

Music, Society and Education for Peace

An overview of Charanga's perspective on music and the multifaceted role it plays in society and Global Citizenship Education

What Is Music?

Music is a bit like magic.

It is not something you can see and yet it can be very powerful: it can make us want to move or change the way we feel; it can tell a story or bring the past to life; it can unite people or scare people; it can paint pictures in our minds; it can convince us to buy things or change our opinions on important topics; it can motivate us and energise us, or lull us to sleep; and it can console us when we are in difficult times.

Music has always been all around us and is inseparable from what it means to be a human on planet Earth. It gets to the heart of what we are.

We were all musicians even before we were born: the first sound each of us ever heard - the first rhythm we ever moved to - was the beating of our mothers' hearts.

It's in our voices and bodies, in our computers and phones, our films, our places of worship or entertainment; it's in our elections, our wars, our ceremonies; it's in our schools and homes, our radios, stadiums and concert halls, our shops and our cars; it's in the news and in our children's toys; and we find it in the nature that surrounds us. It's in every country and every culture. It is part of our identity.

Wherever we are, music is too.

And yet, it is also somehow something more than us, remaining something of a beautiful mystery - just like magic.

Six Social Themes in Spiralled Curricula

Given this all-pervasive and life-giving nature of music, at Charanga we think of music education as an active - rather than a passive - experience; and this runs through our various curricula, resources, training and events. This is not just in the way that every lesson involves hands-on musicianship for every student, but also in the way we encourage learners to engage with and inquire into the broader role music plays or enjoys in our lives and society.

From the early years to the end of secondary school, our spiral curricula progressively revisit and build upon the interlinking elements of music that are introduced in the first year, while simultaneously exploring music's broader role in society in an age-appropriate manner. It is our hope that, as a result, students are not only empowered to be the best musicians they can be - and lifelong learners and lovers of music - but that they are also given the keys to unlocking some of music's other mysteries, thereby helping them gain a better understanding of themselves, their communities and what it means to be human today on this exquisite planet we call home.

To do this, each of the six units in every year group couples a Musical Spotlight with an inquiry into a broad Social Theme, as shown in the table below.

Broader Social Theme Description	Examples of Related Themes
1. Music Is a Peacebuilder and Friendmaker	Diplomacy Kindness Responsibility Charity
2. Music Is a Storyteller and Time Traveller	History Entertainment
3. Music Is a Changemaker	Social justice
4. Music Is a Builder of Community and Guardian of Cultural Identity	Culture
5. Music Is a Friend, Guide and Support	Personal Psychological Moral
6. Music Is a Nature Lover and Guardian of the Earth	Environmental

Music, Education for Peace and Global Citizenship Education

A world-leading music teaching and learning platform now used in over 60 countries, we at Charanga are fully aware of the power of music - the one true international language - and the unique role it plays in our societies and personal lives. We know that excellent music education is a crucial part of a much broader educational responsibility in shaping a more peaceful and sustainable future for all of us on this planet: Global Citizenship Education and Education for Peace.

Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is a strategic area of the United Nations Education Sector programme and builds on the work of Peace and Human Rights Education. It aims to empower learners of all ages with an understanding of the values, attitudes and behaviours that support responsible global citizenship so that they can assume active roles, both locally and globally, in building more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies.

Through our holistic and open-minded approach to music education, Charanga channels the many wonders and joys of music of all genres, and from all places, in order to contribute as significantly as possible to Education for Peace and Global Citizenship Education. In each lesson of each unit and across each year of learning, we work on the cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural levels, encouraging creativity and innovation.

Through our Social Themes, we touch upon the major components of a commitment to peace, human rights and sustainable development, right down to the personal level of seeing music as key to individual well-being and friendship.

And all the while, it is fun!

Magic!