



TOTTINGTON
HIGH SCHOOL

Music Development Plan



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Overview

Key information regarding Music at THS:

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	Jan 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mrs Caitlin Willowley (Director of Creative Faculty)
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr John Atkinson (Assistant Headteacher)
Name of local music hub	Bury Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	

Part A: Music Curriculum

This section addresses the content taught during lesson time, the duration dedicated to music lessons, and the music qualifications or awards that students can attain. An overview of the music curriculum, known as the Learning Journey, can be found on the Tottington High School website ([Music | Tottington High School](#)). This is supported by detailed Schemes of Learning for each individual topic covering the skills and knowledge learned by students in each half term from Year 7-11.

Within the music curriculum, the golden threads of performing, composing and listening and appraising are intricately woven throughout. The curriculum aims to ensure students receive a broad and balanced musical diet incorporating music from a variety of different genres including traditional music, world music, classical music and popular music. Within the curriculum there is an emphasis on ensuring there is a breadth of knowledge covered and that the golden threads of performing, composing and listening are continually developed.

Through our music curriculum, we provide learning opportunities that encompass the school's Vision and Values:

Kindness

- Providing learning opportunities for pupils to work in pairs, small groups, and as a whole class, as well as using discussion activities, allowing for pupils to help and support one another.
- Providing opportunities for performance and critical listening in which pupils give feedback in a kind and constructive manner.

Enthusiasm

- Giving pupils the tools to develop their musicianship and overcome the musical challenges they face.
- Having extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their musical learning outside of the classroom.

Excellence

- Giving pupils varied opportunities to perform in the classroom, to the school, and within the local community.
- Providing challenge within the curriculum to build their aspirations of becoming master musicians and regular teacher modelling of musical mastery.
- Developing pupils' understanding and use of musical terminology and tier 3 vocabulary so that they can 'speak like a musician' developing oracy skills during structured listening and feedback to practical music making.

KS3 Curriculum Overview

Year 7		
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Baseline What do we already know as musicians? Find Your Voice How do we build ensemble performance skills and knowledge of pitch, rhythm, and timing through whole class singing?	Instrumental Skills How do we build ensemble and instrumental skills and knowledge of chords?	Keyboard Skills 2 (cont.) How do we build more performance skills and understanding of notation through the keyboard?
Keyboard Skills How do we build performance skills and understanding of notation through the keyboard?	Keyboard Skills 2 How do we build more performance skills and understanding of notation through the keyboard?	Ukulele Skills How do we build performance and ensembles skills and instrument-specific techniques through the ukulele?
Year 8		
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Music of the World How are rhythms, scales, and melodies used around the world?	Ground Bass How do we develop performance skills and understanding of notation through the keyboard?	The Blues (cont.) How do we develop ensemble skills, understanding of notation, chords, layers, and how music is linked to social issues through Blues music?
	The Blues How do we develop ensemble skills, understanding of notation, chords, layers, and how music is linked to social issues through Blues music?	Four Chords How do we develop ensemble and instrumental skills using a four-chord sequence common in popular music?

Year 9		
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Film Music How do we use composing techniques to create soundtracks for a film scene?	Britpop How can we extend our performance skills and understanding of TAB notation, chords, and the development of Britpop and its cultural context?	Songwriting (cont.) How do we extend knowledge of composition through writing a protest song?
Instrumental Skills How do we perform 'How to Save a Life' by the Fray on keyboards and ukuleles?	Songwriting How do we extend knowledge of composition through writing a protest song?	In at the Deep End How do we further extend our performance skills by creating a performance of our own choice using the musical knowledge and skills we have built up since year 7?

Our aim in music is to produce independent learners; musicians in any medium who have the confidence to engage with any musical discipline at any future stage in their lives; to make pupils life-long musical learners.

At Tottington High School we musically engage pupils and guide them to acquire their musical knowledge and skills in year 7, then build upon and develop these in year 8 and extend then these in year 9. For pupils who opt to study Music beyond key stage three, we further extend and consolidate pupils' skills, understanding, and musicianship to make them the best musicians they can be.

The Music curriculum is designed as a spiral curriculum, encompassing the development of creativity whilst introducing students to progressively more challenging musical concepts when revisiting skills and knowledge.

*By the End of **Year 7**, pupils will be able to:*

- play and perform confidently in a range of solo and ensemble contexts using their voice, playing keyboards and ukuleles fluently, and with accuracy.
- use staff and other relevant notations appropriately to inform their performances.
- identify and use the interrelated dimensions of music.
- listen to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians.
- develop an understanding of the music that they perform and to which they listen, and its history.

*By the End of **Year 8**, pupils will be able to:*

- play and perform confidently in a range of solo and ensemble contexts using their voice, playing instruments musically, fluently, and with accuracy.
- improvise and compose, extending and developing musical ideas by drawing on a given range of musical structures, styles, genres, and traditions.
- use staff and other relevant notations appropriately and accurately in a range of musical styles, genres, and traditions to inform their performances.
- identify and use the interrelated dimensions of music expressively and with increasing sophistication using different types of scales and other musical devices.
- listen with increasing accuracy to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians.
- develop a deepening understanding of the music that they perform and to which they listen, and its history.

*By the End of **Year 9**, pupils will:*

- play and perform confidently in a range of solo and ensemble contexts using their voice, playing instruments musically, fluently and with accuracy and expression
- compose, extending and developing musical ideas by drawing on a range of musical structures, styles, genres, and traditions.
- use staff and other relevant notations appropriately and accurately in a range of musical styles, genres, and traditions to inform their performances.
- identify and use the interrelated dimensions of music expressively and with increasing sophistication, including use of tonalities, different types of scales and other musical devices.
- listen with increasing discrimination to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians.
- develop a broad and deep understanding of the music that they perform and to which they listen, and its history.

Singing is intertwined into many schemes of work throughout Key Stage Three and is a fundamental skill for improving confidence, developing musicianship, and developing understanding of internalised pitch and rhythm.

KS4 Music Qualifications

Eduqas Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Performing Arts		
The Vocational Award in Performing Arts has been designed to support learners in schools who want to learn about this vocational sector and the potential it can offer them for their careers or further study. It is most suitable as a foundation for further study. This further study would provide learners with the opportunity to develop a range of specialist and general skills that would support their progression to employment.		
Unit 1 – Performing	Unit 2 – Creating	Unit 3 – Performing Arts in Practice
Year 10	Year 10	Year 11
Unit 1 enables learners to gain a holistic knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to reproduce an existing piece(s) of professional/published work. Unit 1 requires learners to: ➤ Research and Rehearse ➤ Perform ➤ Review and Reflect	Unit 2 enables learners to gain, develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to create and refine original work in the performing arts. Learners will be required to create their own piece music in response to a brief set by the exam board. Unit 2 requires learners to: ➤ Explore and Develop ➤ Apply their knowledge and skills to create original work. ➤ Review, Reflect, and Refine.	Pupils are given the opportunity to plan and create various pieces of work by responding to industry commissions. They will work to a brief commissioned by an arts organisation to plan a performance. In order for artists to be successful in securing paid commissions, they will need to have a good understanding of the business and management sector of the performing arts industry. Unit 3 requires learners to: ➤ Plan performance work ➤ Promote and pitch ideas ➤ Evaluate and Reflect

Time Allocation

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
1 x 60-minute lesson per week	1 x 60-minute lesson per week	1 x 60-minute lesson per week	3 x 60-minute lessons per week	3 x 60-minute lessons per week

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

At Tottington High School, a commitment to inclusion and equity is integral to the curriculum. At every opportunity we aim to raise awareness of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) with both staff and students in order to foster a shared understanding and acceptance of diversity within our school. Quality First Teaching (QFT) is the first step in responding to students who may have SEND at Tottington High School. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all students in their class, including where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. QFT is achieved through appropriately adapted learning activities and/or teaching strategies which carefully consider the individual learning needs of every student. It is imperative that every student has access to the music curriculum and attains successful outcomes. However, it is recognised that certain students may require additional, often temporary, scaffolded approaches and reasonable adjustments to reach these outcomes. Music staff at THS take pride in knowing their pupils and in making use of their I Know My Class documents to ensure individual students' needs are met. The inclusive ethos within the music department and the ongoing encouragement and support of SEND students is evidenced by the large number of students with SEND opting to study music at GCSE level, including those with various complex needs and EHCPs.

Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds – Pupil Premium (PP)

At Tottington High School, the music department is not only a thriving, busy place where evidence of music-making can be found almost constantly, it is most importantly a place of belonging. The determination to provide a safe space for students to develop creatively and as musicians is integral to our philosophy. This is particularly evident in the inclusion and encouragement of Pupil Premium (PP) students. Large numbers of PP students attend one or more of the musical extracurricular clubs. This focus on PP students can also be found within the curriculum which is designed to engage, stretch and challenge all students and close the gap for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

As a faculty we are incredibly proud of our cultural capital offer which benefits all pupils, including PP. Opportunities are mapped around the curriculum to support the content and to provide context. Pupils develop a better understanding when they can experience and be inspired by live Music. This in turn allows pupils to engage more and be inquisitive surrounding their learning.

- Music teachers regularly perform within lessons to allow students to see what mastery musicianship looks like.

- Extra-curricular activities are open to all pupils at Tottington. These clubs will often lead to performance opportunities.
- Throughout the year, working alongside drama, we offer trips and performance opportunities to increase pupil engagement.

Part B: Extra-Curricular Opportunities

This section addresses the opportunity pupils at Tottington High School have to play and create music outside of lesson time. At THS, students have access to a number of opportunities to create, play and perform music both as soloists and as part of musical ensembles. The activities on offer are designed to not only engage and excite our students but give them valuable opportunities to make progress as musicians beyond the core curriculum. Our extracurricular opportunities also form a major part of our philosophy to produce life-long music learners and musicians.

Instrumental Groups and Clubs

Rock Skool

At Rock Skool, pupils have the opportunity to play the instruments and songs of their choice. Open to any and all pupils, this extra-curricular club encourages pupils to be independent in their music-learning and to further extend skills developed throughout the curriculum. These include subject-specific skills like reading notation and performing in time with an ensemble, as well as wider transferrable skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, resilience, and critical thinking. By learning an individual part to a song and then coming together with their peers to perform as an ensemble, members of Rock Skool can experience playing their favourite pieces of music, on their favourite instrument, or can begin to acquire skills on an entirely new instrument.

Through Rock Skool, pupils have the opportunity to perform live at our Arts Open Evenings and at THS's annual Showcase. In addition, pupils from Rock Skool have the opportunity to participate in Greater Manchester's 'Battle of the Bands' in collaboration with Bury Music Service.

THS Choir

THS Choir is available to all pupils, KS3 and KS4 alike, who wish to sing as part of an ensemble. As part of the choir, pupils further develop their confidence and a sense of belonging, therefore extending skills developed throughout the curriculum.

Pupils have the opportunity to perform with the choir at our community Christmas carol service as well as at our Arts Showcase.

School Musical

Through collaboration with the Drama department, pupils from year 7-10 have the opportunity to join the cast and/or crew of THS's annual school musical following an audition. All pupils whom audition are invited to join the ensemble of the musical, with named parts going to successful auditionees. The school musical rehearses twice a week

and provides pupils with the opportunity to sing as part of an ensemble. Combined with skills learned in Drama and PE, the school musical expands on year 7's singing curriculum and allows pupils to extend their skills in acting and dancing as well. The school musical offers live performance opportunities for all involved pupils.

KS4 Intervention

Throughout the week, Key Stage 4 pupils have two opportunities to continue and extend their music-learning. At lunch time on Wednesdays, both year 10 and year 11 pupils have the opportunity to use the practice rooms for either general practice, or for working on both performance or compositional coursework. This session also allows pupils to gain more one-to-one support with their learning.

Year 11 GCSE pupils have an additional intervention session after-school which focuses largely on exam skills as Component 3: Listening and Appraising has historically been an area of weakness for THS pupils studying GCSE music. Where needed, this session also provides additional opportunities for receiving support with coursework.

Peripatetic Offer

Tottington High School has a very strong relationship with Bury Music Service and we work closely to ensure a wide and varied peripatetic offer that matches the needs and interests of our students. Peripatetic music lessons are delivered by specialist instrumental teachers designed to enhance students' musical education through individualised instruction. This offer provides opportunities to receive tuition in a variety of instruments, fostering a diverse and enriching learning environment on a one-to-one or small group basis.

Charging and remissions are dealt with directly by Bury Music Service. Tottington High School has no involvement in these financial aspects of instrumental lessons.

Practice Rooms

All THS pupils have access to two practice rooms within the Music department where they can rehearse either independently or as part of a group.

Part C: Musical Experiences

Performance Opportunities

THS Showcase

Currently, THS host one showcase a year, usually during the Autumn 2 term. In combination with the Drama department, this showcase provides all pupils at Tottington with the opportunity to perform in front of an audience. These performances can be solo or as part of an ensemble and may include singing, playing a musical instrument, or performing a piece of dramatic art.

THS ARTS Open Evening

Aimed at year 5 and year 6 pupils from our feeder schools, the Music department, in collaboration with the Drama and Art departments, host an Arts Open Evening which allows us – and our pupils – to display what the Arts looks like at Tottington High School. Here, pupils can perform live music either as a solo or as a member of an ensemble. This has included opportunities for pianists to perform whilst attendees enter, as well as opportunities for pupils from Rock Skool to perform what they have been working on in their extra-curricular activities. By playing drama games and inviting year 5 and year 6 pupils to join, Drama students at THS also have the opportunity to display their skills and to talk about what studying the Arts is like at THS.

School Musical

As mentioned in Part B, pupils from year 7 to year 10 involved in THS's annual school musical have the opportunity to perform for an audience. The school musical runs for three nights in the Summer 2 term and enabled pupils to sing live as part of an ensemble.

Assemblies

During assemblies or guest talks, students also have the opportunity to perform on the piano whilst pupils enter. This allows for less confident pupils to experience performing for an audience in what feels like a less stressful environment. This opportunity also means that pupils who do not attend extra-curricular activities for various reasons, still have the chance to perform to or with others.

Part D: In the Future

The Tottington High School music department is very proud of our current music provision, particularly in light of receiving Music Mark status in the academic year 2025-26. In the future we endeavour to sustain this high level of musical experience for our students and also improve on the areas that need further development. In terms of the features of high-quality music provision as specified by the Department for Education (DfE) Tottington High School offers five out of seven features, regularly and robustly. These five features are:

- Timetabled curriculum music for at least one hour each week of the school year for Key Stage 3
- Access to lessons across a range of instruments and voice
- A school choir or vocal ensemble
- A school ensemble, band or group
- Space for rehearsals and individual practice
- A termly school performance

While the academic year of 2025-2026 has seen an expansion of the instruments available to pupils through our core music curriculum with the introduction of the guitar, at THS we hope to further expand the instrumental opportunities available to our pupils by increasing the number of accessible djembes and drum kits.

Additionally, while performance opportunities are available to pupils all year round, ensuring clear whole-school live performance opportunities are accessible each term is important. Therefore, we hope to increase the school performance opportunities to include an additional school performance such as a talent show or a journey through music of the world during the academic year of 2026-2027.

Trips and Musical Experiences

Of the DfE's seven features of high-quality music provision, one additional area in which development is required, is the opportunity for pupils to enjoy live performance at least once a year. The trips and musical experiences available to our pupils are minimal. While pupils have the opportunity to watch live theatre performances in collaboration with the Drama department, the same cannot be said for live music performances. We hope to increase these opportunities by inviting professionals from the British and Irish Modern Music Institute (BIMM) Manchester into school to offer KS4 pupils a workshop in either live performance or songwriting. For the academic year of 2025-2026, an educational visit to Liverpool's British Museum of Popular Music is also being scheduled. Increasing the musical experience opportunities for our pupils is currently a real focus area for development.