

# Music development plan summary: The Howard School

## 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
Head of Department	Ms R Cordell (Head of Performing Arts)
Teachers of Music	Mrs J D'Amiral Mr A Coveney
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr R Hillier
Name of local music hub	Kent Music
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Dynamics Andrew Parry Music

## Part A: Curriculum music

At the Howard School our Music curriculum and provision has undergone extensive work over the past year. With a new Music team, we are very busy working on creating a department where students are engaged, interested and where Music teaching is both meaningful and exciting. We want to ignite a passion for music in our Key Stage 3 pupils which can lead both to further study at KS4 as well as a life-long interest.

Over the past year, our Head of Performing Arts has been working with the team to develop a fresh new curriculum for our KS3 pupils which is very much skills-based but also starts to teach the key knowledge pupils will need to really develop. Our KS3 curriculum is informed by the KS3 Model National Music Curriculum which has meant a

greater emphasis on learning to read and use notation, as well as ensuring both singing and instrumental skills are a key part of every lesson. We have revamped schemes of work to be much more relevant for today's learners and to help them build a stronger foundation for further study/playing.

At KS4, we currently offer the Pearson Level 2 BTEC Tech Award in Music which allows pupils to develop their own musical skills as an individual with every pupil choosing an instrument to learn or continue to develop and flourish as a musician, alongside developing an appreciation for different styles of music from a range of cultures and time periods.

Our music curriculum is designed as a learning journey, leading from early development of skills and understanding in Year 7 all the way through to Year 11 mastery and beyond. Lessons take place weekly with all pupils receiving an hour of music teaching from a specialist teacher in our well-equipped music rooms which include both an Apple Mac suite and midi keyboards, as well as a wide range of instruments including guitars, ukuleles, drum kits and keyboards for use by all.

We appreciate that our pupils come to the school at the start of Year 7 with hugely varied experiences of music, in terms of curriculum and opportunities at their primary school, outside clubs and events, and individual instrument skills. We therefore begin Year 7 with a baseline assessment of all pupils and use this to inform our teaching throughout their first few terms, supporting those with very little musical experience whilst extending those who are already proficient in playing an instrument. Throughout Year 7, we therefore begin by consolidate any prior musical learning from primary school curriculums and start to build a strong foundation for the more technical aspects of playing and appraising which form the secondary curriculum. Pupils will learn about musical elements and graphic notation, ukulele skills, keyboard Skills, Sonority City - Instruments of the Orchestra, Vocal Skills, find your voice!, and Folk Music. All of our Year 7 pupils take part in a Christmas Carol concert contributing to musical performances and singing which they have learnt during their Music lessons.

In Year 8, we learn about different styles of music including Blues, Pop and Reggae, how to use DAW software (Garage Band) to create original compositions, learning how to play hooks and riffs and creating music for video games. Instruments used by pupils in lessons will be mostly piano/keyboard, guitar and drums.

All of our Year 8 schemes of work are focused on developing skills ready for further study at KS4. In this year, we also really work to develop confident use of key music terms.

Children are encouraged to listen to, appreciate and explore different forms of music of increasing length as they move throughout the school in order that they can become reflective and expressive when exploring their own and others' music.

Our KS4 curriculum begins in Year 9 with all pupils who have chosen to study Music at GCSE/BTEC level working on their confidence in playing an instrument of their choice (including voice) to a standard needed for their qualification. Throughout Year 9, Music is delivered through 5 lessons a fortnight in a balance of practical and performance work alongside theory and composition learning. Pupils at this stage will cover a wide range of musical styles, genres and time periods, learning how each of these interweaves and influences the next "generation" of musicians. They will develop more advanced skills in using DAW, including the introduction of Apple Logic Pro to build on earlier skills using Garageband to compose and edit music. Pupils will start to consider how to reflect on their own practices and write about these as well as setting themselves continuing SMART targets. This work gives our KS4 pupils a great foundation for starting their BTEC qualification in Year 10. The BTEC is made of 3 components :

Exploring Music Products and Styles - entered at the end of year 10

Music Skills Development - entered at Christmas of Year 11

Responding to a Music Brief - entered at the end of Year 11

All pupils in KS4 have access to the Music department at break and lunchtimes and after school each day to use instruments, practice rooms, collaborate with their peers and to ask for support from their teachers. Specific after school support sessions are offered twice a week to Year 10 and 11 pupils to help them with their work. All pupils at KS4 are encouraged to take part in Musical activities outside of the classroom including concerts, performances and recording.

To optimise outcomes for SEND pupils we provide help in managing the written communication aspects of music – such as the use of symbols – by using larger print, colour codes, multi-sensory reinforcement, and a greater emphasis on aural memory skills. Music vocabulary is continually referred to in music lessons and assemblies to provide opportunities for children to understand how to apply their knowledge and skills in differing contexts. We maximise the learning experience with opportunities to learn about music through physical contact with an instrument, breaking tasks into manageable chunks and allowing rehearsal time before performance tasks. We use a lot of modelling, anticipate barriers and aim to establish a learning environment which promotes resilience.

## **Part B: Extra-curricular music**

Alongside their timetabled Music lessons, many of our pupils also have individual instrument lessons provided at school by visiting teachers. We especially encourage all KS4 Music students to have instrumental lessons and use PP funding to ensure that there are no financial barriers to accessing these. Instruments (such as bass guitars) can be provided for students to use both in class and at home free of charge through Dynamics as well as loan of some instruments we have at school (including trumpet and tenor saxophone). We work in partnership with Andrew Parry Music, Medway Dynamics and the Kent Music Hub to provide children with wider opportunities in music.

Many of our pupils form bands and groups in their free time and use school equipment and spaces to work together at lunchtimes and after school to rehearse. Music teachers are on hand every lunchtime to support pupils with instrumental practice as well as running after school clubs. We have recently taken part in a charity Christmas concert (for the Oliver Fisher Trust) at Rochester Cathedral where our choir sung in front of an audience of hundreds, we host an annual Christmas service at school for both pupils and parents where our choir, musicians and bands have the opportunity to perform and are planning to introduce both Easter and Summer concerts in addition to this as well having just started a staff and student choir who meet weekly, improving mental and physical health through the power of singing!

The proportion of Pupil Premium and SEND children accessing extra-curricular music opportunities is in line with the rest of the school population and we offer access to pupil premium funding to support any pupils who find finance as a barrier to continuing individual instrumental lessons as well as offering free group lessons in drums utilising our in house experts.

## **Part C: Musical experiences**

As detailed on Part B above, there are a growing number of opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of musical experiences and expanding this is an important focus for the department. In addition to choirs, bands and individual performers being given regular opportunities to practise and perform to audiences of parents, carers and friends, we also take part in external events such as the Rochester Cathedral concerts. We have plans to widen pupils' access to experiences including visits to concerts,

recording studios and working in primary schools now that the Music teaching team is well-established.

## **In the future**

We will continue to work with Kent Music and Dynamics to further develop music education.

We aim to further develop our access to funding to be able to run a wide range of extra curricular clubs and events for all pupils, especially those who are Pupil Premium, whilst maintaining the support of our KS4 pupils to ensure they can achieve the very best outcomes. We have already begun implementing a programme of workshops and events using visiting musicians and trips to venues to encourage wider participation in musical activities, as well as continuing to accept invitations to perform at public events.

We are working on ways to further develop parental understanding of the importance of music education and are working in partnership with Kent Music to support funding instrumental lessons and activities for all.