

Music

Music is a unique form of communication that can change the way pupils feel, think and act. It forms part of an individual's identity and positive interaction with music develops pupils' competence as learners, and often provides a positive boost to their self-esteem. Music education encourages active involvement in different forms of music making, both individual and communal, helping to develop a sense of group identity and togetherness.

Music brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. As an integral part of culture, past and present, music helps pupils understand themselves, relate to others and develop their cultural understanding, forging important links between home, school and the wider world. The study and practice of music develops pupils' critical skills: their ability to listen, to appreciate a wide variety of music, and to make judgements about musical quality. It also increases self-discipline, creativity, aesthetic sensitivity and fulfilment.

Key Stage 2

The principal focus of music teaching in Upper Key Stage 2 is to ensure that pupils develop a strong ability in practical skills. The majority of learning in music lessons is conducted initially through the medium of song. This is further supported through whole school singing assemblies, which take place every week. In addition to singing, music lessons also develop skills of practical performance on keyboard and guitar. Music notation is looked at on a weekly basis and pupils are very confident in reading and performing relatively complex notation by the end of Year 6. In lessons, we also develop listening skills through the listening and watching of performances of a wide variety of musical genres.

Key Stage 3

In Key Stage 3, pupils build on their previous knowledge through the key skills performing, composing and listening. The over-riding aim in lessons is to enable pupils to develop a deep understanding of the music that they perform and listen to, and of its history. In composing, the main activity is related to the study of fanfares. All pupils compose their own fanfare, and many are entered into the national Fanfare competition run by the Royal Opera House. With reference to this competition, we are the most successful school in the country, having provided winners in all but one year that the competition has been running. Indeed, over twenty of our pupils have had their music performed and recorded by the orchestra of The Royal Opera House. Other topics that are studied in great depth are Gospel music, The Blues, and Resistance music under Apartheid.