



Stratford St. Mary Primary School

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27th November 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Recorder Lessons for Woodpeckers Class

In Woodpeckers class we have been learning how to read music using the Stave House characters. If you ask your child about Uncle Semibreve, Father Crotchet, Mother Minim, the Quaver Twins, Ferdi, Dunstan or Note Builder then hopefully they can show you what they have learnt!

In the new year Woodpeckers will be taking their reading further by learning the recorder. Recorders are a great instrument to learn about music on as they are relatively inexpensive and simple to learn but can take the children up to a high standard with their music making, and I am sure some of you remember recorder lessons from your own school days!

The children will be following the 'Recorder Karate' scheme in which they learn to play increasingly complex pieces of music and can achieve coloured 'belts' as they reach each milestone.

We will, of course, be following government guidelines with respect to playing wind instruments in school, therefore recorder lessons will take place in the school hall with windows and doors open and the children socially distanced by 2 metres to avoid the build-up of aerosols.

In order to make maximum progress we would like your child to take their recorder home and practice between lessons. Each child will be given a music book to work from and a school recorder, which will have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Some of you may wish to buy your own recorder to bring in and use and you are more than welcome to. If you would, then there are many different types available and I would like to guide you to get the right one.

Firstly, we will be using a **descant** or **soprano** recorder so please make sure you don't get a treble or soprano by mistake as these are *not* the same. Secondly, there are many 'see-thru' plastic recorders in all kinds of colours and these are very cheap and fun, but they are quite hard to play and sound really out of tune, please avoid. *Aulos* is a reputable company that make good quality instruments. The Aulos 303 is a good model and, at the time of writing, was £7.65 on Amazon. There are some much more expensive models out there, but for beginners you shouldn't need to spend more than £10. Wooden ones sound nicer than plastic but tend to be more expensive, not as hard-wearing and harder to clean.

Finally, if you already have a recorder at home and want to check that it is the right one and still in good working order then please send it in to school on a Thursday or catch me at home-time and I can look at it.

Please ensure that you label both your recorder and the case before it comes into school as we do not want any children to share instruments by accident, particularly during the current situation. Equally, if your child forgets their recorder on a Thursday there will be spares available that will have been disinfected between lessons.

With any luck you will be able to come into school before long and listen to the children perform!

Many thanks.

Jonathan Abbott
Music Teacher