

# DRAGON OF THE NORTH

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW, 2024

### ABOUT OUR TEACHING

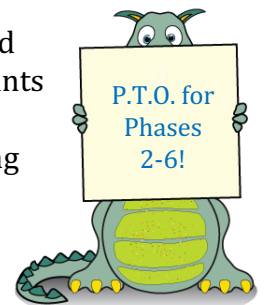
Our music curriculum is built on the fundamentals of rhythm, movement, coordination, listening, singing, solfege, improvisation, notation and composition. Each of these areas is carefully developed through 7 phases, with each phase representing a year's worth of study with 1 hour of whole class teaching per week. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, our work meets and exceeds both National Curriculum requirements, and the Government's non-statutory Model Music Curriculum.

At the Foundation Phase, reception children enjoy an introduction to the fundamentals of music-making through a variety of games and repertoire. By Phase 6, students are experienced performers - as singers and on a range of instruments - have a wide knowledge of great composers and musical genres from around the world, and have experienced the joy of music-making both as a vehicle for self-expression and as a collaborative process. We believe in inclusion, in welcoming mistakes as integral to the learning process, and in the right of all children to a rich, challenging and fun musical education.

The learning objectives in our curriculum weave elements of many pedagogical traditions and theorists, including Bloom, Dalcroze, Freire, Gardner, Kodaly and Orff, together with original activities and techniques drawn from our own practice. Our teachers have years of varied experience - both in schools and as professional musicians - and receive regular specialist training.

### FOUNDATION PHASE

Pupils can respond physically to a range of live and recorded music, showing a range of moods and feelings, creatures, weather, places, and other features of the world around them. They match rhythms and pitch through movement, identifying aural, verbal and visual cues from their teacher and from their peers: for example, to start and stop. With their voices, using body percussion, and playing tuned and untuned instruments, children perform fast and slow, high and low, loudly and quietly using alternate hands. A range of songs, chants and rhymes, different types of voice production, call and echo, and simple ostinati are all introduced, but without naming them at this stage. Generally in our teaching we prioritise direct experience, with explanation and analysis following later.



### PHASE 1

Pupils can repeat, improvise, and read simple rhythms using high and low sounds. They can hold a rhythm both independently and as part of a group, create 2-3 note phrases using tuned and untuned percussion, and know the first 3 solfege notes. Foundations are laid for correct breathing and posture in singing. Changes over time - for example in tempo - are experienced, and basic instrument groups identified. A ludic element to all games, activities and repertoire is maintained, encouraging improvisation and self-expression. Pupils are invited to express emotional responses to what they hear, and storytelling is used to frame their developing skills.



## PHASE 2

Pupils can play 2 independent parts simultaneously as part of an ensemble. They numericise melodies and express them using solfege, and sing a selection of songs from memory. Rests, working with syllables, 1-bar phrases, and a palette of rhythmic cells from semibreve to semiquaver are all familiar. Pupils sing as part of a round, conduct their classmates, and can lead with their non-dominant hand. Simple rhythmic notation is taught, and vocal melodies are created using So Mi and Do. Correct basic beater, drumstick and keyboard technique, and interrupted canons, are all experienced.

## PHASE 3

Pupils sing, read and write simple melodies using the full staff, deploying the number system taught in Phase 2. Arpeggios, the pentatonic scale, ostinati, and pedal point are recognised, sung, played, and used as creative tools. Pupils hold a rhythm while singing a melody, join in a full canon, explore binary forms such as verse and chorus, and understand the difference between solo and ensemble performance. They begin to broaden their knowledge of different musical genres, and start to develop an understanding of the history of music.

## PHASE 4

Pupils practise and perform a range of songs with increasing control and expression, singing with accurate pitch, and with an increasing awareness of historical and cultural context. Their solfege range extends beyond one octave, they participate in and conduct a feral choir, and they execute and improvise 2-bar phrases using percussion patterns of increased complexity. Triplets are encountered, major and minor tonalities are contrasted, and key forms such as ternary, rondo, and the blues are explored.

## PHASE 5

Pupils analyse, contextualise, and draw inspiration from the works of the great composers. Elements of song structure - verse, chorus, bridge, break, pre-chorus, solo - are listened for, discussed, performed, and used as creative building blocks. Minor scales, dotted rhythms, 4-bar phrases, 3/4 time and simple harmony are introduced. Pupils improvise freely and expressively in 3 and 4 time - both solo, and over a vamp or other accompaniment. Pieces in 3 parts are played, and songs are critiqued using appropriate musical terminology.

## PHASE 6

Pupils can place music alongside other art forms, as well as in its historical and cultural context. They learn about more advanced forms such as the symphony and the concerto, understand the staff and other styles of notation, and use increasingly sophisticated vocabulary to describe articulation, dynamics and mood. Pupils move to, vocalise, play, create and notate syncopated rhythms and accents, and improvise in 6/8, 2, 3 and 4 time. Major and minor tonalities are combined, and pieces with multiple parts are created, practised and performed. Pupils are comfortable leading an ensemble and functioning within it, and can play and sing in a range of contexts using a wide variety of instruments. For example, improvising on a theme, composing music for a short film, or accompanying a choir.

