

Music at Menston Primary School

Music is an academic subject, which involves many skills learnt over a period of time at each individual's pace. Listening and appraising, collaborative music making and enjoyment of music provide pupils with a creative outlet in school. All children are encouraged to listen carefully, concentrate fully and perform the elements of music effectively.

Singing

Singing is an important part of school life at Menston Primary School. We sing at the start of assembly and children also get the opportunity to practice songs in their classes. We have a very popular school choir who meet and rehearse once a week. We have established links in the community where the choir perform.

Instruments

Children are offered the opportunity to study a musical instrument with peripatetic teachers from Bradford Music Service, including brass, piano/keyboard, flute and more. We have a school band whose members also practise weekly and we provide opportunities throughout the year for musicians to perform in assemblies and concerts, as well as at various events in the community. All children in Year Three learn to play either the trumpet or trombone and are able to take these instruments home with them to practice.



Members of the band at rehearsal

Children are also exposed to a wide variety of different instruments and styles of music through external visitors. Key Stage One have the chance to enjoy an African drumming workshop as part of their curriculum and Key Stage Two enjoy a percussion performance as well as a brass band concert. We believe these opportunities are vital in inspiring our children to enjoy and succeed in music.

The Teaching of Music at Menston Primary School:

We follow the Charanga scheme of learning which aims to teach music in accordance with the national curriculum and develop children's listen, singing and practical skills in music. We recognise that musical learning is not neat and linear so we therefore allow children the opportunities to revisit established musical skills to embed these concepts. This is key in order for children to achieve mastery in music.

Key Stage One

Children follow a progressive programme which is designed to meet the requirements of the new music curriculum. Children are taught music weekly with a different unit-specific focus each half-term. Lessons begin with listening and appraising, where children begin to recognise styles, find the pulse, recognise instruments and listen and discuss other dimensions of music. This is an important part of the lesson as it exposes children to music and styles they may not recognise and encourages them to develop their own opinions about music.

Music is also taught through a variety of games and singing in lessons. These games help develop their sense of rhythm and pulse and are greatly enjoyed by the children. Later in the unit, children also having the opportunity to use instruments such as the class set of glockenspiels, alongside the song they have been learning. Children are also introduced to improvisation and, later in Key Stage One, are introduced to creating their own basic compositions using note names. We believe it is extremely important that children are given the opportunity to perform in class as part of each topic because this helps develop children's self-confidence and listening skills.

Key Stage Two

Children follow a progressive programme which is designed to meet the requirements of the new music curriculum. In some year groups, an external provider teaches music lessons.

Listening to and appraising music from different genres still forms an important part of each lesson, as it continues to expose children to music they often haven't experienced. The various genres may be historical or geographical in nature and the children are encouraged to voice individual opinions and feelings.

The basic rudiments of music, including pulse, rhythm and pitch are explored via the theory of music and practical work. Musical games are still used and enjoyed to help teach children about pulse and rhythm as well as helping children begin to understand how the different dimensions of music work together.

Singing still forms an integral part of music lessons in Key Stage Two, as does the opportunity to play musical instruments. Glockenspiels are the pitched percussion instruments used most in lessons, with non-tuned percussion being used as and when it is appropriate. Other instruments are occasionally employed to offer a wider variety of sound for composition. Children are encouraged to respond musically by creating their own compositions, melodies and rhythms using musical notation.

Performance is still a central part of the teaching sequence. Pupils are expected to be able to explain why they have chosen a particular instrument or vocal style and are encouraged, in a supportive environment, with self and peer evaluation, helping them to progress as thinking musicians.

We believe that children have the opportunity to become excellent musicians at Menston Primary School. Music is actively encouraged and celebrated not only as an academic subject but as an opportunity for self-expression, collaboration, creativity and enjoyment.

R Bevan

Music Lead