

Music development plan summary: Gartree High School

All schools should have a music development plan from academic year 2023-24.

Schools are expected to publish a summary of their plan on their website from academic year 2024-25.

This template is designed to support schools to produce the summary. It should set out how the school will deliver high-quality music provision in curriculum music, co-curricular music and musical experiences, taking into account the key features in the [national plan for music education](#):

- timetabled curriculum music of at least one hour each week of the school year for key stages 1 to 3
- access to lessons across a range of instruments, and voice
- a school choir or vocal ensemble
- a school ensemble, band or group
- space for rehearsals and individual practice
- a termly school performance
- opportunity to enjoy live performance at least once a year

The summary should reflect your school's music provision for the given school year and your plans for subsequent years. It should also refer to any existing partnership with your local music hub or other music education organisations that supports the school with music provision.

Before publishing your completed summary, delete the advice in this template along with this text box.

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	January 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	January 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mrs Ros O'Hara (Head of Music)
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr Will Carter (Co-headteacher)
Name of local music hub	LeicesterShire Music
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Music Mark

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.

Curriculum Aims

We aim to create skilled, confident and passionate musicians across a range of musical disciplines. We want to nurture independent performers, composers and analysts, but most importantly, to awaken a joy in music for all students.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum Overview

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is designed to deliver an ambitious take on the National Curriculum for Music. Pupils receive one 50-minute lesson per week throughout years 7, 8 and 9. By the end of key stage 3 all pupils will:

- Become confident performers on one or more instruments. This requires them to not only develop a variety of practical skills, but also to acquire the theoretical skills required to understand their instrument and deliver high quality performances.
- Become discerning listeners to a wide variety of music, using technical language rooted in the elements of music to analyse and discuss music in greater and greater depth.
- Become creative composers in a variety of musical styles. This deepens understanding of the mechanics of music, whilst allowing pupils to unleash their creativity.

Our curriculum is designed in a 'spiral model', which means that throughout Key Stage 3, pupils revisit the same topics in ever increasing depth. The topics are as follows:

Baseline Assessment

Harmony and Tonality

Rhythm and Metre

Texture and Melody

Composition Skills

Revision and Consolidation

Key Stage 4

Course: GCSE Music

Exam Board: Edexcel

Curriculum Time: 1 double lesson (100 minutes) and one single lesson (50 minutes) per week.

Final Assessment: 2 Performances (one solo, one ensemble), 2 Compositions (one free, one exam board brief) completed throughout the course and a 1 hour and 30 minute Listening and Appraising exam, completed at the end of Year 11.

Curriculum Overview

Students follow the same areas of Performing, Composing and Appraising that have been present throughout Key Stage 3, albeit in much greater depth.

Performance: Students record one solo and one ensemble (duet or group) performance on an instrument of their choice (including voice). The standard level of difficulty is equivalent to ABRSM Grade 4, with pupils being awarded additional marks for more difficult pieces.

Composition: Students produce two individual compositions. The first is a 'free composition', meaning that students can produce music in any style or genre that interests them. For the second, students compose to a given exam board brief.

Listening and Appraising: Students study 8 set works from a variety of musical styles and genres in detail. They also complete wider listening as a comparison. They are required to do both rhythmic and melodic dictation and write an essay analysis.

Areas of study include:

Instrumental Music

Vocal Music

Music for Stage and Screen

Fusion Music

See here for the link to our learning journey:

[Gartree Music Learning Journey Jan 2026](#)

Music for All

At Gartree, we pride ourselves on delivering a curriculum that is accessible to learners at all levels. Through quality-first teaching we can support SEND learners to access the curriculum, by, for example, providing scaffolding to enable students to increase the complexity of the parts they can play. We allow students to play to their strengths when performing and composing, giving a wide variety of choice where possible for the forces used. Students with SEMH needs are supported by teaching and learning support staff to succeed in group work settings, and firm classroom routines are established so that all learners thrive in a busy, often noisy environment with lots of activity going on. On occasion, alternative work is discussed with the student if, for example, the noisy atmosphere created by whole-class samba performance is overwhelming, and we use our practise rooms extensively to cater to a range of needs.

Here is a link to our Learning Support department and the other strategies in place: [Learning Support Department | Gartree High School](#)

Additional Qualifications

With their peripatetic music teachers, students can take practical musicianship exams for a variety of exam boards including: ABRSM, Trinity and RockSchool. Additionally, they can take ABRSM Music Theory exams, which are organised for pupils attending Music Theory Club.

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.

Music Tuition

We have a diverse number of talented instrumental and vocal teachers teaching individual and small group lessons to our students. These include violin, cello, flute, clarinet, saxophone, bassoon, cornet, trumpet, trombone, piano, keyboard, classical/acoustic/bass guitar, drum kit, tabla, dhol and voice. We have over 120 students taking instrumental lessons and offer school-funded tuition to Pupil Premium students. We are privileged to be able to loan a variety of instruments to students to support their progress. Instruments currently on loan include keyboards, saxophones, trombones, clarinets and flutes.

Ensembles

We have a wide variety of well-attended ensembles. We have a 50-strong choir drawn from the entire school population, as well as the Key Stage 4 Harmony Group. The orchestra goes from strength to strength, and we run a student-conducted Brass Ensemble for part of the year, as well as a Folk Group. Additionally, there is a weekly Steel Pans Group for all students, as well as one exclusively for Year 7. There are a number of so-called 'scratch ensembles' created for specific events, such as the Year 7 choir.

This year's Christmas Concert has already been a huge success, with a sell-out audience and six ensembles, soloists and over 80 students taking part.

Other Clubs:

We run a weekly Music Theory Club. The school funds theory and practical exams for Pupil Premium students, as well as theory exams Grade 6 and above for all students.

Personal Development

Students make extensive use of our facilities to pursue their own musical aims. This includes break, lunchtime and after-school access to 5 practice rooms and one ensemble room, as well as use of the department's instruments, 16 PCs and 16 iPads. Students have significant input into the ensembles that are run and the repertoire that is selected.

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.

We run a huge range of musical experiences for our students, from performances to trips. In-school events include:

- Year 6 Transition Singing Concert
- Year 7 Interform Singing Competition
- Christmas Concert
- Spring/Summer Concert
- Musical
- KS3 Soloist Concert
- KS4 Soloist Concert
- Instrument demonstrations from our peripatetic teachers
- Concert at a nearby care home

Trips include:

- Concerts by local and national orchestras

- Trips to watch musicals and operas (most recently Opera North's touring production of 'The Magic Flute')
- Music for Youth
- Biannual tour of Europe (we visited Belgium and the Netherlands in July 2025)
- LeicesterShire Music's Choir of the Year Competition
- Vocal workshop for the whole of Year 7 at De Montfort University led by Emily Barden (2024)
- A Cappella choral project run by LeicesterShire Music
- Attending the Leicester Young Person Music Industry Careers Conference

In the future

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

We would like to work further on our uptake of musical instruments, particularly orchestral instruments as this would help build our orchestra and increase opportunities for students. With this in mind, we are excited to be taking part in the Philharmonia's Virtual Orchestra pilot.

We are also expanding our students' abilities to lead ensembles, with students 'guest' conducting orchestra and leading Year 7 steel pans.

Technology forms a significant part of the wider music industry, and we are constantly updating our approach to teaching music technology. Recent additions to the curriculum include teaching some sequencing to Year 9 through the medium of composing for horror movies.

We are working towards increasing performance opportunities and input into popular musicians over the coming years, to better reflect the diversity of musicians and their instruments within the school.