

**10/06/25**

Rockademy lessons – general observation

When teaching introductions to improvised ideas, I found it useful to bring students on board and involve them in the process, with some constraints to guide direction.

Example:

You can choose any notes on this string, or only use 3–4 phrases. Students begin to compose and notate their own ideas. This helped build rapport.

With younger students (Rowan – Year 1), engagement improved when tasks were gamified.

Example:

String name guessing game using paper prompts with points for correct answers.

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**09/01/25**

Year in review – reflection notes

- Teaching songs worked well for:
  - repertoire building
  - introducing new techniques
- Group sessions were more effective when students worked well together (e.g. Andrew and Ruth)
- Issues identified:
  - Some song choices were too technically difficult
  - Some material was not idiomatic for guitar

Key reflection:

It is important to choose songs that suit the instrument and sound effective early on. Students benefit from a variety of tracks before developing preferences.

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**28/01/24**

Email to parent – safeguarding / repertoire suitability

Context: “Drop It Like It’s Hot” (Snoop Dogg)

Points considered:

- Is the material age appropriate?
- How do I communicate professionally without overreacting?
- How might parents respond?

Action taken:

- Checked lyrical content (adult themes present)
  - Taught censored version (no explicit lyrics or video used)
  - Suggested future limitation on similar material
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## **Lesson coverage / general notes**

Lessons adjusted due to absences (Ruth, Euan, Andrew). Some students were unavailable despite staff support.

Covered:

- rhythm basics
- tablature introduction
- chord mechanics and strumming
- basic theory breakdown

Observation:

Using different instruments in the room helped students retain information more effectively.

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## **Teaching observation – general reflection**

Introductory lessons often focus on “how to do things”, but the “why” can be overlooked. I find the “why” important for retention because it helps students understand the task more fully.

Teaching idea:

Presenting the same concept in multiple ways improves retention.

Need to balance:

- structured / intense lessons
- fun / engaging lessons

This balance affects long-term student progress.

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## 03/02/26

North Downs Primary – Year 2 Ukulele (group of 4)

Focus: C and Am chords, start/stop strumming

Game:

Leader/stop command system with a competitive element. Students rotate roles depending on performance.

Observation:

Gamification improved engagement and made participation easier to maintain.

Quick music question used at end of lesson.

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## 10/02/26

Year 2 Ukulele + Year 1–3 Guitar

Ukulele:

- “Secret stopper” game worked effectively
- Improved focus and quicker settling
- Students enjoyed “tempo master” and “secret stopper” roles
- Introduced Am chord successfully

Guitar:

- Tuning game using pitch recognition (higher/lower)
- Peer teaching used effectively
- Simple instructions improved engagement
- Improvisation task emerged due to strong engagement
- Dynamics exercise (soft/loud control) introduced

Observation:

Quieter students became more confident in group settings.

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## 24/03/26

Year 2 Ukulele (group of 4)

Spider exercise introduced using gamified team structure.

- Students split into 2 teams
- Each team learns TAB version of exercise
- Designated performer plays for each group
- Peer feedback used for improvement

Aim:

Make technical practice more engaging through competition and teamwork.

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**24/03/26**

Year 1–3 Guitar group (3 students)

Song: Smells Like Teen Spirit (intro riff + muted strumming)

Observation:

The group was slightly chaotic due to ability spread.

Reflection:

A more fundamental approach may have worked better at this stage.

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**24/03/26**

Year 4–6 Guitar (group of 3)

Songwriting workshop:

- Melody / harmony / bass roles assigned
- Students created TAB parts

Aims:

- Improve TAB familiarity
- Encourage group collaboration
- Develop listening skills

Observation:

The task worked musically but was too complex for a 25-minute lesson structure.

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**26/03/26**

SEND lesson – Year 1 (non-verbal autistic student)

Worked alongside specialist staff.

Tools used:

- PLAY / STOP flashcards
- instrument exploration

Observation:

- engagement varies depending on day
  - collaboration with specialist staff is essential
  - progress is gradual but positive overall
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**26/03/26**

Year 4 1:1 guitar lesson

Focus:

- spider exercise variations with metronome
- string skipping / alternate picking
- melody work (Jurassic Park theme)

Target areas:

- sustain
- finger choice
- tone control

Observation:

Breaking tasks into small technical components improves progress.