Music development plan summary: St Bernard's High

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Joyce Githu
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Elizabeth Bailey
Name of local music hub	Music on sea
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Essex Music Services

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.

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.

St Bernard's High School provides a broad and varied Music Curriculum for Key Stages 3 and 4. Music at Key Stage 3 comprises of one 100 minute lesson of music per fortnight, taught to point groups. There is an assessment at the end of each topic, with the assessment based on a performance, a composition, a test of knowledge or a combination of these. Students use keyboards and sing throughout the three years of Key Stage 3.

The following topics are studied at KS3

Year Group	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Year 7	Graphic score/elements of Music	Descriptive Music	Keyboard skills
	Instruments of the Orchestra	Notation	Music from China
Year 8	Caribbean Music	Reggae Music	The Blues
	African Music	Gamelan Music	Indian Music
Year 9	Medieval	Funk and Disco	Sibelius
	Minimalism	Pop Music	Musical Futures

Music at Key Stage 4 comprises of the Pearson Edexcel specification for our GCSE Music qualification. We are allocated three 100-minute lessons a fortnight to complete the curriculum. This curriculum consists of a study of 8 set works of varying different genres as well as a performance module and a composition module which are assessed as coursework earlier in Year 11. A link to the specification can be found here.

The Music Department follows the SEND policy for the whole school which can be found here. However, we assess the individual needs of students within our department and adjust these access supports as necessary to allow all students equitable access to our Music Curriculum.

The department also offers intervention sessions to GCSE students in preparation for composition and analysis of set works.

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.

We have a partnership with Essex Music Services who provide the majority of our peripatetic music staff. The visiting teachers offer the following instrumental lessons:

- piano
- voice
- guitar (bass guitar, electric)
- strings (violin)
- woodwind (clarinet, flute, saxophone)
- percussion (electric and acoustic drumkit)

Lessons are available in 15 minute sessions and students receive 10 lessons a term at an affordable fee. Pupil Premium students have lessons paid by the school.

Students have the opportunity to take graded exams with ABRSM, Trinity and Musical Theatre Singing Examinations with London College Music Examinations (LCME). In the current year we have 77 students taking music lessons of which 17 are paid for through the Pupil Premium, FSM or LAC Fund.

The school has a number of music groups which include two Rock bands, a school Orchestra, School Choir and Chamber Choir which students audition for.

The Music Department has 4 dedicated practice rooms as well as a recording studio. The Music classroom has 15 computers equip with music software for students to use for composition. It is also spacious enough to hold lunch-time performances and rehearsals for our various groups.

In addition, in line with the Catholic ethos of the school, KS3 and KS4 sing hymns during their weekly Year group assemblies with some assemblies dedicated to hymn practice.

Part C: Musical Performances

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.

The Music department have an active performance calendar and hold the following annual musical performances:

- Carol Concert
- Advent Service
- Summer Soiree

We also have a number of collaborations in which we perform. For instance, the Performing Arts Department come together to stage a whole school musical and a Performing Arts Showcase every two years. This year the school production has been put together in collaboration with students from St Thomas More. Advanced instrumentalists are invited to play in musical productions and ex-students are given the opportunity to perform with the orchestra or band.

The Chamber Choir are often asked to perform at musical events including the Festival of Female Voices and enter competitions including the Southend Music Festival. They have also performed at events sponsored by Southend Borough Council including Southend Makes Music and other local community events.

In the future

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

We look forward to enriching and developing vocal music within the school through gospel workshops and engaging more of the student body including KS5 students in musical performances.

We aim to grow the Orchestra by encouraging and promoting the uptake of instrumental lessons in Year 7 which will ultimately feed students into the Orchestra.

We are also keen to develop more curriculum collaboration and possible performance opportunities with our neighbouring schools.