

# A Common Approach

PIANO

Piano





# Introduction

Developing this revised and expanded version of *A Common Approach* has been a challenging and illuminating task. Our career paths and teaching experiences are diverse. We were aware that there are many different ways of teaching piano. Nevertheless, we discovered considerable common ground. We also found that we shared many similar ideas and principles with colleagues from the other working parties. Indeed, it was reassuring to find that many colleagues who contributed to the consultative process not only concurred with much of our thinking but also use some of the activities included here in their own teaching. To all who responded to the draft documentation, we are extremely grateful. Your experience and expertise were particularly valuable, and helped to clarify and refine our thinking.

By drawing on good practice, *A Common Approach* aims to improve the quality of musical experience for all pupils by encouraging instrumental / vocal teachers to reflect on, develop and improve their professional skills, knowledge and understanding. But it is not intended to be prescriptive. Our hope is that teachers will find the suggestions useful and will be helped in developing their own work further. Instrumental teaching is always evolving and we can all benefit from a fresh look at even the most fundamental aspects of our work.

All the ideas and activities have been proven to work on many occasions, in a variety of circumstances and with different pupils. We believe, therefore, that the learning objectives and activities, used in conjunction with a wide and attractive range of repertoire, offer pupils the opportunity to enjoy a broad and balanced instrumental curriculum. Above all, we hope that we are encouraging a musical approach to learning an instrument, an approach that at each stage of learning is stimulating, enlightening and rewarding, and gives pupils a deepening love of music and a range of skills, knowledge and understanding.

There is a perception that the piano is an 'easy' instrument to learn. The apparent ease of sound production, however, is misleading and can lead to mechanical playing and unhelpful physical habits. These can be best avoided by thinking of the whole body as a playing mechanism from the outset. Unlike other instruments, harmonic and textural elements are introduced very early. The level of co-ordination required, therefore, is extremely challenging, even for the simplest of hands-together pieces.

In developing the programmes of study and units of work, considerable thought has been given to:

- promoting a comfortable and balanced physical approach to playing
- developing an awareness of style, with all the attendant implications for tone, touch and technique
- encouraging creativity and musical communication

Indications of repertoire should be seen as suggestions. Teachers naturally have their own preferences and teaching strengths. The working party did, however, feel that it was important to encourage breadth and balance in the musical diet.

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Professional issues regarding pupil and teacher protection are of the utmost importance, for example when teaching posture. Teachers working for Music Services and / or schools will probably have access to comprehensive guidelines. Private teachers are advised to seek guidance from one of the professional associations, e.g. Incorporated Society of Musicians, European Piano Teachers' Association.

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# The Piano Framework

Pupils should be offered broad and balanced programmes of study that promote and develop musical playing and singing. They should be given opportunities to:

- ▶ *express their musical ideas and feelings*
- ▶ *use their creativity, imagination and intuition*
- ▶ *develop their skills, knowledge and understanding*
- ▶ *reflect on and evaluate their progress*

through the interrelated areas of:

## A. listening and internalising

*including:*

- i listening to music with concentration in and out of lessons, building on their experiences
- ii having a clear aural perception of the music to be played
- iii recognising and discriminating between the musical elements of pulse, pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, texture, and tone colour
- iv recognising and conveying structural elements in their playing
- v making links between sound and symbols when using notation

## B. making and controlling musical sounds : developing technique

*including:*

- i posture and freedom of movement / keyboard geography
- ii fingering and co-ordination
- iii tone quality, sound production and articulation

## C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

*including:*

- i improvising expressively
- ii applying their instrumental skills in composing
- iii interpreting music, developing a personal response

## D. playing music

*including:*

- i working out how to play music by ear
- ii repeating musical patterns and phrases accurately from memory
- iii playing pieces in a variety of styles with fluency, expression and understanding
- iv memorising pieces that have been learnt
- v reading and playing music at sight\*

## E. playing music with others

*including:*

- i listening, watching, responding and leading
- ii contributing to collective decisions, including interpretation

## F. performing and communicating

*including:*

- i interpreting and communicating the character of the music
- ii evaluating their performances and making improvements

\* where appropriate

# Programme of Study 1

NQF entry level/Pre-grade 1

## Learning objectives

### A. listening and internalising

*Pupils should learn to:*

i listen to music with concentration in and out of lessons, enjoying their experiences and building on them

ii have some aural perception of the music to be played

iii recognise and discriminate between the musical elements of pulse, pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, texture, and notice changes of tone quality and colour

During programme 1, pupils aim to control sounds on the piano. They start to develop technical and musical skills. They learn how to play simple pieces, enjoying their experiences and building on them with increasing confidence.

iv recognise and convey in their playing simple rhythmic and melodic patterns, e.g. repetition of main tune

v make links between sounds and symbols when using notation, e.g. shape of the melody

# Programme of Study 1

NQF entry level/Pre-grade 1

## Possible teaching activities

### A. listening and internalising

- Ask pupils to listen with concentration to different pieces of music in their own time and then describe them in the lesson, including aspects of dynamics, instrumentation, character, etc.
- Encourage pupils to jot down details of favourite pieces in their notebooks.
- Perform a piece to be learnt to pupils. Ask them to describe its character.
- Ask pupils to tap the pulse of music played by the teacher or other pupils.
- Ask pupils to respond physically to music being played, i.e. moving in time or beating time to music with a regular pulse. Repeat at different tempi.
- Go through the piece again with pupils, using gestures or actions to indicate rests.
- Help pupils to play/sing short, simple rhythmic/melodic phrases by ear.
- Ask pupils simple questions about pulse, pitch, rhythm, dynamics, etc.
- Ask pupils to sing songs they know well, singing some phrases in their heads at a given signal from the teacher. When pupils sing aloud again, they should be singing at the correct pitch and pulse.
- Ask pupils to sing the final note to complete a melodic phrase played/sung by the teacher.
- Ask pupils how many phrases there are in a short piece. Where do they start and finish?
- Listen to other short pieces, e.g. 'Hot Cross Buns', and ask pupils to indicate when the main tune is repeated: count the number of times it is repeated and describe what happens in between.
- Using notation, ask pupils to play/sing or clap short phrases of a piece and count silent bars in their heads, e.g. bars 1-2 clapped/played/sung, bars 3-4 counted and bars 5-6 clapped/played/sung.
- Using notation, ask pupils to describe the main features of a piece before playing/singing it – e.g. shape of melody and obvious repetitions.
- Play a familiar piece incorrectly. Ask pupils to spot the mistakes.
- Play a familiar major-key tune, e.g. 'Lavender's Blue', in a minor key version. Ask pupils to comment on the effect.

## Points to note

It is important that listening is approached in a relaxed and enjoyable way.

Listening games can be linked to all the pieces being learnt in the early stages.

Ensure that pupils understand the difference between tempo, pulse and rhythm.

Further ideas in developing aural acuity can be found in the approaches of Kodaly and Dalcroze (Eurhythmics).

The main aim is to internalise the sound before relating it to a symbol.

In the first instance, it helps if the penultimate note is either the leading note or the supertonic.

There are many opportunities to use a wide range of musical styles from around the world.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i posture and freedom of movement and keyboard geography
  - play with physical freedom and ease, without tension:
    - across the whole range of the instrument while sitting
    - developing a comfortable and balanced position
  - understand the layout of the keyboard
  - identify the letter names of the keys
  - observe the repeating pattern of the keyboard and relate that to aural considerations
  - begin to develop awareness of the visual and aural differences between whole and half tones

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#### ii fingering and co-ordination

- play in a single five-finger hand position, hands separately
- play, at a steady pulse, short, simple phrases, hands separately and together
- play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand
- play two notes simultaneously with one hand
- recognise and use finger numbering
- use appropriate fingering, initially within a single hand position

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#### iii tone quality, sound production and articulation

- play with a focused, clear sound:
    - using some dynamic contrast
    - developing some control over changes in dynamics
    - shaping short melodic phrases
  - play legato and non-legato
  - explore the effects of both pedals
  - differentiate between the various sounds, dynamics and articulations
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## Possible teaching activities

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

#### *posture and freedom of movement*

- Explain to pupils the benefits of positioning themselves an appropriate distance from the keyboard, and of keeping wrists supple and arms relaxed. Demonstrate a variety of both successful and less successful approaches to posture and ask pupils to make observations.
- Encourage the use of the entire range of the keyboard, sitting and/or standing.
- Ask pupils to swing their arms while standing in a relaxed manner and explain how this relates to playing.
- Demonstrate various ways in which pupils can achieve a relaxed and comfortable hand shape.

#### *keyboard geography*

- Ask pupils to observe and comment on the layout of black and white keys.
- Ask pupils to find and play all of the groups of two and then three black keys.
- Explain the letter names for white keys, relating them to the nearby groups of black keys.
- Ask pupils to comment on the aural similarity between notes of the same letter name, and explain to them the repetitive pattern of the keyboard.
- Play games where pupils locate, name and play notes across the range of the keyboard, as specified by the teacher, e.g. 'Find all of the Ds, starting with the highest and working down.'
- Ask pupils to identify the letter names of notes played randomly, using the whole range of the keyboard.
- Illustrate whole and half tones, asking pupils to comment on the difference.

#### *fingerings and co-ordination*

- Explain and demonstrate finger numbers, using both hands.
- Ask pupils to draw the outline of hands and invite them to insert the numbers of fingers.
- Give pupils examples of pairs of fingers for 'walking' exercises. Ask them to choose, and name, pairs of fingers for steps/jumps.
- Encourage pupils to play individual notes within a suitable range, using fingers indicated by the teacher, e.g. 'Find a black key and play it using the third finger, right hand.'
- Ask pupils to play within single hand positions, hands separately and then hands together, short, simple phrases.
- Ask pupils to play two notes simultaneously with one hand, e.g. play the interval of a fifth with 1 and 5. This could then serve as a drone accompaniment.

#### *tone quality, sound production and articulation*

- Play and sing very simple phrases with a variety of dynamics and articulations. Ask pupils to imitate and to identify the different characteristics used.
- Demonstrate 'sound pictures' and encourage pupils to create their own, developing tonal imagination and awareness.

## Points to note

This area is explored more fully in the 'Building a Relationship with the Instrument' unit of work.

Possibilities include allowing the hands to hang naturally to the side of the body, observing the shape, and transferring this to the keyboard, or asking pupils to place their hands face-up on their laps, then turn them over and transfer them to the keyboard.

It may be best to start with a limited group, e.g. C/D/E.

Examples might include C-D in different octaves, using 2-3 (right hand) and 3-2 (left hand), or D-F using 2-4 (right hand) and 4-2 (left hand).

Small extensions may be used in order that melodies spanning a sixth can be played.

Nature or animal images can be useful to explore a range of associated textures and musical characteristics. Both sustaining and una corda pedals could be used to enhance effects.

## Learning objectives

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i improvise expressively by exploring different sounds and creating satisfying repeated musical patterns or phrases

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- ii make use of instrumental skills when beginning to compose

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- iii begin to interpret music with some expression and with a sense of its intended effect; talk about its mood and how it is played and suggest improvements

### D. playing music

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i work out **by ear** how to play short, easy phrases from well-known tunes

## Possible teaching activities

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

- Help pupils to make up short and simple rhythmic/melodic patterns from suggested musical starting points, e.g. pentatonic phrases, drones, rhythmic ostinati. Abstract or pictorial ideas could also be used.
- Repeat the process, selecting and discarding ideas and aiming for musical coherence.
- Lead pupils in a discussion about the musical effect of their improvisations.

- Ask pupils to compose short pieces from a given starting point, e.g. a story, poem, theme, picture, or one of the musical techniques suggested above. Discuss the outcomes. Initially, this could consist of asking pupils to write down their improvisations as an aid to memory, perhaps using their own forms of shorthand as a precursor to staff notation.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to perform their compositions to others.
- Encourage pupils to use the piano in creative activities in the classroom, applying technical skills already acquired.

- Play pieces to pupils with various versions of dynamics, tempi and articulations: ask them to describe how this changes the nature of pieces.
- Show pupils how to experiment with different ways of playing pieces. Ask them to listen and decide which way of playing is most appropriate to the character of the music.
- Discuss ways of making pieces that have limited expressive indications sound more interesting and varied.

### D. playing music

- Choosing appropriate starting notes, play short, simple tunes (familiar and less so), e.g. television jingles, folk-tunes, nursery rhymes. Ask pupils to select one and, on the piano, work out separate phrases by ear, gradually building up the complete tune.
- Ask pupils to play the complete tune expressively to others.
- As an extension activity, ask pupils to teach the tune to other pupils.

## Points to note

The teacher can promote pupils' confidence by:

- demonstrating how to experiment with musical ideas
- providing step-by-step assistance with models, patterns and procedures
- emphasising the open-ended nature of the activity – all outcomes are valued and enjoyed

Through composing, pupils are able to explore the music from the inside. Composing is valid in its own right, but it can also be used to develop performing skills, knowledge and understanding. Productive links with general classroom work should be made wherever possible.

It may be necessary to store pupils' ideas for them since their creative imagination may run ahead of their ability to write down their ideas, at least where staff notation is concerned.

Interpretation is the creative dimension of performing. At the earliest stage, pupils should be encouraged to make expressive musical decisions, e.g. different dynamics and attacks, either intuitively or by evaluating their work. The teacher can help by being an informed listener, giving feedback and encouragement .

This is not as difficult as it sounds. Many pupils experiment with tunes they know before starting formal instrumental lessons.

Teachers should select tunes carefully, bearing in mind the implications of starting on different notes.

## Learning objectives

### D. playing music

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- ii **repeat** with accuracy short, easy rhythmic and melodic patterns by playing back from memory

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- iii **play** short, easy pieces from notation / symbols, conveying the character of the music

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- iv **memorise** with accuracy selected short, simple pieces from their repertoire

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## Possible teaching activities

### D. playing music

contd...

- Perform a piece and ask pupils to respond to the music by clapping, tapping or moving with a regular pulse and at a variety of tempi.
- Repeat, with pupils substituting a different sound, gesture or action to indicate rests.
  
- Engage pupils in 'copycat playing', either with or without notation, maintaining a secure pulse and rhythm. Incorporate different musical effects, such as contrasts of dynamics and articulation.
- Ask pupils to sing easy intervals and match them to notes on the piano where appropriate.
  
- Select pieces for pupils to learn, from a range of different times and places, and in a variety of styles. Take into account:
  - the musical and technical skills that will be needed
  - pupils' prior experience
  - opportunities to develop musical ideas
  - their personal response to the music
  - pupils' general musical interests
- Show pupils how to practise their pieces and make improvements.
  
- Help pupils to memorise selected pieces from their repertoire by:
  - building up short sections at a time
  - identifying and remembering rhythmic patterns and the shape of the melody
  - noting where repetitions and contrasts occur
  - focusing on expressive details
- From time to time, teach a short piece away from the music, only referring to the notation once it is learnt.
- Encourage pupils to play from memory to other pupils.

## Points to note

There is always scope to design new musical games in order to develop pupils' short-term memory. These can often be invented together as the activity proceeds, building on prior learning.

At first, limit the phrase to be copied to possibly two bars of 2/4 or equivalent, using only two notes.

Adopt the holistic approach to teaching and learning as outlined in section 1.

Playing from memory is an important and realistic expectation in learning pieces from the earliest stages. Promote confidence by making memorisation of whole pieces a natural part of the learning process. Bear in mind that they are unlikely to be memorised properly until the performance is technically fluent.

Some objectives are:

- to strengthen pupils' confidence
- to focus on the expressive qualities of the music
- to enable pupils to communicate more freely without having the constraints of notation

## Learning objectives

### D. playing music

contd...

- Pupils should learn to:*
- v read and play **at sight** short, simple phrases at a regular pulse; begin to make links between sound and symbol

### E. playing music with others

- Pupils should learn to:*
- i play with others, demonstrating some basic ensemble skills by listening, watching and keeping in time with the group

- ii explore and discuss the character of the music and the expressive possibilities

## Possible teaching activities

## Points to note

### D. playing music

contd...

- Play short, simple rhythmic/melodic patterns and ask pupils to copy them on the piano.
- Using flash cards, help pupils to:
  - recognise different note values and their rests
  - clap, sing and play simple rhythmic/melodic patterns, maintaining a regular pulse, perhaps at different tempi
  - name notes and find them on the piano (note recognition)
  - read and play simple dynamics
  - read and play staccato and legato
- Devise a variety of games to explain staff notation to young beginners, e.g:
  - use a large stave with movable notes
  - space permitting, play 'note jumping': lay out five skipping ropes and ask pupils to step or jump between them, calling out the note names and perhaps singing them as well
  - play the 'musical alphabet' game: a pupil says/sings a note name, the next pupil says/sings the next one, and so on, up and down. Do the same missing out a note – G/B/D, etc.

The maxim 'sound before symbol' is as important now as ever. Reading notation is a means to making music, not an end in itself.

Different forms of notation can be used, e.g. staff, graphic, as an aid to learning. Consider carefully whether notation is a help or hindrance in learning music from aural/oral traditions.

The overall aim is to help pupils to develop instant recall of notes and rhythms, thus heightening musical memory.

Help pupils to gain enthusiasm for learning pieces, using notation when appropriate. Ensure that its use is encouraging rather than discouraging.

### E. playing music with others

- Introduce ensemble playing by means of simple improvisations, using call and response or drones, within clearly defined musical parameters.
- Create opportunities for pupils to:
  - play/sing with an accompaniment, provided either by the teacher or by recorded means, e.g. keyboard, tape, CD/minidisc, computer/midi sequencing
  - play a separate part in a piece for four or six hands

In addition to their lessons, all pupils should be provided with opportunities for participation in ensembles. By playing with others, they are likely to:

- increase their motivation and interest
- quicken their rate of progress
- widen their performing skills
- improve their personal and social skills

- Discuss the mood of the music and how it can be conveyed.
- With pupils, assess their ensemble playing, identifying strengths and areas for further development. Make a recording for this purpose, if appropriate.

## Learning objectives

### F. performing and communicating

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i perform music to others, e.g. parents / carers, teachers and friends, demonstrating an awareness of the mood of the music

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- ii discuss the quality of their playing and, with guidance, learn from their performance

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## Possible teaching activities

### F. performing and communicating

- Organise opportunities for informal performances in lessons and for parents/carers, relatives and friends at home.
- Ask pupils to revise pieces already learnt and to perform them with expression.
- Encourage pupils to perform from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.
- Demonstrate to pupils how to sit when performing duets.

- Help pupils to evaluate each performance and suggest ways of making improvements and building up confidence. Promote self-evaluation as much as possible.
- Encourage pupils to develop their own library of pieces that can be repeated in future.

## Points to note

Performance is a key skill that should be a natural part of the learning process from the earliest lessons. Simulated performances in lessons are particularly beneficial, helping pupils to gain confidence.

Allow plenty of time so that the music is thoroughly prepared.

Pupils should be well prepared for every performance so that it is a positive experience for everyone.

Pieces need to be chosen with care so that they are well within pupils' capabilities.

References to nerves can be counter-productive. If pupils are thoroughly prepared, however, nerves can be viewed as an aid to concentration. Encourage pupils to have a sense of anticipation and enjoyment about performing.

On-going assessment is an integral part of successful teaching and learning. Opportunities for formal assessments need to be built into the activities. Informal assessments, however, are to be encouraged throughout the teaching, prompted by effective teacher-pupil discussion.

# Programme of Study 2

NQF 1 foundation level/Grade 1

## Learning objectives

### A. listening and internalising

*Pupils should learn to:*

i listen to music with concentration in and out of lessons, enjoying their experiences and building on them

ii have some aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling of the expressive characteristics

iii recognise and discriminate between the musical elements, including aspects of articulation, phrasing and quality of tone

iv recognise and convey simple structures in their playing, e.g. repetition of rhythmic and melodic phrases

v hear some elements of the music internally when using notation / symbols, e.g. tempo, pitch, rhythm, dynamics

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i posture and freedom of movement
  - maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:
    - across a comfortable range of the instrument while sitting
    - playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together
    - developing free and confident movement

During programme 2, pupils build on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired in programme 1. They extend their musical and technical skills, play a wider range of repertoire and communicate the expressive character of the music.

# Programme of Study 2

NQF 1 foundation level/Grade 1

## Possible teaching activities

### A. listening and internalising

- Ask pupils to listen with concentration to different pieces of music in their own time and then describe them in the lesson, including aspects of dynamics, instrumentation, character, etc.
- Referring to the musical elements, ask pupils to describe what they liked and disliked about the music they have listened to.
- Perform pieces to be learnt and ask pupils to discuss appropriate features, e.g. tempo, rhythm, range of melody, dynamics, in relation to the character of the music.
- Perform pieces in different ways, e.g. with different tempi, dynamics and articulation. Ask pupils to discuss the effect on the mood and character.
- Play short rhythmic phrases from pieces to be learnt and ask pupils to clap back the pulse and/or rhythm.
- Ask pupils to identify note lengths aurally, e.g. crotchets and minims or quavers and crotchets.
- Ask pupils to tap the pulse of simple phrases with one hand and the rhythm with the other.
- Help pupils to sing/play short melodic phrases of pieces by ear, and to identify the differences either between half steps and whole steps or between different types of larger intervals.
- Play unaccompanied phrases using only the first five notes of the scale and ask pupils to identify major/minor mode and whether the melody ends on the tonic or dominant.
- Ask pupils questions on the phrasing and structure of pieces.
- Improvise some rhythmic patterns with pupils, perhaps related to the pieces being learnt. Contrast long and short notes and link to a mood, occasion or story.
- Using notation, ask pupils to work out the rhythm of phrases in their heads, then clap it.
- Using notation, help pupils to trace the contour of phrases, then compare it with the actual sound when played.
- Ask pupils to clap/hum/sing simple phrases at sight.
- Using notation, perform pieces with some deliberate mistakes or deviations inserted. Ask pupils to identify the differences.

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

#### *posture and freedom of movement*

- Demonstrate exercises for moderately rapid, free movement across the keyboard, e.g. playing single notes or intervals in different octaves, encouraging free movement of the arm. This can be combined with hand crossing. Ask pupils to incorporate these into their practice routines.
- Explain and demonstrate a range of physical warm-ups, at and away from the keyboard, to encourage relaxed shoulders, a supported spine, supple wrists, etc.

## Points to note

Playing to pupils provides an immediate way of modelling, i.e. demonstrating musical ideas and techniques, as well as developing aural skills.

All musical activities, including improvisation, are interrelated and can therefore be taught simultaneously.

This activity can be adapted to an aural one only, by asking pupils to memorise the main melody and then asking them to identify any deviations.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- ii **fingering and co-ordination**
  - play comfortably in extended hand positions (no larger than an octave)
    - connecting different hand positions by the passing of the thumb
  - play, at a steady pulse, short, simple phrases and exercises, hands separately and together, ensuring that the hands are co-ordinated exactly
  - play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand
  - play three-note chords with one hand
  - play with some independence of:
    - hands
    - fingers within one hand
    - articulation between hands, e.g. legato in one hand and non-legato in the other
  - recognise and use consistent fingering
  - use appropriate fingering for scales, arpeggios and chords

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### iii **tone quality, sound production and articulation**

- play with a focused, clear sound:
  - using some dynamic contrast
  - controlling changes in dynamics with more ease
  - shaping and defining phrases
  - developing some independence of dynamic levels between the hands
  - controlling the tone quality when joining or changing hand position
- play with legato and non-legato articulation, including slurring
- incorporate direct pedalling and pedalling for effect as appropriate

*continued overleaf...*

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## Possible teaching activities

## B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

*fingering and co-ordination*

- Move beyond single hand positions, introducing pupils to the concept of thumb passing. Provide demonstrations of how this works, e.g. play the beginning of a scale to the point where the thumb passes under. Repeat the segment, ascending and descending. Apply the same principle to the top half of the scale.
- Ask pupils to play appropriate exercises to reinforce fingering patterns used in scales/arpeggios/broken chords.
- Help pupils to devise similar exercises independently.
- Encourage pupils to describe fingering patterns observed in scales.
- Show how these patterns can be applied to other simple keys.
- Demonstrate how pupils can play in extended hand positions, involving greater stretches between individual fingers, e.g. stretches of a fourth played by 1-2 in the left hand, often found in simple baroque dances.
- Explain to pupils the need to play rhythmically and with careful attention to tonal control when passing melodies between the hands.
- Teach exercises for chordal playing (three-note chords in close position) and encourage pupils to incorporate these into their practice routines.
- Demonstrate some strategies for dealing with passages requiring rhythmic independence, e.g. tapping the rhythm for the left hand while playing the right hand; miming one hand while playing the other.
- Discuss some strategies for dealing with passages using step-wise movement in one hand and larger intervals in the other.
- Using particular passages, discuss various fingering solutions.

*tone quality, sound production and articulation*

- Demonstrate examples of well-rounded tone and contrast this with examples of poorly produced tone (both unfocussed and overly harsh), using the same passage. Invite pupils to comment on the differences.
- Provide some simple explanations of the physical origins of well-rounded tone.
- Demonstrate and explain the physical movements required for legato and staccato.

*continued overleaf...*

## Points to note

For a more detailed investigation, refer to the 'Thumb-passing Technique' unit of work.

With pupils, keep records of scales learnt, e.g. scale charts.

If pupils find the stretches difficult, repeat the same stretch up the scale.

Teachers may wish to introduce chordal playing by using the interval of a fifth and adding the third later, gradually developing ease of co-ordination.

Always encourage pupils to have a thorough and consistent approach to fingering in their practice.

'Good tone' only becomes meaningful in the context of well-shaped musical phrases.

To some extent, different articulations will have occurred in programme 1, but perhaps a fuller explanation is useful at this stage. There is a variety of equally successful approaches to the introduction of staccato. It is useful to make clear links between the sound and the physical movements required.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:* continued from previous page

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

*Pupils should learn to:*

i improvise rhythmic and melodic phrases freely or within given structures, individually or as part of a group

ii compose by developing musical ideas within given simple structures and applying instrumental skills

iii make choices in relation to tempo, dynamics, phrasing, articulation, colour, etc. in order to achieve an intended effect and convey the expressive characteristics; describe and evaluate the music using appropriate musical vocabulary

## Possible teaching activities

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

*continued from previous page*

- Demonstrate examples of good and poor balance between melody and accompaniment, inviting pupils to comment.
- Explain ways in which pupils can achieve better balance, including silent or shadow practice for accompaniments.
- Ensure pupils listen for tonal control when melodies are divided between hands and where there are changes of hand position.
- Demonstrate the use of direct pedalling for the final notes of phrases and encourage pupils to take the initiative in this aspect of their playing, e.g. in transparent textures, such as early classical minuets.
- Show pupils the use of simple pedalling for effect, using both improvisations and composed material, e.g. long pedals for impressionistic effects, *una corda* for subdued tone colour.
- Demonstrate the physical movements needed to achieve clear phrasing and slurring, simultaneously reinforcing the role of the ear.
- Using a variety of pieces, encourage pupils to play with due attention to the natural melodic stresses.
- Play a simple piece to pupils, and discuss how it might be phrased. Demonstrate how the musical interest is enhanced by clear phrasing.

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

- Ask pupils to improvise using modal/blues scales or call-and-response ideas. Focus on musical coherence and an increasing awareness of expressive possibilities, including articulation and dynamics.
- Demonstrate the idea of a 'sandwich rondo' and how episodes can be created in between the main tune. Ask pupils to improvise the main tune whilst the teacher plays the episode. Swap roles: teacher plays rondo and pupil improvises episodes. In group lessons, pupils can share the roles.
- Demonstrate the use of intervals and drones to provide a harmonic context for improvisations.
- Show pupils how to build on ideas from pieces and improvisations and develop individual or group compositions. Starting points can be literary or visual stimuli, musical devices, including sequence, ostinato, riffs, and pieces listened to.
- Ask pupils to explore musical ideas on the piano, jotting down the main points.
- Encourage pupils to evaluate their work during their lessons. Give specific feedback about musical details and help them to overcome particular problems.
- Help pupils to refine and notate their pieces, possibly using ICT if appropriate. Promote opportunities for pupils' compositions to be performed alongside other pieces that they are learning.
- Set activities over a number of weeks. These can be undertaken as part of pupils' practice and reviewed in each lesson.
- When learning new pieces, encourage pupils to make independent decisions about expressive features, such as dynamics, tempi, phrasing, articulation, and tone quality.
- Show pupils how to apply their listening skills and respond to the musical features of the music.
- Tease out pupils' understanding in questions about the music.
- Encourage pupils to perform the music intuitively and to explore different interpretations, even at a simple level.
- Demonstrate alternatives for pupils to discuss and evaluate.

## Points to note

In the early stages, differentiation between melody and accompaniment may not be particularly subtle. Nevertheless, sensitivity in this area should be encouraged at an early stage. A useful introduction to this topic would be the case of a sustained melody note under which other accompanying notes are introduced.

Pianists should be encouraged to link the idea of phrasing with singing and breathing at all times.

Teachers might like to use this as an opportunity to reinforce attention to phrasing and melodic shaping.

Whilst instrumental lessons are not a substitute for curriculum music, they do provide opportunities for pupils to extend ideas that originate from classroom lessons. Instrumental teachers have particular expertise that helps pupils to explore the technical and expressive potential of the instrument.

Structural coherence and balance are more important than how many notes or bars a piece contains. What matters most, however, is that musical creativity becomes a habit - and one that pupils enjoy.

Some pupils interpret music intuitively, with little intervention from the teacher. Others need a more structured approach. All pupils should be encouraged to analyse how they make their musical decisions.

## Learning objectives

### D. playing music

*Pupils should learn to:*

i work out **by ear** how to play easy, well-known tunes in simple keys

ii **repeat** with accuracy short, easy rhythmic and melodic phrases by playing back from memory

iii **play** a variety of easy pieces from notation / symbols, conveying the character of the music

iv play **from memory**, and to others, selected contrasting pieces from their repertoire

v read and play **at sight** short, easy pieces at a regular pulse, beginning to hear some of the elements internally and attending to expressive details, including articulation and dynamics



## Possible teaching activities

### D. playing music

- Encourage pupils to learn simple, familiar pieces by ear and ask them to play them to other pupils in lessons, or to parents and friends.
  - Demonstrate how pupils can use fifths and sixths to provide a simple but effective harmonic backing for pieces learnt by ear.
  - Ask pupils to play straightforward scales, arpeggios and broken chords by ear, given the starting note only. Reinforce the musical design of the scale and the pitches used once it has been correctly played by ear.
- 
- Play a simple piece and ask pupils to recall the melody by humming or singing it. At this stage, melodies can include simple leaps, e.g. the notes of a tonic triad, but aim to keep the overall range within an octave.
  - Engage pupils in more extended 'copycat playing', i.e. more notes, longer phrases, greater expressive detail.
- 
- Building on the musical skills, knowledge and understanding acquired in programme 1, extend the range of pieces to be taught, ensuring that the chosen repertoire relates to the full range of learning objectives.
  - Demonstrate different ways of interpreting the music and encourage pupils to apply their own creative ideas, e.g. using ideas in the piece to generate their own improvisations or compositions.
  - Show pupils how to practise their pieces and make improvements.
- 
- Help pupils to learn selected pieces from memory, showing them ways to remember the music by:
    - encouraging them to identify overall shapes and structures and important 'crossroads' in pieces
    - encouraging them to associate ideas or images with particular passages
    - asking them to identify 'safety net' points in pieces being memorised
- 
- Encourage pupils to read short, simple passages/pieces at sight (mostly avoiding changes of hand position or hands-together reading), making sure that they are well within pupils' technical range.
  - Before playing through passages/pieces for the first time, help pupils to hear in their heads the overall sound of the music by asking them to:
    - identify important notational features of the music, e.g. time signature, key signature, accidentals
    - clap or tap rhythmic patterns
    - tap the pulse with one hand and the rhythm with the other
    - note the shape of the melody and the melodic range
    - identify, from the notation, intervals larger than a second
    - sing/hum the larger intervals, having given them one of the two pitches
  - Emphasise the importance of steady, fluent reading, i.e. maintaining a regular pulse, and of allowing mistakes to pass uncorrected.

## Points to note

This can be linked to work on reinforcing fingering patterns for scales.

Use the holistic approach outlined in section 1.

Choose a wide range of repertoire that:

- consolidates and extends technical skills and knowledge
- uses simple key signatures
- possibly includes compound time
- includes a larger variety of rhythmic groupings
- includes a more extended pitch range

Build up memorisation skills regularly and systematically so that pupils gain confidence and are able to perform to others from memory.

Point out to pupils that when first playing a piece of music from notation, they are always 'sight-reading' it. Sight-reading, therefore, should not be regarded as a separate activity, but rather as an integral part of learning new music.

## Learning objectives

### E. playing music with others

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i play with others, helping to maintain a separate part and showing awareness of their role within the ensemble

---

- ii explore, discuss and convey the character of the music

### F. performing and communicating

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i perform to others with a sense of occasion, e.g. in a concert, school assembly, examination, projecting the character of the music and acknowledging audience applause

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- ii evaluate the quality of their performance in relation to the character of the music, suggesting improvements and commenting on how the intentions were achieved

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## Possible teaching activities

### E. playing music with others

- Provide opportunities for pupils to play simple parts in duets/trios (with other pupils and the teacher), maintaining a regular pulse and listening to ensemble, balance, etc.
  - Ask pupils to play different parts of a piece (with differentiated levels of difficulty) in turn, discovering which part is the most significant in any particular passage and noting how the parts fit together.
  - Encourage different pupils to take a lead, perhaps by counting in, selecting the tempi or suggesting expressive contrasts.
- 
- Ask pupils to discuss the character of the music and how this influences the choice of tempi, dynamics, etc.
  - Discuss with pupils how further improvements can be made to their playing.

### F. performing and communicating

- Organise opportunities for performances with others of a similar standard in lessons, and occasionally for parents / carers, relatives and friends.
- Using their growing library of pieces, prepare pupils so that they are able to perform with fluency and expression.
- Encourage pupils to perform from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.
- Ensure that pupils know where and how to sit to perform.
- Remind pupils that the music stand on a grand piano is further away than on an upright.
- Show pupils how to respond to applause and walk on and off stage.
- Refine pieces through simulated performances during instrumental lessons.

- Lead pupils in reflecting on and evaluating each performance. Help them to build confidence and make further improvements.
- Discuss strategies for overcoming nerves and solving problems.
- Encourage pupils to revise pieces from their repertoire.

## Points to note

Regular ensemble experiences provide a focus for making music. Taking part in a group promotes quicker progression and increased motivation and helps pupils to develop social and personal skills.

Performance enables pupils to convey their music to others, building on a range of acquired skills, knowledge and understanding. Simulated performances in lessons help to develop these skills before playing to larger audiences.

Allow plenty of time so that the music is thoroughly prepared.

Pupils should be well prepared for every performance so that it is a positive, enjoyable experience for everyone - performer(s) and audience.

Fluency is key to developing confidence in performing. Pieces therefore need to be chosen with care to ensure that they are well within pupils' capabilities.

Aim to give understanding and meaning to the music. Stimulate creative thinking in preparing for performance. Pupils should consider different ways of communicating the character of the music.

References to nerves can be counter-productive. If pupils are thoroughly prepared, however, nerves can be viewed as an aid to concentration. Encourage a sense of anticipation and enjoyment about performing.

# Programme of Study 3

NQF 1 foundation level/Grades 2 - 3

## Learning objectives

### A. listening and internalising

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i listen with concentration, responding to the expressive character of music, using their experiences to inform their playing

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- ii have a clear aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling and understanding of the expressive characteristics

---

- iii recognise and discriminate between the musical elements, including more refined aspects of articulation, phrasing, quality / variety of tone

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- iv recognise and convey structural features and compositional devices in their playing, e.g. A A B A, sequence

---

- v hear simple music internally when using notation / symbols, including repetitions, contrasts, changes to melodic and rhythmic patterns

During programme 3, pupils continue to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Through consolidating their technical skills they perform with increasing confidence, demonstrating more understanding of structural relationships and musical devices.

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i posture and freedom of movement
  - maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:
    - across a comfortable range of the instrument while sitting, with some awareness of posture and physiology
    - playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together
    - playing with free and confident movement
    - playing with economy of movement when tackling more demanding pianistic passages

# Programme of Study 3

NQF 1 foundation level/Grades 2 - 3

## Possible teaching activities

### A. listening and internalising

- Ask pupils to listen to a variety of music from different times and places and then describe the expressive character of the music with reference to the musical elements.
- Ask pupils to listen to music that is similar in period, genre, etc. to pieces they are learning. Ask them to point out similarities and differences.
- Perform pieces to be learnt. Ask pupils to describe the overall character using appropriate vocabulary.
- Ask pupils to compare and contrast new pieces with pieces already known.
- Perform pieces in different ways. Ask pupils to describe how changes to the dynamics, articulation, phrasing, tone quality, etc. affect the expressive character of the music.
- Play appropriate rhythms from pieces. Ask pupils to clap them back and identify the note values.
- Ask pupils to tap the pulse of phrases with one hand and the rhythm with the other.
- Help pupils to sing/play by ear short phrases from pieces to be learnt. Ask them to analyse some of the melodic intervals.
- Play unaccompanied phrases in major and minor keys, ending on the tonic, dominant or submediant. Ask pupils to identify the mode of the music and the finishing note.
- Ask pupils to identify the main sections of more extended pieces. Ask further questions on rhythmic/melodic features, use of sequence, tonality, modulations, etc.
- Ask pupils to prepare short pieces using various compositional techniques, e.g. tone clusters, glissandi, pentatonic and whole-tone scales, and describe their effect.
- Encourage pupils to improvise short pieces using similar techniques.
- Using notation, ask pupils to work out in their heads:
  - the rhythm of phrases
  - the sound of melodies, e.g. hum/sing simple phrases and then compare with the actual sound when played
- Using notation, ask pupils to describe the main characteristics of pieces to be learnt: refer to musical elements, articulation, phrasing, use of sequence, tonality, structure, expressive features, etc.
- Ask pupils to clap/hum/sing appropriate phrases at sight.
- Using notation, perform pieces with a range of deliberate mistakes, e.g. rhythmic, melodic, dynamic. Ask pupils to identify the differences.

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

#### *posture and freedom of movement*

- Show pupils 'gymnastic' exercises, e.g. those which encourage simultaneous movements in contrary motion, aiming for a supported and flexible upper body.
- Demonstrate and consolidate a range of physical warm-ups, at and away from the keyboard, to encourage free shoulders, a supported spine, supple wrists, etc.
- Encourage pupils to use video recordings, mirrors, etc. to check their own posture in between lessons.

## Points to note

As their knowledge increases, pupils are able to use a larger musical vocabulary.

There are many natural links with the early stages of GCSE work.

Music from all parts of the world is appropriate for these activities.

These movements could be applied to particular pieces, e.g. Bach's *Musette* in D major which requires lateral freedom.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- ii **fingering and co-ordination**
  - play comfortably in a variety of extended hand positions:
    - connecting different hand positions by passing the thumb with greater fluency
  - play, at a steady pulse, with clarity and control, short exercises which have more rhythmic independence between the hands
  - play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand at a variety of tempi
  - play major and minor chords, hands separately and together
  - play with more independence of:
    - movement of hands and arms
    - fingers
    - articulation between hands and within one hand
  - use consistent fingering, particularly in more demanding passages
  - appropriate fingering for scales, arpeggios and chords

---

### iii **tone quality, sound production and articulation**

- play with a focused, clear sound:
    - using a larger range of dynamics
    - controlling changes in dynamics
    - shaping and defining phrases
    - controlling the dynamic levels of each hand with more ease
    - controlling the tone quality when joining or changing hand position
    - using an appropriate range of accent and emphasis
    - highlighting the top note of a chord
  - play with some variety of legato and non-legato articulation, including slurring and staccato
  - use direct pedalling, pedalling for effect and legato pedalling where musically appropriate
-

## Possible teaching activities

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

#### *fingering and co-ordination*

- Demonstrate to pupils the phrasing implications of particular choices of fingering, e.g. how the phrasing for a series of couplets might be achieved by the repeated use of the same pair of fingers.
  - With pupils, identify passages in which fluency depends upon comfortable and organised fingering. Provide a solution to use as a model.
  - Show pupils alternative fingerings for a given passage, discussing the musical outcomes.
  - Encourage pupils to adopt careful practice strategies that reinforce considered and consistent fingering, e.g. short groups stopping on a particular finger or beat of the bar.
  - Demonstrate and explain exercises that address the particular challenges encountered when tackling scales hands together, e.g. stopping at the half-way point in two-octave scales.
  - Ask pupils to identify scale patterns and apply them with increasing independence to other keys.
- Show pupils the physical movements required for smooth thumb passing in hands-separate arpeggios/arpeggio figures, paying due attention to the thumb, wrist, arm and elbow.
- Explain and demonstrate comfortable fingerings for three- and four-note chords. Ask pupils to incorporate these into their practice routines.
- Provide pupils with simple fingering solutions for ornaments and ask them to practise exercises based on ornamentation, e.g. repeating a mordent, starting on the successive notes of a scale.

#### *tone quality, sound production and articulation*

- Provide pupils with simple demonstrations and explanations of the physical movements required for particular articulations and ask them to apply these to particular pieces.
- Show pupils how to develop even staccato touch at a range of dynamic levels and at different tempi and ask them to comment on the musical effects.
- Demonstrate the effects of good and poor balance, both between and within hands, and invite pupils to comment on the results.
- Illustrate exercises for chordal balance, playing the top note of the chord *f*, followed shortly after by the rest of the chord *p*, and with the lower notes followed by the top note.
- Demonstrate playing the lower notes of a chord and singing the top, encouraging pupils to incorporate this into their practice routines.
- Select, demonstrate and discuss repertoire, e.g. the sets *For Children* by Bartok, Burgmüller Op. 100, *Easy and Progressive Studies*, Kabalevsky Op. 27 pieces, that emphasises clear contrasts of dynamics and articulation, including a developing range of tenuto, staccato, etc. Ask pupils to comment on the various effects.
- Illustrate and explain simple exercises for the introduction of legato pedalling, asking pupils to imitate these and to apply them to short passages in pieces.

## Points to note

Supervision of fingering is important, at least in the early stages of learning, in order that unhelpful habits are avoided.

Point out that in the majority of major scales starting on white keys, at the half-way point, 4 goes over in the left hand ascending, and in the right hand descending.

As always, pupils should be encouraged to develop aural discrimination as a way of checking how successfully this is being done.

Issues such as the size of pupils' hands and stretches between fingers need to be taken into account.

Staccato touch can originate at the finger, hand (wrist), or arm (though the latter is unlikely at this stage). For further information, refer to the glossary.

Legato pedalling is introduced more fully in programme 4. See the 'Pedalling (Legato)' unit of work.

## Learning objectives

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i improvise in a variety of genres and styles, sustaining and developing musical ideas and achieving different intended musical effects with the instrument

---

- ii apply knowledge and understanding of the instrument in order to compose with an understanding of musical idiom

---

- iii convey their interpretation with an understanding of the musical style and idiom; make improvements to their work in the light of their knowledge about the music

### D. playing music

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i work out **by ear** how to play tunes in straightforward major and minor keys or modes



## Possible teaching activities

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

- Regularly ask pupils to make up improvisations:
  - in particular styles, e.g. rags, marches, folk-songs; draw on relevant musical devices from pieces being learnt where appropriate
  - by varying a theme, exploring contrasts of elements, e.g. pitch, rhythm, tonality, texture, dynamics
  - using a free theme based on the mood or character of a piece, e.g. sense of autumn, clouds, jollity, sadness, open space
- Discuss the results of the improvisations with pupils, perhaps considering the appropriateness of style, development of ideas, use of musical elements, structure and overall outcome.
- Suggest and demonstrate further ways of developing and refining ideas, whilst building up pupils' confidence.
- Make a recording, if possible.

- Ask pupils to compose short pieces of music for piano (and possibly other instruments/voice), developing the work in programme 2.
- Encourage pupils to use a range of musical devices appropriate to their technical and musical understanding, e.g. repetition, sequence, contrast.
- Literary, visual or emotional starting points can be used, but the process of composing should focus on how effectively the musical ideas are developed within the genre.
- Help pupils to refine their pieces within the chosen style, discussing their progress and suggesting ideas for improvement and development.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to perform their compositions, perhaps involving other musicians.

- Discuss interpretative ideas with pupils as pieces are being learned. Build on an intuitive response to the music.
- Encourage pupils to think about the nature of performance and how they can communicate musical ideas to others. Particular strategies may include:
  - listening to different interpretations of music being learnt and discussing the effects, e.g. by the teacher demonstrating and/or the use of recording.
  - analysing the structure of music being learnt and the implications for communicating this in performance
  - discussing mood, meaning and emotions
  - making links between technique and interpretation
  - emphasising expressive features

### D. playing music

- Play pupils melodies based on the first six notes of the scale, or on the lower leading note and first five notes of the scale. Explain how simple versions of the primary chords can be used to provide a harmonic backing.
- Ask pupils to work out by ear familiar tunes that are more challenging, e.g. longer, larger range, perhaps including some chromatic notes.
- Encourage some use of harmonic backing where possible.
- Playing by ear, introduce pupils to different modes, scales, blues patterns, etc. Ask them to experiment with various starting notes and to work out the key, structure, etc.

## Points to note

Improvisation provides opportunities for pupils to extend their own musical ideas within the context of what they have learned. As instrumental skills and knowledge develop, so should fluency in improvisation. Improvisation enables musicians to gain a deeper insight into musical styles as well as encouraging them to express their own feelings. It should, above all, be an enjoyable activity, undertaken in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere, with the teacher joining in.

Notation is likely to be used as a memory aid, first in shorthand (or graphic form) and then for performance.

It is likely that some pupils will be composing for the early stages of GCSE.

There are many natural ways in which piano teachers can liaise with classroom colleagues for mutual support.

Interpretation is not a separate activity. Pupils should be encouraged to make interpretative decisions in all their playing, even when learning the notes. Considerations of interpretation often inform the way passages are learnt, e.g. in relation to phrasing, fingering, articulation, tempo.

Using I, IVc and V7b involves minimal changes of hand position, and allows for simple harmonisations with satisfactory voice leading.

Sustain opportunities for playing by ear – it brings together many skills.

## Learning objectives

### D. playing music

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- ii **repeat** with accuracy moderately short musical phrases (melodic, rhythmic, textural and harmonic) from memory

- iii **play** a variety of moderately easy pieces from different styles and traditions, showing an awareness of idiom and structure and communicating the character of the music and the intentions of the composer

- iv **memorise** a variety of pieces from their repertoire of increasing length and complexity

- v read and play **at sight** a variety of short, straightforward pieces at a regular pulse, using an increasing rhythmic, melodic and tonal range

## Possible teaching activities

### D. playing music

contd...

- Ask pupils to repeat moderately short phrases, of appropriate difficulty, performed by the teacher or other pupils. These can include music with a variety of time signatures, including compound time, 'swing quavers' and tunes with a wider range.
  - Ask pupils to clap/tap the pulse while the phrases are being played and possibly identify some musical features.
  - Extend a call-and-response sequence, repeating phrases or improvising new ones, always aiming for a musical performance.
- 
- Approach new pieces from different angles - perhaps aurally, or through improvisation, listening, notation, etc.
  - Ask pupils to identify challenging passages and to make suggestions for solving problems.
  - Building on their own suggestions (if appropriate), show pupils how to practise challenging passages and make improvements.
  - Make the process as creative as possible, always aiming to prompt pupils' imagination and curiosity.
- 
- Building on strategies suggested in programme 2, help pupils to commit selected pieces to memory.
  - Once pieces are memorised, encourage pupils to try them out in front of others.
  - Discuss problems and possible solutions in respect of playing from memory.
  - Provide opportunities for pupils to play from memory in a group. Note any new perspectives that this brings, e.g. the opportunity to listen more acutely and to pick up visual cues more easily.
- 
- Develop sight-reading skills by regularly asking pupils to play at sight music that is well within their technical range and in familiar keys or modes.
  - Extend the structured approach outlined in programme 2. Thus, before playing through pieces for the first time, help pupils to hear in their heads the overall sound of the music by asking them to:
    - identify important notational features of the music, e.g. tempo, time signature, key signature, accidentals
    - note articulation, phrasing and dynamics
    - clap or tap rhythmic patterns, perhaps including syncopated patterns
    - tap the pulse with one hand and the rhythm with the other
    - notice the shape of the melody and the melodic range
    - identify, from the notation, a range of intervals
    - sing/hum a variety of intervals taken from the melodic line
    - sing/hum the melodic line of appropriate phrases
  - Ask pupils to sight-read in a small group, e.g. piano duet, each pupil maintaining a simple, independent part (the parts possibly having differentiated levels of difficulty). Emphasise the importance of keeping going and maintaining a regular pulse.

## Points to note

Continue to use the holistic approach outlined in section 1, aiming for simultaneous learning through interrelated activities and processes.

Choose a wide range of repertoire that builds on pupils' technique, musical understanding and creativity. Ensure that it is relevant to their stage of development and interests.

Aim to develop musical memory in a number of ways, e.g. automatic, aural, visual, cognitive, kinaesthetic.

Remind pupils that a performance is secure when it is learnt thoroughly from memory, but they should guard against it becoming mechanical.

Beware of the tendency to increase the speed of the beat as pieces become more familiar.

Sight-reading can always be connected to learning repertoire because the skills are applied when reading pieces for the first time.

Promote enjoyment and confidence by using metaphors to describe phrases and discussing the character of the music and the intended effect.

Encourage pupils to see the benefits of developing sight-reading skills, e.g. facilitating the learning process, accessing a wider repertoire and fostering the ability to play in ensembles.

## Learning objectives

### E. playing music with others

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i play with others, independently maintaining an individual line, demonstrating awareness of their role within the ensemble

---

- ii contribute to collective decisions, e.g. tempo, ensemble, tuning, balance, conveying the character of the music

### F. performing and communicating

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i perform to others with increasing awareness and assurance, communicating the character of the music and their musical intentions to the audience

---

- ii evaluate with perception and some independence the quality of their performance and respond to ideas from others

---

## Possible teaching activities

### E. playing music with others

- Increase the frequency and range of ensemble experiences. These could include both instruments and voices.
- Ask pupils to consider the best layout for particular ensembles, ensuring that all participants can clearly watch the leader.
- Ask pupils to maintain a separate part individually.

- Encourage pupils to develop their listening skills, e.g. awareness of ensemble, balance, when playing with others.
- Promote more musical independence by encouraging pupils to take the lead and make decisions relating to the character of the music.
- Ask pupils to reflect on and evaluate their progress and discuss ways of making further improvements.

### F. performing and communicating

- Organise opportunities for performance with others of a similar standard at various occasions and venues.
- Ask pupils to perform, over time, pieces from a variety of styles.
- Prepare pupils so that they are able to perform with fluency, expression and understanding.
- Encourage pupils to perform some or all of their pieces from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.
- Make sure that pupils know where and how to sit to perform. If notation is used, remind pupils that the music desk on a grand piano is further away than on an upright.
- Ensure that pupils know how to respond to applause and walk on and off stage.
- Refine pieces through simulated performances in lessons, during performances at school and as part of concerts to the wider community.

- Ask pupils to reflect on and evaluate each performance in order to make further improvements and build up confidence.
- Organise opportunities for pupils to join and perform with directed groups which sensitively take into account their musical needs and stage of development.

## Points to note

By this stage, it is possible to encourage simple ensemble work with wind and string players. However, repertoire needs to be chosen carefully. The demands made on pianists often mean that longer periods of preparation are necessary than for other instrumentalists.

Help pupils to learn their parts for new ensemble pieces by providing time in lessons.

Aim to extend and develop the necessary listening skills for playing with others.

Adopt a creative, problem-solving approach which gives pupils the responsibility for overcoming the challenges of playing with others.

To promote self-confidence, help pupils to develop their own library of repertoire pieces, i.e. pieces which once learned and performed can be repeated.

Ensure that pupils perform music from different styles and genres so that confidence and experience can be developed across a range of repertoire.

Encourage pupils to retain pieces that they can perform at short notice, i.e. to build up an internalised music library.

Aim to stimulate creative thinking when preparing for performance. Encourage pupils to consider different ways of communicating the character of the music.

# Programme of Study 4

NQF 2 intermediate level / Grades 4 - 5

## Learning objectives

### A. listening and internalising

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i use their listening skills and experiences of a variety of musical styles and traditions to inform their interpretations, e.g. use of rubato, shaping of phrases, variety of tone

During programme 4, pupils continue to develop their technical skills and to extend the range of their playing. They start to develop a personal response to music, demonstrating this and their growing understanding of musical idioms, as they interpret music and perform to others.

- ii have a clear aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling and understanding of the expressive and stylistic characteristics

- iii identify and incorporate subtle changes to the musical elements in their playing, e.g. tempo, articulation, phrasing

- iv recognise and convey more extended structures and techniques in pieces being studied, e.g. rondo, raga, dance forms, simple modulations

- v hear simple music internally with increasing accuracy and fluency when using notation / symbols

# Programme of Study 4

NQF 2 intermediate level / Grades 4 - 5

## Possible teaching activities

### A. listening and internalising

- Ask pupils to listen to a variety of music from different styles and traditions, using more extended and complex structures. Ask them to describe the expressive character of the music, referring to the musical elements, phrasing, etc. and noting how composers use repetition and contrast.
- Ask pupils to listen to music that is similar in period, genre, etc. to pieces they are learning. Ask them to compare pieces using appropriate vocabulary.

- Perform pieces to be learnt. Ask pupils to describe the overall character and style of the music, referring to the musical elements, phrasing, articulation, tonality, etc.
- With pupils, compare performances of the same piece, looking at shaping of phrases, articulation, use of rubato, quality / variety of tone, etc.

- Help pupils to play / sing by ear appropriate phrases from pieces to be learnt, e.g. irregular phrases, melodies containing chromatic notes / embellishments.
- Ask pupils to comment on the implied cadence at the ends of phrases, e.g. 'open' or 'closed' – imperfect or perfect.
- When playing with others, ask pupils to note the differences between homophonic and contrapuntal passages.
- Encourage pupils to think about and experiment with alternatives in tempi, articulation, phrasing, dynamics, use of sustaining pedal, variety of tone, etc., listening to the effect and deciding which approach meets the musical intentions most successfully.

- Discuss new repertoire with pupils, listening to structure, compositional devices, tonality and melodic lines in order to promote better aural perception.
- Play accompanied phrases to pupils. Ask them to identify perfect, plagal, imperfect and interrupted cadences.
- Discuss the roles of solo and accompaniment in pieces being learnt.
- Use an element of a piece as the starting point for a short improvisation.

- Using notation, ask pupils to work out in their heads the sound of phrases, then compare with the actual sound when played.
- Using notation, ask pupils to describe the overall character of pieces, referring to style, structure, phrasing, dynamic range, texture, etc. Suggest how they affect the mood of the music.
- Ask pupils to clap / hum / sing at sight appropriate phrases from pieces to be learnt.
- Using notation, perform extracts with deliberate deviations in rhythm, articulation, phrasing, dynamics, etc. inserted. Ask pupils to point out the mistakes.

## Points to note

It is important for pupils to be challenged by a range of relevant questions.

Use a framework of open and closed questions that lead pupils step by step.

There are many natural links with the GCSE curriculum.

Whenever possible, use ensemble opportunities to explore different textures.

The emphasis is on intuition, imagination and curiosity.

When appropriate, ensure that pupils are thoroughly familiar with accompaniments. If these are instrumental reductions, take the opportunity to listen to the full version.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i posture and freedom of movement
  - maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:
    - across a larger range of the instrument, indicating awareness of the whole body as a balanced playing mechanism
    - playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together
    - playing with free and confident movement
    - playing with economy of movement when tackling fast scale passages, wider intervals, widely spaced textures, etc.
  
- ii fingering and co-ordination
  - play comfortably in a variety of extended hand positions:
    - moving between hand positions with greater fluency and confidence at a variety of tempi
  - play, at a steady pulse, with clarity and control, a variety of independent rhythmic exercises between the hands, including 2 against 3
  - play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand at a variety of tempi, including when crossing hands
  - play a range of chords, hands separately and together, controlling the movement between adjacent and consecutive chords
  - play with more independence of:
    - movement of hands and arms
    - fingers
    - articulation between hands and within one hand
  - observe and adhere to chosen fingering, particularly in more demanding passages
  - use consistent fingering in a wide range of scales, arpeggios and chords
  - suggest and write in fingering for short phrases
  - use the thumb on black notes where necessary
  - use some finger substitution



## Possible teaching activities

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

#### *posture and freedom of movement*

- Demonstrate and reinforce the importance of a comfortable playing position. Encourage pupils to evaluate this in their own playing.
- Encourage pupils to develop ease in executing free and quick movement across the keyboard, with increasing reliability and accuracy, e.g. rapid leaps.
- Help pupils to develop a greater awareness of the benefits of a supported and flexible upper body in scales, arpeggios and pieces covering a wider range of the keyboard.
- Ask pupils to identify any points of possible tension, e.g. shoulders, elbows, wrists, knuckles.
- Show pupils how to place their feet appropriately in preparation for legato pedalling. Encourage them to remember this when they apply pedalling.
- Illustrate rotary and lateral movements, asking pupils to describe what they see and imitate the movements.
- Demonstrate to pupils the difference between positive and negative body language when performing.
- Encourage pupils to reflect on their body language and to observe others performing, noting the effects of posture on communication.

#### *fingering and co-ordination*

- Provide pupils with models for fingering an increasingly complex range of scales and arpeggios (including arpeggios starting on black keys, contrary motion arpeggios) and ask them to apply them systematically.
- Explain the need for secure fingering in passages of increasing intricacy. Demonstrate practice strategies for reinforcing fingering, stopping on thumbs, stopping on the note after a thumb, etc. Ask pupils to identify passages where this approach is needed.
- Using appropriate repertoire, indicate some basic principles of fingering, e.g. avoiding the thumb on black keys in continuous scalar figurations, considering carefully the frequency of using the thumb to link hand positions. Ask pupils to apply these principles to particularly problematic passages.
- Show pupils a variety of fingering solutions for particular chords and melodic shapes, encouraging them to evaluate the musical outcomes.
- Explain the principle of finger substitution and encourage pupils to use it in appropriate passages.
- Demonstrate hand crossing to pupils and ask them to comment on, and imitate, the physical movements required. Provide them with practice strategies to aid smooth and comfortable hand crossing.
- Provide pupils with a range of exercises to deal with two against three rhythms, e.g. ask them to tap one hand and play the other, then reverse the activity.

## Points to note

An occasional lesson in a large space can help to encourage projection.

Encourage pupils to attend live performances.

At this stage, pupils should be able to apply fingering patterns to similar keys / starting notes with increasing independence.

This provides a useful opportunity to make links with physical / muscular memory.

This is not to suggest a didactic or inflexible approach, but rather one in which some justification for fingering choices is given as the basis for encouraging pupils to develop a more independent approach.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- iii tone quality, sound production and articulation
  - play with a focused, clear tone:
    - using a dynamic range appropriate to the musical requirements
    - controlling changes in dynamics with confidence
    - shaping and defining phrases with more dynamic subtlety
    - controlling the dynamic levels of each hand with ease
    - controlling the tone quality when negotiating more demanding movements around the keyboard
    - using a range of accent and emphasis appropriate to the style
    - exercising tonal control between the hands in simple (two-part) polyphonic textures
    - balancing a chord, highlighting one or two notes as appropriate
  - play with some variety of legato and non-legato articulation at a variety of tempi
  - use some of the available pedal techniques
  - use the una corda pedal where appropriate
  - respond to harmonic changes with appropriate changes of pedal

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i improvise with freedom in a wide range of musical structures genres, styles and traditions, drawing on internalised sounds

## Possible teaching activities

## B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

*tone quality, sound production and articulation*

- Demonstrate a wide range of physical approaches to accents / tenuto and select repertoire to explore this aspect of playing. Ask pupils to experiment with different approaches to given passages and to assess the effects aurally.
- Encourage the development of tonal control in two-part polyphony, asking pupils to use deliberate contrasts of articulation and dynamic between hands, i.e. one hand playing *f* with the other playing *p*, as a preliminary exercise in developing independent control.
- Show pupils the physical approaches required for playing at *p* / *pp* dynamic levels without the use of the *una corda* pedal. Ask them to describe what they observe.
- Explain the mechanics of the *una corda* pedal. Ask pupils to listen to and describe the resulting changes of tone colour.
- Discuss the need for developing a wider tonal range. Ask pupils to practise concentrating on control at lower dynamic levels with the *una corda* pedal.
- Ask pupils to suggest places where the *una corda* might be appropriate, bearing in mind that it has the potential to change both the quality and quantity of tone.
- Give pupils carefully structured exercises in order for them to develop control in legato pedalling.
- Explain a variety of approaches to pedal notation and ask pupils to insert pedalling indications in appropriate passages.
- Play phrases with more, or less, subtle phrasing and ask pupils to comment on the effect. Encourage them to consider where the use of more refined nuances will enhance their performances.

## C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

- Ask pupils to improvise melodies above predetermined harmonic patterns, using conventions and techniques within the chosen style, e.g. melodies in an Aeolian mode above a simple chord sequence.
- Ask pupils to improvise short melodies using a variety of scales, e.g. major, minor, pentatonic, whole-tone, blues, chromatic, modes.
- Ask pupils to improvise with others by embellishing a melody, e.g. the pentatonic *Raga Bhupali*:



- Help pupils to develop confidence by improvising frequently, doing a little at a time.
- Make recordings of improvisations and discuss the outcomes with pupils.

## Points to note

Pupils should understand that on a grand piano the *una corda* changes the nature of the sound, not just the volume.

For more detailed information, refer to the 'Pedalling (Legato)' unit of work.

A chord sequence of *Am7 / Dm7 / Em7 / Am7* provides a suitable accompaniment. The Aeolian mode would be *A B C D E F G A*.

Modes, e.g. Aeolian, Dorian, are useful in that they can be represented as white key scales on the piano.

Focus on developing an awareness of style by relating the particular scale or mode to repertoire being studied.

Research less-familiar musics from around the world and make links with curriculum music, e.g. GCSE, where appropriate.

The best improvisations have a coherent, well-phrased, vocal quality. Singing the ideas before trying to play them provides pupils with an internal template. This allows their improvisations to be head-led not finger-led and will help prevent them from getting musically 'stuck'.

## Learning objectives

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:*

- ii compose in different styles, creating and selecting musical ideas by exploring the characteristics of their chosen resources

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- iii apply their knowledge of style, characteristics and historical / social background in order to interpret the music with understanding and insight; evaluate how their interpretation reflects the context in which the music was created and is performed and heard

### D. playing music

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i work out **by ear** how to play moderately easy tunes, e.g. with simple modulations, a wider range of intervals and different octaves / positions

---

- ii **repeat** with accuracy phrases of a moderate length and complexity in a variety of styles

---

- iii **play** a variety of pieces of moderate difficulty, developing a personal response through sustained study of and reflection on the music

---

## Possible teaching activities

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

contd...

- Ask pupils to compose some pieces over an extended period of time in a variety of traditional and contemporary styles. This could include:
    - a solo piece for piano within a given structure, aiming for consistency of style
    - a short piece for an ensemble, including piano
    - a solo piece for piano, possibly evoking moods or feelings, e.g. clouds, pyramids, the evening, rush hour, dreams
  - Help pupils to refine their pieces within the chosen style and idiom.
- 
- Building on programme 3, discuss the interpretation of pieces being studied, especially how pupils can convey their own personal responses within the stylistic conventions and the composer's markings.
  - Encourage pupils to be aware of stylistic, structural and idiomatic features of pieces, e.g. musical forms, repetition, contrast, development techniques, and to communicate their feelings and understanding in their playing.

### D. playing music

- Ask pupils to play by ear familiar tunes that include some simple chromatic writing and modulations.
  - Discuss the effect of accidentals and what needs to be done in order to modulate from one key to another.
  - Ask pupils to work out some of the underlying harmonies. Discuss possible alternatives. Explain that chromatic writing may be decorative and therefore does not require harmonisation.
  - Ask pupils to vary tunes by using alternative melodic and/or rhythmic patterns. Discuss the variations.
  - Improvise on the given theme and extend the piece for fun.
- 
- Develop further call-and-response or echo exercises, perhaps using more challenging keys and a wider variety of styles and forms, e.g. waltz, Latin-American rhythms, riffs.
  - Play simple pieces in canon, with either the teacher or other members of the group leading. The second group repeats the part played by the first group.
  - Continue the activity in pairs, with the second player decorating the line or improvising answering phrases in the style of the first. Whole pieces can be built up in this manner.
- 
- When pupils are learning new pieces, ask them to identify and discuss structural relationships, e.g. repetitions, contrasts, deviations, developments. Ask them to describe the musical effects of these features.
  - Encourage pupils to learn pieces more independently, identifying and solving problems, and making musical decisions.
  - Continue to advise pupils on practising strategies.
  - Encourage pupils to learn pieces away from the piano in order to consider the overall character, the shape of phrases, subtleties of tempo, etc.

## Points to note

Ensure that time is allowed for reviewing progress of compositions. It may be appropriate to select particular times of the year when it is possible to focus more on composing, e.g. in the summer term after examinations.

Rehearsing, interpreting and performing compositions are essential parts of the process.

Developing an interpretation is the crux of a personal performance and should be the focus of discussion.

Listening to various CDs, etc. of the same piece can stimulate discussion and provide a way to develop pupils' interpretations.

Regular playing by ear helps to build confidence. Familiar tunes can be worked out during individual practice and then played again in the lesson.

As pupils develop their own responses to pieces, so the teacher's input can be reduced.

Encourage pupils to use the holistic approach outlined in section 1 by prompting them to apply listening skills, solve technical and musical problems and use their imaginations.

## Learning objectives

### D. playing music

contd...

*Pupils should learn to:* iv **memorise** a variety of pieces from their repertoire in different styles and traditions, featuring a range of musical devices and structures

v read and play **at sight** moderately easy pieces in different styles at a regular pulse; internalise and incorporate less familiar musical features, e.g. time signatures, variety of tempi, keys

### E. playing music with others

*Pupils should learn to:* i play with others, independently maintaining an individual line with sensitivity and demonstrating awareness of their role within the ensemble

ii contribute to collective decisions, e.g. balance, ensemble, interpretation, conveying the character and style of the music

## Possible teaching activities

### D. playing music

contd...

- Encourage pupils to read the score away from the piano, as another way to help with memorising pieces.
  - Ask pupils to memorise short pieces or sections of music this way, then play them without using the music. Explain that this form of training can support muscular memory.
- 
- Continue to develop sight-reading skills by regularly asking pupils to play appropriate music at sight, using the structured approach outlined in programme 3, i.e. before playing through pieces for the first time, help pupils to gain a clear internal picture of the overall shape and character of the music.
  - Using carefully structured questions, lead pupils to make observations about the musical language, e.g. cadences, passages that are diatonic, chromatic, consonant, dissonant.

### E. playing music with others

- Encourage more independence by promoting unsupervised rehearsals and by asking pupils to take the lead, e.g. pupil-led chamber music ensembles, instrumental/vocal groups.
  - Encourage pupils to use eye contact when playing in small (chamber-music size) groups.
- 
- Discuss ways of using rehearsal time effectively, e.g. marking scores and parts, tuning procedures, dealing with challenging passages.
  - Encourage pupils, through careful listening, to develop greater sensitivity in respect of balance, ensemble, shaping of phrases, etc.
  - Ensure there are a variety of opportunities for ensembles/groups to perform to audiences and to each other.
- 
- Encourage all pupils to contribute to discussions on interpretative issues, e.g. communicating and projecting the style and character of the music.
  - Invite pupils to discuss, using appropriate musical vocabulary, how further refinements can be made.

## Points to note

This is a challenging activity that depends on internalising the music, making links to notation and memorising patterns and structures.

Try to include some aspect of memorising in each lesson.

Use a wide range of styles from different times and places.

As in previous programmes, sight-reading should have fluent, musical outcomes. Attention to rhythmic accuracy and expression will help to project the music.

Encourage pupils to develop greater independence between the hands.

Remember to take account of independent group activities, especially in contemporary rock and folk areas.

Bear in mind that it can take considerable time and effort to organise ensemble opportunities. It is helpful, therefore, to work in close co-operation with school music departments, Music Services, local performing groups and/or other appropriate organisations.

## Learning objectives

### F. performing and communicating

- Pupils should learn to:*
- i perform convincingly to others, responding to the audience, venue and occasion, communicating the character and style of the music through their own / shared interpretation

- ii evaluate with perception the quality of their performance, using their knowledge of performing conventions, including the performances of distinguished musicians



## Possible teaching activities

### F. performing and communicating

- Organise performing opportunities at a variety of occasions and venues, e.g. school events, concerts in the wider community.
  - Ask pupils to perform, over time, pieces from a range of musical styles and traditions.
  - Prepare pupils to perform with fluency and understanding, encouraging them to communicate their personal feelings within the style of the music and the composer's markings.
  - Ask pupils to research some background information on pieces, e.g. details of style, the historical/ social context.
  - Encourage pupils to perform some or all of their pieces from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.
  - Refine pieces through simulated performances in lessons, during performances at school and as part of concerts to the wider community.
  - Encourage pupils to perform music with others independently of the teacher, e.g. duets, ensembles, folk and rock bands.
- 
- Ask pupils to reflect on and evaluate each performance in order to make further improvements and build up confidence.
  - Record pupils' performances in order to promote discussion.
  - Encourage pupils to devise their own criteria for self-assessment.
  - Organise opportunities for pupils to perform with directed groups by encouraging them to join bands, orchestras, choirs, large ensembles, etc. where possible. Pianists can assist by accompanying choirs and/or filling in missing parts in orchestral/ instrumental groups.

## Points to note

Aim to give pupils a range of performing experiences, e.g. solo, with others, directed, non-directed.

Ensure that pupils perform music from a range of musical styles and genres so that confidence and experience is developed across a range of repertoire.

Through performance, pupils demonstrate their ability to absorb a range of musical and technical skills, knowledge and understanding.

Aim to stimulate creative thinking in preparing for performance. Pupils should explore a range of possibilities in their quest to communicate the expressive intentions of the composer.

Recording performances can be both a positive and a negative experience for pupils. With this in mind, only record performances which promise to build confidence and offer positive learning outcomes.

At this stage, a wide range of ensemble music is available to pianists and pupils should be given strong encouragement to participate in ensemble work.

# Programme of Study 5

NQF 3 advanced level / Grades 6 - 8

## Learning objectives

### A. listening and internalising

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i listen systematically and critically to a wide variety of music from different styles and traditions to develop their own independent interpretations

During programme 5, pupils play at an advanced level, applying the breadth of their understanding, skills and knowledge and working with autonomy. They critically evaluate their work and have personal ownership of what they do.

- ii have an accurate aural perception of the music to be played, conveying their feeling and understanding of the expressive and stylistic features in practice and performance

- iii identify and incorporate subtle changes to the musical elements in their playing, interpreting music both personally and idiomatically

- iv recognise and convey in their interpretative decisions a wide variety of musical structures and compositional techniques

- v hear a wider range of music internally when using notation/symbols, anticipating the sound in their heads

# Programme of Study 5

NQF 3 advanced level / Grades 6 - 8

## Possible teaching activities

### A. listening and internalising

- Ask pupils to listen to and identify music from a variety of styles and traditions, including extended pieces with complex structures. Ask them to compare and contrast various pieces, referring to form, texture, harmonic language, instrumentation, tonality, etc.
  - Ask pupils to listen to music that is related in style and tradition to the pieces they are learning. Ask them to compare and contrast the range of musical ideas / devices and observe how they are used in the music.
- 
- Perform pieces to be learnt to pupils and / or listen to recorded / live performances. Ask them to describe the overall character and style of the music.
  - Ask pupils to compare the performances, noting subtleties of tempo, phrasing, articulation, dynamics, quality / variety of tone, etc.
- 
- Help pupils to play by ear more extended and / or complex phrases, e.g. those featuring wider leaps and / or challenging rhythms, from pieces to be learnt. Look at how these phrases fit into the whole piece.
  - Ask pupils to explore the effects of varying the tempi, articulation, phrasing, dynamics, etc. in pieces from different styles and traditions. Encourage them to develop personal interpretations and to use their understanding of the characteristics of the instrument.
  - Discuss the musical effects of more advanced technical devices, e.g. glissandi, finger substitution, and ask pupils to experiment with different ways of using them in pieces being studied.
  - Encourage pupils to ensure consistency of tempo in extended pieces and large-scale movements.
- 
- Discuss new repertoire with pupils, noting structure, tonality, modulations, technically demanding passages, nature of the accompaniment, etc.
  - Encourage pupils to improvise in various styles. This could include making up a short cadenza or adding ornamentation.
- 
- Using notation, ask pupils to work out in their heads the sound of:
    - phrases / pieces
    - simple chords
 then compare these with the actual sound when played.
  - Using notation, ask pupils to describe the overall character of pieces, referring to style, structure, harmonic language, dynamic range, texture, etc. Suggest how they affect the mood of the music.
  - Ask pupils to clap / hum / sing at sight appropriate phrases from pieces to be learnt.
  - Play extracts with subtle deviations from the text in terms of pitch, rhythm, articulation, phrasing, harmonies, dynamics, etc. Ask pupils to point out the mistakes.

## Points to note

It is important for pupils to be challenged by a range of relevant questions.

Use a framework of open and closed questions that lead pupils step by step.

These activities may relate to AS / A level work.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i posture and freedom of movement
  - maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:
    - across the full range of the instrument, indicating awareness and understanding of the whole body as a balanced playing mechanism
    - playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together
    - playing with free and confident movement
    - playing with economy of movement when tackling challenging and demanding passages

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#### ii fingering and co-ordination

- play comfortably in a wide variety of hand positions:
    - moving between hand positions with fluency and confidence at a variety of tempi
  - play, at a steady pulse, with clarity and control, a wide variety of complex rhythmic exercises, including cross rhythms between the hands and within one hand
  - play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand at a large variety of tempi, including when crossing hands
  - play a wide range of chords, hands separately and together, controlling the movement between chords at a variety of tempi
  - play with independence of:
    - movement of hands and arms across the full range of the instrument
    - fingers
    - articulation between hands and within one hand
  - observe and adhere to chosen fingering, particularly in technically challenging passages
  - use standard fingering in a wide range of scales, arpeggios and chords, including scales in thirds and sixths
  - suggest and write in fingering for passages
  - use the thumb on black notes where necessary
  - use finger substitution with ease
  - explore unconventional fingering in scalar passages in response to the musical context
  - use appropriate fingering for scales in thirds, hands separately
  - apply appropriate fingering to repeated note passages
-

## Possible teaching activities

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

#### *posture and freedom of movement*

- Encourage pupils to evaluate their posture, using video recordings and mirrors where appropriate.
- Ask pupils to devise their own checklist of the main sources of tension. Discuss how tension can be alleviated.
- Encourage pupils to find solutions for complex pianistic passages.
- Demonstrate approaches such as a rotation and lateral movement, providing preliminary exercises for their use in repertoire. Ask pupils to identify passages where these approaches are appropriate.
- Invite pupils to devise their own exercises for dealing with the rapid, free movement required by fast leaps in pieces.
- Continue to encourage positive body language when performing.
- Encourage pupils to use imagery in order to convey the character and mood of the music. Discuss how posture may contribute towards communication.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to observe how others communicate in performance, e.g. master-classes, concerts.
- Help pupils to use their posture to communicate musical intention, e.g. beginning and/or changing tempo in an ensemble.
- Discuss ways in which pupils can develop the physical and mental stamina required to play longer, more demanding pieces.

#### *fingering and co-ordination*

- Encourage pupils to develop an increasing awareness of the relationship between choice of fingering and tempo, dynamic level, texture, etc.
- Assign passages in which the fingering is problematic and ask pupils to arrive at solutions for further discussion.
- Encourage pupils to 'filter' and assess printed fingerings, adopting those that appear to be appropriate and discarding those that are not.
- Illustrate a range of fingering solutions to repeated-note figures, asking pupils to experiment and to consider musical outcomes.
- Explain fingerings for scales with hands a third or sixth apart, asking pupils to apply patterns to similar keys.
- Show pupils fingerings for first- and second-inversion arpeggios, dominant and diminished sevenths. Ask them to develop charts to record their progress in learning arpeggios and to think in terms of patterns that can be applied to a range of keys.
- Demonstrate the fingering and physical movements for a selected range of hands-separate staccato scales in thirds and sixths, asking pupils to comment on what they observe.
- Explain the fingering for 'double-note' scales in thirds, both with staccato touch, using one pair of fingers consecutively (diatonic), and legato with systematic fingering (diatonic and chromatic). Ask pupils to practise these, giving due attention to the role of the wrist and tonal control.

## Points to note

Some pupils with poor posture and/or tension problems find relaxation methods useful, e.g. yoga, Alexander Technique.

Encourage pupils to attend a wide range of live performances.

Even at this stage, there may be many passages in which the fingering is directed primarily by the teacher.

This provides an opportunity to discuss (albeit superficially) the role of the editor, and the importance of factors such as the size of the hand.

Factors such as speed, touch, musical character, etc. influence decisions as to whether to change fingers.

An underlying principle is that pupils should evaluate and reflect on the tonal quality of their scale and arpeggio playing, e.g. evenness of touch, dynamic level.

New arpeggio fingering patterns could be reinforced by introductory 'solid' chord exercises. Where at all possible, scale and arpeggio fingerings at this level should be dealt with in groups, according to keyboard layout and fingering pattern.

Particular attention should be given to the role of the wrist.

## Learning objectives

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

continued from previous page

*Pupils should learn to:*

- iii tone quality, sound production and articulation
  - play with a focused, clear tone:
    - using a dynamic range appropriate to the musical requirements, taking into account the acoustics
    - controlling changes in dynamics with confidence
    - defining the phrases and overall structure of the music through dynamic shaping and rhythmic flexibility
    - controlling the dynamic levels of each hand with confidence
    - controlling the tone quality when negotiating demanding movements around the keyboard
    - using a range of accent and emphasis appropriate to the style
    - exercising tonal control between the hands and within one hand in polyphonic textures
    - controlling the tonal balance within a chord or a succession of chords
  - play with a variety of legato and non-legato articulation at a variety of tempi
  - use a variety of pedal techniques, including half-pedalling, pedalling in advance and 'silent' returns
  - use the una corda pedal where appropriate
  - adjust the pedalling according to the instrument and venue

## Possible teaching activities

### B. making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique

contd...

continued from previous page

- Discuss with pupils the need to use 'alternative' scale and arpeggio fingerings in certain musical contexts, discussing the reasons for making such choices.
- Encourage pupils to use finger substitution, and explain how this can assist in creating a legato effect.
- Provide pupils with a range of exercises to deal with various cross-rhythms, and ask them to devise their own.
- Demonstrate exercises to encourage increasingly energetic trill technique. Ask pupils to consider trills in their musical context.

#### *tone quality, sound production and articulation*

- Demonstrate Impressionist repertoire to allow for greater exploration of a range of pedalling techniques (vibrato pedalling and half-pedalling, use of the *una corda*) and for a more refined approach to tonal balance. Encourage pupils to consider tonal subtleties, and the increasingly subtle relationship between notation and implied pedalling.
- Ask pupils to prepare lyrical 19th- and 20th-century repertoire for developing cantabile control, tonal refinement and rubato.
- Encourage pupils to mould phrases of a sustained nature carefully and sensitively, paying particular attention to the challenge of control after long notes.
- Use audio recordings to consider tone and pedalling in different acoustics.
- Ask pupils to listen to, and prepare, 20th-century pieces of a predominantly rhythmic nature, and to develop a range of accentuation, e.g. tenuto, varying degrees of staccato, strength of accent.
- Encourage pupils to discover various strategies for creating legato effects in passages where legato fingering may not be an option.
- Show pupils a range of practice strategies for dealing with fugal textures, e.g. practising with various combinations of voices, practising with exaggerated differences of tone and articulation.
- After listening together to suitable examples, ask pupils to consider how articulation and legato phrasing are approached on different instruments, and what these consciously applied expressive qualities contribute to the overall effect of the music, e.g. making a dance movement seem more animated or a melodic piece more song-like. Explore ways for pupils to recreate what they have heard in these examples in their own playing.
- With pupils, choose an item of repertoire in which articulations, slurs and phrase marks are specified in the text, e.g. a 20th-century piece. Ask them to internalise and apply these expressive qualities from the start of the learning process, using the appropriate techniques.
- Next, select together an item of repertoire in which articulations, slurs and phrase marks are not specified, e.g. a baroque dance. From the start of the learning process, ask pupils to incorporate these expressive qualities, using their knowledge and understanding of musical style, etc., and combining the appropriate techniques with an awareness of phrasing and structure.

## Points to note

For example, a 'white key' fingering for a 'black key' passage, where greater dexterity and speed are required.

Pupils should be encouraged to listen independently to a wide range of piano, orchestral and operatic repertoire at this stage, e.g. Debussy preludes and Suite Bergamasque; Ravel Sonatine; Grovlez, 'l'Almanach aux Images'; Brahms intermezzos; Chopin nocturnes, preludes and mazurkas.

Encourage pupils to listen to Bartok, Three Rondos on Folk Tunes and Mikokosmos Vols 5 and 6; Martinu études and polkas.

In most cases, the sustaining pedal will have an important but not exclusive role to play.

Listening to other instruments' means of expression can broaden pupils' musical awareness. Some instruments have a more natural capacity for legato, i.e. through playing several notes in one bow or breath, and non-legato, i.e. through changing bow or tonguing between notes. Internalising different phrasing characteristics through vocal imitation is a good place to start, followed by playing short passages by ear.

## Learning objectives

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i improvise extended musical ideas with a sense of direction and shape as they develop their own personal style

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- ii compose with consistency of style, coherence of musical ideas and a degree of individuality, and by making the most of the instrumental and vocal resources

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- iii interpret music personally with consistency of style, and an understanding of idiomatic performing conventions; make independent, critical judgements about their interpretation

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## Possible teaching activities

### C. creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas

- Ask pupils to improvise a piece involving a simple modulation, possibly within a given structure, e.g. A (tonic) B (dominant) A (tonic). Explore techniques involved in modulating and apply them in other improvisations.
  - Continue to link improvisations to repertoire being studied, e.g. pupils improvise a short prelude in the style of a well-known composer such as Bach, Chopin or Gershwin.
  - Ask pupils, or teacher and pupil, to extend a melody by improvising in turn, each player basing the improvisation on the previous section. Aim for coherence and expression within an agreed style.
  - Ask pupils to improvise a cadenza for a concerto or ornaments for a baroque or classical solo piece.
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- Teach a well-known jazz standard, e.g. 'I Got Rhythm':
    - play pupils a recording of the piece
    - familiarise them with the 32-bar A A B A form and teach them the chords and melody. Play it with them as a pupil / teacher duo, swapping roles
    - demonstrate how to embellish the melody freely and encourage pupils to do the same when their turn comes
    - finally, ask them to improvise over the chords, making fewer references to the original melody
  - Ask pupils to devise / use a graphic score as the basis for a free improvisation in a contemporary style.
- 
- Ask pupils to compose pieces for more than one instrument / player, e.g. piano duet, piano and other instruments, piano and voice.
  - Support pupils in refining, notating and evaluating their ideas.
  - Provide guidance on writing for other instruments / voices.
  - Provide opportunities for pupils' compositions to be performed, if possible in public, and make recordings to help evaluation.
  - Ask pupils to write programme notes for their pieces, including details of background, style, intention and outcomes.
- 
- Ask pupils to evaluate their approach to the interpretation of pieces being studied, justifying musical decisions by referring to musical styles, conventions and personal feelings.
  - Explore alternative ways of interpreting the directions of the composer.
  - With pupils, discuss the interpretations of others, possibly including professional performances and those of their peers, and compare them with their own.
  - Encourage pupils to respond imaginatively to their own playing, and that of others, as performances unfold.

## Points to note

Ensure that technical points are fully understood and absorbed, e.g. modulations to relative keys.

Improvisation provides an obvious and enjoyable way of exploring musical devices and conventions. It often provides the groundwork for more extended compositions. These advanced improvisations can be as challenging for the teacher as the pupil!

Latin-American jazz styles also provide an accessible way into jazz improvisation. The samba employs 'straight' as opposed to 'swing' quaver rhythms, while the use of 'chord tones' as a stock improvisational device, i.e. playing the notes of the chords rather than scales, limits the number of notes pupils need to hear and use at any given point.

Compositions for more than one instrument provide opportunities for pupils to explore different textures.

Pupils can use techniques associated with pieces being learnt. These may include contrapuntal textures and more complex structures, and can involve a higher level of technical difficulty for the performer. Alternatively, limitations may be imposed, e.g. thematic, structural, technical. Encourage pupils to exploit the idiomatic potential of instruments.

## Learning objectives

### D. playing music

*Pupils should learn to:*

- i work out **by ear** how to play pieces of increasing complexity, using simple transpositions if necessary

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- ii **repeat** increasingly extended and complex musical extracts, involving different tempi, keys, tonality, and transpositions where appropriate

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- iii **play** a range of pieces from different styles and periods that are technically and musically advanced; form their own critical ideas in order to project their personal interpretation

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- iv **memorise** systematically and independently pieces from their repertoire with refinement and expressive subtlety, demonstrating a personal response to the music

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## Possible teaching activities

### D. playing music

- Demonstrate how to play by ear in different keys. Initially, let pupils take the most natural key and then transpose to another, e.g. 'Country Gardens' played first in C and then transposed to B flat.
  - As an extension activity, encourage pupils to play a well-known tune in a 'difficult' key and note the problems that need solving.
  - Ask pupils to practise playing a familiar piece, e.g. 'Happy Birthday', in a variety of keys.
  - Help pupils to internalise both melodic and harmonic elements by ear.
  - Ask pupils to make up some variations on well-known tunes by ear, using a range of melodic and/or rhythmic patterns.
  - Ask pupils to work out by ear some possible harmonies for well-known tunes.
- Encourage pupils to play back longer and more complex musical extracts from memory, using a wide range of styles, e.g. ritornello, raga, hooks and riffs.
  - Ask pupils to practise repeating patterns that may include augmented and diminished intervals, asymmetrical phrases and irregular rhythms.
  - Play a three- or four-part chord or simple chord progression and ask pupils to play the upper, inner and lower parts in turn, or the complete progression.
  - As an extension activity, discuss whether the chords are major, minor, diminished, etc. and which position/inversion they are in.
- Continue the holistic approach to learning new pieces described in section 1 by:
    - enabling pupils to research background knowledge of style, period, etc.
    - discussing the structure, harmonic language, etc.
    - ensuring that technical skills are applied to the musical context
    - devising related listening exercises that support the learning and memorisation of key features of the music
    - encouraging pupils to explore alternative ways of interpreting pieces, taking into account their knowledge of genre and period, e.g. approaches to ornaments, cadences, phrasing and articulation, tone quality, etc.
    - enriching pupils' understanding by structuring improvisations based on ideas from the pieces being learnt
    - providing opportunities for self- and peer-evaluation, using criteria that have been devised by pupils themselves
  - Continue to encourage pupils to learn pieces away from the piano in order to consider the overall character, the shape of phrases, subtleties of tempo, etc.
  - Continue to suggest appropriate practising strategies.
  - Encourage pupils to communicate their feelings, within their knowledge and understanding of the style, with more freedom, conviction and independence.
- Help pupils to memorise selected pieces from the repertoire being learnt. Offer particular strategies for dealing with longer and more complex pieces, so that pupils remember music in different ways. These could include:
    - devising ways of visualising the music, ranging from imagining a simple picture outline to a more photographic image
    - relating memory to touch and movement, e.g. finger movement, hand position and patterns of notes
    - supporting pupils in knowing the sound in their heads
    - analysing the structure of the music, e.g. counting the number of times a phrase occurs, noting key changes and sequences, consciously remembering deviations and exit points
  - Provide opportunities for repeated playing and testing in order for pupils to develop complete security.

## Points to note

Aim to promote the creative, enjoyable aspects of these activities.

Transposing by ear is an important tool for the advanced musician.

Before playing chords, it may help to sing or hum the notes / individual parts.

By memorising the music, many performers are able to:

- focus more intimately on the music
- have greater freedom in their playing
- be able to communicate more directly

Pupils should be encouraged to perform from memory regularly in order to build up confidence.

However, this may not be appropriate if it causes anxiety.

The aim should be for the eyes, ears and hands to work together as an integral unit.

## Learning objectives

### D. playing music

contd...

- Pupils should learn to:*
- v read and play **at sight** a range of pieces in a variety of styles containing elements of surprise and deviation; internalise and incorporate a wide range of time signatures and tempi, rhythmic patterns, melodic range, intervals, tonality and expression

### E. playing music with others

- Pupils should learn to:*
- i play with others with assurance and sensitivity, demonstrating an empathy with other performers

- ii contribute their own interpretative ideas and respond to those of others, conveying the character and style of the music

### F. performing and communicating

- Pupils should learn to:*
- i perform music to others with conviction, communicating the character and style of the music; demonstrate empathy with other performers and with the audience, to whom they should be able to talk informatively, providing programme notes if appropriate

## Possible teaching activities

### D. playing music

contd...

- Provide sight-reading practice in music that features a wide range of rhythmic and melodic devices, e.g. syncopated jazz rhythms and a variety of subdivisions where the rhythms are 'straight'. Include pieces that contain elements of surprise and, with pupils, formulate strategies for dealing with them.
- Ensure pupils look through the music first, adopting the structured approach described in earlier programmes, in order to internalise the overall sound and character, and spot potential problems.
- Help pupils to develop further the skill of reading ahead by covering individual bars in the score as soon as they have looked at them.
- Discuss the overall character and style of sight-reading pieces with pupils, emphasising the importance of communicating this to others.
- Encourage pupils to sight-read straightforward, standard repertoire rather than sight-reading exercises.

### E. playing music with others

- Provide ensemble opportunities that make increasing musical and technical demands on pupils.
  - Help pupils to develop more sensitivity and subtlety in their playing, e.g. shaping of phrases, variety of articulation, rhythmic flexibility, through increasing musical awareness and communication within the group.
  - Invite individual pupils to take the lead and direct others.
  - Acknowledge unexpected musical outcomes.
  - Provide a variety of performing opportunities.
- Encourage pupils to use their knowledge, understanding and relevant musical experience to inform their discussions as they seek to develop a shared interpretation.
  - Encourage all pupils to contribute to a shared interpretation that is developed and refined as the piece is practised and performed.

### F. performing and communicating

- Ask pupils to prepare three contrasting pieces for a recital, perhaps building their selection around examination pieces.
- Ask pupils to research information on each piece, e.g. details on the style of music, the composer's life, the historical / social context.
- Ask pupils to prepare a short talk / introduction to each piece.
- Give pupils opportunities to practise their presentational skills.
- During lessons, encourage pupils to develop their own personal interpretations through discussion and debate. Ask them to justify their decisions using appropriate musical vocabulary.
- Encourage pupils to perform some or all of their pieces from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.
- Refine pieces through simulated performances in lessons and by performances to others in preparation for concerts within the wider community.
- Continue to encourage pupils to make music and perform with others, both in directed and non-directed groups.

## Points to note

It is often useful to return to simple music to develop sight-reading skills and, in particular, the ability to read at sight quickly and fluently. This also helps to build up confidence.

Stress the value of sight-reading as a way of accessing and gaining greater familiarity with a wide range of music.

Bear in mind that it can take considerable time and effort to organise ensemble opportunities. It is helpful, therefore, to work in close co-operation with school music departments, Music Services, local performing groups and / or other appropriate organisations.

In addition to other skills of presentation already acquired, pupils should practise projecting their voices and slowing down delivery when talking to an audience.

It should be remembered that young people respond differently to the idea of performing. For some it will be rewarding and motivating, but for others it can be stressful to the extent that they may be ill or wish to give up playing. In preparing for a performance, the following should be taken into account:

- the physical and psychological well-being of the pupil
- the pupil's motivation
- the perceived importance of the performance
- social relationships with other members of the group

Bear in mind that some pupils may never wish to perform in public.

## Learning objectives

### F. performing and communicating

contd...

- Pupils should learn to:*
- ii make informed evaluations about their performance in the light of their knowledge about the music and the interpretations of distinguished musicians

## Possible teaching activities

### F. performing and communicating

contd...

- Ask pupils to evaluate their performances critically, identifying strengths and areas for development.
- Record pupils' performances in order to promote discussion.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to perform to distinguished musicians/teachers in a master-class situation.

## Points to note

Recording performances can be both a positive and a negative experience for pupils. With this in mind, only record performances which promise to build confidence and offer positive learning outcomes.

It can be valuable for pupils to hear positive, constructive guidance from someone other than their own teacher.

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# Unit of Work Template

PROGRAMME(S)

<b>Title of unit</b>	<b>Focus of unit</b> (a brief description of the unit)	<b>Where the unit fits in</b> (how it builds on prior learning)
<b>Length</b>		
<b>Learning objectives</b> (in relation to the programmes of study)	<b>Possible teaching activities</b> (based on holistic learning)	<b>Points to note</b> (e.g. extension activities, practice, differentiation, assessing, illustrations, teaching hints)
<b>Repertoire and resources</b>	<b>Expectations: by the end of the unit</b> all pupils will:  most pupils will:  some will have progressed further and will:	



# Unit of Work

SPECIMEN UNIT FOR PIANO

PROGRAMME 1

<p><b>Title of unit</b> Building a Relationship with the Instrument</p>	<p><b>Focus of unit</b> This unit focuses on establishing a comfortable and supple approach to the instrument that encourages use of a wide range of the keyboard. Pupils may or may not be seated at the keyboard, depending on the activity. A primary intention is to focus on the whole body as a playing mechanism. Given the nature of the unit, teachers might like to consider video recordings and other visual aids to reinforce the points made.</p>	<p><b>Where the unit fits in</b> This unit should ideally be tackled in the very first stages of learning, and may prove useful as revision and for corrective measures at later stages. Teachers should encourage musical creativity while working to establish good playing habits.</p>
<p><b>Length</b> The first few weeks</p>		
<p><b>Learning objectives</b></p>	<p><b>Possible teaching activities</b></p>	<p><b>Points to note</b></p>
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to play with physical freedom</li> <li>• about developing an awareness of a comfortable playing position</li> <li>• how to establish a poised upper body while seated</li> <li>• how to establish and maintain free and comfortable use of the arms</li> <li>• how to establish and maintain flexible wrists</li> <li>• that the techniques are used for expressive purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate finger gymnastics, e.g. holding a key down with the tip of the finger and using circular movements of the arm and the hand. Ask pupils to imitate these activities and incorporate them in their practice.</li> <li>• Help pupils to play finger clusters in suggested locations on the keyboard, using white and black keys at a variety of sound levels.</li> <li>• Introduce games in which the teacher adopts a variety of playing positions (too near, too far, midway). Ask pupils to comment.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to experiment with playing in these positions; lead a discussion on how it feels.</li> <li>• Demonstrate comfortable playing, involving supple wrists and arms, well supported by the upper body. Discuss with pupils and ask them to imitate.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to play single notes, wide apart, using free movement of the whole arm.</li> <li>• Introduce 'walking' exercises, either using adjacent fingers on keys next to each other or using keys a third apart, with 1-3, 2-4, 3-5, etc.</li> <li>• Apply the techniques to pieces being learnt, ensuring that pupils use them for expressive purposes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This can be done across the range of the keyboard.</li> <li>• There is considerable potential for pupils to engage in discussion with each other in group lessons. The teacher may need to guide the discussion to include specific references to distance from the keyboard, height of stool, position of arms, fingers, wrists, etc.</li> <li>• In the first instance, pupils might simply comment that the position is good or bad: an extension activity would be to encourage more detailed references (distance from keyboard, height of stool, position of arms, fingers, wrists, etc.)</li> <li>• Teachers might like to bear in mind Chopin's exhortation: 'Suppleness above everything'!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Repertoire and resources</b> Keyboard gymnastics, physical drills, audio-visual aids</p>	<p><b>Expectations: by the end of the unit</b>  <b>all pupils will:</b> be able to apply most of the principles of balance and comfort, but will require reminders and reinforcement activities after completing the unit  <b>most pupils will:</b> be able to apply the principles, with occasional reminders and reinforcement  <b>some will have progressed further and will:</b> be able to apply the principles consistently, playing with a comfortable, balanced and free physical approach</p>	

<p><b>Title of unit</b> Thumb-passing Technique</p>	<p><b>Focus of unit</b> In this unit, pupils study the role of the thumb in scales / scale passages and in passages requiring greater scope than a single five-finger position. They establish appropriate physical movements for one of the most fundamental aspects of piano technique.</p>	<p><b>Where the unit fits in</b> In this unit, pupils move beyond playing within single hand positions, having already established a confident legato touch and a balanced, comfortable hand position. A similar approach can be used for arpeggios at a slightly later stage.</p>
<p><b>Length</b> Not applicable</p>		
<p><b>Learning objectives</b></p>	<p><b>Possible teaching activities</b></p>	<p><b>Points to note</b></p>
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to develop the free and supple movement of the thumb, and the hand across the thumb</li> <li>• how to incorporate smooth thumb passing into simple scales / scale passages</li> <li>• that an aural awareness and theoretical knowledge of the structure of scales helps to reinforce fingering patterns</li> <li>• that a systematic approach to scale patterns promotes an expressive performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise physical exercises that allow for well-co-ordinated passage of the thumb. A variety of approaches are possible, considering the co-ordinated roles of the arm, hand and finger. Exercises used may focus on physical movements away from the keyboard, using the fall-board or a table.</li> <li>• Using clusters, help pupils to practise smooth passing of the thumb in ascending and descending passages, e.g. right-hand, C followed by D and E together, passing the thumb under for F (and then repeating ascending and descending).</li> <li>• Ask pupils to play one- or two-octave scales, hands separately, listening for evenness of tone.</li> <li>• Continue with pupils playing scales in a variety of rhythmic patterns, with different articulations and with attention to dynamic shaping.</li> <li>• Show pupils how to discover scales aurally and / or visually from a given starting note. Encourage them to arrive at appropriate fingerings by a combination of trial and error and using their knowledge of patterns observed in other scales.</li> <li>• Introduce the thumb-passing technique in repertoire being studied and discuss how it supports an expressive performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the age of pupils, demonstration combined with imagery and analogy might be particularly useful for these physical movements.</li> <li>• Teachers need not restrict themselves to groups based on diatonic scales. Any black and / or white key clusters can be used.</li> <li>• Learning scale patterns in contrary motion, based on symmetrical layouts, provides a useful introduction to hands-together scale playing.</li> <li>• Teachers should encourage pupils to appreciate the musical potential of scales / scale passages.</li> <li>• Non-diatonic scales, e.g. blues and whole-tone scales, can be used to provide a link with improvisation exercises.</li> <li>• As notation is not the central issue here, teachers need not restrict themselves to scales with simple key signatures, e.g. B major lies very comfortably under the hand.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Repertoire and resources</b> Pieces with simple, brief scale passages, allowing pupils to apply the knowledge they have gained Scales, diatonic and non-diatonic</p>	<p><b>Expectations: by the end of the unit</b> <b>all pupils will:</b> be able to begin to understand the need to focus on tonal control when passing the thumb; play scales with developing evenness of tone and regularity of rhythm <b>most pupils will:</b> be able to control tone when passing the thumb; play scales with evenness of tone and regularity of rhythm <b>some will have progressed further and will:</b> be able to pass the thumb smoothly and efficiently; play scales evenly and fluently and with a greater degree of tonal control</p>	

# Unit of Work

SPECIMEN UNIT FOR PIANO

PROGRAMME 3

<p><b>Title of unit</b> Improvising and Composing</p>	<p><b>Focus of unit</b> This unit focuses on developing creative improvisational and compositional skills (imagination, range of ideas, sense of structure, balance between contrast and unity) and applying motor skills previously developed through the study of composed and improvised / created pieces.</p>	<p><b>Where the unit fits in</b> Pupils will have achieved some degree of fluency in melodic / rhythmic improvisation. They will therefore be able to focus on more extended improvisations and compositions with more sophisticated textures than before.</p>
<p><b>Length</b> Not applicable</p>		
<p><b>Learning objectives</b></p>	<p><b>Possible teaching activities</b></p>	<p><b>Points to note</b></p>
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about establishing a sense of character and mood</li> <li>• about simple musical structures</li> <li>• how aspects of rhythm, tonality and texture can be applied, as improvisations are shaped into a convincing whole</li> <li>• how to develop memory and notation skills</li> <li>• that many established compositions stem from improvisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss possible moods, characters and working titles for improvised pieces.</li> <li>• Show pupils how to experiment with types of sound reflecting different moods / characters.</li> <li>• Illustrate simple structures (binary, ternary, rondo) using either composed or improvised material.</li> <li>• Assist pupils to define a provisional overall shape for their pieces.</li> <li>• Help pupils to define the pulse and rhythmic character of their pieces, referring back to the experimentation stage.</li> <li>• Extend the activity to include tonality and / or mode. Possibly introduce drones or ostinati to bridge the gap between melodic improvisation and the creation of harmonic textures.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to improvise using both hands, not necessarily simultaneously.</li> <li>• Encourage pupils to explore the use of the sustaining pedal to create further textural interest.</li> <li>• Suggest ways in which pupils can memorise their improvisations: introduce shorthand notations as a possible aid. Discuss further possible notations that may be appropriate to the improvised piece.</li> <li>• Play to pupils compositions with an improvisatory feel, e.g. baroque fantasias, blues, etc. Discuss musical ideas and ways in which pupils can use similar ideas.</li> <li>• Prepare a performance of the improvisation and evaluate strengths and any areas for further development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils should be encouraged to use the entire range of the keyboard and give consideration to duration, dynamic level, attack, register, texture, tonality / mode.</li> <li>• It is possible to use this as an opportunity to develop and enhance aural recognition of overall structure.</li> <li>• Formal (ternary) or less formal (e.g. 'sandwich'), terminology may be used, depending on pupils' ages.</li> <li>• Defining some of the parameters is intended to provide sufficient structure for pupils to improvise effectively.</li> <li>• Improvisation using the hands in alternation can allow for the development of a harmonic awareness in cases where pupils are not ready to co-ordinate both hands together.</li> <li>• Teachers should give thought to providing pupils with sufficient guidelines to develop creative work between lessons.</li> <li>• The extent to which pieces are notated will depend on a number of factors, including the pupils' facility with reading and writing musical notation, the degree of spontaneity desired, etc. Teachers should consider carefully the point at which notation is introduced, bearing in mind that a premature emphasis on notation could stifle creativity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Repertoire and resources</b> A range of pictorial images, poetry, prose or geometric designs might provide starting points Composed pieces of an improvisatory nature (fantasias, toccatas, blues pieces, etc.)</p>	<p><b>Expectations: by the end of the unit</b>  <b>all pupils will:</b> be able to improvise with some fluency, using simple textures and with mainly alternating hands  <b>most pupils will:</b> be able to improvise fluently using simple structures with some two-handed passages  <b>some will have progressed further and will:</b> be able to improvise fluently and idiomatically, using simple structures, mostly with two hands</p>	

<b>Title of unit</b> Pedalling (Legato)	<b>Focus of unit</b> This unit focuses on the mechanism of the sustaining pedal and helps pupils to develop further elementary legato pedalling (with the use of exercises); it lays the foundations for making decisions about the use of the pedal (encouraging the role of the ear). It is anticipated that pupils will begin to develop an aural awareness of problems arising from using the same pedalling on different instruments and in different venues, but that they may largely rely upon the teacher for suggested solutions.	<b>Where the unit fits in</b> This unit builds on prior learning and experience with direct pedalling, and some legato pedalling, in a range of repertoire. Repertoire used in this unit should be well within pupils' capabilities, considering the extra challenge of applying pedalling techniques.
<b>Length</b> One term or longer		
<b>Learning objectives</b> Pupils should learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about the action of the dampers, overtones, etc.</li> <li>• how to achieve effective co-ordination and fluency when using the sustaining pedal to connect chords or single tones</li> <li>• how to listen sensitively to the effects of legato pedalling</li> <li>• to acquire careful practice habits that reinforce good pedalling</li> <li>• to gain independence in exploring pedalling effects</li> </ul>	<b>Possible teaching activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate the basic mechanics of the dampers, using harmonics. A single tone or notes of a chord silently depressed can form the basis of an improvisation illustrating the role of the dampers and the effects of harmonics.</li> <li>• Illustrate how, for example, a C-major scale can be played using the third finger for all successive notes, connecting the single tones by means of the sustaining or damper pedal. The third finger should sustain the note for three counts, with the pedal being depressed on count 3 and lifted on count 2 of the next note.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to copy, aiming to achieve the pedal changes in an integrated manner, immediately after each successive note of the scale.</li> <li>• Play passages with various pedalling solutions, inviting pupils to comment on the results (both in terms of textural and harmonic clarity).</li> <li>• Choose a passage from one of the pieces being studied, demonstrate and insert pedal notation. Ask pupils to play the passage, first without and then with the pedal. Discuss the musical effects and any problems encountered.</li> <li>• Using a piece in which pedalling is implied but not notated, illustrate some pedalling options. Ask pupils to work out the pedalling with reference to the style of the music.</li> <li>• Demonstrate and explain the purpose of possible practice strategies: slow practice; practice without using the pedal, to highlight places where pedalling is or is not required; practise stopping immediately after pedal changes in order to listen for their effectiveness, etc.</li> <li>• Apply pedalling techniques to repertoire being studied. Illustrate various methods of pedal notation.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to improvise pieces in which pedalling is an integral feature.</li> </ul>	<b>Points to note</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both of these activities can be carried out on upright and grand pianos, though it is easier to observe the mechanics on the latter.</li> <li>• The activity described creates an intentional blurring and separates the downward and upward pedal movements from each other. Use both hands in turn.</li> <li>• Sound production and retention are the two crucial factors. Slowing the process down can allow pupils to observe the precise sequence of events. Promptly establishing an appropriate relationship between the production of sound (hand/arm) and the pedal (foot), as well as the exact moment of pedal engagement, will avoid the need for correction at a later stage.</li> <li>• Possibly discuss the relationship between style and choice of pedalling: other factors will include frequency and possibly depth of pedal changes.</li> <li>• Chordal accompaniments (waltzes, mazurkas) might provide useful repertoire for illustrating the various possibilities (no pedal, pedal from beat 1 to 2, pedal throughout the bar, etc.)</li> <li>• General point to note: Teachers need to recognise that adjustments to pedalling might occur because of the differing pedal-floor distances on the lesson piano and the practice piano. Suggested practical remedies include the insertion of a book or piece of carpet to alter the pedal-floor distance.</li> </ul>
<b>Repertoire and resources</b> Chordal pieces from, e.g. Tchaikovsky, Album for the Young; Schumann, Kinderszenen; Burgmüller studies; Chopin preludes (Op. 28 in E, B and C minor, A major); Bartok, Ten Easy Pieces Pop ballads ('The Man I Love'); jazz standards ('Autumn Leaves') theme tunes ( <i>Titanic</i> , <i>The Piano</i> , etc.)	<b>Expectations: by the end of the unit</b> <b>all pupils will:</b> be able to apply pedalling that is mostly clear and accurate <b>most pupils will:</b> be able to pedal fairly fluently and accurately as directed, with some aural awareness <b>some will have progressed further and will:</b> be able to apply pedalling independently, with sensitive aural awareness	

# Unit of Work

SPECIMEN UNIT FOR PIANO

PROGRAMME 5

<p><b>Title of unit</b> Developing Control of Balance and Voicing</p>	<p><b>Focus of unit</b> This unit helps pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquire the tonal control required for good voicing of chords and for good balance between the hands</li> <li>• develop greater aural sensitivity to voicing and balance, and the technical skills to put musical ideas into effect</li> </ul>	<p><b>Where the unit fits in</b> This unit builds on prior learning in balance and elementary voicing control. Repertoire used in this unit should be well within pupils' capabilities, and the approach to legato pedalling should be secure and stylistically informed.</p>
<p><b>Length</b> Not applicable</p>		
<p><b>Learning objectives</b></p>	<p><b>Possible teaching activities</b></p>	<p><b>Points to note</b></p>
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that there always needs to be a sensitive balance between melody and accompaniment</li> <li>• the physical skills required to balance melody and accompaniment</li> <li>• how to sustain careful practice habits that reinforce good balance</li> <li>• how to develop a more refined approach to voicing chords</li> <li>• how to develop the physical skills to put voicings into effect</li> <li>• that the role of the ear is the most important guidance factor when making musical decisions about balance and voicing</li> <li>• that they need to apply their control of balance and voicing in all their repertoire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate good and poor examples of balance between melody and accompaniment, asking pupils to comment on the effects of both.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to play melody and accompaniment separately, at exaggerated dynamic levels (full tone for melody, very soft accompaniment).</li> <li>• Discuss the differences in feeling between the two (depth into the key, use of the arm, etc.)</li> <li>• Ask pupils to practise hands separately, listening carefully to tonal quality.</li> <li>• Introduce shadow practice, where the accompaniment is mimed only.</li> <li>• Reduce the tempo to allow for concentrated listening.</li> <li>• Encourage pupils to sing the melody while playing the accompaniment.</li> <li>• Demonstrate various possible voicings of chords in a given passage, asking pupils to comment on the musical effects.</li> <li>• Discuss and demonstrate possible technical approaches to highlighting particular notes. There are various ways to explain this, including references to greater arm weight for the note being highlighted, or greater key speed, etc.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to play the note to be highlighted <i>f</i>, followed by the rest of the notes <i>p</i>.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to play the accompaniment notes in the chord <i>p</i>, followed by the highlighted note <i>f</i>.</li> <li>• Gradually remove the time-gap between the highlighted note and the accompaniment notes.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to sing the highlighted notes while playing the rest of the chord.</li> <li>• Ensure pupils control balance and voicing in order to project the music stylistically and develop their personal interpretations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are many suitable pieces for this unit: in addition to the simpler Debussy preludes, Brahms intermezzos, etc., many of the studies by Burgmüller are extremely useful. 'Ave Maria', from Op. 100, is technically straightforward but allows for subtle voicing, left-hand melodies, etc. Teachers should also consider assigning repertoire which incorporates the challenge of balancing within one hand, e.g. Burgmüller, Op. 109, No. 9.</li> <li>• Though it is often the case that the uppermost note in chordal passages carries the melody, it is useful to avoid this assumption at this stage, thus giving pupils the opportunity to comment on the different tonal qualities produced by various voicings.</li> <li>• The role of the ear in this kind of practice can not be emphasised too strongly.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Repertoire and resources</b> Brahms intermezzos; Chopin, Lento con gran espressione (posthumous), nocturnes, slow mazurkas; Debussy, 'La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin'; Grieg, Lyric Pieces, Burgmüller studies, Op. 100, 105 (e.g. No. 11); Schumann, Kinderszenen</p>	<p><b>Expectations: by the end of the unit</b>  <b>all pupils will:</b> be able to balance and voice textures so that melodic strands are clear  <b>most pupils will:</b> be able to balance and voice textures so that melodic strands are clear and there is some variety of voicing  <b>some will have progressed further and will:</b> be able to balance and voice textures so that melodic strands are clear and voicing is refined and subtle</p>	

<p><b>Title of unit</b> Finding the Voice for Instrumentalists</p>	<p><b>Focus of unit</b> This additional unit suggests ways in which instrumental teachers can help pupils to 'find' their own singing voices and begin to sing confidently with an accurate sense of pitch. All the activities below are aural, without reference to notation, so that pupils can use their singing voices in instrumental lessons, concentrating on the sound they produce.</p>	<p><b>Where the unit fits in</b> The unit provides possible materials for pupils beginning to pitch their singing voices. As each individual's voice and vocal experiences will be different, these activities should be adapted to suit individual needs.</p>
<p><b>Length</b> Ongoing</p>		
<p><b>Learning objectives</b></p>	<p><b>Possible teaching activities</b></p>	<p><b>Points to note</b></p>
<p>Pupils should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about different ways of using their voices</li> <li>• how to internalise sound and develop 'inner hearing'</li> <li>• how to acquire a consistent sense of pitch, with an awareness of their natural pitch centre</li> <li>• how to match the pitch of their voices to others</li> <li>• how to extend the vocal pitch range</li> <li>• to become aware of melodic shape</li> <li>• about the link between correct breathing and vocal tone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore pupils' voices by asking them to imitate rhymes and very simple, short phrases, using a variety of sounds, e.g. whispering, humming, singing. Finish by singing on a monotone or the soh - me minor third pattern.</li> <li>• Introduce melodies that develop the 'thinking voice'. When pupils can sing a simple melody accurately from memory, ask them to sing some sections in their heads at a given signal from the teacher. When they begin singing aloud again, pupils should still be singing at the correct pitch. In a group situation, individual pupils in turn might give the signal. If appropriate, use sol-fa hand-signs.</li> <li>• Sing simple phrases and ask pupils to sing them back. Begin with a very small pitch range, using the minor third pattern (soh and me), then move to the third, fifth and sixth of the major scale (me, soh and lah). When pupils are pitching well, move on to phrases using the first, second and third notes of the major scale (doh, ray, me). If you then move on to melodies using the first, second, third, fifth and sixth notes of the scale (doh, ray, me, soh and lah), pupils will be able to sing any pentatonic song with well-centred vocal pitch.</li> <li>• Encourage pupils to improvise vocally by taking a lead in the above exercises when they have sufficient confidence.</li> <li>• Explore higher and lower pitches with pupils by using large gestures, to reinforce an understanding of when the voice is moving up and down.</li> <li>• Use appropriate call-and-response songs: ask one pupil to sing the 'call' for another pupil to 'respond', e.g. 'Kumala Vista'.</li> <li>• Help pupils to discover a wider pitch range by using the sliding voice, moving smoothly up and down the vocal pitch range. Start modestly, gradually increasing the range, e.g. humming smoothly, following the moving hand of the teacher, then that of another pupil.</li> <li>• Change the starting pitch of the simple tunes pupils already know when singing unaccompanied.</li> <li>• Ask individual pupils to start call-and-response songs at different pitches.</li> <li>• Sing the rhythm of known tunes several times on a monotone, at a different pitch each time.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to indicate the shape of a melody with their hands. Ask them to recognise any patterns that emerge, such as repetition or sequence.</li> <li>• Help pupils to improve their breathing in order to develop their vocal tone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always teach 'voice to voice', with pupils facing the teacher to enable them to copy physical aspects of the speaking and singing.</li> <li>• Avoid giving phrases from the piano.</li> <li>• This exercise will also help pupils to develop an internalised sense of pulse.</li> <li>• If you do not wish to use sol-fa hand-signs, trace the pitch of songs with your hands. Pupils can also 'show' the movement of pitch in this way.</li> <li>• If pupils have difficulty pitching their voices accurately, find a comfortable natural pitch for them and sing these simple exercises at that pitch.</li> <li>• Many spirituals and folk-songs from different cultures are based on three, four or five notes of the pentatonic scale.</li> <li>• African, Afro-Caribbean and American repertoire provides many opportunities for this activity.</li> <li>• The imagery of a rocket taking off, a flying humming bee or a lift in a department store can add some humorous alternatives.</li> <li>• Ask pupils to identify whether the starting note is higher or lower.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Repertoire and resources</b> 'How Can I Keep from Singing?'</p>	<p><b>Expectations: by the end of the unit</b>  <b>all pupils will:</b> begin to pitch their own singing voices accurately; recognise pitch movement within simple melodies  <b>most pupils will:</b> pitch their own singing voices accurately; copy simple melodies with an understanding of relative pitching  <b>some will have progressed further and will:</b> understand the pitching of their own voices; recognise the relative pitching of simple melodies; sing simple melodies musically and with good intonation</p>	

# Short-term Planning and Recording Template

Name(s)/Group	Term	Year
Targets for the term	Current attainment	
	Programme	Grade

Date	Objectives and activities	Lesson outcomes and achievements
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
<b>Record of work</b> (e.g. pieces, studies, scales and exercises, aural, playing/singing at sight, duets/ensembles, improvisation/composition, performances)		
<b>End-of-term summary</b>		

# Summary of Learning Outcomes

*By the end of each programme:*

## Programme 1

Pupils play a variety of short, simple pieces (including studies) with fluency and some expression. When playing with others, they listen and watch, keeping in time with the group. In performing to others, they show awareness of the character of the music. They play with an appropriate, balanced and relaxed posture, technical control and a pleasing musical sound. They display aural awareness in their control of musical elements (pulse, rhythm, tempo, dynamics and quality of tone) and begin to internalise musical patterns in their heads. They play short phrases by ear, from memory, and from notation where appropriate. They improvise simple musical patterns (both rhythmically and melodically) with expression and use their instrumental skills when composing. They talk about the quality of their playing and suggest ways in which they can make improvements.

## Programme 2 (building on programme 1)

Pupils play simple pieces from a variety of styles with fluency and expression, internalising the sounds and conveying the character of the music. When playing with others, they help to maintain a separate part with an awareness of their own role in the ensemble. They perform to others with a sense of occasion, acknowledging audience appreciation and applause. They maintain an appropriate posture in a manner that facilitates freedom of movement. They build on their listening experiences, making distinctions in articulation, dynamics, tone quality, etc. They recognise simple structures in their pieces and use these in their own improvisations and compositions. They also improvise and compose using a limited number and range of notes, or with more freedom. They play by ear easy pieces in simple keys, recall short rhythmic and melodic phrases from memory and use notation, sometimes at sight. They make choices about their playing in relation to musical elements and talk about the quality of their performances.

## Programme 3 (building on programme 2)

Pupils play a variety of moderately easy pieces from different styles, conveying the expressive intentions of the music. When playing with others, they maintain an independent part individually, showing awareness of their role within the ensemble. They play with assurance when performing to others, communicating the character of the music with expression and understanding. They display good posture themselves and identify it in others. Their growing technical control (articulation, fingering, co-ordination, etc.) is used more consistently. They utilise their listening skills to make expressive decisions and to project the character of the music. They recognise common structures and musical devices, e.g. repetition, sequence, contrast, and use this knowledge in performing, improvising and composing. They play by ear pieces in simple keys or modes, recall moderately short musical phrases and read/play at sight a variety of short pieces. They evaluate the quality of their performances with some independence, using appropriate musical vocabulary, and make improvements in the light of their own perceptions and those of others.



**Programme 4** (building on programme 3)

Pupils play a wide variety of pieces of moderate difficulty from different styles and traditions. They communicate their feelings within their knowledge and understanding of the style and the composer's markings, demonstrating a personal response to the music. When playing with others, they maintain their own individual line with confidence and sensitivity, making significant contributions to the ensemble and shared interpretation, and taking a lead when appropriate. As soloists or in ensembles, they perform to others with conviction, responding to the audience, venue and occasion. They communicate the music through their own individual or shared interpretations and present their performances carefully, with attention to detail. They develop a wide range of dynamics and tone colours, using these sensitively and musically in their informed interpretations. They memorise, internalise, imitate and recall musical patterns of increasing length and difficulty. They play by ear pieces with simple modulations and a wide range of intervals and read and play at sight pieces in different styles. When improvising and composing, they freely develop their own musical ideas within a variety of musical structures, drawing on internalised sounds. They are able to describe, discuss and demonstrate understanding of how musical elements are used in a particular form or style. They evaluate their performances independently, and critically appraise pieces that may include their own as well as others' compositions.

**Programme 5** (building on programme 4)

Pupils play a range of advanced pieces from different styles and traditions that are technically and/or musically demanding. They draw on their high levels of technical control (rhythm, tempo, co-ordination, articulation, dynamics, melodic line, tone colour, etc.) in order to interpret the music, expressing their feelings within their knowledge and understanding of style, period and the composer's markings. They demonstrate the physical and mental stamina to play extended works. When playing in ensembles, they show sensitivity and empathy to others, contributing their own interpretative ideas and responding to those of others. In performance, they project the music with conviction through their own individual or shared interpretations, demonstrating a personal response to the music and an awareness of audience, venue and occasion. They memorise, internalise, imitate and recall sections from a wide variety of music. They read and play at sight moderately difficult pieces and respond to musical characteristics, including elements of surprise. They improvise extended musical ideas with a sense of direction and shape. They compose with consistency of style and coherence, understanding the idiomatic possibilities of their musical resources. They make informed evaluations about their performances, and those of others, in the light of their knowledge about the music and the interpretations of other musicians and professional artists. They value their music-making and take ownership of what they do.

# 72 Summary of Learning Objectives

*Pupils should be given opportunities to:*

*express their musical ideas and feelings; use their creativity, imagination and intuition;  
develop their skills, knowledge and understanding; reflect on and evaluate their progress*

	Programme 1	Programme 2	Programme 3	Programme 4	Programme 5
<b>A</b>	<b>listening and internalising</b>				
i	listen to music with concentration in and out of lessons, enjoying their experiences and building on them	listen to music with concentration in and out of lessons, enjoying their experiences and building on them	listen with concentration, responding to the expressive character of music, using their experiences to inform their playing	use their listening skills and experiences of a variety of musical styles and traditions to inform their interpretations, e.g. use of rubato, shaping of phrases, variety of tone	listen systematically and critically to a wide variety of music from different styles and traditions to develop their own independent interpretations
ii	have some aural perception of the music to be played	have some aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling of the expressive characteristics	have a clear aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling and understanding of the expressive characteristics	have a clear aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling and understanding of the expressive and stylistic characteristics	have an accurate aural perception of the music to be played, conveying their feeling and understanding of the expressive and stylistic features in practice and performance
iii	recognise and discriminate between the musical elements of pulse, pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, texture, and notice changes of tone quality and colour	recognise and discriminate between the musical elements, including aspects of articulation, phrasing and quality of tone	recognise and discriminate between the musical elements, including more refined aspects of articulation, phrasing, quality / variety of tone	identify and incorporate subtle changes to the musical elements in their playing, e.g. tempo, articulation, phrasing	identify and incorporate subtle changes to the musical elements in their playing, interpreting music both personally and idiomatically
iv	recognise and convey in their playing simple rhythmic and melodic patterns, e.g. repetition of main tune	recognise and convey simple structures in their playing, e.g. repetition of rhythmic and melodic phrases	recognise and convey structural features and compositional devices in their playing, e.g. A A B A, sequence	recognise and convey more extended structures and techniques in pieces being studied, e.g. rondo, raga, dance forms, simple modulations	recognise and convey in their interpretative decisions a wide variety of musical structures and compositional techniques
v	make links between sounds and symbols when using notation, e.g. shape of the melody	hear some elements of the music internally when using notation / symbols, e.g. tempo, pitch, rhythm, dynamics	hear simple music internally when using notation / symbols, including repetitions, contrasts, changes to melodic and rhythmic patterns	hear simple music internally with increasing accuracy and fluency when using notation / symbols	hear a wider range of music internally when using notation / symbols, anticipating the sound in their heads

B making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique					
i	<p><i>posture and freedom of movement and keyboard geography</i></p> <p>play with physical freedom and ease, without tension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– across the whole range of the instrument while sitting</li> <li>– developing a comfortable and balanced position</li> </ul> <p>understand the layout of the keyboard</p> <p>identify the letter names of the keys</p> <p>observe the repeating pattern of the keyboard and relate that to aural considerations</p> <p>begin to develop awareness of the visual and aural differences between whole and half tones</p>	<p><i>posture and freedom of movement</i></p> <p>maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– across a comfortable range of the instrument while sitting</li> <li>– playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together</li> <li>– developing free and confident movement</li> </ul>	<p><i>posture and freedom of movement</i></p> <p>maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– across a comfortable range of the instrument while sitting, with some awareness of posture and physiology</li> <li>– playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together</li> <li>– playing with free and confident movement</li> <li>– playing with economy of movement when tackling more demanding pianistic passages</li> </ul>	<p><i>posture and freedom of movement</i></p> <p>maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– across a larger range of the instrument, indicating awareness of the whole body as a balanced playing mechanism</li> <li>– playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together</li> <li>– playing with free and confident movement</li> <li>– playing with economy of movement when tackling fast scale passages, wider intervals, widely spaced textures, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><i>posture and freedom of movement</i></p> <p>maintain physical freedom and ease, without tension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– across the full range of the instrument, indicating awareness and understanding of the whole body as a balanced playing mechanism</li> <li>– playing with a comfortable and balanced position which ensures flexibility when playing hands separately and together</li> <li>– playing with free and confident movement</li> <li>– playing with economy of movement when tackling challenging and demanding passages</li> </ul>
ii	<p><i>fingering and co-ordination</i></p> <p>play in a single five-finger hand position, hands separately</p> <p>play, at a steady pulse, short, simple phrases, hands separately and together</p> <p>play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand</p>	<p><i>fingering and co-ordination</i></p> <p>play comfortably in extended hand positions (no larger than an octave):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– connecting different hand positions by the passing of the thumb</li> </ul> <p>play, at a steady pulse, short, simple phrases and exercises, hands separately and together, ensuring that the hands are co-ordinated exactly</p> <p>play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand</p>	<p><i>fingering and co-ordination</i></p> <p>play comfortably in a variety of extended hand positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– connecting different hand positions by passing the thumb with greater fluency</li> </ul> <p>play, at a steady pulse, with clarity and control, short exercises which have more rhythmic independence between the hands</p> <p>play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand at a variety of tempi</p>	<p><i>fingering and co-ordination</i></p> <p>play comfortably in a variety of extended hand positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– moving between hand positions with greater fluency and confidence at a variety of tempi</li> </ul> <p>play, at a steady pulse, with clarity and control, a variety of independent rhythmic exercises between the hands, including 2 against 3</p> <p>play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand at a variety of tempi, including when crossing hands</p>	<p><i>fingering and co-ordination</i></p> <p>play comfortably in a wide variety of hand positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– moving between hand positions with fluency and confidence at a variety of tempi</li> </ul> <p>play, at a steady pulse, with clarity and control, a wide variety of complex rhythmic exercises, including cross rhythms between the hands and within one hand</p> <p>play rhythmically when passing from hand to hand at a large variety of tempi, including when crossing hands</p>

**B making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique**
*continued*

play two notes simultaneously with one hand

play three-note chords with one hand

play major and minor chords, hands separately and together

play a range of chords, hands separately and together, controlling the movement between adjacent and consecutive chords

play a wide range of chords, hands separately and together, controlling the movement between chords at a variety of tempi

play with some independence of:

- hands
- fingers within one hand
- articulation between hands, e.g. legato in one hand and non-legato in the other

- play with more independence of:
- movement of hands and arms
  - fingers
  - articulation between hands and within one hand

play with more independence of:

- movement of hands and arms
- fingers
- articulation between hands and within one hand

play with independence of:

- movement of hands and arms across the full range of the instrument
- fingers
- articulation between hands and within one hand

recognise and use finger numbering

recognise and use consistent fingering

use consistent fingering, particularly in more demanding passages

observe and adhere to chosen fingering, particularly in more demanding passages

observe and adhere to chosen fingering, particularly in technically challenging passages

use appropriate fingering, initially within a single hand position

use appropriate fingering for scales, arpeggios and chords

use appropriate fingering for scales, arpeggios and chords

use consistent fingering in a wide range of scales, arpeggios and chords

use standard fingering in a wide range of scales, arpeggios and chords, including scales in thirds and sixths

suggest and write in fingering for short phrases

suggest and write in fingering for passages

use the thumb on black notes where necessary

use the thumb on black notes where necessary

use some finger substitution

use finger substitution with ease

explore unconventional fingering in scalar passages in response to the musical context

use appropriate fingering for scales in thirds, hands separately

apply appropriate fingering to repeated note passages

**B** making and controlling musical sounds: developing technique *continued*

iii	<p><i>tone quality, sound production and articulation</i></p> <p>play with a focused, clear sound:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using some dynamic contrast</li> <li>– developing some control over changes in dynamics</li> <li>– shaping short melodic phrases</li> </ul>	<p><i>tone quality, sound production and articulation</i></p> <p>play with a focused, clear sound:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using some dynamic contrast</li> <li>– controlling changes in dynamics with more ease</li> <li>– shaping and defining phrases</li> <li>– developing some independence of dynamic levels between the hands</li> <li>– controlling the tone quality when joining or changing hand position</li> </ul>	<p><i>tone quality, sound production and articulation</i></p> <p>play with a focused, clear sound:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using a larger range of dynamics</li> <li>– controlling changes in dynamics</li> <li>– shaping and defining phrases</li> <li>– controlling the dynamic levels of each hand with more ease</li> <li>– controlling the tone quality when joining or changing hand position</li> <li>– using an appropriate range of accent and emphasis</li> <li>– highlighting the top note of a chord</li> </ul>	<p><i>tone quality, sound production and articulation</i></p> <p>play with a focused, clear tone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using a dynamic range appropriate to the musical requirements</li> <li>– controlling changes in dynamics with confidence</li> <li>– shaping and defining phrases with more dynamic subtlety</li> <li>– controlling the dynamic levels of each hand with ease</li> <li>– controlling the tone quality when negotiating more demanding movements around the keyboard</li> <li>– using a range of accent and emphasis appropriate to the style</li> <li>– exercising tonal control between the hands in simple (two-part) polyphonic textures</li> <li>– balancing a chord, highlighting one or two notes as appropriate</li> </ul>	<p><i>tone quality, sound production and articulation</i></p> <p>play with a focused, clear tone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using a dynamic range appropriate to the musical requirements, taking into account the acoustics</li> <li>– controlling changes in dynamics with confidence</li> <li>– defining the phrases and overall structure of the music through dynamic shaping and rhythmic flexibility</li> <li>– controlling the dynamic levels of each hand with confidence</li> <li>– controlling the tone quality when negotiating demanding movements around the keyboard</li> <li>– using a range of accent and emphasis appropriate to the style</li> <li>– exercising tonal control between the hands and within one hand in polyphonic textures</li> <li>– controlling the tonal balance within a chord or a succession of chords</li> </ul>
	play legato and non-legato	play with legato and non-legato articulation, including slurring	play with some variety of legato and non-legato articulation, including slurring and staccato	play with some variety of legato and non-legato articulation at a variety of tempi	play with a variety of legato and non-legato articulation at a variety of tempi
	explore the effects of both pedals	incorporate direct pedalling and pedalling for effect as appropriate	use direct pedalling, pedalling for effect and legato pedalling where musically appropriate	use some of the available pedal techniques	use a variety of pedal techniques, including half-pedalling, pedalling in advance and 'silent' returns
	differentiate between the various sounds, dynamics and articulations			use the una corda pedal where appropriate	use the una corda pedal where appropriate
				respond to harmonic changes with appropriate changes of pedal	adjust the pedalling according to the instrument and venue

C creating, developing and interpreting musical ideas					
i	improvise expressively by exploring different sounds and creating satisfying repeated musical patterns or phrases	improvise rhythmic and melodic phrases freely or within given structures, individually or as part of a group	improvise in a variety of genres and styles, sustaining and developing musical ideas and achieving different intended musical effects with the instrument	improvise with freedom in a wide range of musical structures, genres, styles and traditions, drawing on internalised sounds	improvise extended musical ideas with a sense of direction and shape as they develop their own personal style
ii	make use of instrumental skills when beginning to compose	compose by developing musical ideas within given simple structures and applying instrumental skills	apply knowledge and understanding of the instrument in order to compose with an understanding of musical idiom	compose in different styles, creating and selecting musical ideas by exploring the characteristics of their chosen resources	compose with consistency of style, coherence of musical ideas and a degree of individuality, and by making the most of the instrumental and vocal resources
iii	begin to interpret music with some expression and with a sense of its intended effect; talk about its mood and how it is played and suggest improvements	make choices in relation to tempo, dynamics, phrasing, articulation, colour, etc. in order to achieve an intended effect and convey the expressive characteristics; describe and evaluate the music using appropriate musical vocabulary	convey their interpretation with an understanding of the musical style and idiom; make improvements to their work in the light of their knowledge about the music	apply their knowledge of style, characteristics and historical / social background in order to interpret the music with understanding and insight; evaluate how their interpretation reflects the context in which the music was created and is performed and heard	interpret music personally with consistency of style, and an understanding of idiomatic performing conventions; make independent, critical judgements about their interpretation
D playing music					
i	work out <b>by ear</b> how to play short, easy phrases from well-known tunes	work out <b>by ear</b> how to play easy, well-known tunes in simple keys	work out <b>by ear</b> how to play tunes in straightforward major and minor keys or modes	work out <b>by ear</b> how to play moderately easy tunes, e.g. with simple modulations, a wider range of intervals and different octaves / positions	work out <b>by ear</b> how to play pieces of increasing complexity, using simple transpositions if necessary
ii	<b>repeat</b> with accuracy short, easy rhythmic and melodic patterns by playing back from memory	<b>repeat</b> with accuracy short, easy rhythmic and melodic phrases by playing back from memory	<b>repeat</b> with accuracy moderately short musical phrases (melodic, rhythmic, textural and harmonic) from memory	<b>repeat</b> with accuracy phrases of moderate length and complexity in a variety of styles	<b>repeat</b> increasingly extended and complex musical extracts, involving different tempi, keys, tonality, and transpositions where appropriate
iii	<b>play</b> short, easy pieces from notation / symbols, conveying the character of the music	<b>play</b> a variety of easy pieces from notation / symbols, conveying the character of the music	<b>play</b> a variety of moderately easy pieces from different styles and traditions, showing an awareness of idiom and structure and communicating the character of the music and the intentions of the composer	<b>play</b> a variety of pieces of moderate difficulty, developing a personal response through sustained study of and reflection on the music	<b>play</b> a range of pieces from different styles and periods that are technically and musically advanced; form their own critical ideas in order to project their personal interpretation

D playing music <span style="float: right;"><i>continued</i></span>					
iv	memorise with accuracy selected short, simple pieces from their repertoire	play <b>from memory</b> , and to others, selected contrasting pieces from their repertoire	<b>memorise</b> a variety of pieces from their repertoire of increasing length and complexity	<b>memorise</b> a variety of pieces from their repertoire in different styles and traditions, featuring a range of musical devices and structures	<b>memorise</b> systematically and independently pieces from their repertoire with refinement and expressive subtlety, demonstrating a personal response to the music
v	read and play <b>at sight</b> short, simple phrases at a regular pulse; begin to make links between sound and symbol	read and play <b>at sight</b> short, easy pieces at a regular pulse, beginning to hear some of the elements internally and attending to expressive details, including articulation and dynamics	read and play <b>at sight</b> a variety of short, straightforward pieces at a regular pulse, using an increasing rhythmic, melodic and tonal range	read and play <b>at sight</b> moderately easy pieces in different styles at a regular pulse; internalise and incorporate less familiar musical features, e.g. time signatures, variety of tempi, keys	read and play <b>at sight</b> a range of pieces in a variety of styles containing elements of surprise and deviation; internalise and incorporate a wide range of time signatures and tempi, rhythmic patterns, melodic range, intervals, tonality and expression
E playing music with others					
i	play with others, demonstrating some basic ensemble skills by listening, watching and keeping in time with the group	play with others, helping to maintain a separate part and showing awareness of their role within the ensemble	play with others, independently maintaining an individual line, demonstrating awareness of their role within the ensemble	play with others, independently maintaining an individual line with sensitivity and demonstrating awareness of their role within the ensemble	play with others with assurance and sensitivity, demonstrating an empathy with other performers
ii	explore and discuss the character of the music and the expressive possibilities	explore, discuss and convey the character of the music	contribute to collective decisions, e.g. tempo, ensemble, tuning, balance, conveying the character of the music	contribute to collective decisions, e.g. balance, ensemble, interpretation, conveying the character and style of the music	contribute their own interpretative ideas and respond to those of others, conveying the character and style of the music
F performing and communicating					
i	perform music to others, e.g. parents / carers, teachers and friends, demonstrating an awareness of the mood of the music	perform to others with a sense of occasion, e.g. in a concert, school assembly, examination, projecting the character of the music and acknowledging audience applause	perform to others with increasing awareness and assurance, communicating the character of the music and their musical intentions to the audience	perform convincingly to others, responding to the audience, venue and occasion, communicating the character and style of the music through their own / shared interpretation	perform music to others with conviction, communicating the character and style of the music; demonstrate empathy with other performers and with the audience, to whom they should be able to talk informatively, providing programme notes if appropriate
ii	discuss the quality of their playing and, with guidance, learn from their performance	evaluate the quality of their performance in relation to the character of the music, suggesting improvements and commenting on how the intentions were achieved	evaluate with perception and some independence the quality of their performance and respond to ideas from others	evaluate with perception the quality of their performance, using their knowledge of performing conventions, including the performances of distinguished musicians	make informed evaluations about their performance in the light of their knowledge about the music and the interpretations of distinguished musicians

# Glossary

*The following definitions are designed to be used in conjunction with A Common Approach.*

<b>Alberti bass:</b>	triadic accompanimental figures based on repeated patterns, often found in classical sonatas
<b>articulation:</b>	the nature of attack and release of notes. This includes staccato, legato and various degrees between these extremes. Also used to refer to the clarity of playing in passage-work
<b>balancing:</b>	a form of tonal control in which melody and accompaniment are played with appropriate levels of tone. Used to refer to melody in one hand and accompaniment in the other, or where both melody and accompaniment appear in the same hand
<b>call and response:</b>	a type of musical activity found in some jazz and world-music styles, in which a musical call, often sung or played by an individual, is followed by a response, which may or may not share the same musical characteristics. Useful as a stimulus for improvisational activities
<b>cantabile touch:</b>	a particular type of legato touch, emulating the smoothness and tonal gradation of singing
<b>couplet:</b>	a two-note phrase: these are often found in succession in early classical repertoire
<b>cluster:</b>	the effect produced by playing a number of adjacent keys simultaneously (usually either a group of white keys or a group of black keys), using conventional or unconventional (palm, flat of the hand, forearm, etc.) playing techniques
<b>damper pedal:</b>	see <i>sustaining pedal</i>
<b>drone:</b>	a repeated or sustained musical figure (often a perfect fifth) providing a harmonic point of reference, usually (but not always) the lowest part of a texture phrase
<b>direct pedalling:</b>	use of the sustaining pedal in which it is depressed simultaneously with the start of a chord, and released at the same time that the hands release the chord. It can be used to enhance tone colour and to emphasise an accent (thus sometimes known as 'rhythmic' pedalling)
<b>extension:</b>	in the early stages of learning, the physical movement required for intervals greater than a second, using adjacent fingers, e.g. C followed by E, using 1 and 2 in the right hand; or a movement extending the hand beyond a closed five-finger position
<b>half-pedalling:</b>	a pedalling technique using the sustaining pedal. In this, the standard movements for changing the pedal are greatly speeded up, with the effect that treble tones are cleared but bass ones are not (because it takes longer to damp the bass strings)
<b>kinaesthetic memory:</b>	see <i>muscular memory</i>
<b>lateral movement:</b>	flexible movement of the forearm, combined with a free wrist. This may be applied to left-hand accompanimental figurations in Chopin nocturnes, where an element of pivoting would be added
<b>legato pedalling:</b>	also known as 'syncopated' pedalling. Use of the sustaining pedal to connect notes or chords that cannot be joined by hands alone, simultaneously enhancing the resonance of the tone colour
<b>muscular memory:</b>	also known as 'kinaesthetic' memory. A form of memory which arises as a result of repetitive practice and in which the playing becomes a reflex action. Without the aid of other forms of memory it is notoriously insecure
<b>playing mechanism:</b>	refers to the main physical components (arms, wrists and fingers) utilised in playing, recognising the need for all three to be used in various combinations and to various degrees
<b>raga:</b>	an organised collection of tones that sets the melodic framework for a piece of Indian classical music
<b>rotary movement:</b>	forearm rotation to enable speed and flexibility in certain types of passage-work, including Alberti bass, broken octaves, etc. The extent to which the forearm is involved will depend upon factors such as the dynamic level of the passage



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<b>staccato:</b>	there are several possible approaches to staccato touch: all of the approaches have in common the need to release notes before their full durations. The distance from the key surface and the precise nature of the movement will depend upon the musical context
<b>sustaining pedal:</b>	the right-hand pedal, which raises all of the dampers from the strings simultaneously when depressed, allowing free and sympathetic vibrations. Also known as the 'damper' pedal
<b>syncopated pedalling:</b>	see <i>legato pedalling</i>
<b>tone production:</b>	refers to ways in which the various parts of the playing mechanism are used in combination to produce particular kinds of tone colour
<b>una corda pedal:</b>	the left-hand pedal. On upright pianos, this has the effect of moving the hammers closer to the strings, thus facilitating softer playing. On grand pianos, the una corda (literally 'one string') moves the key action to the right, so that only one out of two, or two out of three, strings are struck. In addition to the reduction in the number of strings activated, the una corda mechanism results in more veiled tone quality (because less-worn parts of the hammers strike the string)
<b>vibrato pedalling:</b>	changing the sustaining pedal rapidly, either to secure quick reduction of the tone that has been produced, or to provide atmospheric effects in the works of Debussy and more recent composers
<b>voicing:</b>	a form of tonal control in which the different notes of chords are given varying degrees of prominence. In many examples from the romantic period, the top note of a series of chords may constitute the melody, therefore requiring greater prominence



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