



FROM LEFT: Academic Music Teacher Jason Goopy, Christopher Slater, Nicholas Ng, Alexander Lewis and Aidan Murphy

Ram, sam, song, gooley, gooley, gooley, ram, sam, song

Just the slightest mention of these words, taken from a Malaysian nursery rhyme, sees 20 energetic Prep students jump to their feet ready for action. Without any prompting and together with their teacher they eagerly repeat the next verse. Their enthusiasm is infectious and amidst all the fun these boys are actually learning to distinguish between their speaking and singing voice.

Scenes like these are now a regular occurrence in the Prep classroom with music lessons taught on a daily basis as part of the College's Music Everyday program. Based on the world-renowned Kodaly philosophy, named after Hungarian composer and educator Zoltan Kodaly, the program aims to foster a life-long love of music. Kodaly believed music to be an integral part of the education of every child; not to make them professional musicians, but just to complete them as people. You cannot

nourish a child if you give him something to eat only once a week – music must be taken everyday.

Behind the new initiative is BBC's Academic Music Teacher Mr Jason Goopy. We are currently the only boys' school in Brisbane to offer this type of program as part of the curriculum. It is a critical step in developing and implementing a sequential aural-based music program for students from Prep right through to Year 12, he said.

More than just music

Evidence shows that the skills and experiences learnt through music are incredibly transferable. When asking Jason just how important it is for children of this age to be exposed to music, he rattles off a long and extensive list of benefits including:

- support of literacy and numeracy development through songs, syllable work and musical stories;
- the building of confidence, self-esteem and expression through creativity and performance; and
- the development of social and interpersonal skills through games, to name just a few.

Music in disguise

Far from simply learning instruments or how to read music, boys use an array of what one could deem unconventional props, such as slinkys and soccer balls, to discover the fundamentals of music. Each lesson includes up to 10 small musical activities involving songs, rhymes, games and musical stories with each task central to Kodaly's philosophy and based on the notion that:

- Singing is central to teaching and learning as every child has access to their voice; and
- learning is prepared over a period of time with new concepts uncovered through a carefully guided discovery process, reinforced through practice.

The final note

At the end of the year, boys will have developed the musical skills to:

- Sing in-tune;
- keep the beat and accurately perform the rhythm of songs and rhymes;
- discriminate between small intervals of sound;
- perform confidently; and
- learn to actively listen as an audience member.

Just as a great song can diffuse the most dullest of days, when attending one of these lessons you can't help but smile in seeing these youngsters enjoy the universal language known as music. 🎵