

Music development plan summary: West Hill School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025 - 2026
Date this summary was published	July 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2026
Name of the school music lead	Mr. S. Wells
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mrs K. Anderton
Name of local music hub	Tameside Music Service

Our Vision

We believe that studying music is vital to a child's development and has many benefits for our students.

These benefits include; enhanced cognitive development and academic performance; emotional expression and wellbeing; the development of creativity, discipline and perseverance; social skills, teamwork and cultural awareness; not to mention the many transferable skills opening up a myriad interdisciplinary career options.

However, perhaps the most important reason for studying music is to provide our students with a skill, passion and an appreciation of music that can be enjoyed throughout their lives whether as individuals or shared in a community with other musicians.

Our vision is for every student to:

- Be given the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, sing and experience a wide range of musical opportunities to ignite passion and stimulate their creativity.
- Expand their understanding of the history and elements of music enabling them to cultivate a love for music and to experience the emotions that music provokes.
- Be provided with opportunities to develop their presentation skills through musical performance inside and outside of the classroom as part of an ensemble or soloist.
- Gain valuable life skills through the application of music by helping our students form opinions, evaluate and express their feelings, create ideas and learn how to react and adapt to positive and constructive criticism.
- Develop resilience, perseverance and a positive growth mindset through the continual practice of music
- Leave West Hill School with inspiration to continue their musical journey and knowledge of how to nurture their musical talents.

Part A: Curriculum music

Our music curriculum is informed by the model music curriculum and is planned for in all year groups. Skills are mapped progressively across Key Stages as guided by the National Curriculum. Students receive a one hour curriculum music lesson per week which are taught by our specialist music teachers.

Lessons are of a practical nature as we believe music is about 'doing'. The three musical areas of performance, composition and listening form the core of our

curriculum and they are a thread that runs through our lessons. There are opportunities for learning new instruments, developing new skills, singing and using music technology throughout our KS3 curriculum. In addition, students are provided with opportunities to listen to and actively engage with music from a range of cultures and traditions in all key stages.

Students are prepared for and offered the opportunity to go on to study AQA GCSE Music at KS4.

Our department staff know when and how to differentiate appropriately using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively.

Verbal feedback is on-going throughout all our music lessons and we use teacher assessment at planned points throughout the year using a variety of methods to track pupil progress. In addition, there are opportunities for self and peer assessment planned into our lessons. The department has an assessment policy that assesses musically and appropriately and is in alignment with school assessment strategy.

The department has a suite of Apple Mac computers solely for our use which includes relevant and up to date software that is accessible for whole classes to use simultaneously. In addition to our class set of keyboards and ukuleles, our curriculum resources also include a class set of DJ decks for students to learn. Furthermore, we use a variety of teaching resources including online resources to enhance our lessons and develop our students.

Our annual budget is planned to support the delivery of the music curriculum and provide students with opportunities to broaden their musical experiences.

Part B: Co-curricular music

We are a busy and vibrant department which offers a range of weekly co-curricular activities. These include 1:1 instrumental lessons with music specialists, jazz orchestra, beginner jazz collective, guitar ensemble, samba band, keyboard club, saxophone and brass learners, and vocalise singing. Our variety of ensembles offer our students the opportunity to learn and perform music in a range of different styles and genres.

We work closely and engage with our local music hub and private instrumental tutors to provide 1:1 tuition covering most instrumental families.

We offer our students regular formal and informal opportunities throughout the year to perform to parents and peers. Our annual school carol service and spring concert are well attended and particular highlights in the school year.

Pupil premium students who demonstrate an interest in music are encouraged to participate in our co-curricular offer and are supported by free individual instrumental lessons financed through their funding.

We have an excellent stock of instruments for students use during curriculum time, instrumental tuition and co-curricular activities. Students receiving 1:1 lessons are encouraged to take these instruments home to practice. In addition, we have three dedicated practice rooms and two larger rehearsal spaces available for students to practice at social times.

Currently, the budget is planned to support the delivery of co-curricular ensembles and resource music within the school.

Part C: Musical experiences

Students regularly attend concerts to watch the Halle Orchestra perform at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester.

Our students have participated in a series of educational workshops working alongside professional musicians from the Halle orchestra culminating in a public performance with other local schools. Additionally, our students have worked with professional musician and music educator Jon James on a yearlong composition project which resulted in them performing on the stage of the Bridgewater Concert Hall.

We provide various performance opportunities throughout the course of the year. Our ensembles are in much demand at Christmas, performing regularly in our local community. In addition, our school carol service and spring concert are well attended and students are encouraged to perform individually or as part of an ensemble. We

believe that external performance opportunities are fundamental to a student's musical development enhancing their cultural capital and also benefitting the local community.

Students are encouraged to participate in music outside of school and our music teachers provide information and sign post them in a suitable direction for their ability.

Our students are aware of the variety of music careers available and also alternative careers for which studying music is beneficial.

A number of students have gone on to study music at university and pursue careers in music. Some of these have returned to school to share their experience in the industry with current students.

We also engage with the Speakers for Schools organisation, hosting online broadcasts with professionals working in the music industry. Recent broadcasts include Heather Walker, Director of operations at the Royal Opera House and BBC television composer David Lowe.

In the future

- We are committed to maintaining a strong co-curricular music offer, ensuring that all students continue to have access to the enjoyment, creativity and sense of achievement that comes from learning a musical instrument and participating in ensembles free of charge. We will actively encourage our new Year 7 cohort to attend free beginner learner clubs, providing an accessible starting point for students who may be new to music-making. These clubs will act as a pathway into our wider ensemble provision, helping to build confidence, musical skills and long-term participation within the department.
- We aim to further develop the live music opportunities available to students. Building on the performances and events we already provide, we want a greater number of KS3 students to experience visits to external music organisations and venues, watch professional musicians perform live, and take part in public performances themselves. These experiences will enhance students' cultural capital, broaden their understanding of different musical styles and careers within the music industry, and inspire greater engagement with music both inside and outside the classroom.

Further information

Below are some links to external music organisations that you may find useful:

- [The Royal Northern College of Music - Music Conservatoire \(rncm.ac.uk\)](http://rncm.ac.uk)

- [Chetham's School of Music | The UK's largest specialist music school, based in Manchester \(chethamsschoolofmusic.com\)](#)
- [BIMM Music Institute | Industry Leading Music Colleges and Music Schools](#)
- [Spirit Studios Music School | Music Production University](#)
- [Home | The Bridgewater Hall \(bridgewater-hall.co.uk\)](#)
- [Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council Tameside Music Service - Tameside MBC](#)