

Singing strategy

We believe that singing is inclusive and transcends all economical and academic boundaries, with huge benefits on mental and physical wellbeing. Therefore, singing will be at the heart of every music lesson, with pupils appreciating that singing is whole heartedly accepted and engraved in our school culture.

Alongside our Listening Strategy, children will enhance their ability to listen carefully and develop a sense of pitch, allowing them to sing in harmony and with musical delivery by the end of Year 6. All teachers will consistently use the principles outlined below in every singing lesson to support children in developing vocal production.

Children will learn to sing a wide range of styles throughout the Key Stages that will give them the opportunity to develop their vocal potential, love of music and refine their individual taste.

The following principles will be introduced and covered throughout the Key Stages as follows:

Warm ups – These will help pupils use their voices safely.

Breathing – A proper breathing technique has the potential to result in better control over the breath and thus the quality of the voice's tone and tuning, the ability to sing longer phrases, a natural (unforced) adjustment in dynamics, improved overall stamina, minimised tension in the chest, shoulders, neck and face, less pressure on the vocal folds and the freedom to expressively phrase melodies.

Posture – Correct posture (relaxed, soft knees, shoulders back) will set the body up to produce unforced but well focused sound.

Dynamics – An understanding of this will allow children to sing out with confidence and expression but not tip over into shouting.

Phrasing – This will give shape to melodic lines and ultimately create musical interest in the melody.

Context – This will help children tell the story of the song through considering the context in which it was written, or by discussing the meaning of the lyrics or certain words.

Vocal health – In line with 'warm ups', this will ensure the children take care of their voices by keeping hydrated, resting their voices and keeping vocal muscles relaxed.

Teachers should be aware that the acquisition of these principles will develop slowly over time but will equip our pupils for a future in singing and music.

Where possible, teachers will encourage pupils to discuss and use terminology surrounding the interrelated dimensions of music as outlined in each year group focus.

Pulse | Rhythm | Pitch | Dynamics | Tempo | Timbre | Structure | Texture | Notation

Year 1

1. Focus on singing simple songs, chants, rhymes, rap and spoken word in unison, with many being sung from memory.
2. Sing simple songs, at the same pitch and in unison, beginning with a small range (E-G) and then a slightly wider range including pentatonic songs e.g. 1,2,3,4,5.
3. Begin responding to simple visual directions and counting in.
4. Sing a range of call and response songs, copying back intervals of an octave and fifth (high, low) to control vocal pitch and match the pitch they can hear.
5. Begin to demonstrate good singing posture.

Year 2

1. Sing songs regularly with increasing vocal control.
2. Sing from memory and/or from notation in unison and sometimes in parts with more pitching accuracy.
3. Sing to communicate the meaning of the words.
4. Be able to add actions to a song and move confidently to a steady beat.
5. Learn the meaning of dynamics (loud/quiet) and tempo (fast/slow).
6. Be able to define and demonstrate dynamics and tempo when singing by responding to (a) the leader's directions and (b) visual symbols (e.g. crescendo < decrescendo > and pause ).
7. Sing as part of a choir within extended singing opportunities e.g. whole school assemblies
8. Continue to build on good singing posture.

Year 3

1. Sing a widening range of unison songs, of varying styles and structures.
2. Sing from memory and/or from notation in unison and tunefully.
3. Sing expressively, with attention to the meaning of the words.
4. Be able to perform actions confidently and in time to a range of action songs.
5. Sing with an awareness of following the beat.
6. Build on their knowledge of dynamics by performing forte and piano, loud and soft.
7. Understand and follow the leader or conductor.
8. Copy back simple melodic phrases using the voice.
9. Sing as part of a choir within extended singing opportunities e.g. whole school assemblies.
10. Continue to build on good singing posture.
11. Sing with attention to clear diction.

Year 4

1. Continue to sing a broad range of unison songs with the range of an octave.
2. Rehearse and learn songs from memory and/or with notation.
3. Sing expressively, with attention to breathing, phrasing, staccato, legato.
4. Sing in different time signatures: 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4.
5. Sing 'on pitch' and 'in time'.
6. Understand and follow the leader or conductor responding to instructions for getting louder (crescendo) and getting quieter (decrescendo).
7. Sing as part of a choir with an awareness of size: the larger, the thicker and richer the musical texture.
8. Continue to build on good singing posture.
9. Demonstrate vowel sounds, blended sounds and consonants.

Year 5

1. Sing a broad range of songs from an extended repertoire.
2. Sing in unison and parts, and as part of a smaller group with a sense of ensemble and performance.
3. Rehearse and learn songs from memory and/or with notation.
4. Sing expressively, with attention to breathing, phrasing and dynamics.
5. Sing in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 and 6/8 time.
6. Sing 'on pitch' and 'in time'.
7. Self-correct if lost or out of time.
8. Sing a second part in a song.
9. Develop confidence as a soloist.
10. Demonstrate articulation whilst singing.

Year 6

1. Sing a broad range of songs as part of a choir with a good sense of ensemble and performance. This should include observing rhythm, phrasing, accurate pitching and appropriate style.
2. Continue to sing in parts where appropriate.
3. Rehearse and learn songs from memory and/or with notation.
4. Sing expressively, with attention to breathing, phrasing and dynamics.
5. Sing in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4 and 6/8 time.
6. Sing syncopated melodic patterns.
7. Sing with and without accompaniment.
8. Demonstrate and maintain good singing posture and breath control whilst singing.
9. Talk about the different styles of singing used for the different styles of songs sung in this year.
10. Demonstrate articulation whilst singing.