

Music at St Michael's School

At St Michael's we want our children to develop a love of music as we believe that music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity.

Intent

Our high-quality music education engages and inspires pupils to use their skills as musicians, increasing their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement.

Children experience a range of practical music sessions to create and make their own music as well as being inspired by professional musicians. We recognise and value the vast benefits of music on the development of children's social and emotional wellbeing and, as with all subjects, we encourage children to share their skills with the wider community. By exposing the children to a wide range of musical events, genres and practical experiences we show the children that they have the potential to use music in their adult lives. This could be through joining choirs, becoming songwriters, working in music production or composing music.

Our curriculum is designed to be broad and balanced to allow children to take inspiration from great musicians throughout history.

We achieve this by providing a rich, diverse curriculum, underpinned by our school's core values of Respect, Honesty and Love, enabling every member of the school community to have a 'Lifetime Love for Learning'.

Implementation

Music is an integral part of school life at St Michael's; from singing in whole school assemblies, listening to a broad range of Music in class, learning nursery rhymes in Reception, to dance units in PE. In addition to all of this, Music is taught discreetly in each year group either weekly or fortnightly to ensure that all children have access to this highly creative medium.

Children's musical experiences at St Michael's begin in the Early Years where on a daily basis children listen to and join in with a range of songs.

Throughout their time at school, children explore key musical concepts such as rhythm and pitch using the Sing Up scheme as well as being exposed to high quality musical compositions and musicians through the BBC 10 pieces resource. Children's musical experiences increase in levels of challenge as they move through the school: all children learn how to sing, and all children learn how to play instruments – both pitched and unpitched.

Using the Sing Up scheme, children in KS1 begin learning about pitch and rhythm and are taught to sing accurately. As they move through the school, they are taught the more complex aspects of singing in a round or parts and reading traditional musical notation. Throughout each unit key vocabulary is taught to support children in their musical journey.

Teachers are provided with a Curriculum Map and Knowledge Webs to ensure all children are progressing their musical learning skills. The Knowledge Webs identify what knowledge and skills to assess and how to do this.

Aldbourn is a uniquely musical village and our links with the wider community lead to truly magical musical experiences for our children. Every child in Year 3 learns to play the cornet and this is supported by a conductor from the world-famous Aldbourn Brass Band. The support from the band also allows us to run a Brass Ensemble where children in KS2 regularly practice and perform as a small group. Every child in Year 6 learns to play the ukulele. In addition to this, children can access individual music tuition in piano, drums, guitar and a range of brass instruments. Regular concerts in our church, participation in the incredible Young Voices, visits to the village Nursing Home and our whole school Celebration Assemblies give children regular opportunities to perform in front of an audience. As a school, we are involved in the Wiltshire Music Connect Network and, as such, the children have additional opportunities to listen to and perform live music from live Samba workshops to song writing sessions with professional composers.

Impact

The vibrant nature of Music at St Michael's School is a key contributing factor to our children's confidence and self-esteem when they leave us in Year 6. 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. It enables them to discover areas of strength, helps them develop an understanding of culture and history, and creates an enormously rich palette from which they can access fundamental abilities such as achievement, self-confidence, creativity, interaction with and awareness of others and self-reflection. Frequent opportunities to share their work with an audience encourages our children to develop a sense of ownership of their music-making and to reflect on their progress and development. We celebrate their success by giving them ample opportunities to perform and showcase their abilities in music.