



Notre Dame MUSIC
@NotreDame_MUSIC

NOTRE
DAME
SCHOOL



Prep Music Department

The Prep Music Department at Notre Dame School offers **an inclusive, well rounded musical education** which educates the **whole child**. Music is always an essentially **practical** activity and all skills, knowledge and appreciation are learned through the musical activities of **performing, composing and listening**. **Singing** is a **natural** and **fundamental** activity **accessible to all**. Musical experience in the Prep School is both **grounded** and **spiritual**, both **individual** and **communal**, and both **personally tailored** and **all embracing**.



Notre Dame Preparatory School

Music Department Policy

In the spirit of Saint Jeanne de Lestonnac, our foundress:

‘We are all educators.....

Accompanying young people in their efforts to build their lives for today and tomorrow.’

These words embody our Mission.

Notre Dame is a Roman Catholic Independent School with a strong ecumenical tradition, respecting the faiths and cultures of all members of our community.

As a foundation of the Company of Mary Our Lady (COMOL) the School has a distinctive ethos which places at the service of society and the Church, an educational legacy acquired from over 400 years of existence. The Order has constantly developed and updated its educational and pedagogical work to meet the needs of the time. The Order’s distinct educational style, embodied in its ‘Educational Project’ is a Christian humanist education, which embraces the ideal of becoming women (and men) who can transform the world.

The Company of Mary Our Lady promotes:

- A quality education in all areas
- An education for solidarity, social responsibility and development
- An education that goes beyond the classroom, seeking other educational opportunities
- An education carried out with others, working together and complementing one another.
- An education offered as a service through educators who bear witness, by their word and life, to the values and principles of a Company of Mary Our Lady education.

The School’s aims in order to achieve this are as follows:

- To offer a holistic and personalised education
- To develop a secure and stimulating environment in which pupils are encouraged and challenged to fulfil their potential: academically, spiritually, creatively and physically and gain an appreciation of the global world in which they live
- To develop in pupils a responsible and independent attitude towards work and their roles in society and inculcate a desire to contribute to the wider community.
- To ensure that the school atmosphere is such that all pupils learn to live amicably together, gaining a keen awareness of others, their feelings and their needs, and to begin to build a reasoned set of attitudes, values and beliefs based on Christian principles.
- To learn to respect each pupil as a valued individual and to imbue feelings of confidence, independence and self-esteem.
- To liaise with parents, enlisting their co-operation and interest in order to promote a happy partnership working in trust
- To prepare each pupil for the next stage of their education ensuring that it is appropriate to their individual abilities, aptitudes and needs

In line with The School Mission statement, the Music Curriculum at Notre Dame Preparatory School is designed to enrich the whole child and to develop their musical awareness.

The Kodaly approach is used throughout the school as it develops the child systematically in the three key areas of Performance, Composition, and Appreciation. *All children can sing, and can sing in tune. This is the greatest instrument of all!*

This is achieved through singing and rhythmic work, leading to more advanced levels of music literacy and performance.

Instrumental tuition is available in all orchestral instruments, singing, and theory. There are 14 visiting music teachers giving over 130 lessons each week.

There are over 20 music clubs, groups and ensembles rehearsing every week including beginner's instrument clubs, choirs, orchestras and bands.

The key ingredient of Notre Dame Preparatory School's Music Department is that MUSIC IS FOR ALL. We aim to involve as many girls as possible in at least one of our numerous choirs, orchestras and ensembles.

Our Aims in Teaching Music:

- Enjoyment of Music through participation in ensemble and class activities
- Developing vocal skills, resulting in an ability to maintain pitch, sing in unison, and in parts
- Developing skills in rhythmic ability, aural work, and music literacy
- Developing concentration necessary for group and solo music making
- Developing an understanding of the place of music in our culture, in other cultures and throughout history
- An ability to read music with fluency, and to use this skill in composition and in choral and instrumental music making

Why is Music Important?

- Music is a vital creative subject giving girls an outlet to express themselves.
- Music develops the child's ability to appreciate the arts in fine detail, their confidence in public performance, and their creative composing skills
- As well as specifically musical skills, music develops fine and gross motor functions, pattern matching, reading and mathematical skills. Music is known to be a learning accelerator and children regularly involved in musical activity do better academically than their peers who are not.
- Music provides an opportunity for group and ensemble work. This gives children a sense of achievement, as well as commitment, enjoyment, team work and collaborative skills, attention and listening ability and co-operation.

The Kodaly Method:

Music throughout the whole age range in the department is taught through the Kodaly Method. This method is based on singing as a natural and fundamental activity accessible to all. The method mirrors language teaching methods which teach language by immersion. As in a French class where instructions are given in French, as far as possible as many regular classroom instructions and classroom management in Music lessons are *sung*. These songs and the singing of the register give the girls frequent opportunities to sing unaccompanied both solo and with the group as a natural part of every lesson. Singing is therefore not treated only as a separate or special activity. The songs regularly used in the department for this purpose can be found in the booklet 'Songs for Classroom Management' but each teacher is encouraged to develop their own individual material that suits them and their classes.

The Kodaly method also provides a foundation in music notation through rhythm games, the use of Kodaly rhythm syllables for rhythm reading and notation, and pitch matching work using numbers.

Music in Worship

Music is an active part of school worship and the girls are encouraged to see musical activity in general, but singing especially, as a potential opportunity for expression of love for God and each other. Communal singing is an essential part of this expression and girls are encouraged in regular hymn practice, assemblies, masses and other liturgical services to understand and value the emotional and moral content of the songs they are singing, and to experience worship through singing as an activity that transcends the everyday. Music, and especially singing, is therefore taught both as a natural, grounded, fundamental and individual experience and also a heightened, spiritual, uplifting, communal and transcendent one.

Celebrating Excellence in Music

- Annual Ensemble concerts for both the Infant and Junior Departments
- Annual Carol Service for the Juniors and Nativities for the Infants and Nursery
- Smaller chamber and solo soirées and lunchtime concerts, giving all children an opportunity to present items they have been preparing.
- Solo performance in class, where children bring an item to perform to their peers
- Solo performance in class assemblies
- Vocal solo and ensemble performances in the Year 3&4, and Year 5&6 productions
- Occasional Choir tours in the UK or abroad
- Performances in the community, such as carol singing in care homes
- Performance in competitive music festivals where appropriate
- Year 6 Chamber Music performances in the Ceremony of Achievement

Strategies for ensuring Progress and Continuity

- Annual review of the Curriculum, maintaining one suitable for the needs of the children in each year group, adjusting and reviewing as required, where possible to fit with the cross-curricular requirements of TASK.
- Maintain a 'music profile' on each child, keeping a record of their assessment results and extra-curricular instrumental and ensemble activities, providing an opportunity three times per year for each child to review their musical involvement with their class

teacher and providing regular opportunities for them to take up new instruments or activities, as well as a record in one place for the purpose of reporting.

- Encourage all girls to take up a musical instrument, through regular promoting and demonstration of instruments in assembly and in class, and through the music profile system, and through encouraging girls on a regular basis to consider taking up an instrument, as well as providing free or cheap beginners' clubs and free or one-off trial lessons to encourage children to try instruments out.
- Maintain and develop an extensive extra curricular programme designed to involve as many girls as possible. Presently we have over twenty rehearsing groups in the Prep School including beginners' instrument clubs, string orchestra, concert band and various choirs as well as music theory.
- Provide a specific auditioned extra-curricular programme for Year 6 in their third term, leading to their Ceremony of Achievement, preparing them for Year 7.
- Provide an extra-curricular group for gifted, talented and able children to stretch their musical skills and provide them with chamber music opportunities.
- Develop and maintain musical instruments and resources for the department, with a view to the future enlargement.

Rewards and recognition

- Staff in the department may choose to tweet weekly progress in ensemble work such as 'Posture of the Week' or 'Bow Hold of the Week' in real time during each rehearsal where these awards are given. These progress awards earn children house points.
- Regular emails are sent to parents documenting extraordinary progress or contribution in any particular lesson or rehearsal.
- For the major choirs and ensembles, attendance on time, with their appropriate instrument in hand, with good behaviour and without leaving the rehearsal on any pretext earns the girl 3 house points per rehearsal. Late attendance or attendance without an instrument might earn a girl 2 house points, etc.
- ABRSM certificates and comments sheets awarded after ABRSM exams are documented by the department and given out in the half term after the pupil has taken the examination, in assembly.
- Green Book awards are given out for especially noteworthy performances, pieces of work, contributions to ensembles or behaviour in lessons and music clubs.

Assessment

This is used to show the development of individual girls in music. It involves assessing girls in all areas of the subject, including singing, pitch recognition, performing, listening and composing.

Singing is assessed briefly in every lesson for every girl using the singing of the register to record a mark out of 5 according to a differentiated mark scheme.

Most work in Music is practical and is assessed on an ongoing basis through individual coaching. Assessment is not generally made of written work in folders as only a small amount of written work is completed in response to listening questions which are marked together in the lesson for immediate feedback, or is rough work in preparation for a practical performance

which is recorded on video and self/peer-assessed. However, there are formal assessments carried out throughout the year as follows:

Assessment is still according to the three main original National Curriculum areas of focus for practical music: **Performing, Composing and Listening**, since the approach to music at Notre Dame is essentially practical, and these three practical areas are still heavily represented in the New National Curriculum. These areas are supported by the use of staff and other musical notations and an understanding of the history of music as described in the New National Curriculum. There are therefore three formal assessments across the year corresponding to these three areas. Normally the Listening assessment will be completed in the first half of term 3, so that knowledge of work completed across the year can be assessed and used in the second half of the term for reporting.

Throughout the year in the scheme of work national curriculum levels are used to judge where to pitch material for differentiation. These levels are not used for formal assessment purposes.

Further information on assessment can be found in the attached appendices.

Reporting to Parents

On a formal basis, there is a written report annually, as well as two parent's evenings.

The Music Department operates an open policy whereby parents can contact the Director of Music to discuss any issue relating to their daughters musical education.

Pupil Profiling in the Prep School

The electronic pupil profiling system consists of an initial short individual interview with every pupil in Years 3 to 6 about her musical activities, which are recorded on an individual excel spreadsheet for each girl. These spreadsheets are updated as girls take up or drop instruments or take associated exam grades and constitute a working document. After the interviews forms are sent home to parents of girls who are not yet learning an instrument, with a suggested instrument that the child is interested in. At the start of each term all the details are checked again with each class and the girls are asked again if they are not learning an instrument whether they would like to. In addition, at the start of each term, a check is run on any forms that have been sent home but not yet returned. This profiling system raises awareness of instruments every term and gives girls at least three specific opportunities to take up instruments or clubs every year. This system also allows quick reference of pupil activities for reports writing and parents' evenings. In Key Stage 2 the class sung register scores are recorded in these profiles and automatically recorded on each girl's profile.

In Key Stage 1 this information is currently recorded by hand and collated separately by the teacher.

Summary and Mission Statement

The Prep Music Department at Notre Dame School offers an inclusive, well rounded musical education which educates the whole child. Music is always an essentially practical activity and all skills, knowledge and appreciation are learned through the musical activities of performing, composing and listening. Singing is a natural and fundamental activity accessible to all. Musical experience in the Prep School is both grounded and spiritual, both individual and communal, and both personally tailored and all embracing.