

# Music

## Curriculum Intent

*'Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity'*  
(National Curriculum, 2014)

At Green Ridge, we know that nearly everyone enjoys music, whether by listening to it, singing, or playing an instrument. Whether studied as a discreet subject or as part of the wider curriculum, music can **enrich** pupils' lives and education.

We believe that pupils should leave primary school having a knowledge of the building blocks used to create music (and subsequently what we use as our markers to appreciate it), known as the **elements of music**:

- Duration
- Tempo
- Timbre
- Melody
- Rhythm
- Dynamics
- Form/structure.

Pupils can acquire these skills sequentially over their time at Green Ridge, being introduced in the youngest of year-groups in ways in which the children can relate to. We also recognise that the musical elements must be explicitly taught and defined, as well as learned through the vehicle of wider **music appreciation, theory and history**.

Music offers pupils a range of other learning skills, far beyond the music curriculum, which are broad and support many other areas of learning, such as:

Music is a **science**

It is exact, specific; and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart, a graph which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

Music is **mathematical**

It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions which must be done instantaneously. Pupils can develop their maths and pattern-recognition skills with the help of musical education; playing music offers repetition in a fun format.

Music is a **foreign language**

Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French; and the notation is certainly not English--but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language. Our pupils at Green Ridge learn German as their modern foreign language, and this supports them in developing their musical knowledge, both in terms of the history of famous composers and also of the Germanic musical terms.

Music is **history**

Music usually reflects the environments and times of its creation, often even the country and/or racial feeling.

Music is a **physical education**

It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lips, cheek, and facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach and chest muscles, which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets. Just like playing sports, children can develop motor skills when playing music.

Music is all these things, but most of all **music is art**

It allows children to take all these dry, technically boring (but difficult) musical skills and techniques and use them to create emotion. That is one thing that science cannot duplicate: humanism, feeling, emotion, call it what you will.

In addition to this, music supports many wider educational skills and dispositions which we wish to teach and instil within the children at Green Ridge:

- Musical training helps **develop language and reasoning**: Pupils who have early musical training will develop the areas of the brain related to language and reasoning. The left side of the brain is better developed with music, and songs can help imprint information on young minds.
- Develops a **mastery of memorisation**: Even when performing with sheet music, musicians are constantly using their memory to perform. The skill of memorisation can serve pupils well in education and beyond.
- Pupils learn to **improve their work**: Learning music promotes craftsmanship, and pupils learn to want to create good work instead of mediocre work. This desire can be applied to all subjects of study.
- A **sense of achievement**: Learning to play pieces of music on a new instrument can be a challenging, but achievable goal. Pupils who master even the smallest goal in music will be able to feel proud of their achievement.
- **Emotional development**: Pupils of music can be more emotionally developed, with empathy towards other cultures.
- Music **builds imagination and intellectual curiosity**: Introducing music in the early childhood years can help foster a positive attitude toward learning and curiosity. Artistic education develops the whole brain and develops a child's imagination.
- Music **supports pupils with their own mental health and well-being**: Pupils can fight stress by learning to play music. Soothing music is especially helpful in helping pupils relax.
- Musical instruments can **teach discipline**: Pupils who learn to play an instrument can learn a valuable lesson in discipline. They will have to set time aside to practice and rise to the challenge of learning with discipline to master playing their instrument.
- Pupils can **learn teamwork**: Many music lessons or performances require teamwork as part of an ensemble, band or orchestra. In these groups, pupils will learn how to work together, learn to respect one another's ideas, and build camaraderie.
- **Responsible risk-taking**: Performing a musical piece can bring fear and anxiety. Doing so teaches pupils how to take risks and deal with fear, which will help them become successful and reach their potential.
- **Better self-confidence**: With encouragement from teachers and parents, pupils playing a musical instrument can build pride and confidence. Musical education is also likely to develop better communication for pupils.

### In summary...

Music is a **multi-disciplinary subject**, which not only provides skills for music, but also supports many other learning and wider life skills which other subjects cannot do in the same way. In order to prepare children for the next stage of their musical education in Key Stage 3, at Green Ridge, we want the children to leave us with:

- A wide and growing musical vocabulary
- An appreciation for a range of musical styles and genres
- An appreciation of the different musical periods in history, and their impact on music of the current day
- The skill to play at least one instrument
- Being able to discuss and compare music they hear, using musical language
- Being able to compose music for different purposes and audiences; and
- Being able to read some musical notation.