**Recommendations (from the music subject Ofsted report (**[**HERE**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-music/striking-the-right-note-the-music-subject-report)**) 21.09.23)**

**Curriculum**

Schools should make sure that:

* pupils, particularly at key stage 3, have enough curriculum time to develop their musical knowledge and skills incrementally
* the curriculum identifies precise end points in performance, composition and listening work, and then sets out the knowledge and skills pupils need, step by step, to reach these end points
* the curriculum builds, incrementally, pupils’ knowledge of the technical and constructive aspects of music

**Pedagogy and assessment**

Schools should make sure that:

* teachers provide ongoing feedback to pupils that improves the quality of pupils’ music making both in terms of technique and expressive quality
* teachers routinely demonstrate to pupils what high-quality musical responses sound like, and the processes for achieving those outcomes

**Systems at subject and school level**

Schools should:

* actively seek the support of local music hubs or other sources of expertise when developing and improving the curriculum
* support subject leaders to develop a curriculum that deliberately and incrementally teaches all pupils to become more musical
* continuously develop teachers’ subject knowledge, including their musicianship skills and their understanding of what high-quality music making should sound like for pupils in the age group they teach; this approach should align with the choices set out in the school’s curriculum
* make sure that all pupils can develop their musical talents and interests, by offering extra-curricular activities and instrumental and vocal lessons

**Other organisations**

* Those involved in writing commercial curriculums should clearly identify what pupils should know and be able to do (and what this should sound like) before moving on to the next stage of learning.
* Music hub leaders should continue to develop and build relationships with school and trust leaders to support them in developing their curriculum and wider musical offer.

**Key terms used in this report**

**Knowledge in music**

**Procedural knowledge**

Procedural knowledge is the knowledge used in performing a task, such as playing an instrument or using multi-tracking software fluently. It is the foundation of performing and composing. Well-developed procedural knowledge depends on pupils acquiring an array of automated procedures in order to develop technical and expressive competence on an instrument.

**Declarative knowledge**

Declarative knowledge is a set of musical knowledge that can be stated verbally. It is content that can be discussed. In a musical context, examples of declarative knowledge might include notation, keys and chords, or the works and songs that comprise musical culture. Declarative knowledge underpins advanced thinking. It is the presence of this knowledge in long-term memory that enables the conscious mind to process complex concepts. It is better to give pupils regular, spaced-out re-encounters with this content than to teach it in blocks, to help them build knowledge in long-term memory.

**Pillars of progression in music**

**Technical:** The development of motor skills for music is an important aspect of controlling and understanding sound. Pupils’ ability to control sound, through singing, playing instruments, or using music technology, helps them to get better at performing, composing and listening to music.

**Constructive:** This refers to knowledge of how the building blocks of music come together, both analytically and in the creative process. It includes knowledge of the musical elements/interrelated dimensions of music and the building blocks of composition.

**Expressive**

This focuses on the less definable aspects of music: quality, meaning and creativity. Our research review identified that musical expression in performance depends on the highly developed technical expertise of the performer. This is combined with what a performer knows and understands about the music they are playing, both specifically and in terms of the wider culture in which the music exists.

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| **Primary** | **Secondary** |
| **Curriculum intent: identifying what pupils need to know and do:** | |
| High-quality music education is likely to:   * follow a curriculum that takes into account what pupils can realistically learn in the time available * give pupils regular opportunities to return to and consolidate their short-term learning, while gradually introducing new ideas, methods and concepts * have identified end points that set out the specific curriculum content to be learned, rather than articulating principles and assuming that any content will work to realise these principles | High-quality music education is likely to:   * follow a curriculum that takes into account what pupils can realistically learn in the time available * give pupils regular opportunities to return to and consolidate their short-term learning, while gradually introducing new ideas, methods and concepts * have identified end points that set out the specific curriculum content to be learned, rather than articulating principles and assuming that any content will work to realise these principles |
| **Planning the curriculum so that pupils become more ‘musical’** | |
| A high-quality music curriculum is likely to:   * deliberately build pupils’ procedural knowledge in how to control sound * provide plentiful opportunities to consolidate procedural knowledge * be built in a way that is gradual, iterative and coherent with regard to instrument choice * include opportunities for pupils to develop and practise the components of compositions that are set out in the school’s curriculum * include tasks at a technical level that is appropriate for pupils to be able to realise their expressive intentions * give pupils opportunities to learn about musical culture and repertoire | A high-quality music curriculum is likely to:   * deliberately build pupils’ procedural knowledge of how to control sound * provide plentiful opportunities to consolidate procedural knowledge, including using staff notation * be built in way that is gradual, iterative and coherent with regard to instrument choice * include opportunities for pupils to develop and practise the components of compositions that are set out in the school’s curriculum * include tasks at a technical level that are appropriate for pupils to be able to realise their expressive intentions * give pupils opportunities to learn about musical culture and repertoire |
| **Pedagogy: teaching the curriculum** | |
| High-quality music education is likely to have the following features:   * high levels of guidance for novices, remembering that pupils in every key stage are sometimes novices * a focus on the quality of musical responses, supported by ongoing feedback on task components * clarity about the components that will form the basis of formative assessment | High-quality music education is likely to have the following features:   * high levels of guidance for novices, remembering that pupils in every key stage are sometimes novices * a focus on the quality of musical responses, supported by ongoing feedback on task components * clarity about the components that will form the basis of formative assessment |
| **Assessment** | |
| High-quality music education is likely to have the following features:   * judicious use of summative assessment to check whether pupils are learning the curriculum as intended * use of assessment to identify pupils’ misconceptions or gaps in their understanding | High-quality music education is likely to have the following features:   * judicious use of summative assessment to check whether pupils are learning the curriculum as leaders intend * use of assessment to identify pupils’ misconceptions or gaps in their understanding |
| **Systems at subject and school level** | |
| High-quality music education is likely to have the following features:   * sufficient time for teachers to teach the music curriculum * a range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, including opportunities for pupils to perform to the school community, put on concerts and shows, and go on trips to professional concerts * opportunities for pupils to have instrumental and vocal lessons * leaders who understand how music departments operate differently from those of other core/foundation subjects and are therefore flexible in their approaches * leaders who understand their staff’s experience and expertise in and knowledge of music * a focus on developing teachers’ subject knowledge, including developing them as musicians | High-quality music education is likely to have the following features:   * sufficient time for teachers to teach the music curriculum * a range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, including opportunities for pupils to perform to the school community, put on concerts and shows, and go on trips to professional concerts * opportunities for pupils to have instrumental and vocal lessons * leaders who understand how music departments operate differently from those of other core/foundation subjects and are therefore flexible in their approach * leaders who understand their staff’s experience and expertise in and knowledge of music * a focus on developing teachers’ subject knowledge, including developing them as musicians |

* Visit [**this page**](https://www.triboroughmusichub.org/school-services/curriculum-guidance-for-schools/) to access all TBMH’s free curriculum support documents.
* Visit [**this page**](https://www.triboroughmusichub.org/school-services/music-hub-services-for-schools-2023-2024-academic-year/) to access all TBMH’s updates for schools about the 2023-24 academic year