

Portreath School Subject Statement 2021

Subject: Music Leader: Sam Forsdick

Quotes that guides us:

“Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity.”

“A high-quality music education should engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. As pupils progress, they should develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon.”

Why it is important to teach Music:

Listening and producing music is something that brings people joy and that itself is important. We want to help children develop a lifelong love of music. Music also plays a huge role in brain development. Studies have shown that music activities particularly in Early Years facilitate many different aspects of development and learning, providing one of the most effective influences on young people’s brain development at this key age.

Music is a multisensory experience and involves three ways of learning: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. It has been shown to activate all three cortices (motor, visual and auditory) of children’s brains. Anita Collins, a neuroscience and education researcher has described the effect of it as “like fireworks going off in the brain ... Music is a whole brain workout.” Music develops our brains and also facilitates other learning.

It helps develop creativity and can also support children with their mental health and well-being. Music is used in our school in a variety of ways, including a way to help everyone feel calm as well as inspire them. There is a lot of research which show the therapeutic benefits of music and can be a wonderful way to help children express their emotions.

Key Concepts for Children:

- ♣ That there have been different styles of music and these have varied throughout history and vary throughout the world
- ♣ Music can affect what we think and feel and support our brain development
- ♣ We are all musicians and we can use our voices, instruments, technology to communicate and bring joy
- ♣ Pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, volume and structure are key components to consider when listening to and creating music
- ♣ Music notation is a form of communication and a way to capture music in a written form

What we do well as a school:

As well as discrete lessons Music lends itself to being a cross curricular subject in every way. Therefore, we link our music sessions to our topics to give it a context and to use it as a means to deepen our understanding of a topic. Music is often played in lessons to create atmosphere, to inspire and as part of mindfulness sessions.

As a school we have sometimes work on whole school projects drawing on local music or music from around the world. For example, a Greek topic led to each class listening to music from another culture and learning to dance to it. From this a whole school dance was created and performed to parents.

At Portreath school we have a choir and encourage all children from all key stages to join. The choir perform to the school and also to the wider community. We also take part in performances along with the eight other schools in the Crofty MAT. Music is used as a way to connect us all.

All the children also get to perform as part of a Key Stage Show at least once a year. This involves learning and performing songs as well as the use of percussion. Children who learn an instrument get to perform to the rest of the school and parents. As part of this we often ask the music teachers to perform to give the children further opportunities to listen to high quality live performances.

We like to have live performances from theatre companies and these often involve live music (instrument and singing) for example Squashbox Theatre, Cornish Caretakers.

Every year group from Year 2 + have had the opportunity to learn an instrument as a group during one year whilst being at Portreath School. This included brass instruments, ukulele and African drums. This was supported and partly funded by the Cornwall Music Hub. In 2019 we had a whole school music day led by music specialists and funded by the PTA. This was a huge success and is planned to be repeated once restrictions allow.

Children in Key Stage 1 and 2 have the opportunity to learn either the keyboard, guitar, violin and have singing lessons. These are paid for by parents and any pupil premium children can receive these for a heavily discounted rate. These sessions are run by Cornwall Music Service.

As a TIS school we see music therapy is a technique that uses music to encourage children who find it difficult to express themselves verbally to share their feelings. It's not about teaching children how to play musical instruments. Instead, it's about using musical elements to help young people to fulfil their potential.

Our PE teacher specialises in dance and uses music effectively in PE lessons. We also like to occasionally use music in the playground and in the hall at lunchtimes.

There is an annual talent contest, many children showcase their musical talents within this.

Curriculum Design

We currently use the National curriculum to guide us and the resource Music Express to support our planning. Whenever possible and most appropriate we link music to our topic work. We feel as a school we can develop the teaching of music further though more regular and consistent whole class music lessons. We want lessons each year to build on what has come before so there is clear progression across the school. The Crofty MAT are planning to create a small step curriculum document to ensure clear sequences of learning. These will give small steps that build towards key end points that link to the National Curriculum. These break down the National Curriculum statements into smaller steps. We are looking to adopt this once it is complete. Cornwall music Hub have also produced a new scheme that we are looking into using to support us further. We have signed up to 'Sing Up' and 'Songfest' once Covid restrictions allow, it will be used to enhance our singing.

The plan is for our curriculum to give the children an opportunity to:

- ♣ perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians

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♣ 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

♣ understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations.

Implementation

The music curriculum will ensure that students sing, listen, play, perform and evaluate. This will be embedded in the classroom activities as well as the weekly singing assemblies, various concerts and performances, and the learning of instruments. The elements of music will be taught in the classroom lessons so that children are able to use some of the language of music to dissect it, and understand how it is made, played, appreciated and analysed. They will learn how to compose focussing on different dimensions of music, which in turn feeds their understanding when listening, playing, or analysing music. Composing or performing using body percussion and vocal sounds will also be part of the curriculum, which develops the understanding of musical elements without the added complexity of an instrument.

In order to expose the children to a wide range of composers, each half term music by a particular composer is played at the start and end of assemblies.

Resources

We have a good selection of instruments for the children to use. As well as a wide range of percussion instruments we have some tuned instruments such as a class set of chime bars are available to aid the children in learning notes and to aid learning to read music. We also have two school keyboards and a piano.

When a whole class is learning an instrument the we can hire class sets from Cornwall Music Hub supply a class set to aid their learning.

Training

As part of the whole class sessions led by Cornwall Music Service specialists, school staff were part of these sessions to build their knowledge and confidence. As a result of a school audit linked to subject knowledge and confidence music has been identified as a key area for training. Initially this will be through staff meetings within school and we will then look at how we can enhance this further with support from local secondary schools as well as identifying relevant courses.

What does monitoring tell us?

We now want to target more of our monitoring to ensure there is specific discussion around music. The subject lead plans to have discussions with children around music.

Covid-19

Covid has impacted on music in a variety of ways. It has meant not being able to have music teachers and visitors into school. It also meant that apart from Reception we were unable to sing and the children are unable to come together for assembly. This year there has not been a choir as a result. Following guidance singing is now allowed as long as we follow guidelines. We hope as restrictions are lifted we can back to offer a fuller music curriculum and develop further our teaching of it.

Next Steps

- Ensuring regular music lessons take place across the school that build on each other and demonstrate progression
- Re-establishing things such as singing and music lessons post Covid-19.
- Helping everyone to have a clearer vision of why music is important and how it is taught
- Develop everyone's subject knowledge-staff and children
- Ensure music has a bigger presence in school