

# Music

## in the Early Years

at Malvern Wells



“The evidence suggests that children who undertake music education from early years have higher levels of cognitive capacity (especially regarding language acquisition and numerical problem solving), tend to remain in education for longer, and earn more across their lifetime. Even better news is that it can also reverse the cognitive issues relating to disadvantage.”

—ANITA COLLINS (RESEARCHER IN  
NEUROSCIENCE AND MUSIC EDUCATION,  
UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA, SYDNEY  
HERALD, JULY 2015)





Music interweaves through all areas of learning and development




Music making can be challenging to provide for in early years settings as it is noisy, and it can be difficult to document as it is live, invisible and once it has been created in that moment it disappears, unless we capture it



Music should not be quantified by performer-listener and should not only be judged by how music is perceived in western culture



# Introduction



Music can be a way of exploring, communicating and responding experience. Making music with others can be a social experience whether this be parent-baby/carer-baby exchanging coos, or two or more children making music with pots, pans or traditional instruments.

This interaction with others, whether this be with one other person or a group, is personal to each individual and is often an expression of feelings. All vocal communication is comprised of musical elements such as pitch, rhythm and timbre, demonstrating that musicality is an intrinsic part of being human. Music should be seen as a core component of children's learning and should be shared with young children to ensure they have broad, balanced and rounded experiences in early childhood and beyond.

# EYFS Music -Early Learning Goals



## Being Imaginative and Expressive

- ✓ Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs
- ✓ Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music



## Speaking

- ✓ Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences



## Listening, Attention and Understanding

- ✓ 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

# EYFS Music –Educational Programmes



## **Expressive Arts and Design**

The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.



## Child-Initiated Learning

Key indicators and examples of effective practice when monitoring music in the early years, in relation to child-initiated learning through an enabling environment

# AN ENABLING MUSICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT -Performing Area



## WHAT MIGHT I SEE CHILDREN DOING?

- Creating their own songs, singing familiar songs, and improvising songs.
- Matching music to pictures/visual resources at tidy up time.
- Anticipating changes in music, eg when music is going to get faster, louder, slower through physical responses and playing instruments.
- Clapping, tapping or moving to the pulse of the music they are singing or listening to and rhythms to accompany words.
- Physically interpreting the sound of instruments and the actions of musicians, eg walking on tiptoes to the sound of a xylophone or pretending to play a trumpet.
- Choreographing their own dances or replicating favourite dances.
- Acting as a 'conductor'.
- Listening and responding to others in pair/group music making.
- Holding and playing instruments effectively and with control to play loud/quiet, (dynamics), fast/slow (tempo) and to produce a good musical sound.

# AN ENABLING MUSICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT -Art and Workshop Area



WHAT MIGHT I SEE CHILDREN DOING?

- Creating visual representations of sounds, instruments and pieces of music, eg drawing or painting in response to music
- Making their own instruments from recycled, natural and found materials.

# AN ENABLING MUSICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT -Books and Stories Area



WHAT MIGHT I SEE CHILDREN DOING?

- Adding sound effects to favourite stories using musical instruments or through body percussion.
- Creating music based on a favourite story.
- Talking about genres of music and how they associate with characters and stories.
- Singing favourite nursery rhymes.

# AN ENABLING MUSICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT -Imaginative and Role-Play



WHAT MIGHT I SEE CHILDREN DOING?

- Singing in their role-play, e.g. singing phrases such as "dinner's ready" or "let's go" or singing songs whilst in role e.g. singing a lullaby whilst rocking a baby doll.

# AN ENABLING MUSICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT -Outdoor Learning



WHAT MIGHT I SEE CHILDREN DOING?

- Many of the experiences offered indoors are also possible outdoors. Outdoors children have more freedom to be loud and to experiment with noise.
- Children will experiment with the music they can create with homemade musical instruments.

# ADULTS SCAFFOLDING LEARNING DURING CHILD-INITIATED LEARNING

## WHAT SHOULD I SEE ADULTS DOING?

- Observing and responding sensitively to children engaged in music-making
- Responding to children's ideas and suggestions
- Suggesting possibilities to extend their ideas
- Offering other instruments and resources when appropriate
- Playing music alongside children to take learning forwards, suggesting ideas and showing what's possible
- Introducing and encouraging use of a rich musical vocabulary
- Sharing their own experiences and making suggestions
- Role modelling thinking aloud and commenting
- Modelling how to play musical instruments effectively
- Posing questions and/or 'ponderings' to stimulate ideas and add challenge e.g. What could you use instead to make a sound like the wind?
- Offering to record children's musical compositions and responses to music e.g. dances
- Copying children's vocal play and singing through play experiences

## Adult-Led Learning

Key indicators of effective practice when monitoring music in the early years, in relation to adult-led learning



# WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT TO SEE WHEN ADULTS ARE LEADING A 'MUSIC' ACTIVITY?

- Offering information about music played/songs sung; eg children may be interested to learn who wrote the music, where the music is from.
- Encouraging children to listen and respond to a wide range of music.
- Discussing music with children, modelling how to describe the music and seeking out their opinions and thoughts.
- Lowering the volume of their own singing voice so that they can listen carefully to how children are singing as well as being mindful of the pitch needed to help children to tune in.
- Choosing songs carefully, repeating them frequently, singing them slowly and using strategies such as call-and-response to help children to learn them.
- Playing a range of musical games including pitch matching games, sound matching games, rhythm and conducting games.
- Modelling and encouraging children to move whilst playing instruments and when listening to music.
- Modelling respect and care of musical instruments as well as techniques for playing effectively.
- Scaffolding children's musical ideas, eg by copying a child's pattern and then adding an idea of their own.
- Supporting children to create music based on a theme or linked to a story.
- Recording children's compositions.