

Charanga EYFS and Development Matters

Nursery and Reception Years

This document explains how the Nursery and Reception Years can support knowledge, skills and development in line with the non-statutory curriculum guidance for EYFS (Development Matters).

The learning incorporates both teacher-led and child-led learning activities involving listening and responding to music, musical games, singing, playing instruments, improvising, composing and performing.

The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time. (Development Matters page 9)

The Nursery and Reception units enable children to understand musical concepts through a repetition-based approach to learning. Learning about the same musical concept through different musical activities enables a more secure, deeper learning and mastery of musical skills.

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. (Development Matters page 9)

Musical teaching and learning are not neat or linear. The strands of musical learning, presented within the lesson plans and the on-screen resources, are part of the learning spiral. Over time, children can both develop new musical skills and concepts and consolidate and deepen learning. Repeating a musical skill doesn't necessarily mean their progress is slowing down or their development is moving backwards! It's just shifting within the spiral. Mastery means both a deeper understanding of musical skills and concepts and learning something new.

Listen and Respond and Games Tracks

The Listen and Respond and Games Tracks include a range of activities, allowing you to mix up the way you teach each time, and focus on slightly different learning. This is all explained in the supporting documentation. For example, Listen and Respond can be questions and answers to develop communication and language skills, along with social development by listening to each other and taking turns.

Another week, Listen and Respond could involve moving to the music, developing physical skills (both fine motor and gross motor), and encouraging creative expression. The Games Tracks similarly have a range of activities to deliver over the course of the unit, which will develop different skills and areas of knowledge and child development. These include free-form creative movement as well as finding and moving in time to the pulse.

Sing and Play

Singing is central to all units and is included in every lesson. The units contain well-known songs, action songs, and nursery rhymes. Singing will support the development of communication and language, specifically extending vocabulary and developing diction, pitch, and intonation. These skills will be developed and deepened through repeating and memorising the songs.

Improvisation is incorporated within Listen and Respond, Games and the playing of simple untuned instruments and body percussion. This supports being imaginative, expressive and creative. Improvisation can be vocal, instrumental and physical through movement.

EYFS Units and Collections

In addition to the Nursery and Reception years there are more materials in the Freestyle section called EYFS Units and Collections offering:

- Units – for easy access should you prefer to create your own learning pathway.
- Continuous and Enhanced Provision Ideas and Musical Activities – complete with guidance and planning, ideal for extending learning opportunities or for a more flexible approach.
- Listen and Song Collections – useful for musical moments throughout the week.

Continuous and Enhanced Provision Ideas

These activities support learning outside the music curriculum class time. There are clear aims, planning, and guidance about how they relate to the curriculum. These activities cover a wide range of expressive and creative learning as well as child development, both musically and more generally.

Musical Activities

These activities are clearly explained, and although accompanied with suggested tracks, you can choose music that is particularly relevant for your children. The activities develop a broad range of skills which are outlined in each document. These activities can be mixed together to create your own Units of Work for nursery classes or as alternative units for 4–5-year-olds.

To Conclude

Combining the units with appropriate materials from the EYFS Units and Collections will ensure the unique needs of every child, class and school setting are met.

Please visit the CPD & Training Centre at the top of the screen for more information and support.

Key Learning

Pupils aged 3–4 Freestyle > EYFS Units and Collections			
Curriculum Skills and Elements	Unit or Collection (in bold) and Activity	Key Learning	Development Matters says that children should be taught to:
Listen with concentration Move creatively to the music Talk about the music Pulse/beat Rhythm Pitch Tempo (speed) Dynamics (volume)	Listen Animal-inspired listening	Find and move to the pulse. Dance musically in the character of the animal. Describe thoughts and feelings. Identify fast, slow, loud and quiet.	Listen with increased attention to sounds. Providing a range of listening activities helps children to develop their listening skills. Respond to what they have heard, expressing their thoughts and feelings.
	Musical Activities Collection Listening 1	Move, dance and respond with their bodies to the music.	
	Musical Activities Collection Listening 2	Copy back simple moves to the pulse of the music. Use a range of cross-body, gross and fine motor skills.	
	Musical Activities Collection Listening 3	Discuss the music answering simple questions. Match the mood of the music to a picture.	
	Musical Activities Collection Listening 4	Move to the pulse and respond to a musical sound to stop, start or raise arms.	
	Musical Activities Collection Listening 5	Move, dance and respond with their bodies in the character of the music.	
	Musical Activities Collection Music Games 2	Listen to and respond accordingly to: Sit down; Stand up; Find a space; Sit together at the front.	
Match instruments to their sound Copy back Pulse/beat Rhythm Pitch	Musical Activities Collection Music Games 1	Match the sound of different instruments with their pictures.	Play sound-matching games.
	Me, My Stories, Everyone, Our World Games Tracks	Copy back clapping rhythms of names and words. Copy back playing or singing one note at a time.	

Curriculum Skills and Elements	Unit or Collection (in bold) and Activity	Key Learning	Development Matters says that children should be taught to:
Copy back Pulse/beat Tempo (speed)	Musical Activities Collection Listening 4	Move to the pulse and respond to a musical sound to stop, start or raise arms.	Clap or tap to the pulse of songs or music and encourage children to join in.
	Musical Activities Collection Listening 2	Copy back simple moves to the pulse of the music. Use a range of cross-body, gross and fine motor skills.	
	Me, My Stories, Everyone, Our World Games Tracks	Find the pulse in different ways (marching, jumping, blinking).	
Sing/rap words Following a leader Pulse/beat Rhythm Tempo (speed) Dynamics (volume)	Songs Collections Ages 3–5 Learn to Sing the Song	Learn songs and action songs, section by section.	Remember and sing entire songs. Sing the melodic shape (moving melody, such as up and down, down and up) of familiar songs. Sing the pitch of a tone sung by another person ('pitch match').
Play instruments Keep a steady beat Play in a group Pulse/beat Rhythm Tempo (speed)	Musical Activities Collection Sing and Play 1	Play a simple rhythm on an instrument with a song for example, on the words 'quack, quack, quack' in Five Little Ducks.	Play instruments with increasing control to express their feelings and ideas.
	Musical Activities Collection Sing and Play 2	Change the words to songs to incorporate playing instruments for example, Old MacDonald Had A Band. Play a simple rhythm with a song.	
Sing/rap words Following a leader Creating/improvising Pulse/beat Rhythm Pitch Tempo (speed) Dynamics (volume)	Musical Activities Collection Sing and Play 2	Create words to known songs. Create or improvise actions for the songs.	Create their own songs or improvise a song around one they know.
Perform Sing Play Dance Follow a leader Pulse/beat Rhythm Pitch Tempo (speed) Dynamics (volume)	Share and perform any learnt songs from the units and collections.	Rehearse and perform songs regularly. Some songs will have actions or a dance. Rehearse and perform following a leader. Select a wide variety of songs.	Play, share and perform a wide variety of music and songs from different cultures and historical periods.

Pupils aged 4–5

Freestyle > EYFS Units and Collections

Reception units in the Original Scheme

Curriculum Skills and Elements	Activity	Key Learning	Development Matters says children should be taught to:
Listening and responding Follow the leader Movement Copy back Finding a steady beat Composing Improvising	All Reception Units of Work Games Track – Activity 1	Find the pulse in different ways (marching, jumping, blinking).	Explore and engage in music-making and dance, performing solo or in groups. Six examples below: 1. Notice and encourage children to keep a steady beat.
	EYFS Units and Collections Musical Activities Collection Listening 4 Listening 5	Move to the pulse and respond to a musical sound to stop, start or raise arms. Move, dance and respond with their bodies in the character of the music.	2. Play movement and listening games that use different sounds for different movements.
Pulse/beat Rhythm Tempo Timbre (the quality and character of the sound)	All Reception Units of Work Games Track – Activity 2 Big Bear Funk Games Track – Musical Activities 2	Copy clapping back rhythms from the song. Create own rhythms from words.	3. Model how to tap rhythms to accompany words.
	All Units of Work Listen and Respond Games Track (Activity 1)	Finding the pulse in whatever way you choose; perhaps be an animal like a monkey or march like a soldier.	4. Play music with a pulse for children to move in time with and encourage them to respond to changes.
EYFS Units and Collections Musical Activities Collection Listening 4	Move to the pulse and respond to a musical sound to stop, start or raise arms.		
	Big Bear Funk Games Track – Musical Activities 3b Learn to Sing the Song – Activity 3 Reflect, Rewind and Replay Compose with the Song – Big Bear Funk	Add pitch to the words and phrases used in the Games Track Musical Activities 2 rhythm games. Compose a section with the song. Compose a rhythm or a simple melody using two pitched notes. Compose the 1 or 2-note tune with one person at the whiteboard. Encourage all children to put forward their ideas.	5. Encourage children to create their own music.
	Big Bear Funk Learn to Sing the Song – Activity 4	Freestyle or choreograph your own dance.	6. Encourage children to choreograph their own dance moves.

Curriculum Skills and Elements	Activity	Key Learning	Development Matters says children should be taught to:
Listening and responding Movement Musical Styles Finding the pulse Pulse/beat Rhythm Tempo Timbre (the quality and character of the sound)	In All Reception Units of Work Listen and Respond	To move, dance and respond with their bodies in any way they can when listening. To describe their thoughts and feelings when listening to the music.	Listen attentively, move to and talk about music, expressing their feelings and responses.
	In All Reception Units of Work Learn to Sing The Song	To learn unit songs from memory.	Sing in a group or on their own, increasingly matching the pitch and following the melody.