

Music

The music curriculum is based upon a sequential core of knowledge centred around literacy, creating and performing, thinking and responding, and history and culture. Opportunities for singing, playing instruments, reading notation, listening to all genres of music, critiquing, dramatic role play and performing are consistently offered. Given the diversity of the students at ACS, multicultural experiences in music are ongoing. Children sing and listen to music from all parts of the world in class on a regular basis. Wherever possible, music is connected to, and integrated with, other subject areas being studied.

Pre-Kindergarten pupils learn simple action songs and rhymes, move to the beat, dance, explore the world of instruments and listen to age appropriate musical selections. The concepts of loud/soft, fast/slow, same/different, and high/low are explored through experiences and games.

The goal for Kindergarten children is the establishment of a strong foundation for future musical growth. This is accomplished through an experiential process which stresses active involvement. Some of the activities that foster this include: finding and using the singing voice, developing a feeling for the steady beat, learning the appropriate use of instruments, movement skills, and beginning music literacy through pre-reading activities. A repertoire of songs and listening is also a strong part of the Kindergarten year.

1st Grade students are able to use their singing voices with growing confidence. 1st Graders sing simple songs, play and recognise a variety of classroom percussion and melodic instruments, move to the beat and to established pieces of music from all genres. They begin to use notation, start to discriminate in regards to pitch, tempo, duration and volume, and learn about the larger world of music as it occupies its cultural place in life.

Singing, playing instruments, moving to the beat, and listening to music remain the focal points of the 2nd Grade music experience. The year long major unit of study is entitled, "Music Around the World." We learn and practice the basics of music by using songs, games, recordings and related activities that another 2nd Grader is also learning, somewhere else in the world.

3rd Grade musicians are building a vocabulary which allows them to begin to make judgments about the art form. They can recognise and use music not only as a means of self-expression, but also as a discipline or form of leisure. Added to the ongoing learning about the elements of music: melody; harmony; rhythm; tempo; tone colour; and dynamics, the soprano recorder is also introduced. The instrument experience allows students to have first hand knowledge of bringing the elements of music together, with performance as a goal.

Students in 4th Grade have enough vocabulary and skills to express ideas and opinions about music. The writing of music is encouraged and taught, as is the introduction to band and orchestra instruments, with hopes that the child will play in the future. All 4th Graders participate in a choir. They also have exposure to beginner level music technology in the Harmony House computer lab and in the Lower School computer lab.