

Music development plan summary: Sir Thomas Wharton Academy

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	October 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Mr Brad Dobson
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Doncaster Music Service
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.

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As a school we deliver high-quality provision in curricular music across KS3 and KS4. Our KS3 curriculum has been developed to ensure to include the key features of the national plan for music education. Our school music curriculum is also guided by the model music curriculum (March 2021), which is a piece of non-statutory guidance for teaching music from Key Stages 1 to 3. As a school we have recently restructured our timetabled curriculum to include 2 47-minute lessons of KS3 music over a fortnightly timetable (95-minutes per fortnight in total). This allows for the music department to plan 6, 7 or 8-week Schemes of Learning, depending on the half term. During lessons we give access to group music making experiences across a range of instruments, and voice. The KS3 curriculum is structured so that prior learning is built upon lesson by lesson but also topic by topic, so that students can broaden their skill sets by trying new instruments/styles of music but also deepen their musical learning and abilities by developing specific skills.

Our KS4 curriculum currently offers AQA GCSE Music, which is timetabled for 3x 95-minute lessons per fortnight (approx 5 hours per fortnight): <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/music/gcse/music-8271>

Our KS4 curriculum enables students engage with performance, composition and listening/understanding skills but can 'specialise' within the realms of the courses on a specific instrument, voice or via performance via production options.

The KS4 curriculum is developed in-line with course requirements, but also so that prior learning is built upon. Planning and delivery are adapted regularly to suit the needs of the learners, and this planning is judged and assessed by the classroom teachers, based on learning outcomes. This is discussed with students in lessons. Homework is set using Show My Homework, although most KS4 homework is based on coursework requirements and usually based around extended projects.

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.

As a school we give access to peripatetic lessons across a range of instruments and for voice. This is through independent peripatetic teachers for piano, voice, drum kit, woodwind (such as clarinet and flute), brass (such as trumpet, horns) and strings (such as violin). Students are able to play for fun or with more academic rigour. Some students learn aurally, using YouTube tutorials as guidance, others learn by ear with music notation. When appropriate, students are entered for Graded Music Exams via the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), Trinity College London (e.g. Trinity Rock & Pop) or using Rock School London (RSL).

Students have a range of opportunities to showcase their talents and participate in a variety of musical experiences. Whilst some of these are to showcase excellence within the area, others are for all in order to promote their love and enjoyment of music

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and the wider arts. This includes our winter and summer showcase events (Winter Warmer and Summer Sizzler) which primarily focuses on our enrichment offer and student showcase opportunities of their developing talents within peripatetic lessons and drama/dance clubs. Other events, such as our school productions (e.g. Musicals, pantomime), Awards Ceremonies, open evenings and Athletic Events, are primarily focused on showcasing excellence across key stages, to celebrate and inspire across the Academy.

We currently offer a number of electives to KS3 students as part of their curriculum offer (timetabled lessons) in addition to their standard music lessons.

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.

Within the academy we organise and deliver a range of performance opportunities, such as school musical productions, public performances to the school and wider community. Our annual, whole-school, end of year Awards Ceremony and our Athletics Championships provide further opportunities for students to perform to a large audience in thoroughly planned and prestigious environments.

Further enrichment is offered through music clubs such as, but not limited to, choir, rock band, musical theatre, with opportunities to showcase the work through performances through selective events across the academic calendar.

We offer a range of experiences and visits to theatres, to watch both local amateur and touring productions of musical theatre performances and theatres such as the Lyceum and CAST. Equally, as part of our 'Audience With' series, we have invited touring acts into the school such as performances from the National Theatre, providing access to live sound, effects and underscores, but also touring bands/artists performing their original music and providing bespoke Q&A sessions to our students.

Our students have access to specialist facilities and rooms within our Academy both before, during and after school hours to rehearse with their various instruments or to develop new skills over a period of time. These facilities are available to book freely for students and are an outstanding resource in the development of young musicians, that otherwise they wouldn't have access to.

In the future

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

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In the forthcoming years we are striving to continue to develop the offer that our students receive beyond the current. We are passionate in providing an increased offer of enrichment clubs and electives with a music focus for students of all age groups, thus acknowledging the need to continue to provide further opportunities for live performances.

As part of our Post 16 offer we give the students the opportunity to complete the Gold Arts Award and are hopeful in further developing opportunities with local theatres for work experience opportunities for our students as part of our Performing Arts Scholarship. We also offer these students the opportunity of work experience in the Performing Arts Department to provide wider opportunities in the Arts to enhance their future career potential.

It is an aim to continue to develop the uptake of Level 2 music qualifications, whether this be GCSE, BTEC or other comparable qualifications, which then provides a clear link in to relaunching music at KS5 with students, to further develop their skills, opportunities and experiences as a young musician.

Further information (optional)

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