Music

What We Teach in Music:

Our Music curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and carefully sequenced so that all pupils develop a secure understanding of how music is created, organised and performed. Aligned with the National Curriculum, it introduces children to key musical elements such as rhythm, melody, harmony, structure and expression.

Through practical music-making, pupils grow as performers, composers and listeners, developing creativity, confidence and musical understanding. From Reception to Year 4, they learn the violin through weekly Stave House lessons, building strong foundations in notation, ensemble skills and disciplined practice. In Years 5 and 6, children extend this knowledge by performing and composing pieces inspired by a wide range of genres, traditions and cultures.

The curriculum is structured around four strands:

- Listen and Appraise – developing listening skills, musical appreciation and accurate use of vocabulary.
- Notation – reading and interpreting musical symbols with increasing confidence.
- Improvisation and Composition – experimenting with and refining original musical ideas.
- Playing and Performance – developing technical control, ensemble awareness and expressive performance skills.

Musical vocabulary is mapped progressively across year groups so pupils can describe, compare and evaluate music with growing precision and confidence.

How We Teach Music:

Our teaching approach combines modelling, listening, discussion and practical exploration. Teachers explicitly demonstrate musical skills and vocabulary before giving pupils opportunities to practise, apply and refine their learning through singing, instrumental work and composition. Collaborative learning is encouraged through group performances, helping pupils develop confidence, teamwork and attentive listening. Pupils are encouraged to think as musicians by listening critically, making creative decisions, evaluating performances and refining their compositions over time.

Music lessons are carefully sequenced so that learning builds across the four curriculum strands: Listen and Appraise, Notation, Improvisation and Composition, and Playing and Performance. Prior knowledge is revisited regularly to strengthen understanding and support long-term retention. As pupils progress, they develop increasing technical control, a broader musical vocabulary and a deeper understanding of elements such as rhythm, melody, tempo, dynamics and structure.

Assessment is ongoing and informs future planning and teaching. Teachers use questioning and observation of performance to gauge understanding and identify next steps. Misconceptions are identified and addressed promptly through additional modelling, and regular retrieval practice helps pupils retain and apply previously taught knowledge and skills.

At Bocking Primary, we are committed to ensuring that Music is accessible to all learners. Lessons incorporate visual prompts (for example, Stave House characters such as Amos the Ant for note A), alongside practical demonstrations, broken down instructions and repeated practice of key skills. Flexible groupings enable pupils with SEND, EAL and those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable to participate fully and experience success.

The development of musical vocabulary is embedded throughout the curriculum. Key terminology is explicitly taught and revisited, enabling pupils to discuss, evaluate and compare music confidently using subject specific language. Speaking and listening are integral to lessons, supporting pupils in articulating their ideas and reflecting on performances and compositions. This is further reinforced in weekly music assemblies, where pupils explore a different genre or composer each month and learn songs from a wide range of musical styles.

Music learning is enriched through memorable, practical experiences. Children learn instruments through Stave House violin lessons, perform to audiences and explore a broad range of musical styles, genres and cultures. Listening activities, live performances, including opportunities to attend Young Voices and collaborative music making help pupils develop an appreciation of music beyond the classroom and foster a lasting enjoyment of the subject.

What Our Children Have Learnt in Music:

By the end of primary school, pupils leave Bocking as confident young musicians with a secure understanding of how music is performed, composed and organised. They understand how music works, can talk about it using the right vocabulary, and can perform music with increasing skill.

Knowledge and skills:

- Pupils understand key musical elements such as rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics and structure.
- They can read and interpret musical notation and use this to perform increasingly complex pieces with accuracy and confidence.
- They can sing with control and expression.

How children show their understanding:

- Pupils talk clearly about music using subject-specific language.
- They evaluate performances thoughtfully.
- Their practical work shows growing accuracy and fluency.

Progression over time:

- Work becomes increasingly sophisticated as pupils move through the school, from simple rhythmic and melodic patterns to more complex, layered compositions and performances.
- Performances show increasing confidence, control and ensemble skills.

How learning is evidenced:

- Evidence is gathered through performances, recordings on Seesaw and discussions.
- Progress is visible in pupils' growing independence and musical understanding.
- All pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, are supported to achieve well through inclusive teaching, appropriate adaptations and high expectations. Progress is evident in pupils' growing independence, confidence and musical understanding.