

MUSIC

Music is a universal language that speaks to everyone, transcending cultural and linguistic barriers. Making sounds with objects and voices is something that almost all children will experiment with.

The music area provides children with opportunities to explore instruments, sing, listen to songs and move to music whilst developing a sense of rhythm, beat and rhyme.

In addition to providing a space for children to freely express their feelings and emotions, the music area affords opportunities for the exploration of different musical genres and cultures.

Within nursery, music encompasses more than simply the 'music area', it includes the musical experiences that practitioners provide.



CURRICULAR & DEVELOPMENTAL

Health & Wellbeing

Exploring the use of instruments can support children to use and develop their motor, visual and auditory skills.

Learning to keep a beat supports development of cognitive skills, such as pattern recognition, memory and attention.

The control required to play instruments helps children develop both fine and gross-motor skills.

Listening to music can promote a sense of wellbeing. It helps children to regulate their emotions and supports brain development.



Literacy

Developing a strong sense of rhythm can support development of language and literacy skills through experimenting with pace, pitch and pause. Rhymes and songs encourage rhythmic flow which supports fluent speech, whilst slowing the rate of speech enhances articulation.

Listening to music and singing songs and rhymes helps children become aware of the sounds of language, supporting phonological awareness including rhyming words, alliteration and syllabification.

The rhythmic and repetitive qualities of music help children memorise words and phrases, supporting language acquisition and expansion of vocabulary.

Maths & Numeracy

Music is based on repeating mathematical patterns and sequences, such as beat, tempo and rhythm. Children can develop mathematical thinking skills through recognising, engaging with, and responding to these as they join in, make and sustain a beat.



Rhymes and songs explore number concepts, including sequence order, counting on and back, and quantity. *"One, two, buckle my shoe."*

Concepts of size, amount and positioning can be explored through songs and rhymes. The Hokey Cokey explores the terms 'in' and 'out', whilst a song about Goldilocks can compare sizes of bowls, chairs, beds and bears.

Other

Children can use their imagination to experiment with and create their own musical ideas, followed by opportunities to experience the excitement of presenting and performing.

Music supports creative expression through movement and dance, involving rhythmic, playful and expressive movement whilst responding to the beat or mood.

Through listening, exploring and responding to music from a range of cultures, children widen their musical horizons, develop appreciation for diversity, and enrich their musical and cultural knowledge.

ROLE OF THE ADULT

Practitioners should demonstrate ways that children can hold, play and care for instruments, such as using the correct beater and adopting appropriate playing techniques. This is particularly important when introducing new or unfamiliar instruments.

It's important to provide opportunities for children to experience music and instruments from a variety of genres and cultures. This can inspire and provoke children's curiosity.

Adults should ensure that children have opportunities throughout the day to experience musical activities, including listening to music, playing instruments, singing songs and saying rhymes.

Practitioners can support this through remaining an active participant, supporting children by leading sessions, encouraging engagement, modelling actions and providing props and resources.



ROOM STRUCTURE & LAYOUT



Given that music is typically 'noisy', ideally, it should not be positioned next to a 'quiet area.'

The music area often involves movement and dance; therefore, the space should be adequately sized to facilitate this.

If providing electronic instruments, resources, or a CD player, it's important to ensure that the area is located near a power source.

RESOURCE IDEAS

A selection of both tuned and untuned musical instruments

Sheet music, musical notation and writing materials

Clear labelling or images of instruments showing names and beaters to be used

Song and rhyme visuals: spoons, stones, books, Boardmaker visuals

Song and rhyme of the moment display with props

Keyboards, drum mats, recording devices

Scarves, ribbons and floaty materials to use whilst moving to music

REFLECTION POINTS

- Is the music area located in a place that reflects its value and the rich learning opportunities it provides?
- Do practitioners have confidence in their knowledge, understanding, and ability to model and demonstrate the use of instruments and resources? For example, if providing musical notation, is there understanding around what a particular note represents?
- To what extent do children have the opportunity to engage with a range of different music, songs and rhymes, addressing a variety of concepts?
- Resources should be refreshed regularly in order to reflect children's interests, support development, and extend learning. Are resources presented in a manner that can provoke curiosity and inspire creativity?

