

First Access case study:

# Princecroft School



**First Access is about providing whole classes or class groups with a formative opportunity to experience and enjoy music making. It usually involves a whole class of children learning to play a musical instrument, usually all at the same time, but sometimes splitting the class into smaller groups. However it is structured, every child in the class takes part.**

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Princecroft Primary School is a one-form entry local authority maintained primary school in Warminster. The headteacher, Gemma Pierson, is a music specialist and is also Music Subject Lead.

When Gemma was Deputy Headteacher, she taught music for all year groups and wrote the school's music curriculum. When she became headteacher she appointed a music specialist, Gabriella Cooper, to teach across the school two days per week during class teachers' PPA time. This case study outlines how First Access is embedded within this provision.

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## What?

Every class within key stages 1 and 2 learns a different instrument. A range of instruments are used, including glockenspiels, recorders, djembes, ukuleles, cornets and keyboards.

## How?

A music specialist teaches each class for one hour a week for three terms out of six. Lessons include both the instrumental First Access learning and the curriculum music learning, following the bespoke music curriculum written by the headteacher.

Some of the instruments used are owned by the school, such as class sets of glockenspiels and recorders, and others are hired through Wiltshire Music Connect's instrument hire scheme.

## Why?

The decision to employ a specialist to lead music across the school was taken in order to ensure that music was taught well and regularly. Because it is taught as PPA cover, music has a protected timetabled slot, and progression through the music curriculum is strengthened by having the same specialist teacher teaching every year group.

The choice of instrument for each year group has been carefully planned, with several factors taken into account. The size and physical characteristics of the pupils have been considered. Links have been made with the music curriculum and other curriculum areas; for example, Year 4 pupils play djembe drums which links to both their music unit on polyrhythm and their geography unit on West Africa.

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## What are the strengths of this model?

- Having the same teacher teaching music throughout the school promotes continuity of learning. The teacher understands the skills that pupils have already developed, both on the instruments studied and in the wider music curriculum, and can build on this prior learning effectively.
- The variety of instruments used supports access to a range of styles, genres and cultures. Pupils learn an instrument for a sustained period of time, but learn different instruments as they progress through the school, giving them the opportunity to find something that they really enjoy.
- Having music taught as PPA cover ensures that the time is protected and is not reduced because of pressure in other subject areas.
- Pupils are encouraged to continue their instrumental learning outside of First Access by having lessons with peripatetic teachers. The skills of school staff are also used to deliver extra-curricular instrumental lessons and groups. Pupil Premium funding is used to support this.



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