my music and explain my choices.	I can evaluate and improve music independently, justifying changes with musical vocabulary.