



European Schools

Office of the Secretary-General of the Board of Governors

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Original

Final version

Music syllabus (primary cycle)

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MUSIC EDUCATION SYLLABUS

Purpose

Music plays a central role in the culture of every country. The musical heritage of each country includes traditional folksongs, dances, particular composers and styles and is also a living tradition that is reflected in its modern music. Music gives children an appreciation of their own culture and an insight into the culture of others.

Music is accessible to children at all times and in every place. From their earliest years children hear music in their homes and in their surroundings. As they grow older, they come across music in many contexts. Music plays a very important part in their nursery education and by the time they come to primary school, children will have had a wide variety of enjoyable musical experiences.

Music plays an integral part in the children's social, cognitive and emotional development. The discipline of making music in groups develops children's social skills. By learning to discriminate carefully in their listening, children develop their cognitive and linguistic skills; the sense of rhythm, pattern and order in music also contributes to the growth of their mathematical understanding. Through listening, appreciating and responding to music, children are able to explore their own emotions. Music can enrich their personal development and open the door to leisure activities that they can enjoy throughout their lives.

The school needs on the one hand to develop the children's natural abilities and on the other hand to transmit the social and cultural dimension of music. The purpose of teaching music in primary is to allow the children to sing, to broaden their knowledge of musical styles, to experiment with sounds and to lead them towards an understanding of the elements of music.

Main Aims

The central aim is to maintain and develop children's enjoyment of music. Children enter primary school having had a range of enjoyable musical experiences. They should leave for secondary with their enjoyment undiminished. Indeed it should be deepened as their musical knowledge, skills and understanding develop. Whatever they learn about music will be wasted if they do not continue to regard music as a source of enjoyment. This aim underpins all others.

The school should also aim to develop every child's musical potential. Children vary widely in their musical attainments. Some show considerable talent at an early age. Others acquire musical skills at a much slower rate and with greater effort. However, all children have the ability to make progress.

Music has a particular contribution to make to the general aim of developing pupils' self-esteem, self-expression and personal enrichment. Because music making is essentially a group activity music also has a special part to play in the development of social skills.

Content Objectives

The programme for music set out in this syllabus is divided into three domains. The objectives for the children's progress over the primary years in the three domains are as follows:

Music making and performing

Children will be enabled to:

- Sing with a healthy voice and an increasing control of pitch, rhythm and expression
- Play a widening range of instruments as part of a group with increasing sensitivity and control

Listening and responding

Children will be enabled to:

- Listen to and appreciate a widening range of musical styles from their own culture and from other cultures.
- Listen with increasing discrimination and move to music with increasing precision.

Composing

Children will be enabled to:

- Experiment with sounds and create music with increasing sensitivity

The following objectives represent strands that cut across all three domains:

- To build up the children's knowledge of notation and terminology.
- To increase their knowledge of instruments, composers, performers and styles.
- To enable children to discuss music with increasing discernment.

Teaching Principles

The teaching of music in the European School system is underpinned by the following principles:

- Music is for all pupils.
- Pupils are entitled to an education in music that stresses enjoyment, participation and holistic development.
- Lessons in music will be for the most part practical in nature allowing for learning through doing.
- Pupils should be given opportunities to move to music whenever appropriate.
- Pupils will follow a syllabus which is developmental and sequential in nature thus providing them with opportunities to develop their potential.
- The processes of music making and performing, listening and responding, and composing are more important than any products of such processes.
- The European dimension to the teaching and learning of music is fundamental to the European Schools and music has a role to play in European Hours
- Links should be made with Physical Education through dance, and links should also be made with other subjects.
- In evaluating pupils' progress positive attitudes, enthusiasm and co-operation should be valued as highly as competences in the skills area.
- Music lessons should be varied and balanced in content, and in learning opportunities.
- Pupils will be encouraged to share experiences, feelings, knowledge, skills and their musical heritage.
- In order to develop an appreciation of music, it is important to know how to behave appropriately at live performances.
- The learning of music is a lifelong experience. It is therefore very important that the continuum from nursery, through primary to secondary school be as seamless as possible.

CONTENT ACTIVITIES

Y E A R	MUSIC MAKING AND PERFORMING		LISTENING AND RESPONDING	COMPOSING
	SINGING	PLAYING	DISCRIMINATING	CREATING AND RECORDING
1	<p>Sing simple songs including action songs</p> <p>Sing loudly and softly with clear diction</p> <p>Develop good posture and breathing habits</p>	<p>Clap the pulse (steady beat) when performing a familiar song</p> <p>Accompany songs with body percussion</p> <p>Learn how to handle and play rhythm instruments</p> <p>Echo simple rhythmic patterns using body percussion or rhythm instruments</p>	<p>Listen to pieces of music and talk about them</p> <p>Listen to music that reflects the cultural heritages of the children in the class</p> <p>Respond imaginatively to pieces of music through movement</p>	<p>Discover ways of making sounds using body percussion</p> <p>Explore vocal rhythm (words, syllables, rhymes...)</p> <p>Explore ways of making sounds using rhythm instruments</p> <p>Use simple graphic symbols for pitch (high-low), tempo (fast-slow), duration (long-short)</p>

Notes:

Pulse: The underlying throb in Music.

Body percussion: Using parts of the body to create different sounds/rhythms (clap, stamp etc)

CONTENT ACTIVITIES

Y E A R	MUSIC MAKING AND PERFORMING		LISTENING AND RESPONDING		COMPOSING
	SINGING	PLAYING	LISTENING	DISCRIMINATING	CREATING AND RECORDING
2	<p>Sing with increasing vocal control</p> <p>Perform familiar songs with increasing awareness of dynamics</p> <p>Sing songs in class group and also in smaller groups</p> <p>Show greater control of pulse and tempo while singing well known songs</p>	<p>Learn how to handle and play tuned percussion instruments</p> <p>Use tuned percussion instruments to play a drone accompaniment</p> <p>Mark pulse and rhythmic patterns simultaneously in groups</p> <p>Recognize and play rhythmic notation for crotchets, quavers and crotchet rests</p>	<p>Express ideas about pieces of music in pictures or words</p> <p>Listen to music that reflects the cultural heritage of the children of the class</p> <p>Move to a marching rhythm</p>	<p>Distinguish between sounds of different duration (long or short)</p> <p>Perceive variations in volume (getting louder, getting softer)</p> <p>Understand the terms piano and forte</p> <p>Identify the tempo of the music as fast or slow, getting faster or getting slower</p> <p>Understand how sound is produced on different instruments</p> <p>Respond to variations in pitch, tempo and duration</p>	<p>Explore ways of making sounds using tuned percussion instruments</p> <p>Using sounds to illustrate a simple story</p> <p>Devise and use graphic symbols to record simple musical patterns</p>

Notes:

Dynamics: The loudness and softness of a piece of music **Quaver:** A note lasting half a beat
Drone: Long held note/notes **Piano:** Softly
Crotchet: A note lasting one beat **Forte:** Loudly

CONTENT ACTIVITIES

Y E A R	MUSIC MAKING AND PERFORMING		LISTENING AND RESPONDING		COMPOSING
	SINGING	PLAYING	LISTENING	DISCRIMINATING	CREATING AND RECORDING
3	<p>Sing a widening repertoire of songs with increasing vocal control and confidence</p> <p>Perform simple rounds in two parts with an awareness of two-part hearing</p>	<p>Accompany songs with simple ostinati on tuned percussion instruments</p> <p>Perform rhythmic patterns from rhythm notation</p> <p>Recognize and use rhythmic notation for minim, crotchets, quaver and crotchet rests</p>	<p>Express ideas about music through movement, art, language</p> <p>Learn to recognize the characteristics of music from different cultural heritages</p> <p>Use an appropriate musical vocabulary</p>	<p>Perceive the variations in pitch in a melodic phrase (moving upwards, downwards or staying the same)</p> <p>Begin to recognize the timbre of wind and stringed instruments of the orchestra</p> <p>Identify two/ four beat or three beat time through moving to music</p>	<p>Create sound effects for different situations</p> <p>Devise and use graphic symbols to record sound effects</p> <p>Invent simple melodic patterns</p> <p>Explore how the timbre of different instruments can suggest various sound pictures</p>

Notes:

Ostinato/Ostinati: A constantly repeated pattern (rhythmic/melodic) **Staccato:** Each successive note clear and detached

Minim: A note lasting two beats **Legato:** Smoothly without breaks

Timbre: Tone colour – the characteristic sound produced by different instruments

CONTENT ACTIVITIES

Y E A R	MUSIC MAKING AND PERFORMING		LISTENING AND RESPONDING		COMPOSING
	SINGING	PLAYING	LISTENING	DISCRIMINATING	CREATING AND RECORDING
4	<p>Sing a wide repertoire of songs with control of pitch, rhythm, tempo and dynamics</p> <p>Sing or play a rhythmic or melodic ostinato or a drone to accompany a song</p>	<p>Recognize and play familiar rhythmic patterns from rhythm notation</p> <p>Understand and use symbols for dynamics (like pp, p, f, ff, <, >)</p> <p>Use instruments to play simple, familiar tunes and accompaniments from memory or from notation</p>	<p>Listen to and describe excerpts of recorded music</p> <p>Listen and respond to longer pieces of music in a variety of ways</p> <p>Learn about music that reflects different cultural heritages and about some of the composers associated with it</p> <p>Use an appropriate musical vocabulary</p>	<p>Identify the instrument families of a symphony orchestra</p> <p>Identify two/four- beat time and three- beat time</p>	<p>Select sounds from a variety of sources to illustrate a character or a sequence of events.</p> <p>Use the pentatonic scale to make compositions</p> <p>Use standard or other notations to record compositions</p>

Notes:

Pentatonic Scale: A scale comprising five notes widely used in folk music

CONTENT ACTIVITIES

Y E A R	MUSIC MAKING AND PERFORMING		LISTENING AND RESPONDING		COMPOSING
	SINGING	PLAYING	LISTENING	DISCRIMINATING	CREATING AND RECORDING
5	<p>Sing a wide repertoire of songs with awareness of phrasing and expression</p> <p>Sing in a variety of styles and know about the music's social, historical and cultural context</p>	<p>Perform music with two or more parts, vocally, instrumentally or both</p> <p>Use instruments to play simple tunes and accompaniments from notation</p>	<p>Understand how music is used to influence emotions</p> <p>Listen to various styles of music and learn about their function and historical context</p> <p>Learn about instruments, composers and performers associated with different musical styles and traditions</p> <p>Discuss music (including own composition) using an appropriate musical vocabulary</p>	<p>Identify different instruments through listening to pieces of music</p> <p>Identify six-eight time</p>	<p>Use voice, body percussion, rhythm and tuned instruments and electronic instruments to create a sound story</p> <p>Devise a rhythmic ostinato to accompany a familiar melody</p> <p>Record compositions on electronic media (e.g.: tape recorder, keyboard, computer)</p> <p>Record compositions using notation</p> <p>Interpret music through dance</p>