



Stanton Bridge Primary School

Music in the Stanton Bridge Primary Curriculum

At our school, we ignite a passion for music so that every child can experience the joy of performing, composing and listening. Through rich and memorable musical experiences, pupils develop confidence, creativity and a sense of belonging, while discovering how music can communicate ideas, express emotion and bring people together.

At Stanton Bridge, Music is designed to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to become confident performers, thoughtful composers and perceptive listeners. Guided by research-informed practice and our Thinking School ethos, learning is deliberately structured to build secure musical knowledge, develop technical proficiency and deepen pupils' understanding of the interrelated dimensions of music.

We have very high expectations for music. Pupils experience a broad range of musical traditions, genres and instruments and are taught by carefully selected specialists who bring exceptional expertise to our provision. Through partnerships with accomplished musicians and educators, including Oxford University alumni, pupils benefit from high-quality tuition, inspiring role models and opportunities that extend far beyond the classroom.

Pupils learn to sing, play instruments, improvise, compose and perform both independently and as part of an ensemble. Through the Charanga scheme, specialist teaching and purposeful opportunities to revisit and refine their learning, pupils build fluency, accuracy and musical independence. They learn to listen critically, respond thoughtfully and discuss music using increasingly precise musical vocabulary.

Music is brought to life through an ambitious programme of enrichment and performance. Pupils have opportunities to work with expert musicians, participate in workshops and ensembles, and perform in prestigious venues across the West Midlands and beyond. These experiences allow children to experience the discipline, excitement and pride of performing for authentic audiences while developing resilience, collaboration and self-belief.

We are committed to recognising and nurturing musical talent. Pupils who demonstrate particular interest, aptitude or potential are identified, encouraged and provided with opportunities to develop further through specialist tuition, instrumental learning and performance. At the same time, our inclusive approach ensures that every child, regardless of background or previous experience, can participate, succeed and see themselves as a musician.

By the time pupils leave Stanton Bridge, they are confident, creative and reflective young musicians. They appreciate music from different cultures, traditions and periods; understand the dedication involved in developing musical excellence; and are prepared to continue their musical journey with curiosity, ambition and a lifelong appreciation of music.



Core musical knowledge

Our curriculum develops three interconnected forms of musical knowledge. Together, they enable pupils to perform, compose and listen with increasing fluency, understanding and expression.

Technical knowledge	Constructive knowledge	Expressive knowledge
Pupils learn to control their voices, instruments and bodies to produce an intended sound. This includes posture, breathing, diction, pulse, rhythm, pitch, coordination, instrumental technique and the use of notation.	Pupils learn how music is organised and created. They explore how pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and structure work together when performing, improvising, composing and arranging.	Pupils learn how musicians communicate meaning and emotion. They develop musical judgement, creativity and stylistic awareness through listening, rehearsal, interpretation and performance.

Curriculum principles

Principle	What this means at Stanton Bridge
Music is practical	Pupils spend substantial curriculum time making music through singing, playing, rehearsing, composing and performing.
Progress is cumulative	Knowledge and technique are revisited frequently so that pupils gain fluency rather than experiencing isolated activities.
Singing provides the foundation	Secure pulse, pitch, listening and vocal control prepare pupils for later instrumental and ensemble work.
Breadth leads to depth	Pupils encounter varied instruments, genres and traditions while receiving sustained practice within coherent vocal and instrumental programmes.
Performance has purpose	Authentic audiences, professional venues and collaborative ensembles give pupils a meaningful reason to practise, refine and communicate.



The Stanton Bridge musical journey

The curriculum moves deliberately from secure singing and listening foundations to sustained instrumental and vocal programmes, before pupils combine their learning as confident young musicians.

Phase	Curriculum emphasis	Provision and progression
Early Years	Musical foundations	Music is embedded through singing, rhymes, movement, listening and musical play. Pupils begin to keep a steady pulse, explore pitch and dynamics, copy simple rhythmic and melodic patterns and respond creatively to music.
Years 1 and 2	Singing and exploration	Charanga supports a singing-led curriculum. Pupils develop vocal confidence, expressive singing and attentive listening before applying these foundations to tuned and untuned instruments. They experiment with sound, improvise, compose and perform simple musical ideas.
Years 3 and 4	Expert band programme	Pupils work as members of a consistent band programme led by expert musicians. They take different instrumental roles using steel pans, keyboards, drums, trumpet, acoustic guitar and electric guitar. Regular ensemble rehearsal develops instrumental technique, timing, coordination, listening, notation and the ability to maintain an independent part.

Sustained band learning

The Years 3 and 4 programme is not a series of disconnected instrumental encounters. Pupils take complementary roles within an established band, revisit repertoire and techniques, respond to the playing of others and learn how individual parts combine to create a coherent performance. This sustained approach enables pupils to develop control, fluency and expression over time.

Additional instrumental opportunities

Alongside the core curriculum, pupils can extend their musicianship through access to both electric and classical pianos. These opportunities support individual practice, accompaniment, composition and the further development of pupils who show particular interest or aptitude.



The Stanton Bridge musical journey continued

Phase	Curriculum emphasis	Provision and progression
Year 5	Expert vocal programme	Pupils receive specialist vocal teaching, learning how posture, breathing, diction, pitch, tone and phrasing contribute to secure and expressive singing. They develop classical vocal technique and progress towards performing operatic repertoire, both independently and as part of an ensemble.
Year 6	Combined musicianship	Pupils bring together the vocal, instrumental, listening, composing and performance skills developed across the school. They rehearse and perform with increasing independence, respond to musical direction, refine their work and understand how different voices and instruments contribute to an ensemble.
Additional pathway	Gifted and talented programme	Pupils who demonstrate sustained interest, musical aptitude, commitment or emerging talent are identified and invited to deepen their learning. Additional specialist tuition, instrumental and vocal development, ensemble opportunities and performance experiences help pupils progress beyond the core curriculum.

Enrichment and performance

Music is a visible and valued part of school life. Pupils work with carefully selected musicians and educators, including Oxford University alumni, whose expertise raises expectations and gives pupils access to authentic musical practices.

- Performing in prestigious venues across the West Midlands and beyond.
- Taking part in workshops, rehearsals, ensembles and collaborative musical projects.
- Performing for authentic audiences within school and the wider community.
- Encountering live music and accomplished musicians who broaden pupils’ understanding of musical careers and traditions.
- Developing the discipline, confidence and responsibility required to prepare for public performance.

Equity and inclusion

Every pupil is entitled to a rich musical education. Teaching is adapted so that pupils with different starting points and additional needs can participate meaningfully in singing, instrumental work, composition and performance. Additional pathways extend learning without limiting high-quality musical experiences to pupils whose families can access private tuition.

**Progression in performing**

Phase	Singing	Instrumental development	Ensemble and performance
Early Years	Join in with songs and rhymes; explore pitch, pulse, dynamics and vocal sound.	Explore classroom percussion and sound-makers; copy simple patterns.	Perform informally with others and begin to start and stop together.
Years 1 and 2	Sing with increasing pitch accuracy, clear words and awareness of pulse and expression.	Play tuned and untuned instruments musically; repeat and create rhythmic and melodic patterns.	Perform short pieces, follow signals and maintain a simple part within a group.
Years 3 and 4	Use singing to support pitch, phrasing and ensemble awareness.	Develop sustained technique within the band programme across complementary instrumental roles.	Maintain an independent part, respond to direction and balance individual sound within an ensemble.
Year 5	Develop classical technique through secure posture, breathing, diction, tone, phrasing and operatic repertoire.	Use prior instrumental knowledge where appropriate to support accompaniment and musical understanding.	Sing with expression, control and increasing independence in solo and ensemble contexts.
Year 6	Apply vocal technique confidently across shared repertoire and performance projects.	Combine instrumental roles with increasing fluency, control, accuracy and expression.	Rehearse, refine and perform integrated vocal and instrumental work for authentic audiences.

Performance expectations

Across the school, pupils learn that successful performance depends on preparation. They practise carefully, accept feedback, repeat difficult passages, listen to other performers and make deliberate improvements to accuracy, balance and expression.

**Progression in musical understanding**

Phase	Listening and appraising	Improvising and composing	Notation and musical knowledge
Early Years	Listen and respond through movement, talk and play; recognise contrasts in sound.	Explore, select and combine sounds; invent simple musical responses.	Recognise visual cues and simple representations of sound.
Years 1 and 2	Listen with concentration to live and recorded music from varied traditions; identify simple musical features.	Improvise and compose short rhythmic and melodic ideas using voice and instruments.	Follow pictorial, graphic and simple rhythmic notation; begin to connect symbols with sound.
Years 3 and 4	Identify instruments, layers, structure and expressive choices; recall and reproduce increasingly complex patterns.	Create and organise ideas for particular purposes, drawing on the interrelated dimensions of music.	Read and follow notation relevant to band roles, including rhythmic notation, pitch, chord symbols or tablature where appropriate.
Year 5	Listen critically to vocal music, including classical and operatic traditions; discuss interpretation, style and meaning.	Explore how melody, harmony, texture, dynamics and phrasing shape vocal arrangements and performances.	Use notation, lyric scores and musical markings to support accurate, expressive singing.
Year 6	Compare interpretations and connect music with its cultural and historical context using precise vocabulary.	Improvise, compose and arrange ideas for voices and instruments, refining work in response to evaluation.	Apply appropriate notation independently when rehearsing, composing and communicating musical ideas.

Breadth of musical culture

Listening repertoire is selected to introduce pupils to high-quality music from different periods, traditions, cultures and communities. Pupils encounter both live and recorded music and learn about the musicians, purposes and contexts that shape what they hear and perform.



Teaching and learning

Lessons are responsive to the musical activity and phase of learning, but consistently prioritise active music-making. Teachers and specialists model musical processes explicitly, break complex techniques into manageable steps and provide frequent opportunities for guided and independent practice.

Element	What pupils do
Listen and connect	Pupils listen attentively, recall prior learning and identify the musical focus through high-quality examples.
Model and teach	Teachers and specialists demonstrate vocal or instrumental technique, notation and musical vocabulary clearly.
Practise and rehearse	Pupils repeat, refine and secure technical components before combining them within more complex musical tasks.
Create and interpret	Pupils improvise, compose, arrange or make expressive decisions using the knowledge they have developed.
Perform and respond	Pupils perform to others, listen critically and use feedback to improve accuracy, fluency, control and expression.

Assessment and impact

Assessment identifies what pupils know, can do and can express musically. It is proportionate, practical and closely connected to curriculum content. Teachers use assessment to adapt teaching, identify pupils who need further support and recognise those ready for additional challenge.

- Ongoing observation of singing, playing, rehearsing, improvising, composing and listening.
- Checking whether pupils can recall and apply musical vocabulary, notation and knowledge of repertoire and context.
- Evaluating increasing accuracy, fluency, control, independence and expression over time.
- Reviewing pupils' ability to maintain a part, respond to direction and contribute responsibly to an ensemble.
- Using recordings, pupil reflection and portfolios on Showbie to capture progress and support purposeful feedback.
- Recording attainment against agreed progression points and using this information to inform future teaching and provision.

The intended impact

By the end of Year 6, pupils can sing and play with confidence, contribute to an ensemble, listen critically, use appropriate musical language and create and refine their own musical ideas. They understand that musical excellence is developed through knowledge, disciplined practice, collaboration and expression. Pupils leave Stanton Bridge with the confidence and foundations needed to continue participating in music at secondary school and beyond.