



# Ofsted

## INSPECTOR CURRICULUM

### Primary Music aide-memoire

A high-quality music education should give pupils the tools and memorable experiences to understand music's place with the world and engage in the joy of making it.

### Contents

- ⇒ This document has been created to support inspectors undertaking a deep dive in Music.
- ⇒ It provides a high-level summary of stage two training and wider guidance.
- ⇒ The six focus areas provide a structure to explain subject level outcomes as identified by inspection activities.
- ⇒ School leaders may not be able and should not be expected to articulate their intent **as it is outlined** in this aide-memoire or to provide documents which neatly provide the evidence for the focus areas.

**Ed Watkins/Mark Phillips**

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## 1. Curriculum

### Scope:

The curriculum should develop pupils' knowledge and skills across the range of musical competencies. It should develop gradually, consolidate prior learning and prize quality of response.

### Technical

Can the pupils accurately produce sound vocally, instrumentally or using music technology? How do curriculum plans build this capability so that:

- **building blocks are small**
- **learning is consolidated**
- **learning is coherent across units of work**

What are curricular expectations regarding staff and other notations? Are these met?

### Constructive

How well does the curriculum develop the understanding and application of musical components:

- **elements** such as pitch or metre. Can pupils use this language to talk about music at all?
- **the components of composition** e.g. the melody. Do pupils develop the components over time?

### Expressive

What is the medium used in the curriculum for considering musical quality?

- **simple and beautiful comes before complex** but error strewn.
- Are the **mechanical aspects of composition learnt well enough** to give pupils the freedom to be imaginative?
- Do pupils listen to a wide range of music?

### Sequencing

Do later units consolidate previous concepts?

**The curriculum has considered the transfer, or lack of transfer, across domains in its sequencing.** This might be a route to explore if the curriculum defines activities and experiences e.g. how does instrumental skill develop if the instrument isn't consistent across units of work?

Has learning been **defined in small enough steps** and do these steps avoid cognitive overload? Any discussion should start from an awareness of what the steps are in the first place and how these are consolidated before further progress is made.



### Memory

Are technical and analytical competencies **learnt to automaticity** to enable higher level learning and expressive responses to be developed?

Do plans connect existing learning to new learning?

Do pupils demonstrate the deep learning of concepts and skills that the curriculum lays out?



## 2. Pedagogy

### What is the rationale for the teaching chosen in lessons (fitness for purpose)?

Do activities support the curriculum intent?  
 Are pedagogical approaches well matched to the stages of learning?

### How well can pupils realise the creative intentions of the curriculum?

Pupils have a clear idea of how to work with the constituent elements of their compositions and bring them together to a convincing whole.

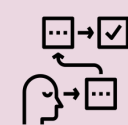
### How well can pupils meet curricular intentions regarding the use of communications systems like staff notation?

Have these expectations been set at a level a large majority of pupils can meet?

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## 3. Assessment

- How does assessment identify progress in the **components** which underly musical progress?
- How does this assessment support the giving of usefully specific **feedback**?
- Does assessment focus on the building of **competence** over the rehearsal of outcomes?
- How does musical assessment interact with school-wide rehearsal schedules?




## 5. Systems


- What **strengths and weaknesses** have you identified through the deep dive? Can the school readily **explain** and **qualify** potential systemic issues? What mechanisms are there for curriculum construction and renewal?
- How are inexperienced or non-specialist staff supported?
- Do induction and training provide staff with a **shared knowledge of the music curriculum**? Does development attend to teachers' subject expertise and pedagogical content knowledge?



## 4. Culture

- How does a thriving **musical culture** manifest in the school? 
- What allowances are made for staff, e.g. in loading, to enable them to build a school's **co-curricular** life?
- Are pupils involved in much music making **outside the classroom**? When are they able to share this with the rest of the school community?

## 6. Policy

- Can school leaders articulate how music departments **operate differently** to other core/foundation subjects? This is likely to include the role of **vertical groups** and learning that takes place **outside the taught curriculum** hours. 
- What is the presence and/or impact of **carousels**?
- Is **sufficient time** allocated for teaching?
- Is **CPD** conceived of as a series of developmental events with similar principles in mind to the way in which our pupils learn?



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## INSPECTOR CURRICULUM

### Secondary Music aide-memoire

A high-quality music education should give pupils the tools and memorable experiences to understand music's place with the world and engage in the joy of making it.

### Contents

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- ⇒ It provides a high-level summary of stage two training and wider guidance.
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- ⇒ School leaders may not be able and should not be expected to articulate their intent **as it is outlined** in this aide-memoire or to provide documents which neatly provide the evidence for the focus areas.

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## 1. Curriculum

### Scope:

The curriculum should develop pupils' knowledge and skills across the range of musical competencies. It should develop gradually, consolidate prior learning and prize quality of response.

### Technical

Can the pupils accurately produce sound vocally, instrumentally or using music technology? How do curriculum plans build this capability so that:

- building blocks are small
- learning is consolidated
- learning is coherent across units of work

What are curricular expectations regarding staff and other notations? Are these met?

### Constructive

How well does the curriculum develop the understanding and application of musical components:

- elements such as pitch or metre. Can pupils use this language to talk about music at all?
- the components of composition e.g. the melody. Do pupils develop the components over time?

Are these secure enough to be available for use in descriptive or composite creative tasks?

### Expressive

What is the medium used in the curriculum for considering musical quality?

- simple and beautiful comes before complex but error strewn.

Are the mechanical aspects of composition learnt well enough to give pupils the freedom to be imaginative?

Do pupils listen to a wide range of music?

### Sequencing

Do later units consolidate previous concepts?

**The curriculum has considered the transfer, or lack of transfer, across domains in its sequencing.** This might be a route to explore if the curriculum defines activities and experiences e.g. how does instrumental skill develop if the instrument isn't consistent across units of work?

Has learning been **defined in small enough steps** and do these steps avoid cognitive overload? Any discussion should start from an awareness of what the steps are in the first place and how these are consolidated before further progress is made.



### Memory

Are technical and analytical competencies **learnt to automaticity** to enable higher level learning and expressive responses to be developed?

Do plans connect existing learning to new learning?



## 2. Pedagogy

### What is the rationale for the teaching chosen in lessons (fitness for purpose)?

Do activities support the curriculum intent?

Are pedagogical approaches well matched to the stages of learning?

### How well can pupils realise the creative intentions of the curriculum?

Pupils have a clear idea of how to work with the constituent elements of their compositions and bring them together to a convincing whole.

### How does the dept. prepare pupils for assessments and exams?

Are exam papers/assessments *the* curriculum? Do staff give feedback on components of complex tasks to build structurally sound foundations for composite artefacts?

### How well can pupils meet curricular intentions regarding the use of communications systems like staff notation?

Have these expectations been set at a level a large majority of pupils can meet?

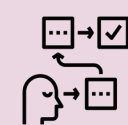
## 3. Assessment

How does assessment identify progress in the **components** which underly musical progress?

How does this assessment support the giving of usefully specific **feedback**?

Does assessment focus on the building of **competence** over the rehearsal of outcomes?

How does musical assessment interact with school-wide rehearsal schedules?



## 5. Systems


What **strengths and weaknesses** have you identified through the deep dive? Can the school readily **explain** and **qualify** potential systemic issues? What mechanisms are there for curriculum construction and renewal?

How are inexperienced or non-specialist staff supported?

Do induction and training provide staff with a **shared knowledge of the music curriculum**? Does development attend to teachers' subject expertise and pedagogical content knowledge?



## 4. Culture


How does a thriving **musical culture** manifest in the school? 

What allowances are made for staff, e.g. in loading, to enable them to build a school's **co-curricular** life?

Are pupils involved in much music making **outside the classroom**? When are they able to share this with the rest of the school community?

Is there good **uptake** of music beyond key stage 3?

## 6. Policy

Can school leaders articulate how music departments **operate differently** to other core/foundation subjects? This is likely to include the role of **vertical groups** and learning that takes place **outside the taught curriculum** hours. 

What is the presence and/or impact of **carousels**?

Is **sufficient time** allocated for teaching?

Is **CPD** conceived of as a series of developmental events with similar principles in mind to the way in which our pupils learn?