

Music Progression of Skills (2026-27)

At Waverley Abbey School, we believe that a high-quality music education should engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talents as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. By providing a high-quality musical education, pupils are encouraged to explore the world of music and to be introduced to as many new musical experiences as possible. The aim of our music curriculum is to open children's eyes and ears to a diverse musical programme that will be the foundation for a lifelong love of music and to equip children with the musical skills and knowledge to continue their musical education.

What the National Curriculum requires in music at KS2

Pupils should be 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.

Musical teaching can be broken down into the following skills

- Singing
- Listening
- Composing
- Improvising
- Performing (Instrumental performing and reading notation)

This table outlines the key musical skills in for each year group.

Each year group will build on the skills taught in previous year groups and well as introducing new skills.

Key Musical Skills	Year 3	New Skills in Year 4	New Skills in Year 5	New Skills in Year 6
Singing	• Sing in unison • Use pitch to sing scales • Sing using different dynamics • Combine singing with actions • Sing at different tempos • Perform in productions and assemblies	• Introduce vocal harmony • Sing in rounds. • Sing songs with a range of time signatures (2/4, 3/4 and 4/4)	• Observe phrasing, accurate pitching and appropriate style whilst singing. • Sing three-part rounds. • Develop singing in harmony.	• Continue to sing three and four-part rounds experimenting with positioning. • Develop vocal harmony.
Listening	• To understand the context of music • Listen to a range of live and recorded music • Appraise music using the elements of music.	• To understand the context of music • Listen to a range of live and recorded music • Appraise music using the elements of music.	• To understand the context of music • Listen to a range of live and recorded music • Appraise music using the elements of music.	• To understand the context of music • Listen to a range of live and recorded music • Appraise music using the elements of music.
Composing	• To combine rhythmic notation with letter names to create 3 note phrases.	• To combine rhythmic notation with letter names to create 5 note pentatonic phrases.	• To compose melodies combining rhythmic notation with letter names. • To use rhythmic notation to compose	• Plan and compose an 8- or 16-beat melodic phrase using the pentatonic scale (e.g. C, D, E, G, A)

		• Compose rhythms on untuned percussion.	• To use rhythmic notation to compose bars of music in 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4. • To consider how compositions can create mood through the elements of music. • To record compositions through musical notation or graphic scores.	bars of music in 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4. • To consider how compositions can create mood through the elements of music. • To record compositions through musical notation or graphic scores.	• incorporate rhythmic variety and interest. • Play this melody on available tuned percussion and/or orchestral instruments. • Notate this melody
Improvising		• Invent short 'on-the-spot' responses using a limited note range.	• Improvise on a limited range of pitches on an instrument. • Make composition decisions about the structure of improvisation.	• Improvise over a drone. • Improvise over a simple groove. • Explore a range of dynamics in improvisations.	• Extend improvisational skills through working in small groups to create musical with multiple sections that include repetition and contrast.
Performing	Instrumental Performing	• Develop skills in playing tuned percussion or melodic instruments. • Play and perform melodies from staff notation.	• Develop skills in playing a musical instrument over a sustained learning period. • Play and perform melodies following staff notation • Perform in parts from staff notation.	• Play melodies on tuned percussion or melodic instruments following staff notation. • Perform in small groups. • Develop the skill of playing by ear on tuned instruments.	• Play a melody following staff notation on a stave. • Incorporate dynamics in the playing of instruments.

		• Copy stepwise melodic phrases at different speeds.	• Copy short melodic phrases.		
	Reading Notation	• Introduce the stave, lines, spaces and clef. • Recognise how pitch changes on a stave. • Apply word chants to support the reading of rhythms from a stave.	• Understand the difference between minims, crochets, quavers and rests. • Follow and perform simple rhythmic scores to a steady beat.	• Further understand the difference between semibreves, minims, crochets, quavers and rests. • Understand the difference between 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time signatures. • Read and play short rhythmic phrases from sight.	• Further understand the difference between semibreves, minims, crochets, quavers and rests. • Further develop skills to read and perform pitch notation in an octave. • Read and play four bar phrases from notation identifying note names and durations.

Music Curriculum Overview

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Autumn 1	Glockenspiel	Clarinets (Classes 1 and 2)	Singing	Ukulele
Autumn 2	Production	Clarinets (Classes 1 and 2)	Production	
Spring 1		Clarinets (Classes 1 and 2)	Motown	WW2 Composition (Glockenspiel)
Spring 2	Purpose of Music	Clarinets (Classes 3 and 4) Production	Djembe Drums	Jazz 2 (Glockenspiel)
Summer 1	Recorders	Clarinets (Classes 3 and 4)	Mambo (Glockenspiel)	
Summer 2		Clarinets (Classes 3 and 4)	Jazz 1 (Glockenspiel)	Production

Year 3

Unit	Learning Objectives	Key Skills	
Glockenspiel	- To know how to play and read the notes C, D, E, F - To know how to play a range of tunes on the glockenspiel. - To know how to improvise using the notes C, D, E, F - To know how to compose using the notes C, D, E, F - The difference between pulse and rhythm. - To know what a crochet, minim, crochet rest and minim rest are.	Performing (Instrumental Performing)	- Develop skills in playing tuned percussion or melodic instruments. - Play and perform melodies from staff notation. - Copy stepwise melodic phrases at different speeds.
		Performing (Reading Notation)	- Introduce the stave, lines, spaces and clef. - Recognise how pitch changes on a stave. - Apply word chants to support the reading of rhythms from a stave.
		Composing	- To combine rhythmic notation with letter names to create 3 note phrases. - Compose rhythms on untuned percussion.
		Improvising	Invent short 'on-the-spot' responses using a limited note range.
Production		Singing	- Sing in unison - Use pitch to sing scales - Sing using different dynamics - Combine singing with actions - Sing at different tempos - Perform in productions and assemblies
Purpose of Music	- To know that music can tell a story. - To know that music can be represented visually.	Listening	- To understand the context of music - Listen to a range of live and recorded music - Appraise music using the elements of music.

	To use invented graphic notation to represent music (pictures, colour, shapes)	Composing	Compose rhythms on untuned percussion.
Recorders	- To know the correct posture, breathing and handling when playing an instrument. - To know what tempo is. - To know how to play and read B A G - To use knowledge of notes to play the correct tempo.	Performing (Reading Notation)	- Introduce the stave, lines, spaces and clef. - Recognise how pitch changes on a stave. - Apply word chants to support the reading of rhythms from a stave.
		Performing (Instrumental Performing)	- Develop skills in playing tuned percussion or melodic instruments. - Play and perform melodies from staff notation. - Copy stepwise melodic phrases at different speeds.

Year 4

Unit	Learning Objectives	Key Skills	
Clarinet 1	- To know the correct posture, breathing and handling when playing the clarinet. - To be able to produce 3 notes (G, F, E) using correct embouchure and finger positions. - To perform using the notes above as an ensemble, in unison, while demonstrating rhythmic awareness by staying in time with the music. - To know and be able to identify rhythmic notation including crotchet (1 beat), minim (2 beat), and semibreve (4 beat) notes. - To develop aural memory by playing teacher lead call & response patterns of increasing difficulty using the notes above. - Use Body percussion to demonstrate rhythmic awareness and explore different timbres.	Performing (Instrumental Performance)	- Develop skills in playing a musical instrument over a sustained learning period. - Play and perform melodies following staff notation - Perform in parts from staff notation. - Copy short melodic phrases.
		Performing (Reading Notation)	- Understand the difference between minims, crotchets, quavers and rests. - Follow and perform simple rhythmic scores to a steady beat.

		Improvising	• Improvise on a limited range of pitches on an instrument. • Make composition decisions about the structure of improvisation.
Clarinet 2	• Extend the range of notes used to include C & D. • Extend the range of rhythmic notations known by adding Quaver (1/2 beat) notes, and use these in their performance. • Develop their aural memory by playing call & response pattern using a wider range of pitches and rhythms, to include the new notes learnt, and also dotted rhythms. • Develop breathing technique, demonstrated in pieces that feature longer phrases.	Performing (Instrumental Performance)	• Develop skills in playing a musical instrument over a sustained learning period. • Play and perform melodies following staff notation • Perform in parts from staff notation. • Copy short melodic phrases.
		Performing (Reading Notation)	• Understand the difference between minims, crochets, quavers and rests. • Follow and perform simple rhythmic scores to a steady beat.
		Improvising	• Improvise on a limited range of pitches on an instrument. • Make composition decisions about the structure of improvisation.
Clarinet 3	• Extend the range of notes to include throat A, and low B. • Be able to play pieces using the full range of note known. • Develop ensemble playing by introducing multiple part body percussion patterns, as	Performing (Instrumental Performance)	• Develop skills in playing a musical instrument over a sustained learning period. • Play and perform melodies following staff notation • Perform in parts from staff notation. • Copy short melodic phrases.

	well as performing simple rounds (e.g. Hot Cross Buns) on the clarinet. Perform to an audience, demonstrating an understanding or performance etiquette such as posture, listening to others, and how to accept an applause.	Performing (Reading Notation)	- Understand the difference between minims, crochets, quavers and rests. - Follow and perform simple rhythmic scores to a steady beat.
		Composing	- To combine rhythmic notation with letter names to create 5 note pentatonic phrases. - To use rhythmic notation to compose bars of music in 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4. - To consider how compositions can create mood through the elements of music. - To record compositions through musical notation or graphic scores.
Production		Singing	- Introduce vocal harmony - Sing in rounds. - Sing songs with a range of time signatures (2/4, 3/4 and 4/4)

Year 5

Unit	Learning Objectives	Key Skills	
Singing	- An introduction to singing - To develop vocal techniques - To develop ensemble singing skills - To develop music expression - To improve performance confidence	Singing	- Observe phrasing, accurate pitching and appropriate style whilst singing. - Sing three-part rounds. - Develop singing in harmony.
Production		Singing	- Observe phrasing, accurate pitching and appropriate style whilst singing. - Sing three-part rounds. - Develop singing in harmony.
Motown	- To understand the Historical context of 20th Century music. Music through the ages. - Listen, appraise and compare a selection of 20th century music. - To learn a Motown song. - Know the common features of Motown music. - Use Interrelated dimensions of music and discuss how it fits together in the song.	Listening	- To understand the context of music - Listen to a range of live and recorded music - Appraise music using the elements of music.
		Singing	Observe phrasing, accurate pitching and appropriate style whilst singing.
Djembe Drums	- To listen to and appraise African djembe drumming music. - Explore the culture and history of Djembe drumming. - Learn posture when using drums and hand beats BASE, TONE, SLAP	Listening	- To understand the context of music - Listen to a range of live and recorded music - Appraise music using the elements of music.
		Performing (Instrumental Performing)	Perform in small groups.

	- To play Djembe drums in different ways and to compose rhythms - Focus on the structure of a piece of music and cyclic patterns. - Learn to play music using djembe drums.	Improvising	- Explore a range of dynamics in improvisations.
Mambo (Glockenspiel)	- Identify and discuss the dimensions of music. - The historical context of some of the songs. - Learn the term 'ostinato'. - Ostinatos on glockenspiels notes D, G, B, A, E, with rests. - Extension: to learn Bb - Create own individual ostinatos	Listening	- To understand the context of music - Listen to a range of live and recorded music - Appraise music using the elements of music.
		Composing	- To compose melodies combining rhythmic notation with letter names. - To use rhythmic notation to compose bars of music in 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4. - To consider how compositions can create mood through the elements of music. - To record compositions through musical notation or graphic scores.
		Performing (Instrumental Performing)	- Play melodies on tuned percussion or melodic instruments following staff notation. - Perform in small groups. - Develop the skill of playing by ear on tuned instruments.
		Performing (Reading Notation)	- Further understand the difference between semibreves, minims, crochets, quavers and rests. - Understand the difference between 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time signatures. - Read and play short rhythmic phrases from sight.

Jazz 1 (Glockenspiel)	• To listen to a range of jazz music and appraise using the elements of music. • To listen to Bossa Nova and swing music and identify features of these musical styles. • To explore the structure music • To play instrumental parts with the music by ear using the notes G, A + B and D, E, G, A + B. • To improvise in a Bossa Nova style using the notes G, A + B. • To improvise in a swing style using the notes D, E, G, A + B.	Listening	• To understand the context of music • Listen to a range of live and recorded music • Appraise music using the elements of music.
		Improvising	• Improvise over a drone. • Improvise over a simple groove. • Explore a range of dynamics in improvisations.
		Performing (Instrumental Performance)	• Perform in small groups. • Develop the skill of playing by ear on tuned instruments.

Year 6

Unit	Learning Objectives	Key Skills	
Ukuleles	- Know the history of the Ukulele and its origins. - To learn the correct posture and handling when playing an instrument. - Learn to strum and pluck strings - Play using open strings GCEA along to a piece of music - To know what a chord is: C, F G7	Performing (Instrumental Performing)	- Play a melody following staff notation on a stave. - Incorporate dynamics in the playing of instruments.
WW2 Composition (Glockenspiel)	- To know how to discuss the structure of a song. - To know the specific benefits music has provided during specific time periods and the historical context of some of the songs. - To know that lyrics are composed to evoke a specific meaning and how the interrelated dimensions of music - To know the impact of major and minor notes on the emotions. - To know sharp, flat and natural notes on a scale and how these notes change the mood of a piece of music - To write lyrics for a WW2 song - To compose a WW2 piece of music	Listening	- To understand the context of music - Listen to a range of live and recorded music - Appraise music using the elements of music.
		Composing	- Plan and compose an 8- or 16-beat melodic phrase using the pentatonic scale (e.g. C, D, E, G, A) - incorporate rhythmic variety and interest. - Play this melody on available tuned percussion and/or orchestral instruments. - Notate this melody
		Performing (Instrumental Performing)	- Play a melody following staff notation on a stave. - Incorporate dynamics in the playing of instruments.

		Performing (Reading Notation)	• Further understand the difference between semibreves, minims, crochets, quavers and rests. • Further develop skills to read and perform pitch notation in an octave. • Read and play four bar phrases from notation identifying note names and durations.
Jazz 2 (Glockenspiel)	• To talk about the musical dimensions in songs. • To make critical choices about the instruments to play based on the music genre. • To know how to improvise in a blues style using one, three or five notes. • To know how to play instrumental parts with the music by ear using the notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. • New: Bb • Improvise and compose own notes phrases along with song.	Listening	• To understand the context of music • Listen to a range of live and recorded music • Appraise music using the elements of music.
		Improvising	• Extend improvisational skills through working in small groups to create music with multiple sections that include repetition and contrast.
Production		Singing	• Continue to sing three and four-part rounds experimenting with positioning. • Develop vocal harmony.

Whole School

	Key Skills	
Music Assemblies	Singing	• Sing in unison • Use pitch to sing scales • Sing using different dynamics • Combine singing with actions • Sing at different tempos • Perform in productions and assemblies • Introduce vocal harmony • Sing in rounds. • Sing songs with a range of time signatures (2/4, 3/4 and 4/4)
	Listening	• To understand the context of music • Listen to a range of live and recorded music • Appraise music using the elements of music.