



THE WESTLEIGH SCHOOL
Aspiring & Achieving Together

School Music Development Plan

Policy Originator:	Head of Music
Approved by:	
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Audience:	All

Part A: Curriculum Music

This section of the development plan addresses the content that is explored during lesson times. Outlined within this is the duration of lesson time given to music, the music qualification and awards the students can attain, and the overview of the curriculum. A general overview of the music curriculum known as our learning journey can be found on the Westleigh website. This is supported with explanations of what each topic covers.

We ensure at Westleigh that the golden threads performing, composing, and listening are an integral part of the curriculum and are displayed within each topic that the students explore. The Westleigh music curriculum is designed to give every student a varied and well-balanced diet of musical experience and culture.

Curriculum Overview

At the root of our music curriculum is an understanding that all individual talents are different, and we should explore this. Giving our students the chance to explore their talents, interests, and creativity within an environment which is inclusive and safe for personal expression. Through exploration of a wide range of genres, skills and styles the students can open their understanding of the world and the musical cultures surrounding them. Our vision for music at Westleigh is more than just developing the musical skills of each individual student. It's an opportunity to see students develop within themselves and their resilience and confidence within the wider school with opportunities such as school productions, band skills club, choir, trips and the opportunity to access individual music tuition.

Through our music curriculum, we reflect our school values:

Ready

In music, being ready means arriving prepared to learn, bringing the correct equipment, following instructions promptly and participating positively in every practical and written lesson. Students are encouraged to develop resilience, embrace new challenges, and always strive to improve their musical skills.

Respectful

Music is built on collaboration. Students demonstrate respect by listening carefully to others, valuing different musical ideas and cultures, caring for instruments and equipment, and supporting the performances and contributions of their classmates. Everyone has the right to learn, rehearse and perform in a positive environment.

Safe

Students work safely by using instruments, technology and classroom equipment responsibly, always following staff instructions and moving around the music department sensibly. Creating a safe learning environment allows every student to perform confidently, take creative risks and enjoy making music together.

Year 7

Term 1	Musical elements What are the musical elements and how are they used within music?	
Term 2	Keyboard foundations How do we build performance skills and understand notation through the keyboards?	Samba drumming How can we develop our rhythmic skills and develop an understanding of world music?
Term 3	House music/foundations of music technology How can we build upon our music technology skills through an understanding of house music characteristics?	

Year 8

Term 1	The Blues How can we develop our understanding of notation, chords, basslines and historical understanding of Blues music using keyboards?	
Term 2	African drumming How can we further develop our ensemble skills, rhythmic awareness, and understanding of world music through drumming?	Jazz and improvisation How can we develop our understanding of 7 th chords, improvisation and performance skills using keyboards?
Term 3	Film and Foley How can we further develop our music technology skills and understanding of film compositional features using GarageBand?	

Year 9

Term 1	Pop music How can we further develop our performance skills and read TAB and Chord diagrams upon the ukuleles? How can we develop our understanding of the history of pop music?
Term 2	Horror music How can we further develop our music technology and compositional skills whilst developing an understanding of the compositional features of horror music using GarageBand?
Term 3	Band skills How can we further develop our ensemble performing skills and instrumental skills using vocals, guitar, bass and drums whilst understanding the core values of a practicing musician?

We aim at Westleigh to allow our students to have independence and have freedom to explore their own creative choices. We hope within our music curriculum we can inspire and provide skills for our students to be lifelong musicians.

Our goal for our students is to engage and ignite students' passion for music while teaching key musical knowledge and skills in year 7. We then push to build upon these foundation skills in year 8 and consolidate them in year 9 introducing new instruments and challenges throughout the student's musical journey. For students that choose to take music into KS4 we offer a more personalised approach to their musical development and listen to their creative choices and consolidate their musical understanding throughout this.

Year 7

We aim for students to have the foundations to play and perform on a variety of instruments such as keyboard, Samba percussion instruments and vocals. They also will also develop their music tech skills to navigate the basics of GarageBand. They will do this whilst exploring different styles and genres of music and developing their theoretical understanding of music.

Year 8

Students further their development of performance, theory and music tech understanding whilst exploring further genres and styles of music. They explore instruments such as keyboards, African drums and vocals.

Year 9

Students finish their 3 years with 3 separate topics where they pull together all their prior learning and explore their musical understanding to an even higher level. The students explore this upon instruments such as Ukulele, Guitar, keyboard, vocals and drums. Again, they are

developing all the skills from past years but there is a further focus on working together to advance within their ensemble playing.

Year 10 & Year 11

Students now start to work on their development in music by working towards the achievement of completing a person BTEC in music practice Level 1 / 2. Students complete 3 different assessments set out by Pearson to achieve this award and get to explore their musical abilities further within this. The students can and are expected to work more independently throughout this course and our curriculum throughout KS3 supports the skills expected throughout this.

Year 10 & 11 – Pearson BTEC in music practice Level 1/2

Component 1	Component 1 is a chance for our students to research and develop their knowledge within a wide range of musical styles. Within their developing understanding, students have a chance to demonstrate their knowledge throughout composition, listening, and performance.
Component 2	Component 2 allows our students to develop their musicianship skills and work upon two disciplines of their choosing throughout the use of performance and compositional skills. Students will develop their understanding of key skills and techniques to advance them as a progressing musician.
Component 3	Component 3 allows our students to demonstrate their skill development across the entirety of the BTEC qualifications. The students will be asked to choose from a selected list a song that they must then change into a selected genre using their chosen discipline.

Time Allocated

Year 7 – 1 × 60-minute lesson per fortnight

Year 8 – 1 × 60-minute lesson per fortnight

Year 9 – 1 × 60-minute lesson per fortnight

Year 10 – 3 × 60-minute lessons per week

Year 11 – 3 × 60-minute lessons per week

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

At The Westleigh School, a commitment to inclusion and equity is integral to the curriculum. It is imperative that every student has access to the music curriculum and attains successful outcomes. Teaching staff work closely with support staff to ensure the curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet individual needs. Within music at The Westleigh school we enjoy

getting to know each student and learning about each student's individual needs, we ensure that all classes have a personalised seating plan to ensure that all students needs are met and we know where students may always need extra support. Our commitment to support SEND students within the music department is reflected well within the large number of SEND students choosing to study music further into KS4.

Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds (Pupil Premium)

The music department provides an inclusive environment where all students can participate and flourish. Pupil Premium students are actively encouraged to engage in curricular and extracurricular music opportunities, with financial support provided where appropriate.

Music Qualifications

The Westleigh School offers the Pearson BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice at Key Stage 4. The qualification develops performance, composition, music creation, and industry skills through practical projects and externally assessed components. Students are also able to sit instrumental exams from a range of boards supported by established individual instrumental tutors.

Part B: Extracurricular Music

At Westleigh we understand the importance of supplying our students with a rich music education in and outside of the classroom. Here is the extra music curriculum we have to offer at The Westleigh School. Westleigh students have the opportunity to create, play, and perform music in a solo setting as well as an ensemble. The activities on offer are there to support our students into becoming well-rounded musicians and to allow our students to express themselves in their personal musicality.

Instrumental and Vocal Groups and Clubs

As part of our musical offering at the Westleigh school, we offer a section of extracurricular groups to allow students to expand their musical abilities in a way that works for them. One of our extracurricular groups is band skills which allow students to work upon an instrument of their choosing lead by tutors and staff that specialise in these instruments. This group allows for solo and collaborative development of performing skills and offers a welcoming environment for students to experiment and expand their creativity. As well as this we offer a school choir where students can work on their vocal technique and perform as a group learning a varied repertoire. Students are able and encouraged to perform within a multitude of school assemblies across the school year. To support personal expression students are invited every Friday to take part in our fun Friday lunchtime offering where students can perform karaoke tracks to their peers to harness performing skills in a low-stakes environment to build upon confidence.

GCSE/BTEC Coursework Club

KS4 students are continuously offered the opportunity to develop their music-learning throughout the week. Once week students are invited to a Btec drop-in session where staff

members are available to answer any questions regarding skills development, and students have access to practice rooms to allow for personal or collaborative development.

Students are encouraged to drop in whenever possible to address any queries surrounding their coursework. Dependent on any misconceptions arising after school sessions will be catered to address these and ensure each student receives a universal offer within music.

Peripatetic offer

The Westleigh school works closely with Wigan music service to ensure students can access specialist music tuition. We have a varied peripatetic offer that works around our students' needs and interests. Each Peripatetic music lesson is delivered by a specialist music tutor and are catered to each student's individual needs and progression. This offer allows our students to make the choice to enrich their musical learning on a one to one basis.

Individual Practice Opportunities/Practice Rooms

All Westleigh students have access to two practice rooms as well as a fully equipped classroom with a performance stage. This allows our students to rehearse independently and as part of an ensemble. Students are introduced to the practice rooms and are given a demonstration of correct and safe use of equipment before using these.

Instrumental Choices

Students have access to a wide and varied range of instruments and equipment at the Westleigh school. We aim to open our students' eyes to a diverse range of instruments including those from different cultures and musical traditions and provide access to these where possible.

Part C: Musical Experiences

Performance Opportunities

Students are given a range of different opportunities to showcase their budding talents and skills at the Westleigh school. At opening evenings, we take the chance to display the sheer talent that our students have and have multiple performances running throughout the evening. Our students enjoy performing to their peers during numerous assemblies and events throughout the school year and are keen to put themselves forward for this. Funday Friday is a much-anticipated part of the school week, providing a regular and low-pressure opportunity for students to get up and perform their choice of karaoke for their peers. Our KS4 students are expected and encouraged to perform for their peers, material that they have been working on to foster a culture of peer feedback, support and encouragement within lessons.

Trips and Musical Experiences

It's valuable for our students to see music in practice in outside of the classroom and for our students to see this as a future career prospect and how this might become a reality for them. We understand it is important for our students to be inspired and encouraged by other practicing musicians, so we ensure to invite guest speakers into Westleigh from various walks of the music industry to inform our students about career opportunities and their next steps. We

also have a Westleigh staff band who perform regularly at events to provide relatable role models and break down barriers for our students.

Part D: In the Future

The Westleigh school music department is pleased with the current provisions that we have to offer and the steady development of the department. We have received our music mark of recognition in the academic year 2025-2026. Looking into the future of the department we aim to continue to strive towards a continued progression of the department looking at where we need further development as well as continuing to uphold and foster a culture of high expectations and strong provisions. Out of the seven features outlined by the department of education as high-quality music education the Westleigh achieves five out of the seven securely and consistently. Our five are:

- Access to instrumental and vocal lessons across a range of instruments.
- A school choir and/or vocal ensemble
- A school ensemble, band or group.
- Suitable spaces for rehearsal and individual practice.
- Opportunities for pupils to experience live music performances at least once a year.

Where are students have opportunities for performing and students thrive within this, there is room for improvement here to ensure that students have opportunities to perform at least once every term in a formal setting. Although there are provisions for students to perform, we would like to see this as a showcase event and to build enthusiasm around these events. Looking into the development of this we hope to add talent contests, open mic events and cabarets which we hope to lay down the groundwork to get these up and running in the next academic year.

Another area that we are not yet meeting is a timetabled curriculum music lesson for at least one hour each week of the school year for KS3. Although this is not currently possible within the timetable. We hope to look further into this in the future and continuously review and improve our curriculum to ensure that our students do not have their learning affected because of this.

Trips and musical experiences

Although at Westleigh we are continuously providing our students with access to live music performances within school we lack and wish to improve upon the experiences that they can have outside of school. Our trips currently at the Westleigh are minimal and in order to inspire and develop our student's passion for music this needs to change. During the academic year of 2026 – 2027 we hope to get our students out to see live music in a professional setting looking at events at the Bridgewater Hall and elsewhere to make a trip that is accessible and beneficial to our students. Although we have numerous visits from surrounding colleges from the surrounding area to inform our students of their next steps, within music we would like to explore further prospectives for our students. We are hoping to organise a trip to The Manchester College for our year 10 students, so our students have the choice to expand their options for further education.