



St Michael's Catholic Primary School – Progression of Music Skills

This document outlines how musical knowledge, skills, and understanding build progressively from EYFS to Year 6, across four key strands:

- 1. Performing (Singing and Instrumental)**
- 2. Listening and Appraising**
- 3. Composing and Improvising**
- 4. Musical Notation and Literacy**

EYFS (Reception)

Focus: Exploration, foundational skills, expressive development

Strand	Skills Progression
Performing	Sing simple songs from memory; match pitch and maintain a steady pulse using body percussion or instruments.
Listening	Respond physically to changes in tempo, pitch, and dynamics; recognise sounds from Western classical, film, and world music.
Composing	Explore making sounds with everyday objects; use vocal sounds and percussion to tell a story.
Notation	Begin using graphic symbols to represent sounds (dot/stick, picture symbols).



Key Stage 1 (Years 1–2)

Focus: Pulse, rhythm, pitch awareness, developing confidence in performance

Strand	Skills Progression
Performing	Sing in unison with expression; maintain a beat using untuned percussion; explore basic actions/body percussion.
Listening	Identify musical features (loud/soft, fast/slow); listen and respond to a range of genres and cultures (classical, film, chants, world music).
Composing	Create rhythmic and melodic patterns using ostinato; compose short pieces using simple structures (question/answer, call/response).
Notation	Begin using basic rhythmic symbols (crotchets, quavers); understand graphic notation; begin writing rhythms and simple graphic scores.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3–4)

Focus: Technical skill development, ensemble work, notation fluency

Strand	Skills Progression
Performing	Sing with control, pitch accuracy and dynamics; perform in parts (rounds, partner songs); play tuned instruments (keyboard, recorder, ukulele); begin ensemble playing.
Listening	Listen with attention to detail; recognise musical structures (binary, ternary); identify instruments and textures; appraise composers and genre features.
Composing	Improvise using scales and pentatonic patterns; compose using stimuli and musical elements (dynamics, tempo); create rhythms using note values.
Notation	Read and write standard notation (treble clef, middle C); understand note lengths and rests (crotchets, quavers, minims); use symbols to structure compositions.



Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5–6)

Focus: Advanced technique, expressive performance, independent composition

Strand	Skills Progression
Performing	Sing in harmony with expression and projection; perform confidently with tuned and untuned instruments; lead and follow in ensemble settings; stagecraft and rehearsal technique.
Listening	Analyse a wide range of genres using musical vocabulary (dynamics, texture, form, tempo, timbre); evaluate performances using constructive critique.
Composing	Compose using triads, chords, and more complex structures; explore songwriting and musical storytelling; record and edit performances using tech.
Notation	Read and write using full staff notation, including time signatures, clefs, note values, dynamics, and articulation marks (legato, staccato, fortissimo, etc.); interpret and create scores.

St Michael's Music Skills Progression Table

Strand	EYFS (Rec)	Key Stage 1 (Y1–2)	Lower KS2 (Y3–4)	Upper KS2 (Y5–6)
Performing	- Sing simple songs from memory- Keep a steady beat with movement	- Sing in unison with growing control- Use body percussion and untuned instruments	- Sing in parts (rounds, partner songs)- Play tuned instruments (keyboard, recorder)- Ensemble skills	- Sing with harmony and expression- Lead/follow in ensembles- Perform with stage presence
Listening & Appraising	- React to tempo, pitch, and dynamics- Identify different instruments	- Listen to classical, film, and world music- Identify tempo, dynamics, and instrument families	- Analyse musical form (binary, ternary)- Recognise musical features and historical context	- Use musical vocabulary to analyse pieces- Evaluate and compare styles, techniques, and composers
Composing & Improvising	- Explore sound effects and basic storytelling- Create sounds with voice and objects	- Compose simple rhythmic and melodic patterns- Use call/response and graphic scores	- Use pentatonic scales and chords- Improvise using tuned instruments- Compose with structure	- Compose full pieces using chords, triads, and notation- Use tech to record and edit performances
Notation & Literacy	- Use symbols and pictures to represent sounds (dot/stick/graphic)	- Read/write basic rhythm (crotchets, quavers)- Introduce graphic and stick notation	- Read treble clef (middle C onwards)- Understand note/rest values and time signatures	- Use full staff notation, dynamics, articulations- Write and read performance/ composition scores

