

What does Music look like in Early Years?

Guidance for subject leaders

The EYFS statutory framework has been updated and the revised document will need to be used in all early years' settings and schools from September 2021. It is important that subject leaders understand what their specialist subject looks like in early years; how key knowledge and skills are taught and what progression through these may look like. There is no requirement for schools to adopt a particular teaching style or method and the school curriculum as a whole needs to be considered, so it meets the needs of your children, families and community. The ELG should not be seen as your curriculum as this very narrow, merely a checkpoint for the end of the reception year. The revised EYFS still has seven areas of learning, rather than the individual subjects used within the National Curriculum but this document will highlight the main links between the two. Communication and Language development is key and is a 'golden thread' which runs through and underpins all other areas of learning, as does Personal, Social and Emotional Development. The statutory framework is supported by two non-statutory documents which schools can choose to use ('Development Matters' and 'Birth to 5 Matters'). The table below shows where learning in early years links to the NC programme of study in Music. These statements are basics upon which to build your full curriculum.



Development Matters		Birth to 5 Matters	
Birth to Three – Babies and young toddlers will be learning to:	Expressive arts and design Show attention to sounds and music. Respond emotionally and physically to music when it changes. Move and dance to music. Anticipate phrases and actions in rhymes and songs, like 'Peepo'. Explore their voices and enjoy making sounds. Join in with songs and rhymes, making some sounds. Make rhythmical and repetitive sounds. Explore a range of sound-makers and instruments and play them in different ways. Enjoy and take part in action songs, such as 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'.	Range 1	Expressive arts and design Babies explore media and materials as part of their exploration of the world around them. (See Characteristics of Effective Learning) Communication and language Turns toward a familiar sound then locates range of sounds with accuracy. Listens to, distinguishes and responds to intonations and sounds of voices.
		Range 2	Expressive arts and design Babies explore media and materials as part of their exploration of the world around them. (See Characteristics of Effective Learning). Communication and language Move whole bodies to sounds they enjoy, such as music or a regular beat. Physical Development Enjoys finger and toe rhymes and games.

Development Matters		Birth to 5 Matters	
	<p>Communication and language Enjoy singing, music and toys that make sounds. Use intonation, pitch and changing volume when 'talking'.</p> <p>Physical development Clap and stamp to music.</p> <p>Literacy Enjoy songs and rhymes, tuning in and paying attention. Join in with songs and rhymes, copying sounds, rhythms, tunes and tempo. Say some of the words in songs and rhymes. Sing songs and say rhymes independently, for example, singing whilst playing.</p>		<p>Literacy Responds to sounds in the environment such as cars, sirens and birds. Is interested in and explores the sounds made by banging and tapping familiar objects and simple instruments. Waves and taps arms, bounces or stamps to simple rhythms in songs and rhymes.</p>
3 and 4 year olds will be learning to:	<p>Expressive arts and design Listen with increased attention to sounds. Respond to what they have heard, expressing their thoughts and feelings. Remember and sing entire songs. Sing the pitch of a tone sung by another person ('pitch match'). Sing the melodic shape (moving melody, such as up and down, down and up) of familiar songs. Create their own songs, or improvise a song around one they know. Play instruments with increasing control to express their feelings and ideas.</p> <p>Communication and language Sing a large repertoire of songs.</p> <p>Physical Development Are increasingly able to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm.</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional Development Select and use activities and resources, with help when needed. This helps them to achieve a goal they have chosen, or one which is suggested to them.</p>	Range 3	<p>Expressive arts and design Moves while singing/vocalising, whilst listening to sounds and music, while playing with sound makers/instruments. Mirrors and improvises actions they have observed, e.g. clapping or waving. Sings/vocalises whilst listening to music or playing with instruments/sound makers. Expresses self through physical actions and sound. Creates sound effects and movements, e.g. creates the sound of a car, animals.</p> <p>Communication and language Listens to and enjoys rhythmic patterns in rhymes and stories Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions or vocalisations.</p> <p>Physical Development Shows interest, dances and sings to music rhymes and songs, imitating movements of others.</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional Development Moves while singing/vocalising, whilst listening to sounds and music, while playing with sound makers/instruments. Mirrors and improvises actions they have observed, e.g. clapping or waving. Sings/vocalises whilst listening to music or playing with instruments/sound makers.</p>

Development Matters		Birth to 5 Matters	
		Range 4	<p>Expressive arts and design Joins in singing songs. Creates sounds by rubbing, shaking, tapping, striking or blowing. Shows an interest in the way sound makers and instruments sound and experiments with ways of playing them, e.g. loud/quiet, fast/slow. Beginning to describe sounds and music imaginatively, e.g. "scary music". Creates rhythmic sounds and movements.</p> <p>Communication and language Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories. Recognises and responds to many familiar sounds, e.g. turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door. Shows interest in play with sound, songs and rhymes.</p> <p>Physical Development Moves in response to music or rhythms heard played on instruments such as drums or shakers.</p> <p>Literacy Has some favourite stories, rhymes, songs, poems or jingles. Enjoys rhythmic and musical activity with percussion instruments, actions, rhymes and songs, clapping along with the beat and joining in with words of familiar songs and nursery rhymes.</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional Development Shows a sense of autonomy through asserting their ideas and preferences and making choices and decisions.</p>

Development Matters		Birth to 5 Matters	
Children in reception will be learning to:	<p>Expressive arts and design Listen attentively, move to and talk about music, expressing their feelings and responses. Sing in a group or on their own, increasingly matching the pitch and following the melody. Explore and engage in music making and dance, performing solo or in groups.</p> <p>Communication and language Listen carefully to rhymes and songs, paying attention to how they sound. Learn rhymes, poems and songs.</p>	Range 5	<p>Expressive Arts and Design Explores and learns how sounds and movements can be changed. Sings familiar songs, e.g. pop songs, songs from TV programmes, rhymes, songs from home. Taps out simple repeated rhythms. Develops an understanding of how to create and use sounds intentionally. Uses movement and sounds to express experiences, expertise, ideas and feelings. Experiments and creates movement in response to music, stories and ideas. Sings to self and makes up simple songs. Creates sounds, movements, drawings to accompany stories. Notices what other children and adults do, mirroring what is observed, adding variations and then doing it spontaneously.</p> <p>Literacy Recognises rhythm in spoken words, songs, poems and rhymes. Claps or taps the syllables in words during sound play.</p>
		Range 6	<p>Expressive arts and design Begins to build a collection of songs and dances. Makes music in a range of ways, e.g. plays with sounds creatively, plays along to the beat of the song they are singing or music they are listening to. Chooses particular movements, instruments/sounds, colours and materials for their own imaginative purposes. Uses combinations of art forms, e.g. moving and singing, making and dramatic play, drawing and talking, constructing and mapping. Responds imaginatively to art works and objects, e.g. “this music sounds likes dinosaurs”, “that sculpture is squishy like this [child physically demonstrates]”, “that peg looks like a mouth”.</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional Development Shows confidence in choosing resources and perseverance in carrying out a chosen activity.</p>

Early Learning Goal - Being Imaginative and Expressive

Children at the expected level of development will:

- 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.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Characteristics children may display which will support future learning in Music

Playing and Exploring	Active Learning	Creating and thinking critically
<p>Development Matters Realise that their actions have an effect on the world, so they want to keep repeating them. Reach for and accept objects. Make choices and explore different resources and materials. Plan and think ahead about how they will explore or play with objects. Do things independently that they have been previously taught. Respond to new experiences that you bring to their attention.</p> <p>Birth to 5 Matters Engaging in open-ended activity. Showing particular interests. Initiating activities. Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error.</p>	<p>Development Matters Keep on trying when things are difficult. Show goal directed behaviour. Begin to correct their mistakes.</p> <p>Birth to 5 Matters Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time. Showing high levels of involvement, energy, fascination. Not easily distracted. Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off, and that their skills can grow and develop (growth mindset).</p>	<p>Development Matters Concentrate on achieving something that's important to them. They are increasingly able to control their attention and ignore distractions. Review their progress as they try to achieve a goal. Check how well they are doing.</p> <p>Birth to 5 Matters Thinking of ideas that are new and meaningful to the child. Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal. Checking how well their activities are going.</p>

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'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'. Development Matters

'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'. Musical Development Matters in the Early Years

What Music might look like in Early Years, including in Indoor and Outdoor Provision

What you might see children doing	What you should see practitioners doing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacting, communicating and expressing their feelings through music. • Working collaboratively and independently both indoors and outside. • Being actively involved in musical projects linked to their interests. • Exploring/developing skills which have previously been taught by an adult. • Singing to themselves and with others. • Moving in time to music or a beat. • Talking about what they and others have created in music. • Exploring a wide range of age appropriate musical instruments which they can select themselves. • Responding musically to what they see, hear, feel and experience. • Having opportunities to work alongside adults to learn new skills and consolidate learning. • Talking about music they have listened to or created. • Representing graphically music they have recorded or created. • Having fun listening to and responding to different types of music. • Making their own musical instruments. • Playing aloud for others and taking part in performance. • Mirroring and copying sounds made by others. • Exploring and making sounds with their bodies and with their voices. • Using simple music making and recording equipment. • Music making on the move by transporting resources into other areas of provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating alongside children, following their lead and engaging in age appropriate conversations about the musical process. • Enhancing provision and providing provocation to stimulate interest in musical opportunities. • Teaching children how to transport and clear away resources appropriately. • Teaching children specific vocabulary/musical terms. • Challenging children who show well-developed skills and interest. • Providing a wide range of high quality, well organised resources linked to children's levels of development and prior learning. • Providing space and time for children to experiment with self-chosen resources. • Providing opportunities for children to be inspired by and to respond to the work of others, including music of different styles and from different times. • Supporting children with communication needs to access activities in alternative ways. • Instigating opportunities to consolidate and develop skills. • Providing access to live music through visits from professional and amateur players (i.e. family members, local music groups). • Linking musical experiences to learning in other subjects, for example, adding sounds to a story or role-play. • Considering prior learning when planning opportunities. • Thinking about a logical sequence of skills development (not expecting children to use a skill they haven't been taught). • Enjoying singing and responding to music with the children. See it as a spontaneous activity to include as part of routines and learning in other areas, as well as something to plan. • Teaching children a wide range of songs and rhymes.

The Curriculum – What we want children to learn (Taken from Development Matters)

The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.

- Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.
- The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.
- Young children's learning is often driven by their interests. Plans need to be flexible.
- Babies and young children do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line.
- Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

Progression

		Instruments	Performance	Singing	Movement	Communication	Collaboration
2-year room		Will explore a set of basic handheld instruments e.g. shakers	May be happy to join in with adults and other children.	May sing short parts of favourite songs or join in with simple repeated lyrics.	May start to add simple moves to music but not in time with the beat.	Gesture or simple verbal reply given in reply to talking about music-making.	Focused on own task with lots of adult input.
Nursery/Pre-school		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Reception Class		Can music-make with a growing number of different instruments.	Will perform in front of a known group.	Can sing favourite songs in their entirety to themselves and others.	Can move to a beat and keep time.	Starts to use a range of specific terms linked to music and names simple instruments.	Collaboration with peers in addition to individual music-making.

Assessment in Early Years

As in the previous version of the EYFS the ELGS are not to be used or envisaged as a curriculum. The EYFS clearly states 'The ELGS are there to support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year One'. Observation checkpoints are included in Development Matters to support practitioners when considering whether children are on track or if additional support is needed.

'Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence- Statutory Framework for EYFS 2.2' (See document for more information about assessment, including the three statutory assessments in EY).

Useful links

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

Development Matters

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/971620/Development_Matters.pdf

Birth to Five Matters

<https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/#:~:text=%20Birth%20to%205%20Matters%3A%20non-statutory%20guidance%20for%20the,Years%20Coalition%2C%20composed%20of%20the%20following...%20More%20>

Musical Development Matters (linked to previous version of Development Matters)

<https://www.early-education.org.uk/musical-development-matters-download>

Please note: This document is not to be used as a tick list for assessment or planning purposes. Its aim is to support with understanding the revised Statutory Framework and accompanying non-statutory guidance documents. These documents may also be useful for mixed age teachers, new to EY teachers, senior leaders and governors – Cumbria County Council Early Years Team.

