

WINGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Policy Statement for Music Education

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Intent:

We believe that the benefits of a good musical education are manifold and have a direct and considerable impact on the overall development and progress of every child. All of our music teaching - regardless of the age, background or prior experiences of the children, aims to raise the standards of children's speech and language skills and improve confidence, through stimulating and engaging activities. These activities may be through whole class or key stage music specific sessions, taught by teachers or music specialists, or as a topic tool for cross curricular learning as part of the school Creative Curriculum. Topic plans and learning objectives ensure that the children make progress as they move through the school.

Across the UK, 7% of children begin school with speech, language and communication needs (Bercow, 2008). At Wingrove, 86% of children begin school with English as an additional language and 25% of our children have a special educational need, including speech and language issues. Research shows that children with additional language needs are more likely to have low self-esteem and poor social skills, and are more at risk of poor educational attainment and reduced life chances - all as a result of poor communication skills (I can talk- Issue 2, 2006).

Both academic and neuro-scientific studies suggest that singing has a direct correlation with improving speech, language and communication skills, therefore impacting on educational attainment and life chances.

"Singing is a key musical activity that involves both music and language and can promote language skill development because singing involves both the 'musical' centres in the brain and also 'language centres'. Our voices are a key component of who we are. Confident and healthy voice use links to a positive self-concept; Healthy singing improves our underlying vocal coordination and enables us to maximise our potential to communicate with others using our voices." (Graham and Welch, 2007)

Implementation and Impact:

In response to the findings of the Bercow report (2008) and the subsequent 'Every Child a Talker' initiative, all of our music teaching - regardless of the age, background or prior experiences of the children, aims to raise the standards of children's speech and language skills and confidence through stimulating and engaging activities.

These activities may be through whole class or key stage music specific sessions or as a topic tool for cross curricular learning as part of the Wingrove Primary School Creative Curriculum.

As a school, we encourage:

- ✓ Singing
- ✓ Vocal play
- ✓ Musical puppet play
- ✓ Musical storytelling
- ✓ Pulse and rhythm activities

- ✓ Simple composition
- ✓ Songs for instructions, questions and to mark changes in routine
- ✓ Exposure to a wide variety of music from many cultures, traditions and musical periods
- ✓ Involvement in instrumental tuition
- ✓ Participation in extra-curricular activities.

All of these activities are proven to improve and develop:

- ✓ Speech, language and communication skills

When instructions are given in song it helps auditory learners in particular and the whole class in general to 'tune in' and follow directions. The instruction songs then become part of the routine and the children recall the activity when prompted by the music.

- ✓ Language and vocabulary recall

The naming, signing and visual prompts given in song particularly improve the responses of children who have EAL. A child with English as a second language can learn words more quickly from songs than spoken directions, instructions and conversation.

- ✓ Listening and auditory skills

Children and adults alike learn, repeat and remember more language in song than in any other form.

- ✓ Physical coordination/vocal flexibility

Singing uses both sides of the brain and so exercises this vital organ and improves memory

- ✓ Confidence and personal and social skills

Singing stimulates a group of chemicals in the brain which can improve the mental health of our children. Dopamine promotes motivation and a sense of reward, Oxytocin promotes trust, Serotonin combats depression, Opioids give pain relief and Noradrenaline increases muscular power and resistance to fatigue.

Statement of content:

National Curriculum 2014:

"...learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence..."

"Pupils should be taught to sing and play musically with increasing confidence and control. They should develop an understanding of musical composition, organising and manipulating ideas within musical structures and reproducing sounds from aural memory."

"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."

At Wingrove, music is taught discreetly, as part of a cross curricular theme, and specifically; in class, in music assemblies, by visiting specialists and through extra-curricular activities. Regardless of the form the teaching may take, the curriculum for the musical education of our children can be considered in four important areas:

- Listening and appraising
- Musical Activities
- Creating and exploring
- Performing

Our whole class music teaching takes place through the Charanga Musical Schools website. This provides guidelines for progression through each of the teaching areas and teaches the interrelated dimensions of music through each termly unit for each year group. There are also assessment formats to show progress through teaching. Charanga describes this as an 'ever- increasing spiral of musical learning.'