



Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust

St John's Catholic School & Sixth Form College: Music Development Plan

This development plan has been created in line with the DfE's '[School music development plan: summary template](#)'. Schools can use this template to ensure that integral features of its music curriculum are met to help students receive a varied and enriching musical education, both inside and outside of the classroom. Schools are expected to publish a summary of the music development plan on their website for staff and students to read and understand.

This development plan considers the seven key features of high-quality music provision, as laid out in the national plan for music education:

- Timetabled curriculum music of at least one hour each week of the school year for KS1 to KS3.
- Access to lessons across a range of instruments, including singing.
- A school choir or vocal ensemble.
- A school ensemble, band or group.
- Space for rehearsals and individual practice.
- A termly school performance.
- Opportunities to enjoy live music performances, at least once a year.

Music Development Plan

General overview	
Details of music development plan	Information
Academic year that this development plan covers	2026-27
Date this development plan was published	
Date this development plan will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Rebecca Bell
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music	Matt Dunn
Name of local music hub	Durham Music Service (DMS)
Name of other music education organisations	

Vision and Overall Objectives

As *A Learning Community guided by Gospel Values*, St. John's aims to provide students with a broad and diverse range of musical opportunities, ensuring music has a positive and far-reaching impact on the lives of every student who walks through our doors. We recognise that music provides enjoyable and beneficial opportunities for students' personal, social and spiritual development and plays an active role in young people's lived experience.

Through our music provision, we aim to promote and celebrate diversity in music, empowering students to participate in performance opportunities, regardless of their identity, experience and background and to use music as a vehicle for self-expression. Through our Music curriculum, we want all students to gain the skills, knowledge and experiences to prepare them for further study, independent learning and to promote a love for music that will last a lifetime.

Students will study a wide variety of artists, genres and styles, ensuring they are guided towards key influential practitioners, whilst nurturing their own interests and tastes. We will provide students with a safe, inclusive and supportive environment, recognising what excellence looks like for different people, as well as a busy, diverse and active performing environment, ensuring students are continually stimulated, challenged and celebrated for their talents.

Within the next 10 years, we hope to develop St. John's into an outstanding provider of music education, offering our students high-quality teaching spaces and performance facilities, access to inspirational music tuition and a wealth of performance opportunities, working closely with local and national arts organisations, higher education institutions and the local community to make an impact beyond our walls and beyond students' time at St. John's.

Core Components

- One hour of curriculum music per week at Key Stage 3
- The opportunity to study Music at Key Stage 4, with a view to extending this to Key Stage 5 within the next two years
- A rigorous [curriculum](#), designed around musical progression, inclusivity and diversity
- Optional individual or small group instrumental/vocal tuition available to all students through Durham Music Service, subsidised by the school
- A rich extra-curricular programme with equal opportunities
- A programme of regular performance opportunities
- Continued development of music as part of whole-school liturgies and spiritual development
- Two dedicated Music teachers delivering the curriculum
- Two dedicated Music classrooms with IT facilities, a recording studio, two practice rooms and performance space
- Financial commitment to improving facilities, equipment and access to opportunities through a Performing Arts Fundraising programme
- Financial commitment to subsidising instrumental/vocal tuition for Pupil Premium students
- Collaboration and partnerships within the Trust and with local and national arts organisations, funding providers and educational institutions

Part A: Curriculum music				
Development Priority (questions to consider when identifying priorities)	Action Implementation Strategies	Outcomes	Responsibility & Costs	Date/ timescale
<i>Does the curriculum clarify how much time is allocated per week for music teaching across all key stages?</i> To ensure all students have the opportunity to study Music at Key Stages 3 and 4.	- All students study Music for one hour per week throughout Key Stage 3 - All students have the opportunity to continue to study Music at Key Stage 4. Those who do opt for Music receive 5 hours per fortnight of curriculum time, which is in line with other option subjects	All students have the opportunity to study Music at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 as part of a broad and balanced curriculum	SLT Head of Performing Arts: R Bell	On-going
<i>Has the music curriculum been adjusted to make it more accessible for students with specific needs, e.g. SEND?</i> To ensure the Music curriculum is accessible to all students, including those with specific needs, including SEND and EAL.	- The Music curriculum at St. John's has been designed to be inclusive, celebrate diversity and support all students, regardless of individual need - Resources and teaching & learning strategies are planned with the needs of all students in mind and adapted where necessary; Quality First Teaching is at the heart of all lessons - Musical Literacy is a key focus of our curriculum, ensuring all students are supported to use and understand musical language and read Western notation. Each year, students are provided with Musical Literacy sheets containing the key terminology and musical notation required for the school year, which aid students in independent learning - The curriculum and related resources are reviewed annually by Music staff	- All students are able to participate and make progress in their Music curriculum lessons - All students are able to play an instrument and sing, progressing at a bespoke pace throughout all key stages	SLT Performing Arts faculty: R Bell (HOD) A Liddle (Music & Drama teacher)	On-going
<i>What qualifications and awards can students study for and achieve during the</i>	At Key Stage 4, students study the Eduqas GCSE in Music. More details can be found here . This qualification has been chosen due to its suitability for our students, however this will be reviewed annually to ensure it	Students achieve excellent results at Key Stage 4. In 2024, 94% of students achieved grades 9-4, with 50% of	R Bell	On-going

<i>academic year?</i> To ensure students study an appropriate and worthwhile qualification at KS4. To ensure students have access to other Music qualifications that will enhance their experience and future opportunities.	remains the best option for our students In 2026-7, we will be working towards offering the Trinity Arts Award qualification, to give students who do not study Music at KS4 or KS5 an opportunity to gain a nationally recognised qualification. Students who are having instrumental lessons are encouraged to take graded performance exams.	students achieving the top 9-7 grades and in 2025, 100% of students achieved grades 9-4, with 75% of students achieving above their target grade. Students have additional qualifications in performance and arts participation which will benefit them in college and university applications, CVs and in enrichment.		
<i>Is the music curriculum informed by the model music curriculum or any other non-statutory guidance for teaching music?</i> To ensure students make musical progression in line with government and exam board expectations.	The Music curriculum at Key Stage 3 is informed by the Model Music Curriculum, ensuring students are performing in line with government expectations. We have also planned the curriculum content in line with the Eduqas GCSE Music qualification.	Students are fully prepared for musical learning beyond the classroom, as well as being prepared for Level 2 and Level 3 programmes of study.	R Bell	On-going
<i>What opportunities do students have to learn to sing or play an instrument during lesson times?</i> To ensure students have the opportunity for practical musicianship, including singing and playing an instrument, during curriculum lessons.	• All students are expected to achieve a practical outcome, either singing or playing an instrument, in every scheme of work throughout the Music curriculum, alongside the other core skills of listening and appraising, and composition • Singing is embedded into each scheme of work, whether as a practical outcome, or teaching & learning method to improve aural skills, ensemble skills or general musicianship • Students explore a range of instruments during curriculum time, including pitched and unpitched percussion, ukulele and keyboard, with keyboard being the primary focus for musical progression	• All students develop their practical and general musicianship, both as soloists and ensemble performers, through singing and instrumental performance • All students finished Key Stage 3 with the skills to play the keyboard and sing, therefore ensuring they can access the Key Stage 4 Music curriculum	R Bell A Liddle	On-going

	We aim for every lesson to include either singing or instrumental practice outside of written assessment and evaluation lessons	should they wish to		
<i>What partnerships support the school's music curriculum, e.g. a local music hub?</i> To work in partnership with the local music hub and other arts organisations and individuals to support our Music curriculum.	- Key Stage 4 students access instrumental/vocal tuition through Durhan Music Service (DMS) or through independent teachers. Music staff work closely with tutors to ensure students meet the performance requirements for GCSE Music - We try to ensure as many students as possible can access workshop opportunities to support their curriculum skills and knowledge. Workshop opportunities are frequently provided through our partnerships with local arts organisations, higher education institutions and venues.	- Students are well supported to succeed in the performance element of their GCSE exam - Students gain access to the expertise of specialist musicians in order to develop specific skills, for example, choral singing or sound design	R Bell A Liddle	On-going
Part B: Extra-curricular music				
Development Priority (questions to consider when identifying priorities)	Action Implementation Strategies	Outcomes	Responsibility and costs	Date/ timescale
<i>What music tuition offered outside of what is taught in lesson time?</i> To ensure all students are offered the opportunity of instrumental/vocal tuition outside of curriculum time.	St. John's will continue to use DMS as its main provider of high-quality, affordable instrumental/vocal tuition outside of curriculum time and St. John's Music staff will provide additional provision, where timetabling and staffing capacity allows. We are committed to ensuring students have access to as broad a range of instrumental lessons as possible in order to cater for all students' interests and abilities. In 2026-27 we will offer tuition across string, woodwind, brass, drum kit, guitar, voice and keyboard. Students will receive one-to-one or small group tuition, ensuring highly personalised learning	- We hope for the number of students receiving instrumental tuition to continue to grow - Musical tuition will support students' musical growth both inside and outside of the Music curriculum - Students receiving tuition should feel empowered to progress in their musical journey, whether	SLT School has committed to £10,230 SLA with DMS for the 2026-27 academic year	On-going

	Extra-curricular clubs will offer full group opportunities to develop instrumental skills	that be through performance opportunities or studying Music at Key Stage 4, Key Stage 5 or post 18.		
<i>What music ensembles can students join outside of lesson time?</i> To provide students with a diverse range of extra-curricular ensembles.	- In the 2025-26 academic year, our Performing Arts Faculty offered students the opportunity to participate in the following ensembles: choir, orchestra, handchime ensemble (Years 10-13), MADD (Music, Art, Drama, Dance - school production), chamber choir and Sixth Form Theatre Company. We plan on providing a similar provision in the next academic year. - In the 2025-26 academic year, our Performing Arts Faculty offered all students the opportunity to participate in the following clubs: karaoke club and project ensemble. We plan on providing a similar provision in the next academic year. - Participation in extra-curricular ensembles and opportunities to perform at in-school events will be offered free of charge and students are regularly signposted towards opportunities to join these ensembles by their Music teachers during curriculum lessons, through posters and on PREP slides	- We hope to increase participation in music-making across the school - We hope to increase the number of students participating in school performances	R Bell A Liddle N Rose (AHT)	On-going
<i>Are students aware of what music qualifications and awards they can receive outside of lesson time?</i> To ensure students have the option to gain additional music qualifications.	- We will work with our instrumental/vocal tutors to ensure students are offered the opportunity to work towards graded performance exams. These include ABRSM, Trinity and Rock School qualifications - Students who commit to taking these exams will be rewarded through ClassCharts and recognised on social media	We hope to have an increasing number of students interested in completing additional music qualifications and hope this increases our students' chances of gaining university places as UCAS points are attached to these qualifications at Grade 6+	R Bell A Liddle DMS Exam entry costs variable	On-going

<i>What instruments are offered for extra-curricular activities, and what is the charging and remissions information for this?</i> To ensure students have access to a wide range of instruments to ensure they can access extra-curricular clubs and instrumental tuition.	- Where students do not already own or hire their own instruments, we will provide instruments/equipment for in-school music-making where appropriate, including keyboards, pianos, guitars, drum kits, Trumpets, glockenspiels, djembes, ukuleles, hand chimes, boomwhackers, microphones and amplifiers - DMS offer instrumental hire at a reasonable cost. Pupil Premium students are eligible to receive free instrumental hire through our PP fund - Our Performing Arts Faculty are committed to maintaining and adding to our musical equipment through our departmental budget and Performing Arts Fundraising budget	Access to instruments should not be a barrier to accessing musical tuition or extra-curricular opportunities	L Byron D Athey (PP Lead) R Bell A Liddle	On-going
<i>Where can students rehearse or practice individually or as part of a group?</i> To ensure students have access to high quality rehearsal spaces.	- St. John's has two dedicated practice rooms, which both contain instrument storage and acoustic pianos. We also have a Music Studio, which offers a space to rehearse band instruments such as electric, acoustic and bass guitar, electric and acoustic drum kit - The Music classrooms and Main Hall are also available for students to practise in larger groups and include access to a grand piano, a further 4 acoustic pianos, two digital pianos and an electric organ. Music stands are also provided - St. John's have been successful in securing £80,000 of funding from the Wolfson Foundation to refurbish the Performing Arts Department. As a school, we and the Trust are also committing £10,000 towards the project so that, from September 2026, both Music classrooms will have IT facilities and new keyboards; the Music Studio will have up-to-date hardware and the Main Hall will be completely renovated to include a new sound and lighting system, a new stage and new theatrical curtains. Once refurbished, we hope	Any student who wishes to practise their instrument in their own time has the facilities to do so with permission from Music staff, ensuring students can develop their skills independently	R Bell A Liddle Lisa Byron £80,000 from the Wolfson Foundation and £10,000 from school/the Trust has been committed for refurbishment of the Music Studio, Music classrooms and the Main Hall	On-going Studio, classroom and Main Hall refurbishment to be completed in 2026

	these spaces will give students the opportunity to practise skills in music technology, such as DJing, mixing and production, as well as providing Performing Arts students with an improved experience in terms of lighting and sound equipment • Our Performing Arts Faculty are committed to maintaining and improving our rehearsal spaces through our departmental budget and Performing Arts Fundraising budget			
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Part C: Musical experiences

Development Priority (questions to consider when identifying priorities)	Action Implementation Strategies	Outcomes	Responsibility and costs	Date/ timescale
<i>What musical experiences are planned for the academic year?</i> To ensure students experience a wide range of aspirational musical opportunities across the academic year.	• Students will experience music-making and musical learning as part of the KS3 curriculum • All students will be aware of the opportunity to learn an instrument through DMS/school-led tuition • All students are invited to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs during lunchtime and after school • Students receiving musical tuition and those attending extra-curricular clubs will have the opportunity to perform as part of a regular programme of performances (liturgies, Christmas Celebration, Jaquie Holloway Prize for Performing Arts, school production, summer lunchtime concerts) and one-off workshop and performance opportunities both in school and in the local community • We will continue to work with local arts organisations and education partners, such as Durham Gala Theatre, Daisy Arts, Durham	• We will maximise cultural capital for our students, with students experiencing a wide diversity of performance styles and genres • Students will gain valuable experience and opportunities to develop their own musicianship and ensemble skills, as well as building their confidence as performers by providing them with a range of audiences of different size and makeup • We will raise aspirations for our students musically, by exposing them to music in higher education and	R Bell A Liddle Educational visit costs for transport; use of PP fund	On-going

	University and Choristers School to provide students with opportunities to work with and listen to musicians outside of St. John's, as well as seeking out opportunities to be involved in national programmes, such as ENO • All students will experience the opportunity to listen to and participate in music performance, especially singing, through collective worship and liturgies • Students will have the opportunity to watch professional performances through a regular programme of trips to theatrical productions and concerts, with supplementary workshop opportunities taken advantage of where available	professional settings		
<i>How can students get involved with musical performances and concerts in and outside of the school?</i> To ensure every student has the opportunity to be involved in musical performances and concerts both inside and outside of school.	• We will provide a wide variety of extra-curricular music clubs, which are open to students from all year groups of any musical experience. We will also run clubs for students with more developed, specialised skills. Members of these clubs will be invited to perform in our regular Christmas celebration, liturgies, Jaquie Holloway Prize for Performing Arts and school production, summer lunchtime concerts as well as any other performance opportunities as they present themselves, both inside and outside of school • All students will have the opportunity to audition for our annual Performing Arts Prize • We will signpost students towards performance opportunities outside of school, such as those provided by DMS and local/national arts organisations by use of displays, social media and communication through ClassCharts	• There will be opportunities for students from a diverse range of musical backgrounds to perform throughout the school year, both inside and outside of school		Events planned throughout the academic year
<i>What charging fees are there for these musical experiences?</i> To ensure all students have access to music-making free	• To use DMS as our main provider of instrumental tuition, as they offer affordable lessons at a cost of £72 per term (2025-6); this has been subsidised by St. John's. Where lessons are provided by St. John's staff, the cost will be £25 per half term. This money	• There should be no financial barriers to students learning an instrument or attending extra-		On-going

of charge and, where there is a cost, to make opportunities as affordable as possible to ensure finance is not a barrier to musical experience.	will contribute to our Performing Arts Fundraising budget, which is used to provide musical equipment and opportunities for our students. Pupil Premium students are entitled to request free tuition from our PP fund. • Attendance at extra-curricular clubs and opportunities to perform at in-school events will be offered at no additional charge • For musical opportunities and trips that involve an external provider and associated costs, St. John's will do all it can to keep costs to a minimum, including seeking external funding and subsidising opportunities from our Performing Arts Fundraising budget. Pupil Premium students are entitled to request financial assistance with trips from our PP fund • The Performing Arts Faculty remains committed to maintaining a fundraising budget, supplemented by income from school performances, fundraising activities and instrumental tuition. They will also work with partner organisations to seek out free workshop and performance opportunities, as well as applying for funding opportunities when they present themselves	curricular opportunities.		
<i>What does transition work look like with local primary schools?</i> To improve and strengthen links with local primary schools to ensure there is musical progression for students as they transition from primary to secondary education.	• Transition co-ordinator and HOD to liaise with feeder schools to identify which students are having instrumental lessons and which are members of their extra-curricular ensembles • HoD will communicate strategically with DMS Local Area Manager to keep informed of local provision at Primary level, especially at our feeder schools • We will continue to offer St. John's as a venue for DMS "stars" ensembles. We currently host "String Stars" • Music will be well-represented at our primary open	• We will have a better understanding of students' musical experiences before attending St. John's and can target students to continue with instrumental tuition and attendance at extra-curricular ensembles • St. John's will become a familiar hub for music making within the Bishop	R Bell L Wilkinson (AHT – Transition) DMS Local Area Manager, Dr. Fiona Glover A Liddle	On-going

	evening, ensuring prospective students and their parents/carers are aware of the musical opportunities on offer at St. John's • Students will be signposted to the musical opportunities on offer at St. John's during Year 5 taster days and Year 6 transition days, as well as having the opportunity to watch current students performing and participate in Music lessons • Through displays and social media, the Performing Arts faculty will keep the wider community informed of musical activities, including performance and trips taking place at St. John's • In 2026-7, ALI will go into primaries to offer support with their musical activities	Auckland area, ensuring young musicians are familiar with the school and the faculty • Prospective students and parents/carers will be well-informed of the musical opportunities available at St. John's and how students can participate, especially those who are having instrumental lessons at primary, to ensure a smooth transition of musical tuition		
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Part D: Improvements

Development Priority (questions to consider when identifying priorities)	Action Implementation Strategies	Outcomes	Responsibility and costs	Date/ timescale
What improvements can be made to the music curriculum?	To improve outcomes at Key Stage 4, we will: • Review the schemes of work currently being used to ensure students complete the course in a timely manner, as well as having adequate time to revise all areas of study before the summer exams • Maintain high expectations for independent learning through regular homework tasks • Ensure intervention is meaningful and impactful in Years 10 and 11 To improve outcomes at Key Stage 3, we will: • Continually review curriculum content, resources and teaching and learning strategies	• Students should make better progress and achieve better outcomes at Key Stage 3 and 4 • Students with an interest and engagement in Music Technology may be more likely to opt for Music at KS4 and KS5 • Students will be more likely to study Music in higher education	R Bell L Byron	On-going Provide a Key Stage 5 Music course within the next 2 years.

	• Embed regular homework into the curriculum to encourage students to participate in independent learning We currently do not offer a Key Stage 5 Music course. We look to be able to do this within the next 2 years. With access to new IT facilities, we will spend the next academic year trialling the best ways of using music technology to enhance the curriculum at KS3 and 4 and improve outcomes for students.			
What improvements can be made to extra-curricular music provision?	• Increased monitoring of who is accessing our extra-curricular provision • We will be welcoming back Applause Theatre School to St. John's in September	• Staff will be better informed of barriers to accessing our extra-curricular opportunities and therefore be able to address any issues • Hosting an external theatre school will give further opportunities to our vocal students and promote St. John's as a centre for Performing Arts in the local area	R Bell A Liddle	On-going throughout the academic year
What improvements can be made to external musical experiences?	• To offer more opportunities to experience live music events to students outside of KS4 • To improve links with higher education institutions in order to make students more aware of further study and aspire to study Music beyond Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5	• We hope to increase the number of students studying music at Key Stage 4, with a view to introducing a Music course at Key Stage 5	R Bell	Within the next two years.