

Music Development Plan Summary:

St Catherine's CofE Primary School



“A central purpose of good music education is for pupils to make more music, think more musically and consequently become more musical.”

National Plan for Music Education

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	October 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	October 2026
Name of the school music lead	Andrew Carless
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music	Andrew Carless (Deputy Headteacher)
Name of local music hub	Hertfordshire Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	St Mary's Arts Hertford & Ware Music Association St Mary's Church

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.

At St Catherine's our priorities for Music are based on the following, from the National Plan for Music Education:

Key features of high-quality school music provision

- Timetabled curriculum music of at least one hour each week of the school year for key stages 1-3.
- Access to lessons across a range of instruments, and voice.
- A school choir and/or vocal ensemble.
- A school ensemble/band/group.
- Space for rehearsals and individual practice.
- A termly school performance.
- Opportunity to enjoy live performance at least once a year.

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.

At St Catherine's, through the Music curriculum, we inspire children to exercise their imagination and creativity whilst learning and growing. Children appreciate and enjoy the diversity of music, working collaboratively, taking risks and reflecting from experiences of failure as well as success to believe in themselves and reach their potential.

Our core scheme of work ([Music Express](#)) includes many examples of musical styles and genres from different times and places. These are explored through the language of music via active listening, performing and composing activities, which enable understanding of the context and genre. Each year group has a playlist of tracks (based on those within the DFE's [Model Music Curriculum](#) Appendix 2) exploring a range of repertoire, from Medieval times through to Twentieth Century pop, as well as traditional and classical forms from across the globe.

Our curriculum provides a class-based, participatory and inclusive approach to music learning. Throughout the scheme, children are actively involved in using and developing their singing voices, using body percussion and whole-body actions, as well as learning to handle and play classroom instruments effectively to create and express their own and others' music. Through a range of whole class, group and individual activities, children have opportunities to explore sounds, listen actively, compose and perform.

Our Music curriculum builds experience and develops understanding of the interrelated dimensions (elements) of music throughout the scheme (eg tempo, dynamics, rhythm, beat, timbre). Each unit has as its focus one process such as performance or composition, or one of the interrelated dimensions, such as pitch, but the learning progresses within the context of all the interrelated processes and dimensions of music. A wide variety of notations, including picture, graphic, rhythm and staff notation are integrated, wherever appropriate, with practical music-making activities throughout the scheme. Notations are used progressively to promote understanding and use of the representation of sound in symbols by all children.

As well as using [Music Express](#), musical provision is planned in EYFS using "[Musical Development Matters](#)".

Throughout Y5 and Y6 all children are taught to play the Ukulele through lessons with a specialist instrumental teacher.

At St Catherine's all classes have an hour of music each week, through a curriculum lesson (based on Music Express), a Focussed Listening session (using our playlists based on the Model Music Curriculum) and a Singing session (via a singing assembly). Children in EYFS also have musical development opportunities through Child Initiated Learning (CIL) based on Musical Development Matters. Children in Y5 and Y6 also have 'First Access' style instrumental tuition via our Ukulele lessons.

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.

Since Autumn 2023 we have offered two choirs as an extra-curricular club. One for children in Years 1, 2 and 3, another for Years 4, 5 and 6. Adding a second choir has enabled more children to participate and more appropriate song choices and progression opportunities. Membership of our choirs is free for all.

Individual piano lessons, led by a specialist teacher from Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS), have been offered by the school for a number of years. Across Spring and Summer 2024 we worked with HMS to develop these opportunities further from Autumn 2024 onwards. Following consultations with children, parents and local secondary schools, in addition to piano, we are now able to offer individual or small group tuition for violin, clarinet and guitar. HMS are also able to hire instruments for children to use in lessons and to practise with at home. Further information on lessons, including prices and availability can be found [here](#). Subsidies are available which could reduce the cost by 50% or even make them free, for families where parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits. Find out more [here](#). As these instrumental lessons become further established, it is an aspiration of ours to then offer a band/ensemble where children who are learning different instruments can play and rehearse together. As/when instrumental teachers think a child is ready, they will be supported to prepare for qualifications such as Music Medals and Grades.

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.

All children have the opportunity to perform throughout the year. Some of these are informal, in-house opportunities such as performing within a class music lesson to peers or as a class, to another class. Children from EYFS to Y6 perform for parents across the year, such as within school plays (eg EYFS and KS1's Nativities at Christmas or the Y5/6 annual production) and termly church services at St Mary's Church. A priority for us in 2025-2026 is to develop more structure, progression and diversity in this area.

Our Year 4/5/6 choir has had a number of further opportunities to perform, some more formal (such as singing a cantata with a live band as part of the Hertford & Ware Music Festival or as part of the Young Voices performance at London's O2 arena) and others more informal (such as singing Christmas songs at a local care home and supermarket). A priority for us in 2025-2026 is to develop appropriate performance opportunities for our Y1/2/3 choir too.

Children who have been learning to play the piano, guitar, violin or clarinet have the opportunity to perform within assembly, both to other children and for parents. Our Y5/Y6 classes have ukulele lessons and performance to children and parents is built into this programme.

Since 2023-2024, through our partnership with St Mary's Arts, we have been able to take every class from Year 1 to Year 6 to attend a live music concert annually. This will continue in 2025-2026 to ensure that every class experiences at least one live music performance, at an external venue, every year. These are being tracked so that over time we can ensure each cohort experiences a wide range of instruments and styles. These are free to attend for all our pupils.

In the future

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

Our priorities for the year ahead are:

- to further embed our new core scheme of work (Music Express) and fully evaluate the impact on pupils' outcomes to ensure it continues to make the difference intended.
- to continue to work in partnership with Hertfordshire Music Service to establish our increased instrumental lesson provision- currently clarinet, violin, guitar and piano- and fully induct new instrumental tutors who have started in September 2025.
- to work in partnership with Hertfordshire Music Service or Hertfordshire College of Music to establish an ensemble for all, such as a percussion club.
- to increase performance opportunities for our Y1/2/3 choir
- to continue to schedule performance opportunities for all instruments being taught (clarinet, piano, violin and guitar) and any new ensemble.
- to ensure everyone has the opportunity to perform at least termly, beyond singing at termly church services.
- to further develop the teaching of singing across the school through singing assemblies, staff CPDL and further embedding of our core SoW.
- to increase our collaboration with St Mary's Church, through partnership working with their newly appointed Director of Music, to enrich musical learning and opportunities at both establishments. For example, the Director of Music will support our Y4/5/6 choir and singing assemblies in 2025/2026, and in turn provide a pathway for St Catherine's pupils onto the church's new junior chorister programme.

Longer term aspirations are:

- to provide an ensemble where children can play, rehearse and perform different instruments together.
- to provide better space for children to rehearse/practise their instruments.
- To further increase the range of instruments and progression pathways on offer, in partnership with Hertfordshire Music Service (subject to demand/availability).

Further information (*optional*)

Our local [Music Hub](#) is Hertfordshire Music Service. You can find out more about them [here](#).

