



Why is music important at St Alban's

At St Alban's music plays an important part in children's academic achievements: developing memory, attention and problem-solving skills. Music provides a platform for emotional expression and social interaction. It encourages creativity and fosters imagination. Music is deeply rooted in various cultures and traditions. Introducing children to a diverse range of musical genres and styles exposes them to different cultural perspectives and promotes cultural appreciation. Learning music requires discipline, practice, and focus. Children learn the value of persistence, goal-setting, and time management as they work towards mastering an instrument or perfecting a musical piece. Participating in music education builds confidence and self-esteem. As children develop their musical abilities and showcase their talents through performances, they gain a sense of accomplishment and pride. Music has a therapeutic effect on children's' well-being. Engaging in music can reduce stress, improve mood, and enhance overall mental health. Introducing music education in schools cultivates a lifelong appreciation and engagement with music. Children exposed to music at a young age are more likely to continue their musical interests into adulthood.

How do we structure music at our school?

We follow the National Curriculum (Model Music Curriculum) to structure our music curriculum, as we know that this means our curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. At St Alban's we teach music discretely. For music, we have thought carefully about how we sequence learning over time and have broken down learning into small steps or building blocks, starting from when children enter primary school until they leave. At each step, we consider what specific knowledge and understanding we want our pupils to know and remember at each stage of their learning and in each subject. The end of the Foundation Stage, KS1, Lower KS2 and Upper KS2 are key end points for each of these building blocks of our curriculum. We know what we want our pupils to know and remember at each of these end points, focusing on what will be most useful to them, and have sequenced lessons over time to reach those end points. To support planning, we use Charanga Model Music Curriculum. This scheme provides full coverage of the primary model music curriculum. The scheme supports the music leader and teachers through mapping the curriculum, outlines knowledge and skills, musical progression, musical elements and styles covered in each year group.

Musical genres, styles and cultures

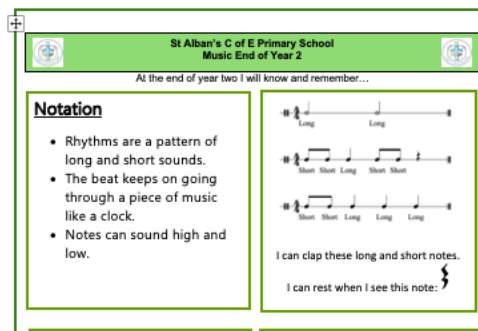
The Scheme exposes children to a wide range of musical genres, styles, and cultures. It celebrates musical diversity and encourages children to explore and appreciate music from different traditions and backgrounds. Our children can easily identify music genres as this is re-enforced daily through children being exposed to different genres through them being played on the speakers in the corridors and in assemblies.





Making Knowledge Sticky

Our curriculum has been carefully designed so that pupils gain more knowledge over time. Some knowledge is very important, and we return to this regularly to help it 'stick' in children's memory. At the end of each unit of work, class teachers have worked with the subject lead to identify key knowledge that they want children to know and remember. At St Alban's we treat our children like scholars, key knowledge is added to the children's music books so that they can look back at what they have learnt in previous years.



Music end of year knowledge is organised into: Notation, Musical Styles, Musical Notes and Orchestral Instruments.

Children's subject knowledge should be built on and revisited, so that they gain an in depth understanding of music that is embedded. Each year group has a music end of year document that is placed in the children's books, which contains key knowledge. This allows them to refer back to prior learning.

What instruments will you learn to play at St Alban's?



EYFS

In EYFS the children have the opportunity to play a variety of tuned percussion instruments such as boom whackers and glockenspiels. The outside area enhances their music exploration through having a selection of untuned percussion instruments, such as drums, tambourines, shakers. Everyday household items such as pans and baking trays as makeshift percussion instruments are used in the outside area this allows children to experiment with different sounds by tapping or striking them with hands or improvised drumsticks. Through doing this they are able to explore rhythm, beat, and dynamics, developing their sense of timing and coordination. The different textures and materials of pans and baking trays provide a tactile and sensory experience for children. They can feel the vibrations and variations in sound produced by different utensils on the surfaces. This sensory engagement enhances their overall musical experience and sensory perception. By experimenting with different sizes and types of pans or trays, children can discover how the sound changes based on the material and shape. Children can use pans and baking trays to create their own musical compositions or improvised performances. They can arrange the utensils in different orders, creating patterns or sequences of sounds. This encourages their creativity, imagination, and self-expression through music-making.

Music at St Alban's CE Primary School

Education for life in all its fullness.



At St Alban's music is performed through singing a wide variety of nursery rhymes and from a young age we want the children to explore their creativity and become composers. We achieve this through teaching them to tap out the rhythm pattern of shapes and colours. These are placed on cards that the children can re-arrange to create their own rhythm. At this age the children don't need to know the names of the notes, but they are being exposed to the length of different notation.

Year 1

In year 1 the children are mainly introduced to the tuned percussion instruments glockenspiels and boom whackers. Learning the glockenspiel introduces children to the world of music and instrumental playing. It helps develop a foundation of musical skills, including rhythm, pitch, and coordination. It allows them to experience first-hand how to create music and be part of a musical ensemble. Playing the glockenspiel involves using small mallets to strike the metal bars, which requires fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Practicing and playing the instrument can help children refine their motor skills, including finger dexterity and precision. Playing the glockenspiel helps children develop their ability to discriminate between different pitches and tones. Playing the glockenspiel in a group setting, such as a classroom or ensemble, encourages teamwork and collaboration. Children learn to listen to one another, Learning to play an instrument like the glockenspiel can boost children's confidence. As they practice and improve their skills, they gain a sense of achievement and self-assurance. Learning to play the glockenspiel often involves reading simple sheet music or color-coded notation. This introduces children to basic musical notation, rhythm symbols, and concepts such as melody and harmony. It provides a foundation for future music learning and understanding. Playing the glockenspiel allows children to express themselves creatively through music. Playing an instrument requires concentration and focus. Learning to play the glockenspiel helps children develop the ability to concentrate for sustained periods, listen attentively, and follow instructions.



Year 2- Year 6

From year 2 and throughout key stage 2 the children focus on learning to play the recorder. Every child and teacher has their own recorder. Every teacher has had training and a detailed recorder booklet has been put together providing them with instructions of how to play the recorder.

At St Alban's the recorder was chosen to be the instrument that is focused on because it introduces children to fundamental concepts of music theory, such as reading musical notation, understanding rhythm, and recognizing pitch. Playing the recorder helps children develop basic instrumental techniques, including breath control, finger coordination, and hand-eye coordination. These skills are transferable to other wind and brass instruments, making the recorder a valuable starting point for future musical exploration. The recorder is often taught in a group setting, allowing children to learn and play music together as





an ensemble. This promotes teamwork, collaboration, and listening skills. Learning to read and play music on the recorder enhances children's musical literacy. They gain exposure to different musical symbols, notation, and terminology. This strengthens their understanding of musical structure, dynamics, and expression, enabling them to communicate and interpret music more effectively. The recorder is a portable and affordable instrument that can be easily carried and played anywhere. Learning to play an instrument like the recorder can boost children's confidence. As they practice and improve their skills, they gain a sense of achievement and self-assurance. Learning to play the recorder develops a range of transferable skills that extend beyond music. It enhances concentration, discipline, and focus. It also promotes patience, perseverance, and the ability to set and achieve goals. These skills can positively impact children's overall academic performance and personal development.

School instruments and private lessons

At St Alban's children are able to build on their music interest through having private lessons to learn various string instruments, brass and woodwind, such as guitar, violin, cornet, flute, piano. Children have an opportunity to celebrate their musical talents in assemblies, whole school plays and concerts.

School Choir

St Alban's has a choir that often performs at school and in local community events. The children who have lessons at school, recently put on a concert for their families and our school choir at the opportunity to perform.

How to play the recorder

At St Alban's we first teach the children how to hold and position the recorder.

Holding position

If you play before I say you make the instrument go away. Rest position, for when you are showing or demonstrating something. Practice position, for when they are practicing their hand position, but are not ready to play yet. They hold their instrument the same way as they would when playing, but rest the mouth piece under their chin, instead of under or near their mouth. If a child blows the recorder take the top off, so that they can focus on just the fingering.

Play position, to play the recorder.



We then teach the children how to blow the recorder. This is to ensure they get a nice tone and limit the squeaks.

Proper blowing technique

How to blow into the recorder to produce a pleasant tone.

Play a short melody for the class on your recorder and afterwards point out that the volume level you were playing for them is the maximum volume the instrument can physically produce without sounding awful.

Get the children to echo you as you speak 4-beat rhythm patterns on the number two, using a quiet speaking voice the whole time, then they can echo you on the word 'two' again but using a whisper voice.

Once the children have gotten the feel for how to blow softly, have them echo you again, still whispering two, into their instruments. Have them hold the instrument with their left hand, not covering any holes.

Learning any instrument takes time and practice, so we are careful not to rush through too quickly, so that the children become confident with their instrument. At St Alban's the first note we teach the children on the recorder is G, following this we then teach A.



Knowing how to play the instrument is important and having the correct technique, but the care of the instrument is just as vital.

Cleaning up



Children don't need to clean their recorders with the length of playing time taking place. Children place their recorders upside down (head joint at the bottom) in the draw string bag. This allows the recorder to dry out. Then place their recorder in their draw. Number the recorders and have a list of the names and numbers so can keep a track.

At St Alban's all the staff have been provided with a booklet that out lines how to play the recorder.

Recorder Playing

It is important that we adopt the correct posture for playing any instrument or singing from early on. Later on, if we do not have the correct posture, it will limit the children on how far they can go.

Basic recorder information.

There are three parts to a recorder the head, body and foot joint.

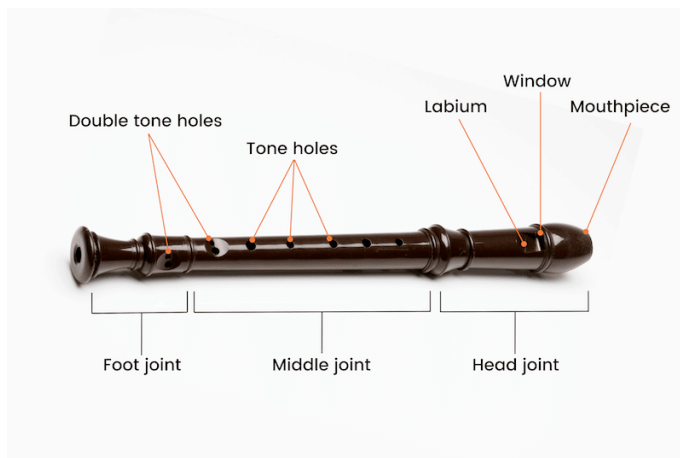
The head joint has a rectangular hole where the sound comes out and a thin hole for blowing into.

The body joint has most of the holes at the front and one singular hole on the back for the thumb.

The foot is short and has doubled holes for performing accidentals.

The head joint should be facing towards your lips.

The rectangular hole and the first of the holes on the body should be in line.



Thumb hole

The thumb hole should face directly back towards you. The holes, including the rectangular hole should face directly away from the player. Important the children don't have the recorder twisted when playing.

Recorder angle

When bring the recorder to your lips, your body and the recorder should form a 45 degree angle or gentle slope towards the ground.



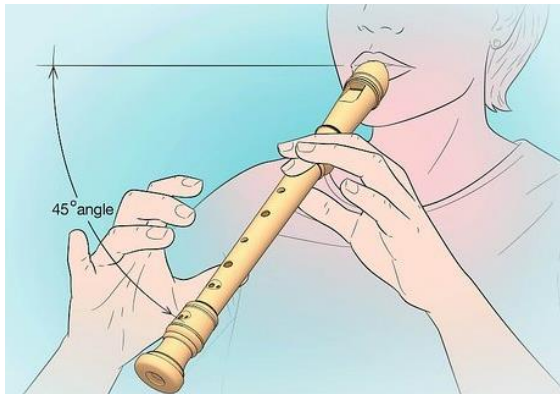
4 Lips around the mouthpiece

Your lips should make a circle shape and seal around the tip only of the mouth piece.

Teeth shouldn't touch the mouthpiece at all.

Don't put the whole recorder in your mouth.

Tongue should rest near the back of your top teeth.



How to blow

Blowing is very important in the process of learning to play recorder.

Keep in mind that the recorder is not an instrument with a large cavity so if you blow too hard it will block and you will get an unwanted effect.

The blow on the recorder should be soft, placing the lips around the hole or mouthpiece and should never bite or use the teeth.

Keep the tongue behind the upper teeth and blow as when you say the syllable "tu" or "du".

Be careful to cover the holes well if you don't get unwanted whistles or squeaks.

It is important not to blow too much air because the recorder collapses and unwanted sounds are produced, the recorder is a simple instrument for that reason.

That's why we don't need to push a lot of air.

left hand on top

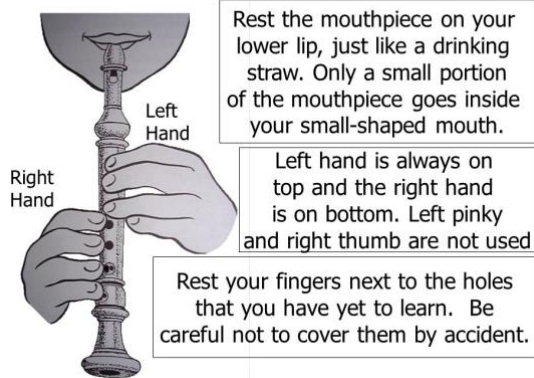
This is tradition – recorders have always been played this way.

Design- it is designed for left hand on top

Preparation- many other wind instruments also use the left hand on top, so prepares for this.

Design is the important reason. The holes on the front are not in a straight line. This is important, because our fingers are different lengths, and these holes line up with the longer and shorter fingers.

They only line up if our left hand is on top.



Fingers curved and perpendicular

When we go to cover the holes to play our fingers need to be slightly curved.

Need to cover the holes with the centre of our finger pads.

Need to make sure the fingers are perpendicular (forming a perfect T) with the length of the recorder.

Angled fingers are more likely to roll and cover the holes on the side of the finger. This will result in half covered holes which produce weak or squeaky sounds.

Don't pull elbows into your body or stick them out, let them relax at a natural position with your body.

Good posture

Good posture allows you to breathe more efficiently and without tension.

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