

# Curriculum, Pedagogy and assessment: Applying the revised frameworks in Primary Music Education

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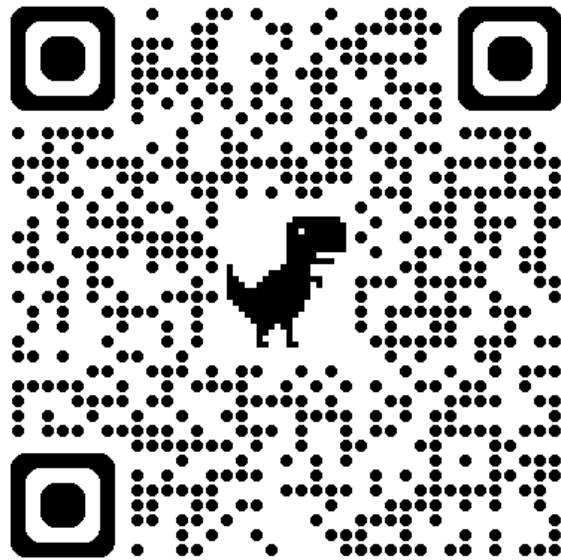
# A FRAMEWORK FOR CURRICULUM, PEDAGOGY AND ASSESSMENT IN PRIMARY SCHOOL MUSIC

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[ismtrust.org](http://ismtrust.org)

# Freely available

- Assessment materials for primary and lower secondary (separately)
- Available from <https://www.ism.org/advice/ism-curriculum-for-music/>



# What are we covering today?

- Thinking about assessment in context
- Exploring assessment in classroom musical learning
- Assessing music musically
- Planning, promoting and evidencing children and young people's musical learning and development over time



# The curriculum – Pollard and Triggs (2005:176)

<b>The official curriculum</b>	<b>‘an explicitly stated programme of learning...’(p175)</b>
<b>The hidden curriculum</b>	‘all that is learned during school activities which is not part of the official curriculum’ (p175)
<b>The observed curriculum</b>	‘the curriculum that can be seen to be taking place in the classroom’ (p176)
<b>Curriculum-as-experienced</b>	‘parts of the curriculum, both official and hidden, which actually connect meaningfully with children’

# Big Question 1

- What do you value in music education?
- What do your pupils value?
- What does your school 'community' value?

# Big Question 2

- How does what is valued in music education by you and your 'community' appear in your primary music curriculum, including the wider school offer?



# Build on what your community brings

Young people in primary school have a wealth of musical experiences that they gain and develop throughout their lives. Children starting school are full of songs, melodies, playful musical ideas and a curiosity about sound and music that has been developed through a range of mostly informal and sometimes formal experiences too. Young children frequently express preferences and opinions about music and an implicit understanding of music as an integral part of cultures and communities. Music in school has exciting opportunities to build upon these and for the joy that they bring to music from their lives outside school into the school community and classroom in creative, imaginative and original ways.

Musical learning in schools is often built around five key processes as main strands, which are interrelated and overlapping. These are:



In addition, there are three overarching themes which run throughout the processes. These are:

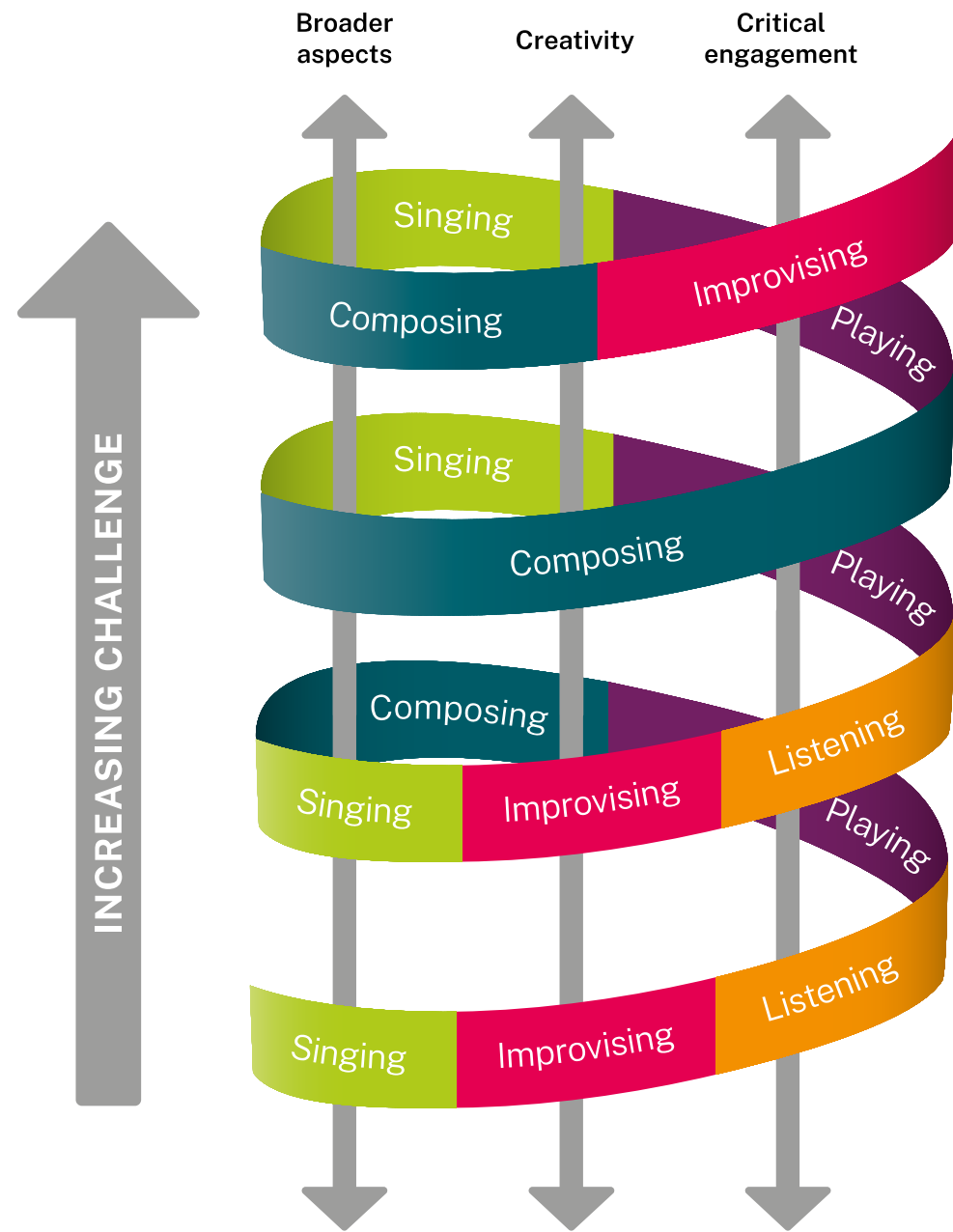
- Creativity
- Critical engagement
- Broader aspects of learning

Learning by ear is a valuable musical activity, and children will often reproduce music they have heard. This is an important facet of musical learning both in and out of school.

Music education in early years should, and in primary contexts must, include singing, playing a range of instruments, and using appropriate music technology to both make and create music. By making music we mean the pupils are involved primarily in performing, on their own or with others, music which already exists; whereas creating music involves the children in creative processes to generate their own original music, or to implement their own ideas exploring pre-existing music and making it their own.

## A note about Notations

Musical notation exists to support musical learning. This means that staff notation, as well as other musical notations, should be used as appropriate to help understand relationships between sounds made by the children and the symbols used in whatever system of notation is being employed. Therefore, learning musical notation need not be an end in itself, it should be done to support music-making.



*“We’ve ‘done’  
ukulele”...*

What’s the key learning sought at  
each different point?

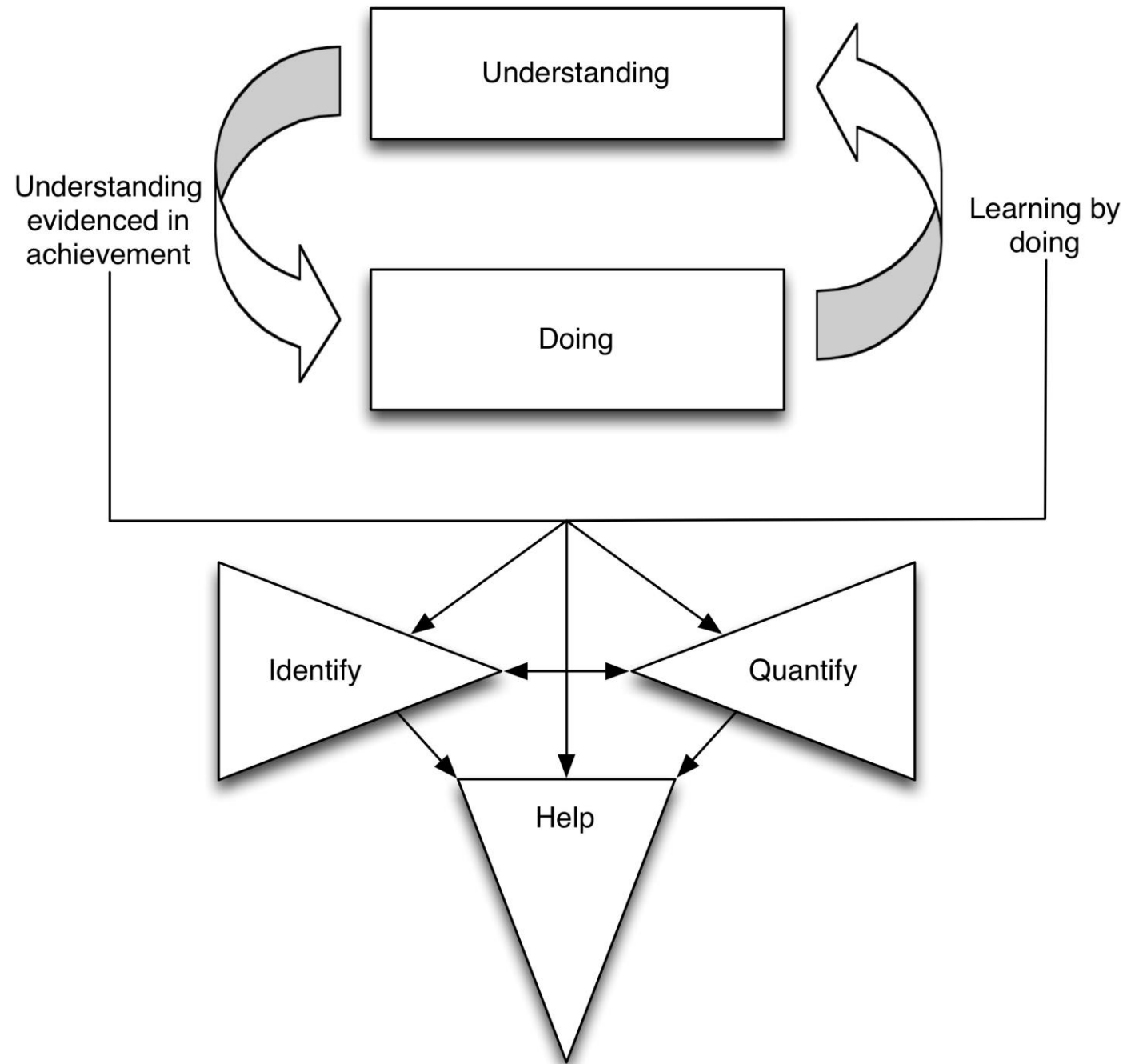


So, what does ‘progression’:

Look like?

Sound like?

Feel like?

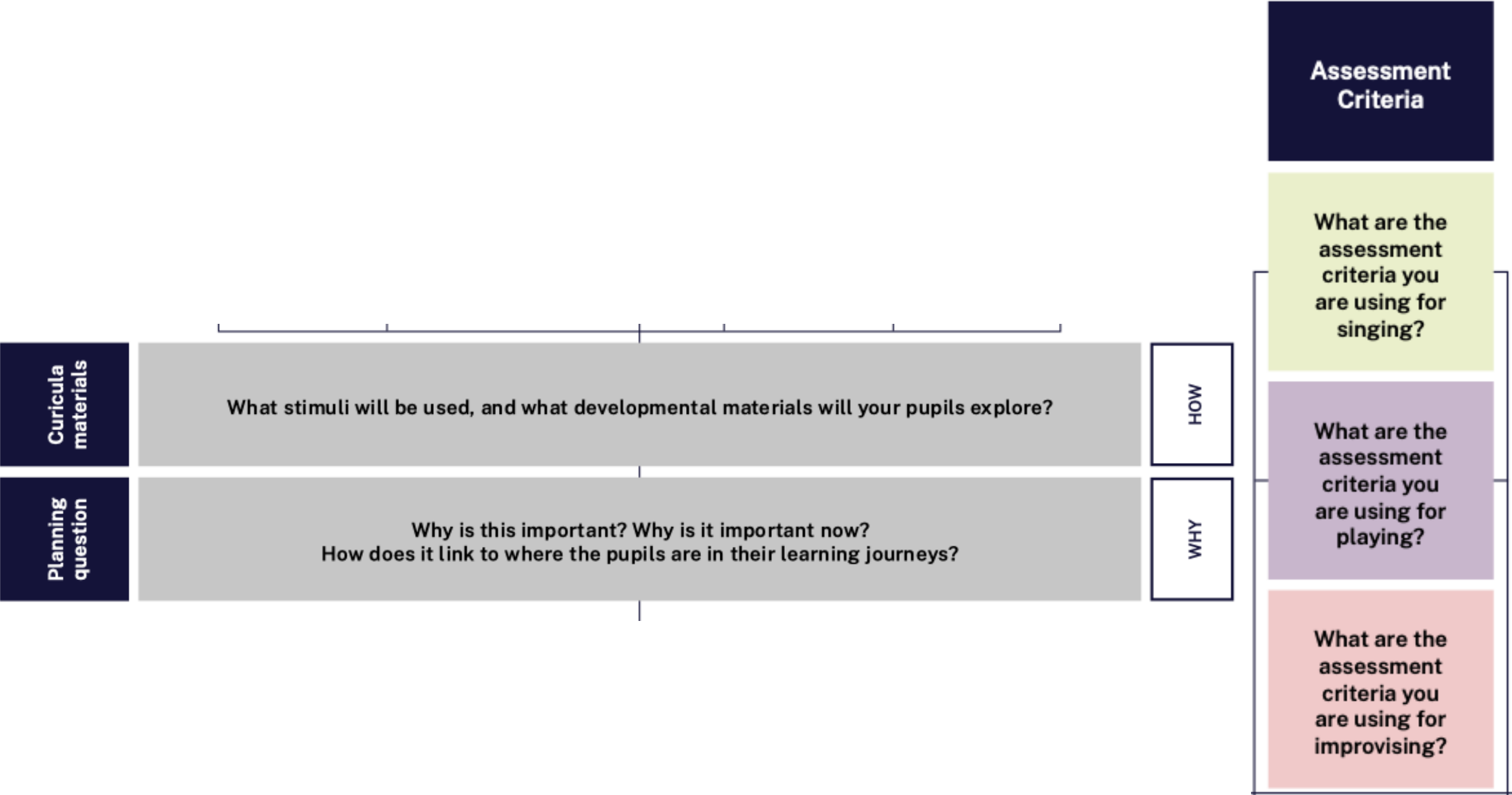


Musical process	Desired skills	Approaches to developing skills	Desired knowledge and understanding	Approaches to developing knowledge and understanding
Singing	What singing skills you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop singing skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding of singing you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding of singing be developed?
Playing	What playing skills you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop playing skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding of playing you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding of playing be developed?
Improvising	What improvising you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop improvising skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding of improvising you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding of improvising be developed?
Composing	What composing you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop composing skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding of composing you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding of composing be developed?
Listening	What listening skills you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop listening skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding involving listening you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding involving listening be developed?
Broader aspects	What skills involved in broader aspects you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop skills involved in broader aspects?	What is the knowledge and understanding involving broader aspects you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding involving broader aspects be developed?
WHAT	WHAT	HOW	WHAT	HOW

Planning question	Curricula materials	Assessment Criteria	Assessed through....				
Why is this important? Why is it important now? How does it link to where the pupils are in their learning journeys?	What stimuli will be used, and what developmental materials will your pupils explore?	What are the assessment criteria you are using for singing?	Responding	Creating and making	Talking	Exploring	Notating
		What are the assessment criteria you are using for playing?					
		What are the assessment criteria you are using for improvising?					
		What are the assessment criteria for you are using for composing?					
		What are the assessment criteria you are using for listening?					
		What are the assessment criteria you are using for broader aspects?					
WHY	HOW	WHAT	HOW				



Musical process	Desired skills	Approaches to developing skills	Desired knowledge and understanding	Approaches to developing knowledge and understanding	
	What singing skills you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop singing skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding of singing you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding of singing be developed?	Singing
	What playing skills you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop playing skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding of playing you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding of playing be developed?	Playing
Improvisation	What improvising you aim to develop?	How are you going to develop improvising skills?	What is the knowledge and understanding of improvising you are seeking to develop?	How will this knowledge and understanding of improvising be developed?	Improvisation



Assessed through....

Notating

Exploring

Talking

Creating and making

Responding

HOW



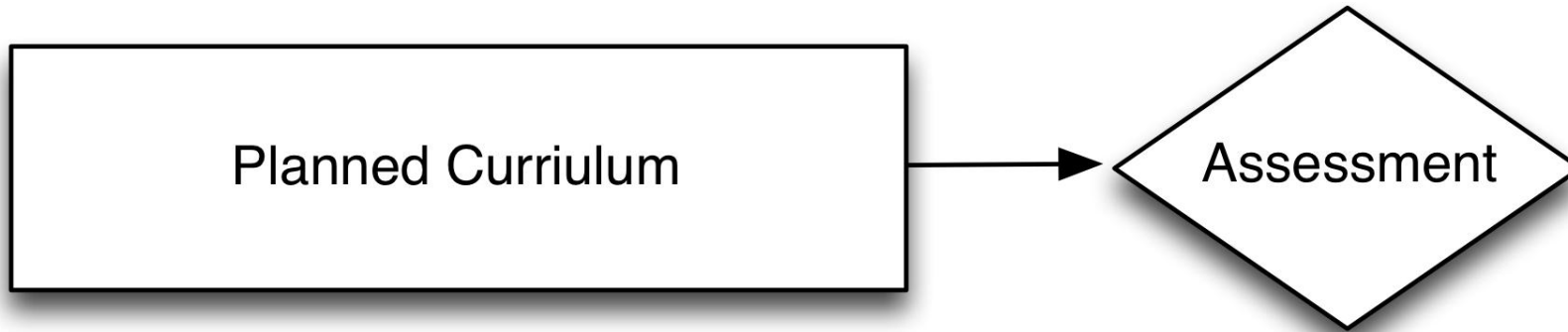
Priorities?

# Big questions:

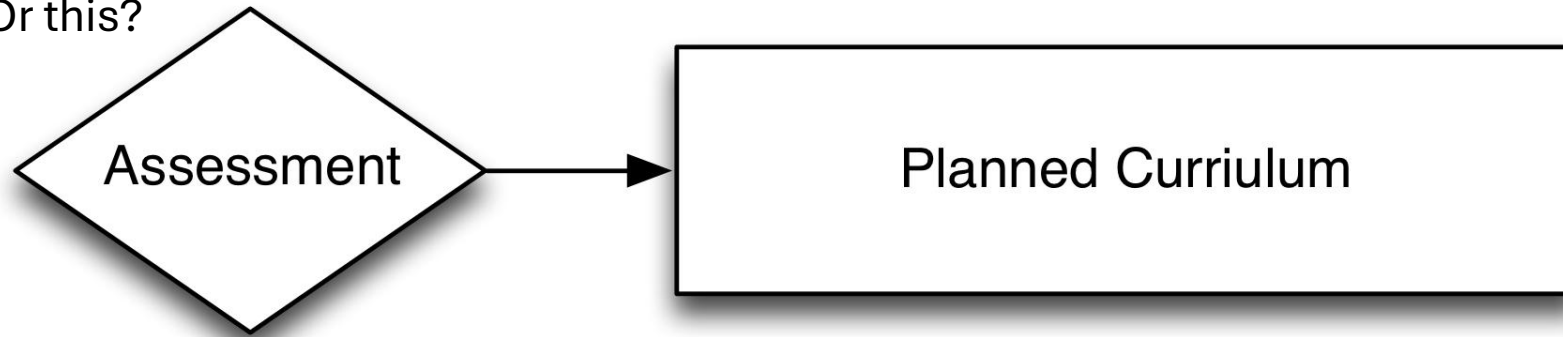
- Have you worked out your priorities for music education in the time available? (e.g. 15 – 30 - 60 hours per year)
- Is your curriculum coherent?
- How does your curriculum *in and of itself* evidence progression?
- Is curriculum planning undertaken holistically or atomistically?

# How do you plan your curriculum?

This?



Or this?



# Curriculum Questions

- What do you want pupils to learn and be able to do at various stages in your curriculum?
  - Are these defined?
  - Are these related to ‘activities’ or ‘learning’?
  - How is *quality* expressed in these?
- 
- How do you build your curriculum to account for pupils with different prior musical experiences, motivations, learning requirements?



## 4 EXAMPLE CRITERION STATEMENTS

### Example statements stage A

- 1 Enjoy singing, playing, trying out and changing sounds; explore sounds and music through play.
- 2 Recognise and broadly control changes in timbre, tempo, pitch and dynamics when playing instruments and vocally.
- 3 Sing broadly in tune within a limited pitch range.
- 4 Follow and offer simple musical instructions and actions.
- 5 Keep a steady pulse with some accuracy, e.g. through tapping, clapping, marching, playing (develop 'internalising' skills).
- 6 Listen to ideas from others, taking turns as appropriate to the context, e.g. passing around instruments, sharing, listening to others playing/singing/ sharing ideas.
- 7 Show awareness of the audience when performing.
- 8 Create music, and suggest symbols to represent sounds (e.g. a large foot for the big bear, small foot for little bear).
- 9 Make physical movements that represent sounds (e.g. move like a snake, an elephant, grow like a tree in response to music).
- 10 Comment on and respond to recordings of own voice, other classroom sounds, musical instruments etc.

### Example statements stage B

- 1 Enjoy making, playing, changing and combining sounds; experiment with different ways of producing sounds with voice, musical instruments, simple music technology, 'body sounds' (tapping, clicking, marching, stamping etc.).
- 2 Sing in tune within a limited pitch range, and perform with a good sense of pulse and rhythm.
- 3 Join in and stop as appropriate.
- 4 Follow and lead simple performance directions, demonstrating understanding of these through movement, singing and playing (including, but not limited to, dynamics and tempo, starting and stopping, adhering to 'starts and stops' -i.e. sound and silence). Pupils could suggest and try out their own ideas.
- 5 Listen with increased concentration, responding appropriately to a variety of live and recorded music, making statements and observations about the music and through movement, sound-based and other creative responses.
- 6 Respond to musical cues.
- 7 Musically demonstrate increased understanding and use of basic musical features as appropriate related to a specific music context (e.g. graduation of sound – getting louder, softer, higher, lower, faster, slower, describe the quality of sounds and how they are made, combined etc. and names of common classroom instruments), supported by verbal explanation, pictures, movements etc. as appropriate.
- 8 Begin to recognise and musically demonstrate awareness of a link between shape and pitch using graphic notations.
- 9 Begin to recognise rhythmic patterns found in speech, e.g. saying / chanting names, counting syllables in names etc.
- 10 Demonstrate understanding of the differences between pulse and rhythm through physical movement, playing, singing.

### Example statements stage C

- 1 Use voice, sounds, technology and instruments in creative ways.
- 2 Sing and play confidently and fluently, maintaining an appropriate pulse.
- 3 Suggest, follow and lead simple performance directions.
- 4 Sing within an appropriate vocal range with clear diction, mostly accurate tuning, control of breathing and appropriate tone.
- 5 Demonstrate musical quality – e.g. clear starts, ends of pieces / phrases, technical accuracy etc.
- 6 Maintain an independent part in a small group when playing or singing (e.g. rhythm, ostinato, drone, simple part singing etc.).
- 7 Create simple rhythmic patterns, melodies and accompaniments.
- 8 Communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings through simple musical demonstration, language, movement and other art forms, giving simple justifications of reasons for responses.
- 9 Offer comments about own and others' work and ways to improve; accept feedback and suggestions from others.
- 10 Aurally identify, recognise, respond to and use musically (as appropriate) basic symbols (standard and invented), including rhythms from standard Western notation (e.g. crotchets, quavers) and basic changes in pitch within a limited range.

### Example statements stage D

- 1 Experiment with voice, sounds, technology and instruments in creative ways and to explore new techniques.
- 2 Maintain a strong sense of pulse and recognise and self correct when going out of time.
- 3 Demonstrate increasing confidence, expression, skill and level of musicality through taking different roles in performance and rehearsal.
- 4 Lead an independent part in a group when singing or playing. (e.g. rhythm, ostinato, drone, simple part singing, etc.)
- 5 Use a variety of musical devices, timbres, textures, techniques etc. when creating and making music.
- 6 Create music which demonstrates understanding of structure and discuss the choices made.
- 7 Listen and evaluate a range of live and recorded music from different traditions, genres, styles and times, responding appropriately to the context. Share opinions about own and others' music and be willing to justify these.
- 8 Be perceptive to music and communicate personal thoughts and feelings, through discussion, movement, sound-based and other creative responses such as visual arts.
- 9 Critique own and others' work, offering specific comments and justifying these.
- 10 As appropriate, follow basic shapes of music, and simple staff notation, through singing and playing short passages of music when working as a musician.



# Example criterion statements

2 Recognise and broadly control changes in timbre, tempo, pitch and dynamics when playing instruments and vocally.

2 Sing in tune within a limited pitch range, and perform with a good sense of pulse and rhythm.

# Example criterion statements

**6** Maintain an independent part in a small group when playing or singing (e.g. rhythm, ostinato, drone, simple part singing etc.).

**5** Use a variety of musical devices, timbres, textures, techniques etc. when creating and making music.

# Assessing Music

*“To Teach is to assess”*

*Swanwick(1988: 149)*

Curriculum  
and  
assessment  
are closely  
bound!

Assessment begins with  
curriculum planning

Curriculum planning should  
begin with learning, not content

Assessment arrives/derives  
from this

We are aiming  
for 'genuinely  
musical  
assessment...  
not this!

- *“For many children assessment means enduring a form of mental and emotional derangement, the morbid exchange of a warm, living experience for a cold, dead reckoning.”*

(Ross et al 1993:168)

# Formative, developmental, feed-forward assessments

- Too often, assessment has come to mean only testing, test scores and final 'judgments'. We want to consider is how you can use formative strategies /assessment to help you in your teaching, and, importantly, to help your pupils move forward with their learning - in order to show impact.
- Formative assessment, done properly, doesn't need to involve numbers or grades, doesn't involve marking learner work three times using different coloured pens each time, or stamping 'verbal feedback given' in a book; it should be about *you*, what you say to the pupils, and what they say to you and to each other.
- Good formative assessment can be as simple as having a conversation with your pupils, asking questions, even playing along with them to keep them in time and helping them to develop the skills to play something independently without your scaffolding .
- It can be all sorts of other things – the key is that it is developmental and it helps them – and you – recognise what they have done, what they should / could do next and, crucially, how they might do this.

## How do you use it?

The boxes on the left-hand side of the framework, singing, playing (etc.), are curricular components of musical learning. They are presented individually here in order to help you ensure that they are both included in your planning, and assessed. However, as is observed throughout this framework, it is vital to note that musical learning happens in a holistic fashion, and that units of work and their assessment should not be atomistically separated. Teachers should be mindful of this throughout planning, delivery, and assessment. However, by showing them in this fashion, teachers can use the framework to help with planning and assessing over time, as although some units of work will focus on different aspects of the musical processes identified, they should all be present (albeit to a greater or lesser extent) throughout the music curriculum when viewed as a whole.

This framework artificially separates skills, knowledge, and understanding; this is intentional and designed to be of use to you during thinking processes which occur throughout planning for learning, teaching, and assessment. At all stages during the planning and teaching processes, you need to be aware of the skills, knowledge, and understanding you are seeking to develop and why this is important for specific pupils or groups of pupils at this point in time, so the framework supports you by delineating these separately. What this means is that planning for learning should precede deciding upon which curricula materials (e.g. activities or repertoire) will be used. Planning, therefore, is based on learning and not activity, and effective assessment arises from well-defined and timely planning.

The assessment criteria boxes link back to the skills, knowledge, and understanding you have defined in the earlier stages of the framework. In an earlier section of this document it was suggested that a three- or four-point scale be used to grade outcomes. What this means is that

assessment criteria statements need to be measurable. For this to happen, the most straightforward way of writing each assessment criterion is to produce one statement in which the outcomes are clearly differentiated by attainment level, not by writing three separate outcome statements. For example, in the example criterion statements section, C3 would be written as:

### Suggest, follow and lead simple performance directions:

- Is not yet able to... [working towards]
- Is able to... [working at]
- Is confidently able to... [working beyond]

### Here is a four-point option:

- Emerging
- Establishing
- Embedding
- Exceeding

Your school will probably use some variation on these.

All the teacher then needs to do is note when this has taken place. What this also means is that teachers do not necessarily need to await a specific assessment lesson to do this, but they can and should assess 'on the hoof' as learning progresses. This may also be captured by a variety of means including informal audio or video recordings. It also means that formative and summative purposes of assessment can be contained within the framework.

When you come to write your own assessment criterion statements, is important that you are clear about the learning sought, and that the activities planned lead towards clearly defined assessment criteria.

## **Suggest, follow and lead simple performance directions:**

- Is not yet able to... [working towards]
- Is able to... [working at]
- Is confidently able to... [working beyond]

## **Here is a four-point option:**

- Emerging
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Your school will probably use some variation on these.



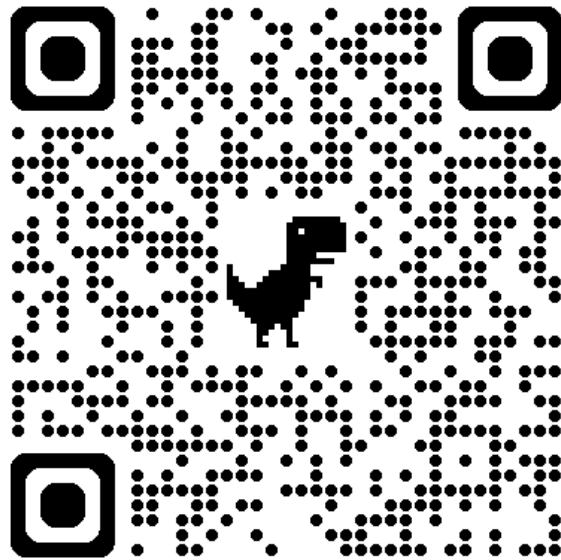
# Final thoughts

Music is a powerful collective and personal experience. Music learning that creates links with children's lives and enables them to experience quality music making supports schools and classrooms to become rich sources of musical and artistic meaning, and is an important source of enjoyment and belonging.

Great schools are joyful and creative musical places where music is embedded throughout the school and its associated community. All those who work with young people, in whatever capacity, have the potential to promote positive musical learning and engagement within and beyond the classroom through developing sustained and effective curriculum, teaching and assessment opportunities which are developmental, inspiring, creative and inclusive.

# Freely available

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- Available from <https://www.ism.org/advice/ism-curriculum-for-music/>



# Introducing the authors

## **Dr Alison Daubney**

Dr Alison Daubney has a portfolio career as a teacher, lecturer, researcher, workshop leader and author. She has worked across all ages and stages of education and taught in a variety of mainstream and special educational settings. Alison has been actively involved in teacher education for many years and is an Honorary Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Sussex. She holds a PhD from the University of Surrey.

Alison has worked extensively in the UK and abroad with University of Cambridge International Examinations on curriculum and assessment development, training and research. She has carried out research and arts education evaluation on behalf of many organisations around the UK and further afield.

Alison has authored multiple books, materials and research reports including Teaching Primary Music published by SAGE, and the award-winning Primary Music Toolkit. She is the Co-editor of the British Journal of Music Education with Martin Fautley.

## **Professor Martin Fautley**

Professor Martin Fautley is Emeritus Professor of Music Education at Birmingham City University. He has a wealth of experience in music education, both in terms of pedagogy, and of music education research. For many years he was a classroom music teacher, subsequently undertaking Doctoral research working in the education and music faculties at the University of Cambridge, investigating the teaching, learning and assessment of classroom music making.

Martin is widely known for his work in researching assessment and is the author of ten books, including 'Assessment in Music Education' published by Oxford University Press. He has written and published numerous journal articles, book chapters and academic research papers on a range of aspects of teaching and learning. He has written and published numerous journal articles, book chapters and academic research papers on a range of aspects of teaching and learning. Along with Alison Daubney, he is Co-editor of the British Journal of Music Education.

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