

Music development plan summary: The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College

Faculty of Performing Arts

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026 - 2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Becki Jankinson
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Helen Buttery
Name of local music hub	Swindon Music Service, GSW Music Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	

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.

- Students in Key Stage 3 receive two music lessons over the course of a fortnight. All music lessons from Year 7-13 are delivered by subject specialists
- All music lessons are delivered in music specialist classrooms. We have two fully resourced mac suites with 49 key MIDI keyboards. Students use Garage Band for composition and production in Years 7-9, and both Sibelius (for notation) and Logic (for sequencing/production) in Years 10-13
- Students have access to a suite of practice rooms which contain a mixture of macs for music composition and recording, acoustic and electric pianos, and full drum kits

- We have a recording studio with a higher spec mac used for recording exam evidence. We also have a well resourced set of equipment including drum mics, vocal mics, USB mics, amps and all related cabling
- We also have bookable spaces for students to use to rehearse and develop their skills
- We have several DJ decks which enable students interested in this aspect of music to develop their skills. DJ training is offered by a visiting professional during both extra-curricular activities and curriculum time for exam groups
- Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is delivered through the core threads of Composing, Performing and Listening/Appraising. This is influenced by the model music curriculum but also ensures that students are prepared for both GCSE and Level 3 courses
- We cover a new topic every term in KS3 and each topic follows a similar structure. We begin with listening/appraising activities to identify the key features of specific styles, understanding their evolution and cultural significance. We then move on to developing practical skills, applying what has been learned, and then the final piece is performed for assessment
- The KS3 Music curriculum ensures students are exposed to a wide range of musical styles, from Classical to Modern. The curriculum has been adapted in response to the publication of the model music curriculum, for example, introducing a topic on British Anthems in Year 9
- Students learn how to work both individually and with others in music. There are a variety of tasks that require the development of individual skills such as notation reading and keyboard work, paired tasks such as composition of film music and group work such as producing and performing a soundscape in Year 7. The variety of tasks allows all students to have the opportunity to develop their skills and their confidence working with others and preparing for a performance
- The music curriculum at KS3 is outlined below:

Year 7				
Making Music	Keyboard Skills	Soundscapes	Japanese Music	Final Project – Cover Songs
Year 8				
Being Beethoven	The Blues	Rap Music	The Music Industry	Final Project – Musicals
Year 9				
Film Music – Composition	Film Music – Performance	World Music	British Anthems	Final Project - Songwriting

- Students in KS3 focus on developing their keyboard skills – all learn how to read notation and apply this learning on the keyboards. They also learn how to play chords and use them in both composition and performance

- Students also have access to a range of other acoustic and electric instruments. For example, using Ukeleles during Year 7 and Guitars and Drum-kits for songwriting in Year 9
- We offer GCSE Music in Key Stage 4 (AQA), and students receive 5 1-hour lessons across a fortnight. These lessons are assigned to different aspects of the course. 2 lessons a fortnight cover history/theory content to prepare students for the written listening exam, 2 lessons cover composition skills and NEA composition coursework completion and 1 lesson a fortnight developing practical skills for the performing unit
- We offer BTec Extended Certificate in Music Performance in the sixth form (R6), and A Level Music (AQA) dependent on the skills and interests of the cohort. This decision is reviewed yearly based on achieving the best outcome for the musicians entering the sixth form
- Sixth form students receive 10 hours of teaching across a fortnight and these lessons are assigned to specific aspects of the course
- We work in collaboration with the Performing Arts department to also offer BTec Performing Arts qualifications at both Level 2 (Tech Award) and Level 3 (Extended Certificate in Performing Arts)
- As part of curriculum time, students can choose music/performing arts enrichment where they learn vocal technique, harmony singing, and performance skills. These enrichment sessions attract huge numbers of students across years 7-10
- As an addition to curriculum time, we offer coursework support and intervention every week after school. This is open to all exam group students and they receive 1:1 support from members of the team. The school run a late bus service which all students can access which enables .
- Implementation of shared curriculum across the White Horse Federation ensuring content-rich topics which develop both theoretical understand and practical skills in equal measure
- Year-on-year reflection on topics covered ensuring a diverse range of music is covered which appreciates the continual evolution of music

Part B: Co-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.

- Access to resources is available for all students. We work in partnership with the Swindon Music Co-Operative who provide all of our peripatetic teachers. All students are informed of the opportunity to have instrumental or vocal lessons either individually

or as a small group. This is communicated to all parents of incoming Year 7 students via the welcome pack and also at the beginning of the academic year to students in all year groups

- Peri lessons are offered on a huge range of instruments and vocals. These lessons are carried out throughout the school day in the practice rooms of the music department. PP funding is used to provide PP students with instrumental 1:1 lessons if they are studying GCSE or Level 3 music
- We have a thriving and popular co-curricular programme offered alongside the Drama and Performing Arts teams
- KS3 students are able to attend open rehearsal nights, music tech club, stage academy and wind band
- KS4 and sixth form students are able to attend all of the above, plus coursework support and supported rehearsal time as part of preparing for performance units in exam courses
- We have a Wind Band which rehearses weekly and is open to all wind players. The group focus on technique, tuning and working together as part of an acoustic ensemble and they perform at both the Christmas and Spring events
- We run a weekly Stage Academy which attracts around 180 committed students every week.
- Our co-curricular programme is open to all students. As part of the weekly curriculum, students take part in enrichment and the student numbers for music and performing arts activities are significant.
- Disadvantaged students are supported in their involvement in activities and performances by the provision of their costumes and funding their tickets for trips, along with the loan of instruments and other equipment such as headphones

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.

- We carry out 4 major performances across the academic year as outlined below:
 1. Remembrance Concert. November. This concert is performed in collaboration with the Wroughton Silver Band (local brass band), and the Wroughton Junior School. It is an evening of performance work dedicated to Remembrance events and all money raised is donated to the Help for Heroes and Poppy Appeal. This is a sell-out community event every year
 2. Christmas Showcase. December. This showcase is performed across 3 nights and sells out every year. It involves around 180-200 students consistently and showcases choirs, wind band, rock bands and musical theatre pieces. Students from all year groups are involved

3. Spring Concert. March. This event is more for solo and small group performances and gives students the opportunities to share their instrumental and vocal skills. Students from all year groups perform
4. Summer Production. July. The summer production is a fully licensed production performed on a large scale with live orchestral accompaniment. It is produced as part of the performing arts offering and includes around 150 students across all year groups. 4 nights of performance always sell out.
- We offer trips to music performances as and when the opportunities arise. In 2025 we took all KS4 and sixth form music students to the Royal Festival Hall in London for the London Philharmonic Schools Event. For many students this was the first time they had seen a live orchestra and for GCSE students it was particularly useful as it contained a performance and analysis of Beethoven's 1st Symphony which was the set work for GCSE in 2025
 - In the summer term of 2026 we hosted a summer festival which showcased the music, drama and performing arts skills of students across all year groups. This event will be open to all stakeholders and future families
 - In July 2026 we took 78 students on tour to Paris. This tour included two performances – one in a central park in Paris, and the other on the community stage at Disneyland Paris. We had to audition for the right to take part in this performance and the feedback received from the Disney team was overwhelmingly positive
 - We have a close relationship with the Wroughton Silver Band who not only work in collaboration with us to perform the Remembrance Concert in November, but also provide live carols during break time in the run up to Christmas. This informal event attracts a huge number of students, singing Christmas Carols and listening to live musicians that they may not otherwise have access to. Members of the band also give their time to play in the pit band for our summer show
 - We work closely with a visiting DJ teacher who also works with students in music tech club and has supported our delivery of the DJing aspect of the GCSE course. This visiting tutor also supports open evenings, options evening and all productions
 - We work closely with a local sound and lighting expert who supports all of our productions, ensuring our events have professional levels of technical excellence and giving students a taste of professional working standards
 - We have a pool of alumni students who are working professionally in the industry who return to deliver training, workshops and/or guidance to students in how to audition successfully, routes to follow and an insight into the life of a professional in the current climate

In the future

- More collaboration with other White Horse schools on trips to enable more live performance experiences for students
- Year on year updating of the music curriculum – reflecting on exam success and needs for development and addressing throughout the curriculum
- Implementation of shared curriculum and assessments – working in collaboration with White Horse schools to ensure consistency
- More uptake on instrumental/vocal lessons – consider new ways of introducing parents and students to the huge amount of opportunities on offer at The Ridgeway