

Intent

The intent of our Music Curriculum at St Laurence Juniors, has been designed to develop and strengthen our children's listening skills and share a sense of curiosity on what music they listen to, both in school and at home. The selection of music our children listen to over their Junior education is diverse, accessible as well as exploring different musicians and composers across different periods of history.

We feel extremely passionate about children listening to wide variety of music at school as a way to help our children equip themselves with more tools in their self-expression. Listening to music can help children empathize with others, help them to process their own feelings and even help them to manage their own wellbeing. Each month the whole school enjoys listening to and accessing Musician of the Month, available on the weekly newsletters, so to encourage and continue conversations from school and at home.

Our children have access to playing instruments in whole class instrument lessons with the Recorder and Ukulele and are encouraged to play in groups, pairs and solo performances across the year. Our music curriculum has been inspired by the Model Music Curriculum and the Department of Education's Music Curriculum guidance for Key Stage 2, so that children develop skills in singing, listening, appraising, performing, composing and improvising abilities. All of these skills can help build confidence and allow personal growth in other subjects as well as their core music skills.

St Laurence children will aim to have listened to, a wide, diverse, rich list of musicians, understand the wide ranging skills of musicians, be advocates of music making and listening, through play and story-telling and become curious on why they enjoy listening to specific music over other kinds of music. This enquiry of being curious when discovering and listening to new music and using music making as a form of self-expression, can potentially stay with them through-out their lives, in order to show respect and appreciation of people from all walks of life, appreciating stories and voices from many different cultures.

Impact

We implement a progressive curriculum throughout the school. Music is taught across all year groups, on a termly rotation, ensuring that all children have a minimum of three terms per year and maximum of six terms of music per year. We ensure all our children strengthen their listening, appraisal skills, performing, improvising and compositional abilities in music lessons. We gather together regularly to practice singing in Collective Worship and sing new and well known songs relevant to our school values of love, hope, joy, resilience and forgiveness. We play musical games in our warm up activities and we encourage students to share their thoughts, observations and opinions on why pieces of music have an impact on their own musical experiences.

Children have an opportunity to join Creative Choir after-school each term, developing singing confidence, songwriting skills and ensemble singing, enriching children's lives within their school community. Children have opportunities to take up extra private tuition during school hours, in the Music Room with visiting Kent Music Teachers. This year we have children enrolled at St Laurence Juniors learning Piano, Drums and Guitar. At St Laurence Juniors we have a strong relationship with Kent Music and have an openness to continue to widen its invitation to more visiting teachers from Kent Music, so that more children can have access to learning other instruments, such as woodwind and string if there is a demand and interest from the children. Students are able to meet and watch professional demonstrations of instruments by Kent Music Teachers and watch Kent Music's Road Show in school to show children the different kinds of instruments they could learn.

Music Lessons are planned using the progression of skills map so that each year group can have a build on their musical experiences and progress their learning in music in each academic year. Children begin learning music in Year 3 by playing the Recorder, understanding basic note values and music vocabulary, and by the time they leave in Year 6 they will have experienced and strengthened their knowledge of music listening and appraising, playing and performing with their experience of Percussion, Ukulele lessons and singing activities. Over the four years they will also have developed ideas in musical composition, improvisation and musical storytelling. They will also have studied Composers with BBC 10 pieces and a growing understanding of periods in Music History, to help them begin their journey into Music lessons at Secondary School.

At St Laurence we offer our children creative ways to engage with different listening activities for Musician of the Month, where all children have access to Musician of the Month by sharing on the school newsletters. In school music lessons children listen and respond to the musicians by discussing ideas, watching videos, discussing songwriter's lyrics, who the musicians were when they were younger, presenting and reading stories to the children about the musician's progression to becoming world class musicians, whilst broadening their musical vocabulary, knowledge of musical instruments and listening preferences. These musical activities help the children discover what music they like to listen to, dance to, smile to, discuss why they don't like a piece of music, as well as considering key musical concepts like rhythm, pulse, pitch, pace, dynamics and simple musical structures.

At St Laurence we collaborate with Kent Music Teachers and our Music Specialist is part of a Thanet Music Network that connects Schools with activities and share ideas for future potential cross collaboration of ideas. St Laurence Juniors enjoys working with local artists such as 1927 Theatre Company, developing skills in musical storytelling for visual image.

Musical Vocabulary is an important part of the learning for children across the year groups and adult vocabulary guides / resources can be provided to adults to feel more confident in their musical teachings.

Through use of ICT on Ipads, use of Art and Drama activities, Music lessons encourage good written presentation, speaking and listening and visual depictions to communicate the children's musical ideas and characters.

Through all our teaching practice we aim to share a love for music and how it relates to our school values. Music can offer hope, love, joy, forgiveness and resilience to life events in surprising ways. We aim for our children to leave with an appreciation that anyone can access music, at any age, if they have curiosity towards the subject in all walks of life.

Implementation

Our Music Curriculum is a creative response to the Music Model Curriculum and National Curriculum with good quality planned lessons. We focus on progression of skills and knowledge offering opportunities for children of different levels to share their growing participation in musical activities.

The lessons are playful and fun filled with key musical concepts to reaffirm and progress subject knowledge, with a range of activities for the children to express their musical observations and growing music vocabulary. and have opportunities to share their engagement in music in Collective Worship or at special festival services at St Laurence-in-Thamet Church. Lessons are monitored for noise levels and headphones are offered to children who require support towards high volumes in music making activities, so music is accessible to all.

Children are praised and celebrated by being selected as a Music Champion for their individual or group dedication and growth in the subject on a termly basis. Year 6 Leavers have an opportunity to win the Rocky Award Certificate for their resilience in Music.

We encourage children to speak of personal musical experiences and look to offer trips in the arts to be gain experience as a good audience and inspire confidence and ideas to join in performance opportunities.

We encourage actively children's responses to Music and use Pupil Voice interviews for feedback directly from the students on their musical lessons and experiences at school. Pupil voice helps demonstrate knowledge in music and shares insights into the children's engagement and enjoyment with the subject and allows their ideas to be considered for future practical lesson ideas, as well as song choices for Collective Worship.

We gather and sing together daily Collective Worship and respond to the children's energy when they learn new songs and well known songs they enjoy singing regularly. We are open to collaborating with visiting artists and musicians and drama practitioners into our school to inspire children to sing and perform with more confidence. We have identified through pupil voice feedback that singing needs further encouragement and repetition of song practice in school to build a strong singing school repertoire.

Children agree the lesson intention and success criteria at the start of each musical lesson. Pupils self-assess their progress after each lesson and help to give our teachers feedback on their musical understanding and practice from the lesson, using the R, Y, G system (R) stands for - I don't understand yet (Y) is for I'm close and (G) is for I understand. Children are assessed three times a year, considering progress and attainment from lesson observations and written work. Music lessons are recorded in their Music books and additional lessons in music are collected and presented in Big Books displaying children's response to Musician of the Month. Some parts of lessons are recorded on audio to capture musical progress and achievement.

We currently hold a Music Mark Award at St Laurence Juniors for our musical contributions across school. We have held this since 2020 and aim to continue to renew this commitment to high quality music education for our children.