Music development plan summary: The Orchard

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	29/10/26
Date this summary will be reviewed	June 2027
Name of the school music lead	Aimi Pinner
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Laura Valentine
Name of local music hub	SIPS
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.

At The Orchard School, our music curriculum is inclusive, ambitious and tailored to meet the needs of pupils with complex needs, severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Our curriculum intent is informed by the EYFS Development Matters guidance, with music incorporated into the Being Imaginative and Expressive strand of Expressive Arts and Design and supported by our 19-step sequential developmental framework. Medium and Long term plans provide a breadth of music topics and experiences from country to classical and pop to religious music. Music is embedded throughout the school day through routine songs, cross-curricular learning and opportunities for vocal, instrumental, sensory and creative expression. Topic-based Expressive Arts and Design lessons provide weekly musical experiences. Pupils also access a range of musical traditions, Sensology, sound baths and inclusive performance opportunities through our weekly Makaton choir and two Orchard bands. We work with our local music hub, SIPS, to explore additional specialist tuition for pupils demonstrating particular musical interests or talents. Progress is captured through Evidence for Learning, using observations, photographs

and video evidence to recognise individual responses, engagement and developmental steps. Our aim is for every pupil to experience, enjoy and participate in music in ways that are meaningful and appropriate to their individual needs, abilities and interests.

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.

At The Orchard School, co-curricular music provides inclusive opportunities for all pupils to explore, enjoy and participate in music in ways that reflect their individual needs, interests and abilities. Our weekly Makaton choir welcomes pupils to participate through singing, signing, playing instruments or moving to music, with pupils contributing to song choices and developing a shared repertoire each term. Supported by-SIPS, we have established two school bands, one in Middle School and one in Upper School, with the Upper School band performing at end-of-year assemblies. Pupils also access a wide range of additional musical and sensory experiences, including Music for Interaction, Tac Pac, Sensology, sound baths, musical play and interactive rhymes, providing opportunities to develop communication, engagement, creativity and musical expression. The school has participated in research into musical play for pupils with PMLD and complex needs, supporting staff to develop their practice. We are continuing to strengthen links with our local music hub and other agencies to bring visiting musicians into school and broaden pupils' experiences of live music. Pupils' musical preferences are explored from transition onwards, enabling favourite and comforting music to support familiarity, wellbeing and engagement. Through these opportunities, we aim to ensure every pupil can experience the enjoyment, belonging and achievement that making music together can bring.

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.

The Orchard School has worked in partnership with Big Top Musical Adventures for approximately ten years, the highly educated and experienced staff are now working with our local Music hub Sips and we hope to continue a strong partnership, providing pupils with valuable opportunities to develop their musical skills and experience specialist music provision. We actively encourage families to engage with musical activities in the wider community through school newsletters and parent coffee mornings, helping to extend musical experiences beyond the school environment. Our Makaton choir performs in school at least once each term, and, where possible, members of the choir and school band participate in external events. Recognising that

accessing community venues can be challenging for some of our pupils, we are developing opportunities to bring live music directly into school. We are working with our local music hub to identify additional local performers who can offer pupils a broader range of live musical experiences. We also work closely with families through parent workshops, helping them understand the musical activities and approaches used in school and supporting them to continue and develop these experiences at home.

In the future

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

We are working with our local Music Hub SIPS Education to make links with local schools and musicians to provide a wider variety of experiences in school for our pupils and work with SIPS to explore more adapted and accessible instruments

We will provide a family morning to explain our creative curriculum and sign post our families to musical activities outside of school, developing pupil and family experiences, preferences and choice.

Further information (optional)