

Music in the Early Years at St Columba's

'Music is a more potent instrument than any other for education'(Plato)

Singing and music play an important role in our culture. You'll find music present in many aspects of our lives: theatre, television, films, worship, holidays, celebrations, and government and military ceremonies. At home, music can become part of our family cultures—a natural part of our everyday experiences.

From birth, parents instinctively use music to calm and soothe children, to express love and joy, and to engage and interact. We can build on these natural instincts by learning how music can impact child development, improve social skills, and benefit children of all ages.

Toddlers and Music: Toddlers love to dance and move to music. The key to toddler music is repetition, which encourages language and memorization. Silly songs make toddlers laugh. Try singing a familiar song and inserting a silly word in the place of the correct word, like “Mary had a little spider” instead of lamb. Let children reproduce rhythms by clapping or tapping objects.

EYFS and Music: Nursery and Reception children enjoy singing just to be singing. They aren't self-conscious about their ability and most are eager to let their voices roar. They like songs that repeat words and melodies, use rhythms with a definite beat, and ask them to do things. EYFS children enjoy nursery rhymes and songs about familiar things like toys, animals, play activities, and people. They also like finger plays and nonsense rhymes with or without musical accompaniment.

Music interweaves through all areas of learning and development in the early years of school at St Columba's. Music-making can be challenging to provide for in early years settings as it is noisy, and it can be difficult to document as it is live, invisible and once it has been created in that moment it disappears,

unless we capture it. Music should not be quantified by performer-listener and should not only be judged by how music is perceived in western culture.

It can be seen within the four aspects of: 'Hearing and Listening', 'Vocalising and Singing', 'Moving and Dancing' and 'Exploring and Playing', how music threads through all areas of learning and development. Music can be a way of exploring, communicating and responding to experience. Making music with others can be a social experience whether this be parent-baby/carer-baby exchanging coos, or two or more children making music with pots, pans or traditional instruments. This interaction with others, whether this be with one other person or a group, is personal to each individual and is often an expression of feelings. All vocal communication is comprised of musical elements such as pitch, rhythm and timbre, demonstrating that musicality is an intrinsic part of being human. Music should be seen as a core component of children's learning and should be shared with young children to ensure they have broad, balanced and rounded experiences in early childhood and beyond.



Resources:

The resources needed for this early years music approach have mostly already been purchased - please see separate list compiled by Robyn Martindale – however the following items would be useful to add to the resources in light of the above:

Set of scarves

Set of ribbons

Set of pom-poms

Set of soft balls

(these would be useful for movement to music)

More sets of hand bells, maracas etc (another early years percussion box or preferably 2?)