



PRESS RELEASE: immediate 26th March 2021

MODEL MUSIC CURRICULUM

On Friday 26th March 2021, the Department for Education launched the Model Music Curriculum. Simon Toyne, President of the Music Teachers' Association responds:

The value of music in children's education has been well rehearsed, but usually explained in terms of transferrable skills. The importance of the Model Music Curriculum is its shining light on the **intrinsic qualities of music as a subject in its own right**. Music is a craft, in which powerful knowledge and skills continually feed each other. Children and young people learn not just from their teachers, but from each other, from musicians practising now, and from the rich heritage of musicians that have gone before us. Every child and young person brings their individual musical experience to the classroom; great teachers nurture them, developing their musicianship and introducing them to music that they haven't encountered before. With every lesson, children's musical personalities develop.

The Model Music Curriculum is an important step in supporting our teachers in ensuring that every child is able to access meaningful classroom music in schools. The purpose of classroom music is developing musical understanding – how music works and how it conveys meaning. Along the way, children will sing, play an instrument, explore music from a range of genres, handle sound as composers, learn to improvise, and develop a means of talking about music. The Model Music Curriculum offers detailed guidance for classroom teachers in primary schools, showing a clear journey from a child's first music lesson in school to what they can be expected to do in Year 6. For specialist music teachers in secondary schools, it shows a curriculum pathway that will lead to further study at GCSE and A Level.

Above all, music in schools needs time. For children and young people to grow as musicians, they need to experience the world of music in all its richness and depth, with their musical knowledge and skills steadily growing over time. This cannot be achieved through short sound bites, or teaching on a carousel system. The Model Music Curriculum's expectation of a minimum of one hour's classroom music per week from Year 1 to Year 9 - with first access instrumental tuition, 1:1 lessons and musical ensembles in addition to that one hour – could make a substantial difference to the musical lives of our children and young people, and to the country at large.



Simon Toyne
President, Music Teachers' Association
president@musicteachers.org

- www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-music-in-schools
- www.musicteachers.org/model-music-curriculum

Media enquiries: Keith Ayling keith@musicteachers.org