

# Music at St Monica's

"Music happens to be an art form that transcends language." –  
Herbie Hancock



## Music

At St Monica's, all our children are musicians, and music is an integral part of school life. Children actively participate in a range of musical activities and experiences with increasing levels of engagement, enjoyment and confidence. They develop the musical skills of singing, playing tuned and untuned instruments, improvising and composing, and listening/responding to music.

Through music they also develop transferable skills such as team work, leadership, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, and presentation/performance skills. We want their experiences at St Monica's to stay with them throughout their lives.

Children benefit from weekly practical music lessons taught by a specialist music teacher. Lessons cover the National Curriculum for music and, where possible, support learning in other curriculum areas, while also preparing children for festivals and performances. Lessons develop the musical skills of performing, listening/aural skills, composing/creating and learning about the inter-related dimensions of music whilst experiencing/learning about a range of musical styles and genres. High levels of engagement and active participation are a vital part of lessons where children experience a range of musical styles and traditions. Children work individually, in pairs, and later in small groups using voices, body percussion and tuned/untuned instruments.

From year 1 onwards, children can learn the piano or violin through 1-to-1 lessons with EMS. In KS2, the range of instruments extends to viola, cello, double bass, guitar, ukulele, recorder, flute, clarinet, saxophone & voice. In lower KS2, all children have a chance to learn the descant recorder. In upper KS2, children are encouraged to use instruments they are learning to play in creative/composing tasks. Other instruments may be available depending on demand and availability.

We believe in a holistic approach where skills are explored and revisited throughout primary school, revising and building on previous experiences. Musical concepts need to be experienced and regularly practised, not "taught" in isolation. Progress is evident in terms of children attempting/tackling more complex tasks and also improving/consolidating skills by repeating simpler tasks. This all contributes to good musical practice and a deeper understanding of music as a whole – we believe this works best when children are immersed in music as active participants, rather than passive learners.

### During Foundation Stage at St Monica's

We develop aspects of Musical Learning and Development such as:

- **Hearing and Listening**
- **Vocalising and Singing**
- **Moving and Dancing**
- **Exploring and Playing**

Music for EYFS students has a primary focus on singing and movement, developing the student's listening abilities, physical co-ordination, motor-neurone skills, memory, aural awareness and singing skills. Each student will lead the class in singing, and all will learn to be led by their peers. Songs are linked to class topics when appropriate. Children have access to a range of instruments so that they can explore sounds and rhythms.

### During Key Stage 1 at St Monica's

We build upon the skills developed during EYFS, a greater emphasis is placed on playing and keeping in time, both individually and in groups.

Pupils are taught to:

- use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes
- play tuned and untuned instruments musically, alongside reading and composing basic notation
- listen with concentration and understanding to a range of high-quality live and recorded music
- experiment with, create, select and combine sounds using the inter-related dimensions of music
- identify the different sections of the orchestra, and the various instruments that make up each section

### During Key Stage 2 at St Monica's

Pupils are taught to sing and play musically with increasing confidence and control. They continue to develop an understanding of musical composition, organising and manipulating ideas within musical structures and reproducing sounds from aural memory.

Pupils are taught to:

- play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression
- improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the inter-related dimensions of music
- listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory
- use and understand staff and other musical notations
- appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians
- develop an understanding of the history of music

<p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's curriculum map shows the units to be covered each term.</li> <li>• There is a medium-term plan for each unit of work.</li> <li>• Plans are annotated and adapted to show how those with additional educational needs will access the content.</li> <li>• More able children are planned for so that they can deepen knowledge and enhance skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is delivered to each class by a specialist music teacher, for a minimum of one hour per week.</li> <li>• Each year group has a weekly singing session, either as a whole school or split into Key Stages.</li> <li>• Workshops are also provided to each year group throughout the year.</li> </ul> <p>During music lessons, pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians</li> <li>• learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others</li> <li>• have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument</li> <li>• use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence</li> <li>• understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated by learning about: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feedback</b></p> <p>Because children display ability in music in a variety of ways, the assessment follows a variety of different methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral feedback: The teacher will informally assess throughout any creation or rehearsal process, giving oral feedback and instant methods of ways to improve/enhance performance.</li> <li>• Pupils are also assessed individually and when performing as part of an ensemble – playing or singing is evidence of achievement.</li> <li>• Students are encouraged to peer and self-assess: the evidence is in the critical listening of each student and the audience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Resourcing and display</b></p> <p>The Infant hall is used for most music lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display is kept up to date and relevant to themes, displaying key vocabulary and concepts that are being taught in Music.</li> <li>• A range of famous composers to be displayed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is well equipped with a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments for use in class lessons.</li> <li>• Visual resources such as lyrics and various forms of notation are displayed on the projector (and printed out for those with specific educational needs) throughout music lessons.</li> <li>• We currently use Sparkyard for a wide repertoire of vocal music, and BBC "10 Pieces" supports learning about classical music.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p><b>Formative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AFL is used within each lesson to establish next steps for pupils.</li> <li>• Performance opportunities are used as a way for children to present their work and for teachers to assess.</li> <li>• Children are assessed individually against the success criteria for the modules taught on an annual basis (e.g. working above/at/below the expected level) and data on each child is made available to class teachers.</li> </ul> <p><b>EYFS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and key workers make observations regarding the pupils' development in this subject.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <p>Monitoring is undertaken by SLT during the school year. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning walks during music lessons</li> <li>• discussions with pupils about what they have learnt</li> </ul>