

Music development plan summary: St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Waltham Cross

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2026
Name of the school music lead	Kirsty Gunn
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	na
Name of local music hub	Hertfordshire Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	The Broxbourne Secondary School St. Mary's School Bishop's Stortford St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust Hertfordshire Music Hub

This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our pupils across three areas – curriculum music, co-curricular provision and musical experiences – and what changes we are planning in future years. This information is to help pupils and parents or carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our pupils' music education. This overview should be viewed as a working document, which will be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

Part A: Curriculum music

This is about what we teach in lesson time, how much time is spent teaching music and any music qualifications or awards that pupils can achieve.

In curriculum music lessons children take part in a wide variety of activities, which include singing and playing, composing and listening. Our curriculum map is continually being updated and diversified to suit the needs of our children. Our provision is based on the Model Music Curriculum recommendations and we have worked closely with Primary Music Specialists from our local Music Hub and music teachers from The Broxbourne Secondary School to develop our curriculum. We

maintain close links with these as our Music lead teacher works as a flute teacher in both organisations.

In key stage 1 children are taught to use their voices musically through speaking chants and singing simple songs, many of which include actions. They are encouraged to pitch-match and children hear good-quality singing from teachers in lessons and older children in hymn practices and assemblies. In key stage 2 children extend their vocal range and begin exploring rounds and part-singing in greater depth and complexity.

In key stage 1 children are introduced to the names and playing techniques for classroom percussion instruments. They begin learning to play melodies with a limited pitch range on chime bars. They use instruments to accompany singing and choose instruments to make sound effects, sound pictures and other activities. In key stage 2 children begin playing recorder and ukulele in addition to percussion instruments and chime bars. They perform songs and melodies with and without recorded backing tracks and learn to accompany singing with ukulele chords. We are very lucky to have First Access recorder lessons for year 3 children, which are funded by Hertfordshire Music Service.

Listening is an important part of our musical learning journey. In key stage 1 children are taught to listen carefully and express their feelings about a wide variety of music (including classical and world music) through movement and words. They learn to listen for and respond to dynamics and tempo changes and discuss what they hear or imagine. They begin to recognise some orchestral instruments through watching video performances.

At present children in years 3 - 5 keep a listening log, which includes faces to indicate whether they liked or disliked each piece of music and a space to add observations, descriptive words or anything else they notice or imagine about the music. In key stage 2 children listen in greater depth and comment on features such as instrumentation, dynamics, repetition / structure, etc. They learn about the four instrumental families and the instruments which belong to them and begin to recognise them visually and aurally. We explore music from different times and cultures and learn to appreciate music in a diverse range of styles and genres. As the current year 4 class moves upwards, we have plans to extend the listening logs into other year groups, so weekly listening becomes a part of all music lessons.

In key stage 1 children choose and play instruments to make different sound effects. They accompany songs and compose their own simple patterns and melodies for chime bars. They notate their compositions using letters and colour to indicate pitches on templates. Key stage 2 children use body percussion and instruments to compose music in response to a wide variety of stimuli, which are often linked to their class topic. They learn how to compose melodies for chime bars, ukulele and learn how to improvise with confidence.

Key stage 1 children learn to read simple graphic notation and are introduced to traditional notation for rhythms. They begin to have an awareness of pitched notation and are encouraged to observe and ask questions about the notation for music they are singing. In key stage 2 children extend their knowledge of traditional rhythms and notations, which by upper key stage 2 will include an understanding of semiquavers, triplets and dotted notes, syncopation and compound time. They learn to aurally recognise and write down rhythm in dictation games. They improve their understanding of staff notation, learning how to “de-code” the music to perform melodies on chime bars, recorder and ukulele.

Children with SEND take part in music lessons in a way that suits each individual – their needs are considered and activities adapted to suit each child. Scaffolds with vocabulary or other support are available and 1:1 support can be available. We hold a weekly SEND singalong session for children who find curriculum music lessons overwhelming. In these sessions we sing action songs and dance to music. We have plans to extend these sessions to include playing instruments and exploring sounds at the level suitable for the children who attend. We have recently acquired funding which will allow us to extend the range of instruments available for these sessions. Our music lead teacher has attended some training and invested in resources to assist in improving our SEND musical provision.

Children in both key stages are given opportunities to perform during class lessons. Performances are often videoed to add to our music portfolio and some are shared on the school website. In the future, we are aiming to increase opportunities to perform outside the classroom and have plans to introduce regular music assemblies and a House Music Competition to the school calendar.

Part B: Extra-curricular music

This is about opportunities for pupils to sing and play music, outside of lesson time, including choirs, ensembles and bands, and how pupils can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

Our school offers instrumental tuition on flute. We refer children who wish to learn other instruments to Hertfordshire Music Hub, where a range of instruments is available. If numbers wishing for a specific instrument are sufficient for other peripatetic teachers to join us, we will request a teacher from Hertfordshire Music Hub. In these difficult financial times music lessons are sadly becoming a luxury that many cannot afford. We plan to advertise what is on offer and the benefits of music tuition to a greater number of children in the hope that numbers will increase. The local Music Hub also runs several Saturday ensembles and groups towards which we can refer children. We regularly refer children to free taster days such as the “Have a go Brass day”.

We have recently had a visit from RockSteady and a number of children have signed up for lessons to learn with the band.

As instrumental lessons are beyond the reach of many families, we offer a choir that is open to all children who wish to attend in years 4, 5 and 6. At present we have more than 40 children attending weekly rehearsals. In these sessions, children enjoy singing unison and part songs, extending their vocal range and exploring more challenging songs and music not always possible in classroom lesson time. They perform regularly in school hymn practices, masses and other events, and make a real impact on the community singing from the choir loft in our local church. At Christmas they sing Carols in the local shopping centre and in former years have visited local residential homes for the elderly. Now that covid restrictions are lifted, we plan to revive this tradition.

Now that ukulele in curriculum lessons has become a regular feature, many children have purchased their own instruments. To assist those who wish to learn more, we have plans to begin a ukulele club, which will run during lunchtimes and give children a chance to improve their skills and practice what they have learned at home.

During lunchtime, children who learn piano are given the opportunity to practice. They prepare for the termly Talent Show and share their performances with the rest of the school.

As we work towards our premier House Music Competition, we are forming plans about how instrumental tuition can be extended more widely within our school at a reduced cost for those who require it. If successful, this should lead to more children being enabled to learn to play an instrument outside of lesson time and then perform in our House Music Competition.

Part C: Musical experiences

This is about all the other musical events and opportunities that we organise, such as singing in assembly, concerts and shows, and trips to professional concerts.

Two of the highlights of our school calendar are the Nativity performance given annually by key stage 2 pupils and the Year 6 Production in the summer term. These events give opportunities for children to sing, dance and act on stage to an audience of the entire school and their parents. These events have long been enjoyed and looked forward to with anticipation.

We hold a termly Talent Show, for which children can audition with instrumental or vocal performances, individually or in groups.

Children sing weekly in hymn practices and during assembly and, as a Catholic school, in regular prayer services, masses and other events, both in school and in the local Church. The Choir leads singing in these events and often performs choir-only songs

to introduce other children to new songs or hymns and to perform songs which would be more challenging to teach to the entire school.

For the first time this year, the Academy Trust we belong to is holding a joint Carol Service, in which schools will come together for an exciting new event. This event will include songs, reading and reflections like the traditional Twelve Lessons and Carols. The music specialists within the separate schools may come together to perform instrumental pieces during the service. It may be possible to record or live-stream the event so all members of our community can enjoy it.

All our events are free to attend and can be enjoyed by parents, families and friends.

The Choir takes part in events such as the Royal Albert Hall Gala organised by Hertfordshire Music Hub and the charity fundraiser singing event organised by Barnardos. These events offer opportunities to perform with hundreds of other singers in iconic venues and to hear live music performed by Orchestras and Bands from other schools. They also sing at annual events such as the Mother's Day Tea and the School Fete.

We emphasize the importance of live music within school. We aim to have live piano accompaniment for performances whenever possible (instead of recorded backing tracks). Our Music lead teacher has a music performance degree on the flute, which features in many music lessons and in school events.

Whenever possible, we invite musicians to perform at our school, and sometimes have workshops, such as Steel pans run by outside musicians.

In the future

This is about what the school is planning for subsequent years.

We already fulfil many of the features of high-quality music provision, such as:

- Weekly curriculum music lessons for all classes in years 1-6, taught by a music specialist.
- A school choir.
- Termly performances.
- Live music within school.

We have been lucky enough to secure some funding to allow us to invest in new instruments to support the development of our music provision and will develop our curriculum to encompass these newly acquired instruments over the next academic year.

As part of our continuing efforts to improve our music provision for all children, this year we plan to:

- Advertise our instrumental tuition offer more widely and promote opportunities to access tuition on other instruments through the local Music Hub. Advertise RockSteady sessions and encourage children to participate in the sessions.
- Establish a House Music Competition, preparations for which will increase the number of children who can access musical tuition and learn a piece to perform in the competition. Opportunities to practice within school will also be addressed as part of this project.
- Apply for a music grant to purchase instruments to support students unable to afford instruments or lessons who wish to learn.
- Introduce more performance opportunities for children taking First Access and other lessons.
- Re-introduce regular music assemblies where children can perform for people outside their own class.
- Establish a new ukulele club for children who already own an instrument and wish to learn more.
- Encourage more musicians from our community to visit our school to perform and talk about their instruments.
- Begin delivering Arts Awards (with a music focus) to children in our school, resulting in an accredited certificate.
- Consider whether we can re-instate the annual Theatre Trip or another concert or event.

Further information (optional)

This year we are beginning a new Artsmark journey, which will encourage further improvements to our core music provision and drive us to introduce many new projects and events.

We believe music is a very important part of any child's education and do our best to provide suitable lessons and activities for all our children.

We are very excited about the improvements we have in view and the many new events we are planning to introduce to our school calendar and hope that these will prove successful and remain part of our school life for many years to come.