

Progression of Skills – Music

This document outlines progression in Music across KS1 to Year 6. It outlines a skills-based progression for Music at Larwood School from KS1 to Year 6, shaped specifically for an SEMH setting.

Progression is deliberately non-linear, flexible and cumulative, recognising that pupils may revisit skills many times before securing them. Depth is prioritised over speed, and musical success is measured through engagement, confidence, regulation, collaboration and independence, rather than written outcomes or age-related attainment alone. Music learning at Larwood is primarily practical and verbal, with understanding demonstrated through discussion, listening, movement, and performance rather than written work. Musical vocabulary and theory (such as tempo, pitch, dynamics, pulse, and structure) are embedded through doing and talking, not recording. Expectations increase gradually across phases, not by assuming prior mastery, but by:

- Increasing choice, independence and musical responsibility.
- Extending sustained focus and ensemble awareness.
- Moving from supported participation to intentional music-making.

Strand	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	National Curriculum Links
Musical Elements (spoken & practical)	Expressive Arts and Design - Being Imaginative and Expressive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo and dynamics through songs, movement and play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo and dynamics through songs, movement and play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a steady pulse with support. • Begin to use musical vocabulary verbally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain pulse for longer. • Use musical vocabulary with increasing confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control tempo and dynamics intentionally. • Understand structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt musical elements for effect. • Explain choices using vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of interrelated dimensions: pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, structure.
Performing	Expressive Arts and Design - Being Imaginative and Expressive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join in with songs and simple playing. • Start and stop with adult cues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to join in with songs and simple playing. • Start and stop with adult cues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play or sing short patterns in time. Follow visual and verbal cues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a part while others play something different. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform longer pieces with fewer prompts. • Maintain ensemble awareness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform confidently with control and sustained focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts with increasing confidence.
Creating & Exploring	Expressive Arts and Design - Creating with Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. Personal, Social and Emotional Development - Managing Self <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore sounds freely. • Express ideas and feelings through music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore sounds freely. • Continue to express ideas and feelings through music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create short rhythmic or melodic ideas within clear boundaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine ideas into short patterns. • Explain choices verbally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ideas over time. • Adapt patterns to fit a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shape ideas to suit mood, style or purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts with increasing confidence.

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Strand	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	National Curriculum Links
Listening & Appraising	Communication and Language - Listening, Attention and Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen briefly and respond to changes (fast/slow, loud/quiet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to listen for longer periods of time and respond to changes (fast/slow, loud/quiet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify instruments and basic features. Talk about how music feels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise patterns and repeated sections using simple vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify structure, tempo and dynamics. Justify opinions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen critically and discuss style, mood and purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing accuracy.

National Curriculum links are intentionally broad and used to demonstrate coverage rather than age-related expectation. Progress is measured by engagement, independence, regulation, and musical decision-making.