

Music Policy

St Vincent's School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs



Approved by:	Mrs E McLaughlin, Mr L Green & The Governing Body	Date: 20/10/2025
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1. Purpose of the policy

This policy reflects the aims and values of St Vincent's School. It ensures all stakeholders, including staff, governors, parents and pupils, are working towards the same goals. Music is a vital part of our curriculum, offering all pupils, regardless of need or ability, the opportunity to explore creativity, develop self-expression, and build confidence.

The purpose of this policy is designed to:

- Set out a framework for all teaching and non-teaching staff, giving guidance on planning, teaching and assessment
- Demonstrate adherence to the National Curriculum objectives and guidelines
- Provide clear information to parents and carers about what their children will be taught
- Allow the governing board to monitor the curriculum
- Provide Ofsted inspectors with evidence of curriculum planning and implementation

This policy will be available on our school website www.stvin.com.

2. Subject vision

Our vision for Art and Design is to provide an inclusive, inspiring, and empowering learning experience where every pupil is valued as a creative individual. We believe that Art and Design plays a vital role in developing self-expression, communication, and confidence, and that it can open doors to understanding the world in new and meaningful ways.

Our vision is that every pupil leaves our school with positive experiences of Art and Design, a stronger sense of identity and voice, and the confidence to continue expressing themselves creatively beyond the classroom.

St Vincent's School follows the National Curriculum including the opportunities for an enhanced enriched curriculum.

3. Aims and outcomes

Aim:

The main aim of the Music Department is to recognise the musical potential in every pupil. Through the implementation of the National Curriculum, we hope that all pupils will reach the targets set, no matter how small they may be. This will take place through a very creative and practical curriculum. We encourage all pupils to have ownership of their music, and emphasis will be placed upon the fact that all contributions are worthwhile. Participation is for all, at every level. Music has an important part to play in the social and emotional development of the child. This is seen as an integral part of every music lesson. It is also recognised that for some children, music may be seen as a means of communication. For those children, whether their needs are physical or emotional, Music Therapy will be provided. The Music Department will continue to ensure that each child achieves their full potential, while still upholding and implementing the School Mission Statement.

The national curriculum for Music aims to ensure that pupils:

- 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
- 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.

Outcomes:

As a result of the aims of the Music Department, pupils will:

- Progress in performing, composing and appraising across a variety of styles, traditions and historical periods.
- Sing with confidence, accuracy and expression, both individually and as part of an ensemble.
- Play instruments and use music technology effectively and creatively to support musical work.
- Demonstrate understanding of the inter-related dimensions of music and apply these within practical tasks.
- Take ownership of their musical learning, contributing ideas with confidence and creativity.
- Develop transferable skills such as listening, collaboration, resilience and problem-solving.
- Use music as a form of communication and self-expression, with Music Therapy provided where appropriate for pupils with additional needs.
- Build confidence, self-esteem and a sense of achievement through active participation in lessons and extracurricular activities.
- Recognise the cultural, social and emotional value of music and foster a lifelong enjoyment and appreciation of the subject.

4. Teaching and learning

Music is taught in single-aged classes by class teachers and/or specialist music staff. Lesson plans are based around the subject's long-term plan and the resources available, with objectives adapted to suit the stage of development for the pupils in each class.

The Music curriculum is delivered through **Kapow (Primary)** and **Musical Contexts (Key Stage 3)**. Both schemes are adapted where necessary to ensure accessibility for pupils with visual impairment, and they are supplemented by the Curriculum Framework for Visual Impairment (CFVI). Teachers also draw on the expertise of QTVIs and specialist music practitioners, as well as accessible resources and online platforms such as Oak National Academy.

Our curriculum is informed by the Model Music Curriculum (DfE) and the Ofsted Research Review for Music. It emphasises creativity, inclusivity, and progression, while ensuring opportunities for pupils to perform, compose, listen to, and appraise music across a wide range of genres, cultures and historical periods. A key feature of our units is the encouragement of critical listening, discussion and reflection on the social, emotional and cultural influences of music, as well as the development of pupils' own musical expression.

The Music curriculum includes a broad range of traditions, drawing from the Western canon and music from across the globe. It is inclusive and representative, recognising the importance of diverse musicians and composers to reflect the backgrounds and experiences of all pupils.

Teaching Methods

- Forward planning is essential, particularly where instruments, technology, or specialist equipment are required.
- The physical location and safety of pupils in the classroom must be considered, e.g. clear pathways for moving safely with instruments, adapted seating, or additional lighting for partially sighted pupils.
- "Hands on" exploration of instruments, technology, and sound sources is encouraged wherever possible.
- More discussion time may be required for pupils with limited visual experiences, especially when describing notation, instruments, or visual aspects of music-making.
- A wide range of adapted equipment (e.g. tactile scores, Braille notation, large print, screen-reading software, DAWs with accessibility features) should be provided to ensure access to all aspects of the curriculum.
- Wherever possible, musical 'starting points' should be provided through practical examples, live performance, or recordings to support pupils' understanding.
- Technology, including accessible music software, MIDI controllers, and sound manipulation tools, will be integrated to broaden participation.
- Resource materials may include tactile diagrams, audio description, Braille scores, ICT packages, and support from LVAs (Learning and Vision Assistants).
- Performances and examples of pupils' work should be shared and celebrated in class and across the school.

Manual Dexterity

For some visually impaired pupils, fine and gross motor skills may need additional support to enable success in musical activities. These include:

- Handling and playing small percussion instruments.
- Developing control of larger instruments such as keyboards, guitars, and drums.
- Using notation tools such as Braille music machines, large-print staves, or tactile resources.
- Using technology such as laptops, iPads, or accessible DAWs, requiring keyboard or touch control.

- Coordinating movements for ensemble performance, keeping pulse and rhythm in time with others.
- Manipulating sound-producing materials (e.g. beaters, mallets, bows, or sliders).

Progression

- Because of differences in visual acuity, motor skills and individual musical abilities, pupils will achieve objectives at different times and with varying degrees of independence.
- Progression through the curriculum will ensure that skills, understanding, and experiences are developed steadily and sequentially.
- Targets will be realistic, appropriate, and achievable, recognising small steps of progress as valuable achievements.
- Pupils will be supported to move on to the next level of musical learning, whether in performance, composition, or use of technology, ensuring that opportunities for excellence remain open to all.

5. Curriculum overview

Here at St Vincent's, our pupils follow a **progressive Music curriculum** that gradually develops learning, with the outcome being the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and understanding that enable each pupil to listen, perform, create, and analyse music. The curriculum is delivered through **Kapow Music (Primary)**, **Musical Contexts (KS3)**, **RSL VQ in Creative Music Industry (KS4)**, and **Pearson BTEC Music courses (KS5)**, ensuring a coherent and sequential approach to musical learning across the school.

Our Music curriculum focuses on the knowledge and skills specific to music, including:

- **Performance, composition, and music technology** – practised discretely to develop technical proficiency and confidence, as part of a broad programme that encourages pupils' creativity, exploration, and original thinking.
- **Cultural and contextual knowledge about musicians, composers, and musical traditions** – how music is created, performed, interpreted, and evaluated, enabling pupils to develop their own appreciation, critical understanding, and musical opinions.

5.1 Key Stage (KS) 1

Pupils are introduced to fundamental musical concepts such as pulse, rhythm, pitch, and dynamics. They explore music through singing, percussion, and simple instruments. Emphasis is placed on enjoyment, listening skills, and creative expression.

5.2 Key Stage (KS) 2

Pupils develop more advanced skills in performing, composing, and using music technology. They explore a wide range of musical styles, traditions, and instruments. Pupils begin to analyse music, identify key features, and express their own musical ideas with increasing confidence.

5.3 Key Stage (KS) 3

- Pupils consolidate their performance and composition skills while exploring complex musical structures, forms, and notation.
- They study music from diverse historical periods, global traditions, and contemporary genres.

- Pupils engage in critical listening, evaluation, and reflection, developing informed opinions and contextual understanding.
- Technology is integrated into composing, recording, and editing, supporting creative and practical skills.
- By the end of KS3, pupils are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to progress to GCSE or vocational music pathways.

5.4 Key Stage (KS) 4

Music is not part of the statutory National Curriculum at KS4. However, pupils who choose to study Music typically follow an accredited course which builds on KS3 skills and includes:

- Developing practical skills relevant to the music industry, including performance, songwriting, arranging, and music production.
- Learning to plan, create, and evaluate their own musical projects using professional-standard technology and software.
- Gaining experience in collaboration, self-management, and professional practice, reflecting real-world music industry contexts.
- Assessment focuses on practical output, creativity, and reflective appraisal, preparing pupils for further education, vocational pathways, or employment in the music industry.
- A curriculum supporting progression from KS3 by consolidating performance and composition skills while adding professional knowledge and industry awareness.

5.5 Key Stage (KS) 5

Music is not part of the statutory National Curriculum at KS5. However, pupils who choose to study Music typically follow an accredited course which builds on KS4 skills and includes:

- Pupils study **BTEC Music courses**, developing advanced performance, composition, and/or production skills.
- Courses emphasise professional practice, project management, and entrepreneurship within the music industry.
- Pupils explore industry-standard software, studio recording, live performance, and event management.
- Assessment is based on **portfolio work, practical projects, performances, and written/reflection tasks**, ensuring pupils are prepared for Higher Education, vocational training, or careers in music.
- Cultural, contextual, and analytical skills are deepened, with students able to critically evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Detail of programmes of study/curriculum maps can also be found on our school website: www.stvin.com

5.6 Programmes of study

	Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
Year 1	Keeping the Pulse	Tempo	Dynamics	Sound Patterns	Pitch	Musical Symbols
Year 2	Call and Response	Instruments	Singing	Contrasting Dynamics	Structure	Pitch
Year 3	Ballads	Creating Composition in Relation to Animation	Developing Singing techniques	Pentatonic melodies and composition	Jazz	Traditional Instruments and Improvisation
Year 4	Body and Tuned Percussion	Rock and Roll	Changes in Pitch	Haiku Music and Performance	Samba and Carnival Sounds and Instruments	Adapting and Transposing Motifs
Year 5	Composing Notation	Blues	South and West Africa	Composition to represent the festival of colour	Looping and Remixing	Musical Theatre
Year 6	Dynamics, Pitch and Texture	Songs of world war 2	Film music	Theme and Variation	Baroque	Composing and Performing a Leavers Song
Year 7	Building Bricks	Keyboard Skills	I've got Rhythm	Form and Structure	Sonority City	Folk Music
Year 8	Hooks and Riffs	Offbeat	Variations	All That Jazz	All About the Bass	Saharan Sounds
Year 9	Dance Music	Soundtracks	Computer and Video Game Music	New Directions	Back in time to the popular music	What Makes a Good Song?
Year 10	Job Roles and Industry Basics	Music Styles in Context (Part 1)	Music Styles in Context (Part 2)	Organising a Music Event or Music Performance	(Organising a Music Event or Music Performance	Mini Showcase / Trial Run or End of Year Mini Performance
Year 11	External Exam Preparation	Organising a Music Event Or Music Performance	Organising a Music Event Or Music Performance	Organising a Music Event Or Music Performance	Organising a Music Event Or Music Performance	Portfolio Completion & Progression
P16	BTEC Lv 2 in Music Industry skills Or BTEC Level 3 in Music Performance	BTEC Lv 2 in Music Industry skills Or BTEC Level 3 in Music Performance	BTEC Lv 2 in Music Industry skills Or BTEC Level 3 in Music Performance	BTEC Lv 2 in Music Industry skills Or BTEC Level 3 in Music Performance	BTEC Lv 2 in Music Industry skills Or BTEC Level 3 in Music Performance	BTEC Lv 2 in Music Industry skills Or BTEC Level 3 in Music Performance

6. Cross-curricular links

Music plays a central role in supporting and enriching learning across the whole curriculum. For pupils with SEND, it provides a practical, auditory, and creative means of engaging with concepts that might otherwise feel abstract or inaccessible. By linking Music with other subject areas, pupils are offered meaningful opportunities to reinforce skills, deepen understanding, and make personal connections.

Examples of cross-curricular links at St Vincent's include:

- **English and Communication** – using song lyrics, rhythm, and musical storytelling to inspire narrative writing, develop descriptive language, and support alternative forms of communication such as symbols, signs, and auditory prompts.
- **Mathematics** – exploring rhythm, beat, tempo, time signatures, and patterns in music to develop understanding of fractions, sequencing, and proportional reasoning.
- **Science** – investigating sound waves, pitch, volume, and timbre; exploring the physics of instruments and the properties of different materials.
- **History and Culture** – studying musical styles, composers, and traditions from different periods and cultures to broaden pupils' awareness of heritage and society.
- **PSHE and Wellbeing** – developing self-awareness, emotional regulation, resilience, and collaboration through group performance, improvisation, and shared musical projects.
- **Technology and Computing** – engaging with digital music production, sequencing software, DAWs, and multimedia tools to extend creativity in modern musical forms.
- **Physical Development** – improving fine and gross motor control through instrument playing, conducting, drumming, and movement-based activities.

By embedding these links, Music not only enhances pupils' progress in other subject areas but also reinforces transferable skills such as **creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication**.

The physical processes of performing, playing instruments, and using technology strengthen coordination, fine motor skills, and cognitive sequencing. Across all subjects, Music fosters transferable skills such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and self-expression.

In addition, Music supports **Citizenship, RSHE, and SMSC** by encouraging pupils to explore personal identity, express emotions safely, and understand and respect different perspectives and cultures. Collaborative musical projects nurture teamwork, empathy, and responsibility, while the study of diverse musical traditions promotes tolerance and cultural awareness. The subject also contributes to pupils' spiritual and moral development by providing opportunities for reflection, improvisation, and self-expression.

Through links to the **Gatsby Benchmarks**, pupils gain insight into the creative music industry, careers in performance, production, and composition, and transferable employability skills, helping to raise aspirations and prepare them for future pathways beyond school.

7. Assessment, recording and feedback

7.1 Assessment

At St Vincent's School, assessment in Music enables staff to understand what pupils have learnt previously, what they need to learn now, and what they will learn next. Assessment supports learning, progression, and personalised feedback for all pupils, including those with SEND.

Formative assessment

Teacher Observation

- Monitoring engagement, effort, and technique during practical music activities (e.g., singing, playing instruments, composing, or using technology).
- Assessing how pupils respond to feedback and develop their musical ideas.

Workbook / Folder / Digital Portfolio Reviews

- Evaluating the development of musical ideas, compositions, recordings, and annotations.
- Encouraging self-reflection and documentation of progress, including listening journals or composition logs.

Questioning and Class Discussion

- Informally assessing understanding of musical concepts, techniques, and cultural/contextual knowledge.
- Checking for depth of thought, use of musical vocabulary, and analytical skills.

Peer and Self-Assessment

- Pupils reflect on their own performances or compositions and provide constructive feedback to classmates.
- Encourages independent learning, critical listening, and creative thinking.

Feedback (Verbal and Written)

- Regular, specific feedback from the teacher during lessons or through digital platforms.
- May include comments on recordings, compositions, or performance videos.

Summative assessment

Project Outcomes

- Final performances, compositions, or music technology projects assessed against clear criteria (e.g., creativity, technical skill, expression, and relevance to the brief).

End-of-term or End-of-year Grades

- Pupils assessed against school-based levels and recorded via **iTrack**.

At the end of each school term, pupils are assessed within one of the following bands:

- **Emerging**
- **Developing**
- **On Track**
- **Secure**

- **Exceeding**

Please see the below linked policies for further details:

- Assessment policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Marking

- Pupils receive regular feedback in line with St Vincent's School marking policy.
- Feedback may take the form of verbal comments during lessons, written notes on digital platforms, or recordings and annotations in portfolios.
- More information can be found in the school's **Assessment Policy** and **Marking and Feedback Policy**.

7.2 Recording

In Music, pupils will record their learning in a range of accessible and creative formats that reflect the diverse curriculum pathways followed at St Vincent's, including **Kapow**, **Musical Contexts**, **RSL VQ Creative Music Industry**, and **Pearson BTEC Music**.

- Pupils may evidence their learning through:
 - Music journals, topic books, or digital folders
 - Audio and video recordings of performances and compositions
 - Digital portfolios and sequencing software files (e.g., MIDI/DAW work)
 - Online assessment-based tool – **iTrack** (Primary & KS3)
 - Coursework and externally assessed units (KS4 & KS5 qualifications)

Evidence may include:

- Photographs or videos of practical work
- Notation, graphic scores, lyrics, or composition sketches
- Reflective notes, self-evaluations, and listening responses
- Teacher and peer feedback

We provide regular, personalised targets and share progress with pupils throughout units of work. Formal progress is reported to parents and carers:

- **Termly** through verbal feedback at Parents' Evenings
- **Twice yearly** through written reports: one for Annual Review and one for Monitoring Evening

8. Resources

8.1 Textbooks and other equipment

The Music Department provides a wide range of instruments, technology, and learning resources to support inclusive and practical music-making across all key stages. This includes:

- Classroom instruments such as keyboards, tuned and untuned percussion, ukuleles, drums and world instruments
- Specialist equipment for pupils with visual impairments, including tactile notation resources, braille music technology, and adapted performance tools
- Recording and music technology equipment such as microphones, audio interfaces, headphones, mixers and iPads
- Digital music platforms including sequencing software and accessible music apps
- Listening and research tools including audio libraries, live and recorded music examples, and contextual reference materials

All equipment is maintained to meet health and safety standards and ensure accessibility for every pupil. Resources are used purposefully to enhance curriculum delivery, musical skill development, independence, creativity, and enjoyment. The department aims to ensure all students—regardless of background, ability, or need—have equal access to high-quality musical experiences.

8.2 External speakers, local museums, trips

Trips, workshops, and visiting musicians are integral to enriching the Music curriculum. They provide real-world musical context, inspire creativity, raise cultural awareness, and broaden pupils' experience of music beyond the classroom.

Educational Visits

- Visits to concerts, music venues, recording studios, theatres, and community music events are directly linked to curriculum content and support performance, listening, and industry knowledge.
- Trips are planned with clear musical learning objectives and follow school procedures for risk assessments, consent, and safeguarding.
- Post-visit reflection is encouraged through discussion, listening logs, and creative responses such as composition or performance tasks.
- Financial support will be considered to ensure access for all pupils.

External Musicians and Industry Professionals

- Visiting musicians, producers, and creative industry specialists bring professional insight and expertise into learning.
- Sessions may include performances, workshops, masterclasses, talks, demonstrations, or collaborative projects and must align with curriculum goals.
- All visitors follow school safeguarding procedures and are supervised at all times.

The impact of all visits and external sessions is evaluated through student feedback and staff reflection to inform future planning, ensuring meaningful and memorable curriculum enrichment.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team at St Vincent's school will:

- Support the subject leader but also hold them to account for the effectiveness of the subject

- Support staff through the provision of training and resources
- Monitor the planning and delivery of the subject
- Ensure the requirements of the National Curriculum are met
- Ensure this policy is reviewed according to the timescales set out

9.2 Subject leader

The subject leaders at St Vincent's school will:

- Prepare and review subject policy and curriculum plans
- Promote the study of the subject throughout the school
- Monitor the teaching and assessment of the subject
- Attend appropriate CPD
- Stay informed regarding developments in the study and teaching of the subject
- Evaluate resources
- Provide training and CPD to staff on the subject curriculum and its delivery, and keep them informed about subject developments nationally
- Assess the impact of the subject curriculum on pupils' learning and development

9.3 Link governor

The link governor responsible for monitoring the curriculum at our school will:

- Monitor the impact of the subject across the school and on pupils
- Monitor teacher workload and professional development
- Ensure subject action plans are suitable
- Monitor the quality of resources
- Keep track of pupil and parent engagement with the subject
- Keep up to date with the curriculum (what's taught, why it's taught, and how it's taught)

9.4 Classroom teacher

Classroom teachers at our school will:

- Teach and assess the subject according to the principles laid out in this policy
- Report to the curriculum manager / Assistant Headteacher
- Maintain subject knowledge and appropriate CPD

9.5 Parents

The parent community at our school will follow the responsibilities set out in the Home School Agreement.

10. Inclusion

All pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant Music curriculum that enables them to make progress in relation to their individual needs and starting points.

Pupils at St Vincent's may have additional sensory, physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioural or communication needs. For these pupils, teaching approaches and resources are further adapted to ensure accessibility and meaningful participation in music-making.

As a school, we follow the **SEND Code of Practice (2014, updated 2020)** and all provisions within pupils' **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**.

Teachers plan lessons so that pupils with visual impairment and additional needs can access Music fully and ensure that no barriers restrict achievement or enjoyment.

Differentiations for Levels of Ability

- Primary Music will be taught predominantly in class groups following the Kapow scheme
- KS3 Music (Years 7–9) will follow the Musical Contexts curriculum in grouped classes
- KS4 students follow an accredited pathway such as the RSL VQ in Creative Music Industry
- KS5 students have the option to progress to Pearson BTEC Music courses

Across all Key Stages, pupils follow a broad and balanced music curriculum that:

1. Matches task complexity to individual skill levels and needs
2. Supports secure development of vocal, instrumental, and listening skills
3. Encourages independence in musical decision-making and creativity
4. Builds understanding of musical traditions, culture, society, and industry
5. Provides opportunities for reflection, evaluation, and improvement
6. Embeds health and safety in all practical music-making
7. Highlights the cultural, technical, social, emotional and economic impact of music in the world today

Classroom Approaches

We aim to provide:

- A positive, supportive, and inclusive environment where all pupils feel confident to participate and perform
- Adapted, multi-sensory experiences including a strong emphasis on auditory, tactile, and kinaesthetic learning
- Clear modelling, individual teacher input, and small-group instruction when required
- High levels of specialist LSA support with relevant training for music and VI needs
- Access to modified notation and technology to reduce barriers and encourage independence
- Opportunities to explore a wide range of instruments, genres, and creative approaches

Teaching methods are flexible and responsive to individuals. The above list is not exhaustive and should be adapted for each pupil according to need and potential.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

11. Links to other policies

This subject policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- Assessment policy
- Marking and Feedback policy
- SEND policy

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by staff and governors every year.