



Music development plan summary:

St John's Catholic Comprehensive School

The document below outlines the Music development plan for St John's Catholic Comprehensive School for the academic year 2024-2025. This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our pupils across curricular and extra-curricular music. This information is to help students, parents and carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our students' music education.

Should you have any further questions, please feel free to email me at sfarrelly@stj.kent.sch.uk

Our Music department is more than just a place for students to learn an instrument or sing in a choir; it is a vibrant, nurturing environment where creativity, discipline, and teamwork thrive. Here, we cultivate not only musical talent but also important life skills, such as perseverance, confidence, and collaboration. Through engaging lessons, enriching performances, and a supportive community, students are encouraged to discover their passion for music whilst developing a strong sense of achievement. By investing in your child's musical education, you are helping them to unlock their full potential and instilling a lifelong appreciation for the arts. We believe every child has a unique musical voice, and our dedicated staff are here to help them find and express it to the fullest.

S. Farrelly (Head of Music)

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-2025
Date this summary was published	September 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2025
Name of the school music lead	Mr S Farrelly
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mrs K Bartholomew
Name of local music hub	Kent Music
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	The Grand, Gravesend

Part A: Curriculum music

This section is an overview of what we teach in lesson time, how much time is spent teaching music, and the qualifications that students can achieve in KS4 and KS5.

KS3 Music Curriculum

As a school we deliver high-quality provision in curricular music across KS3 and KS4. Our KS3 curriculum has been revised to ensure to include the key features of the [national plan for music education](#). Our school music curriculum is also informed 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 are proud that our school timetable curriculum includes 1 1/2 hours of KS3 music over a fortnightly period. This allows for the music department to plan Schemes of Work (SOWs), with a focus on practical music making as well as developing listening and appraising skills. During KS3 lessons, Years 7 and 8 are given the opportunity to develop their skills on guitar and tuned percussion as well as studying music from a range of styles and cultures, with a focus on extending their knowledge of key musical features. The KS3 curriculum is designed in a way that prior learning is built upon lesson by lesson and also topic by topic, so students not only broaden their skill sets by trying new instruments, but also deepen their musical knowledge in a range of styles. Specific topics have been selected at KS3 that inform future specifications that students will need at KS4. This includes western classical traditions, popular music, traditional music, and world music. KS3 Homework is set online and allows students to study topics in more detail, check their knowledge, or pre-learn topics for the next lesson.

KS4 Music Curriculum

Following Year 8, students are then given the opportunity to choose either Year 9 Foundation Music, GCSE Music, or BTEC Music. In Year 9, students are given the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of topics studied at KS3, as well as developing their skills on other instruments to prepare them for GCSE or BTEC music the following year. However, if students are ready, they can choose to study BTEC or GCSE in Year 9. The courses we currently offer at KS4 are:

- AGA GCSE Music (which is graded 1 to 9) <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/music/gcse/music-8271/specification/subject-content/understanding-music>
- BTEC Technical Award in Music Practice (which is graded Pass Level 1 to Distinction star – equivalent to GCSE grade 1 to 9). [practice/2022/specification-and-sample-assessments/btec-tech-award-music-practice-2022-spec.pdf](#)

Our KS4 Music curriculum consist of 3 lessons of GCSE or BTEC music a week for the first year of the course and 4 lessons a week for the second year of the course. This allows for the music department to plan for both GCSE and BTEC as it covers the recommended guided hours to run both courses. Across all KS4 pathways, students engage with performance, creation and production skills, and are able to 'specialise' within the realms of the courses on a specific instrument, voice or via performance or production outlets. The KS4 curriculum is developed in-line with course requirements, but also so that prior learning is built upon. Planning is adapted on a lesson by lesson basis 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 weekly and is set using Show My Homework (Satchel:One) although most KS4

homework is based on coursework requirements and individual needs.

KS5 Curriculum

The knowledge and skills acquired at KS4 allow students who wish to pursue a career in Music or develop their skills and knowledge to a level 3 standard, to access the KS5 qualification:

- BTEC Extended Certificate in Music. (which is graded Pass to Distinction)
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-nationals/music-performance-2018.html#%2Ftab-Extended-Certificate_1

Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music Performance enables learners to explore what it's like to work in the music sector and gain the underpinning knowledge and skills required to work in the music industry. This is achieved by developing the learner's key knowledge and understanding of the essential tools, techniques and equipment required, alongside an understanding of the idiomatic and stylistic features of a range of musical genres. Learners will be supported in their journey to develop a range of musical products. Learners continue from Level 2 courses, to develop their performance skills (as a soloist or part of an ensemble), composing skills (organize musical ideas and make use of appropriate resources using technology) as well as developing an appreciation for diversity in musical styles & traditions through analysis of musical features and devices, through critical listening skills.

The following units are studied:

Unit 1: Practical Music Theory and Harmony

Unit 2: Professional Practice in the Music Industry

Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance

Unit 6: Solo Performance

Please click on the links below to see an overview of our KS3 and KS4 curricula in more detail, published on the school website, which outlines specific schemes of learning and example study repertoire:

KS3 (Years 7 to 8): <https://www.stjohnscs.com/page/?title=Music&pid=100>

KS4 (Years 9 – 11): <https://www.stjohnscs.com/page/?title=Music&pid=341>

KS5 (Years 12 – 13):

<https://www.stjohnscs.com/page/?title=BTEC+Level+3+Subsidiary+Diploma+in+Music&pid=316>

Partnerships

We have strong links with **Kent Music**, which is an educational charity that is government funded. Their mission fits with our own; *to develop musical opportunities to support the aspirations of children, young people, adults and teachers in Kent*. The charity has allowed us as a school to provide opportunities to our students that would not have been possible without the funding of the charity. This includes providing the students with equipment and resources essential for practical and theory lessons, allowing students to access one-2-one teaching lessons, and also giving students the opportunity to access a range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities both in school and the local area.

The school also works closely with **The Grand** - a community hub that can offer educational initiatives such as drama, music, and art workshops tailored to students, either during the school day or as after-school enrichment programs. These workshops can help develop students' creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills, aligning with the idea of a well-rounded education. Students are encouraged to get involved in the excellent opportunities provided by The Grand, including GYG (Gifted Young Generation). GYG is an initiative aimed at supporting and nurturing talented young people, often in the areas of arts, education, and leadership. The purpose of GYG is to provide a platform for young individuals to develop their skills, gain confidence, and explore their potential in various fields. Whatever their skills or interests, the Grand will nurture these through the excellent opportunities they provide. This includes a performance each year at Woodville Halls, where students can perform as a musician, dancer, actor, magician, as well as other art forms. Students at St John's, in addition to other schools from the Gravesham area, collaborate to showcase their talents. This fosters a sense of community among gifted young people, offering them opportunities to connect with others who share similar passions, values, or ambitions.

Part B: Extra-curricular music – Music Tuition, Choirs and Ensembles

This section is about opportunities for our students to sing and play music outside of lesson time, including the extra tuition available, and our school choirs, ensembles and bands, and how students can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

At St John's, students are given the opportunity to enhance their musical experience by taking part in extra-curricular clubs. There are many opportunities for students to get involved in one of the many clubs we offer. The aim of these clubs is to give students the opportunity to take part in live events, either in school or the local community, to prepare them from studying Music at a higher level, or to provide further opportunities to develop their instrumental skills. Some of the extra-curricular opportunities we offer include: KS3 Music Club, KS4 Music Club, Tuned Percussion Ensemble, Gospel Band, KS3 and KS4 choir, Guitar Ensemble. Students are also encouraged to play instruments that they may be learning outside of our school environment.

Extra-Curricular Timetable:

Extra-Curricular Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8am – 8:35am	KS3 and KS4 Solos. (Music Room)	KS3 and KS4 Solos. (Music Room)	KS3 and KS4 Solos. (Music Room)	KS3 and KS4 Solos. (Music Room)	
KS3 Break	KS3 Solos. (Music Room)	KS3 Solos. (Music Room)	KS3 Solos. (Music Room)	KS3 Solos. (Music Room)	
KS4 Break				KS4 Solos. (Music Room)	
KS3 Lunch	Solos and Ensembles (Music room and Studio)	Solos and Ensembles (Music room and Studio)	Solos and Ensembles (Music room and Studio)		
KS4 Lunch		Solos and Ensembles (Studio only)		Solos and Ensembles (Music room and Studio)	
3:20pm – 4pm	KS3 Percussion Ensemble (Music room) Choir (Tech Room)	KS3 Band (Studio)	Choir (Tech Room)	KS3 Percussion Ensemble (Music room) KS4 Band (Studio)	

Practice spaces are also available for students to further improve their classroom practical work to give room for further improvement. This regular availability supports individual and small group rehearsal on any instrument and for voice. The practice spaces also allow for the nurture of independently formed bands as well as collaboration between year groups. These groups then go on to perform in front of their peers in assemblies and Masses throughout the year. This collaboration support enhances our Catholic Social Teaching. Catholic Social Teaching emphasizes values such as community, solidarity, dignity of the human person, and the common good. Music-making and singing provide a powerful means for students to embody and live out these principles.

Part C: Musical experiences, events and performances.

Getting involved in events around the school and local community offers students numerous benefits, both personally and academically. Opportunities to perform in school Masses and assemblies throughout the year allow students to showcase their talents in front of their peers, teachers, and sometimes even parents, helping them build confidence and self-expression. These performances also create a sense of belonging, as students can contribute to the school's cultural and social atmosphere.

One of the most impactful events is our annual 'Cultural Day', where students celebrate music, dance, and arts from around the world. This event allows students not only to share performances from their own cultural backgrounds but also to experience the rich diversity within our school community. Participating in such an event fosters inclusivity, respect for different cultures, and a sense of pride in their heritage.

The school musical is another key opportunity for students to get involved in practical music making. It encourages teamwork, discipline, and creativity, as students collaborate with their classmates to produce a large-scale performance. In addition to developing their performance skills, students learn the importance of preparation, commitment, and the ability to work under pressure - valuable life skills that extend beyond the classroom.

For students with an interest in performing arts, the Performing Arts showcase concerts, both in school and at local venues like the Woodville Halls, provide a platform for students to reach larger audiences. These performances often require additional rehearsals, which help students hone their craft and gain experience in performing for a variety of audiences. Performing outside the classroom in a professional setting can be particularly exciting and can inspire students to pursue careers in the arts or further their involvement in extracurricular activities.

In class settings or extra-curricular clubs, students frequently perform in smaller, more intimate settings, which allow them to build confidence gradually. These performances allow students to experiment, learn from their mistakes, and improve. Whether through solo acts or as part of a group, these experiences teach valuable skills like public speaking, collaboration, and resilience.

Overall, these opportunities help students grow emotionally, socially, and academically. They develop a sense of discipline, gain confidence in their abilities, and learn to appreciate the value of teamwork and diversity. These experiences not only enrich their time in school but also equip them with skills and memories that will serve them well beyond their education at St John's.

In the future

The music department at our secondary school is dedicated to further expand on the opportunities available to students in the coming years. To enhance our vibrant program, we will look to increase the amount of performance opportunities for students, including regular school concerts, talent showcases, and participation in local and regional competitions. These events will provide students with the chance to perform in front of diverse audiences, building their confidence and stage presence. Additionally, we will continue to develop a wide range of school ensembles, encouraging collaboration and allowing students to explore different genres and musical styles.

Individualized instrumental tuition will also be a key focus of our expansion. We hope to offer one-to-one lessons across a variety of instruments, ensuring that students can progress at their own pace. In addition to these lessons, we will endeavour to create pathways for students to take graded exams through recognized boards such as ABRSM and Trinity College. We will offer tailored support for exam preparation, helping students set clear goals and providing opportunities for focused practice and feedback.

To support these initiatives, we will continue to strive to improve our rehearsal and practice spaces. Currently, our music facilities are a central part of the department's success, and we will do our utmost to ensure that these rooms are equipped with high-quality instruments and technology, offering a professional and creative environment where students can focus and develop their skills.

Further information

If you would like more information on organizations that the Music Department works with, please see the links below:

Kent Music: <https://www.kent-music.com/>

The Grand: <https://www.thegrand.org.uk/>

KCC: <https://www.kent.gov.uk>