

Subject	Identifying Highly Able Pupils
Music	<p>Pupils who are highly able in music are likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be captivated by sound and engage fully with music • select an instrument with care and then be unwilling to relinquish the instrument • find it difficult not to respond physically to music • memorise music quickly without any apparent effort, be able to repeat more complex rhythmical and melodic phrases given by the teacher and repeat melodies (sometimes after one hearing) • sing and play music with a natural awareness of the musical phrase -- the music makes sense • demonstrate the ability to communicate through music, for example to sing with musical expression and with confidence • show strong preferences, single-mindedness and a sustained inner drive to make music. • show a high degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance. <p>Pupils more often show their musical abilities through the quality of their response than the complexity of their response. Musical quality is very difficult to define in words, as music is a different form of communication to language. The closest we can get is to say that it 'sounds right': skills and techniques are used to communicate an intended mood or effect. Therefore musical ability is at least as much about demonstrating a higher quality response <i>within</i> levels as about attainment at higher levels. Musical ability can be seen at every level of attainment.</p> <p>Pupils who have ability for music show a particular affinity with sound. This is sometimes hard to identify, especially when it is not combined with more general ability. It is however often most significant, since it may be a pupil's only route to real success, increasing their self-esteem and motivation for other areas of learning.</p> <p>Some teachers believe that music is <i>only</i> accessible for pupils with musical talent: that pupils are either musical, or not musical. This is not the case. All pupils can develop musical skills, knowledge and understanding. Some may need more or less help, but this is no different from any other subject. Teachers need to recognise the different needs of all pupils, including not only those who are highly able, but those who are more highly able across several subjects.</p> <p>Music provides a context in which generically highly able pupils (that is, those who are more generally highly able across several subjects) can be identified and developed. In music, pupils have to deal with a complex range of different and simultaneous factors and bring them together when making and responding to music, using skills which are often associated with highly ability. Teachers have often commented on the way that quickness in remembering rhythmic patterns suggests the ability to think quickly and assimilate information. Similarly, a difficulty with remembering patterns can indicate potential issues across subjects -- teachers have found that music can help them to identify pupils who may require additional support.</p> <p>Because music is abstract, it provides a way of identifying and developing</p>

	<p>skills that are not language dependent. This means that it can play a particularly important part in helping to recognise highly ability in pupils whose language skills have not yet developed, especially those for whom English is not their first language.</p>
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