

St Joseph's College Music Development Plan

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-25
Date this summary was published	September 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2025
Name of the school music lead	Gemma O'Donnell
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Charlotte Slattery
Name of local music hub	City Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	N/A

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.

This section addresses the content taught during lesson time, the duration dedicated to music lessons, and the music qualifications or awards that pupils can attain.

An overview of the music curriculum for each year group is available on the St Joseph's College website <https://www.stjosephstrentvale.com/academic-life/curric-by-subject-area/>. The website also details the time allocated for curriculum music for each key stage and term (or each half-term) of the academic year.

At St Joseph's College, the music curriculum has its foundations based on the National Curriculum incorporating elements from the Model Music Curriculum (March 2021). These elements are integrated into our teaching framework, with adaptations to suit our learners and our specific educational setting.

Within the music curriculum, the golden threads of singing and instrumental development - encompassing both solo and ensemble playing - are intricately woven throughout. The curriculum is designed with a focus on sequencing these skills to

ensure a cohesive and progressive learning experience. The KS3 curriculum leads into GCSE Music or an equivalent vocational qualification then onto A level Music or an equivalent vocational qualification.

Curriculum overview

Year 7		
Musical basics, vocal and keyboard skills	Musical basics, keyboard skills and musical elements	Musical elements, keyboard skills and world music
Reading and writing music notation, performing using good vocal technique and performing using proper piano and keyboard technique	Reading and writing music notation, performing using proper piano and keyboard technique and understanding and applying the key musical elements.	Composing using the musical elements. Understanding Reggae music as well as how to read musical notation.
Year 8		
Blues and Jazz	Music for Film, TV and Media	
the origin and history of Blues and Jazz music. In a cultural, social and musical context.	How music and different types of visual media are connected. How different styles of film and TV show have their own genres of music associated with them. Influential film music composers and their specific composing styles	
Year 9		
Skills Acquisition	Skills Development	Song writing
Using the circle of fifths. The 'Pop Progression' and creating melodies and basslines with pentatonic scales. Layers within a song and standard song structure	Diatonic chords and chord extensions. How to develop melodies, basslines and drum beats. Understanding the function of different song sections.	Applying the skills acquisition and development to song writing, both live and using a DAW.

Year 7

The development of singing starts in the first term of Year 7, where students begin by singing as part of an ensemble during class lessons. In addition to learning good vocal technique and singing in unison, students further refine their skills by singing in canon

and harmony, which teaches them the complexities of timing and harmony in a group setting. This foundational experience helps them understand the basics of vocal harmony and group performance. This also leads up to a full year group vocal performance at the carol service in the Victoria Hall in December.

In addition to the practical work, students in year 7 will learn the basics of music theory, including traditional pitch and rhythm notation in treble and bass clef. This will be the foundation of the theoretical knowledge that will underpin their learning throughout the key stages.

Students also explore keyboard skills in this term, learning the correct techniques and fingering patterns for playing the keyboard or piano with both hands simultaneously. In addition to developing keyboard skills, it also allows them the opportunity to apply the theory knowledge they are developing to practical work and develops their ability in reading music notation.

In the second term, students will explore the musical elements through listening, performance and composition. They will explore various instruments through Peter and the Wolf, delving into the orchestral setting, learning about the different sections and roles within an orchestra and the individual instruments.

Students will rehearse and perform extracts from Peter and the Wolf on the keyboards from sheet music, continuing the development of their keyboard skills and theory and notation knowledge.

Throughout the second term, students will explore some of the great composers of Western Classical Music through listening, reading and performing. They will learn the key musical features of the composers and why they were so impactful on Western Classical music, in addition to developing aural skills through listening questions and deepening disciplinary literacy through reading about their impact on music. They will also perform extracts of some of the composers' great works.

By the third term, students will bring all their skills together to work on developing and notating a simple two-handed composition on the keyboard, utilising the musical elements, which enhances their understanding of how different sounds can be combined to create a cohesive musical experience. This broadens their musical skills and fosters an appreciation for the complexities of creating and notating compositions.

Students further develop their skills and broaden their musical experiences through exploring Reggae music collectively as part of a band. Through structured band rehearsals and individual practice sessions, students engage with the distinctive vocal techniques and rhythmic complexities inherent in Reggae music, enhancing their technical proficiency and theoretical understanding of the genre. Students will develop their ensemble and band skills and explore a range of different instruments such as acoustic and electric guitars, bass guitars and drums alongside continuing to develop their keyboard and vocal skills. This exposure not only broadens their cultural understanding but also enhances their musical ability through the techniques that are characteristic of Reggae music. During this term, students participate in an ensemble

performance of Three Little Birds utilising a melody, chords, riff and bassline. By collaborating with their peers in an ensemble setting, students not only refine their instrumental skills but also develop essential teamwork and communication abilities. Moreover, the experience fosters a broader appreciation for global musical diversity and the rich tapestry of musical expressions found across different cultures.

Year 8

In Year 8, students refine their instrumental and vocal abilities while exploring different genres of music. Throughout the first term, they explore Blues music. Engaging in the genre, students will learn about the context and history of Blues music and the significance of this in today's world, both musically and culturally. Musically, students develop their musical ability both individually and as part of a larger ensemble. Concurrently, students delve into the intricacies of chord structures using a variety of instruments including pianos, keyboards and guitars. Through solo rehearsals and collaborative efforts within larger groups, students not only develop their musical skills but also foster a sense of camaraderie and artistic expression. They will develop knowledge of and ability to play chords and chord progressions (specifically the 12 bar blues), basslines and riffs as well as developing their knowledge of the blues scale and ability to improvise using this. They will also continue to develop their theory and notation knowledge by reading sheet music, broadening their skills to reading chords and guitar tab and writing down improvised melodies. They rehearse these skills individually before combining them in a group performance. This comprehensive approach empowers students to cultivate confidence, creativity, and a profound appreciation for the universal language of music.

In the second and third terms, students explore the world of film music. Students will focus on the music in horror films to learn about music techniques frequently seen in film music such as ostinato, dissonance, chromaticism, leitmotif and pedal notes. They will engage in a wide variety of listening and performance tasks to continue their development of music notation, theory and keyboard skills by rehearsing individual performances of famous leitmotifs on the keyboards. This brings together the skills they have developed in year 7 and 8 as they will be playing with two hands together, both single lines and chords. They will also develop their knowledge of composers such as John Williams through reading about, listening to and analysing their music.

They will then combine these skills and knowledge in a group composition where they will create a musical soundscape or soundtrack to a trailer for a film 'The Woman in Black' This work enhances their understanding of how different instruments and sounds can be combined to create a cohesive auditory experience that reflects the on-screen stimulus. This multifaceted approach to instrumental development broadens their musical skills and fosters an appreciation for the complexities of orchestral and soundscape compositions.

Year 9

In term 1, students focus on developing their music theory knowledge and application of this to practical performance. They will learn about the circle of 5ths, including key signatures, accidentals, functional and diatonic harmony, chord progression including the 4-chord pop progression, bass lines and vocal harmonies. Through a series of listening, written and practical keyboard tasks they will develop their knowledge of this more advanced theory before putting it into practice in a group practical piece where they will refine their instrumental and vocal abilities through exploring popular music. They explore popular conventions and pop structures. Engaging in a diverse repertoire of pop songs, students develop their vocal ability both individually and as part of a larger ensemble, honing techniques such as melisma, projection, and vocal harmony. Concurrently, students delve into the intricacies of chord structures using a variety of instruments including pianos, keyboards, guitars, bass guitars and drums. Through collaborative performances of pop songs, students not only develop their musical skills but also continue to foster a sense of camaraderie and artistic expression. This comprehensive approach continues to empower students to cultivate confidence, creativity, and a profound appreciation for the universal language of music.

In the second and third terms, students further develop their skills in composition and arrangement, both practically using instruments and through the utilisation of sequencing software, focusing specifically on the skill of song writing. Working individually, students will create and build up the layers of a song using a DAW, including a chord progression, bassline, drum beat, riff and vocal melody. This allows students to bring together the skills they have developed so far, both practical and theoretical and apply them in a creative way to create their own song. Through structured instruction and practical application, students develop proficiency in digital audio production, honing their skills in composition and arrangement within a digital environment. Additionally, students will work in groups to collaborate on writing a song as a group, record and compose their musical ideas instrumentally. Drawing upon their understanding of musical notation and chords, students employ these tools to create compositions that effectively convey mood, atmosphere, and narrative within the medium of a pop song. These immersive explorations not only enhance students' technical proficiency in music composition and performance but also fosters their creativity and critical thinking skills in the realm of composition and digital composition

Year 10 & Year 11

In Years 10 and 11, students undertake either the Edexcel GCSE in Music or the Eduqas Level 1/2 Tech Award in Performing Arts (music route). The GCSE is a traditional music course that supports students in forming personal and meaningful relationships with music through the development of musical knowledge, understanding and skills including performing, composing and appraising. The qualification encourages students to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music and musical contexts, develop an understanding of the place of music in different cultures and contexts, and reflect on how music is used in the expression of

personal and collective identities. This qualification also supports the development of musical fluency and provides access to further study of music at A Level.

The Eduqas Level 1/2 Tech Award in Performing Arts (music route) is a vocational qualification designed to equip students with practical skills in music performance and to support learners who want to learn about this vocational sector and the potential it can offer them for their careers or further study. The course enables learners to gain a holistic knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to reproduce an existing piece(s) of professional/published work and to gain, develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to create and refine original work in the performing arts. It also introduces learners to areas of the performing arts that need to be considered when responding to an industry commission.

These courses offer students extensive opportunities to develop their abilities both as solo performers and ensemble musicians. Throughout the courses, students explore a diverse range of musical genres and styles, gaining insight into the conventions, as well as the musical characteristics, inherent to each style. Additionally, students benefit from dedicated time and structured guidance to enhance their instrumental proficiency on a chosen song or piece, as outlined by the exam board's specific brief. This focused approach allows students to engage in thorough practice and rehearsal, facilitating their musical growth and readiness for assessment.

Years 12 and 13

In Years 12 and 13, students undertake either the Eduqas A level in Music or the Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in Performing Arts (music route). The A level is designed to allow learners to pursue their own musical interests. Learners develop skills in the three distinct but related disciplines of performing, composing and appraising. The course is designed to offer contrast and breadth as well as depth of study. Learners will engage with both classical and popular music. All learners will study the development of the symphony, engaging with landmark orchestral repertoire, which is important in developing knowledge and understanding of musical elements and language in context. Learners will use the musical language of this period to compose one piece of music to a brief. Learners will also study Musical Theatre and 20th century music.

The students will engage actively in the process of music study and develop performing skills to demonstrate an understanding of musical elements, style, sense of continuity, interpretation and expression. In addition, they will develop composing skills to demonstrate the manipulation of musical ideas and the use of musical devices and conventions. This will enable them to recognise the interdependence of musical knowledge, understanding and skills, and make links between the integrated activities of performing, composing and appraising underpinned by attentive listening. The course will broaden their musical experience and interests, develop imagination and foster creativity as well as develop and extend the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate effectively as musicians. It will allow them to develop

knowledge and understanding of a variety of instruments and styles, and of relevant approaches to both performing and composing in addition to developing awareness of music technologies and their use in the creation and presentation of music.

The course encourages students to appraise contrasting genres, styles and traditions of music, and develop understanding of musical contexts and a coherent awareness of musical chronology. Students will develop as effective, independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds, reflecting critically and making personal judgements on their own and others' music. They will engage with, and extend appreciation of, the diverse heritage of music in order to promote personal, social, intellectual and cultural development.

The Cambridge Technical Extended certificate in Performing Arts provides students with practical experience to help them develop the skills and knowledge that will equip them for employment within this broad and competitive sector.

With an emphasis on musicality and practical music making, the course provides a contemporary, accessible and creative education in music with an integrated approach to the three main elements – performing, composing and appraising.

Students are encouraged to be creative and to broaden their musical horizons and understanding with five areas of study as they explore musical context, language, and performance. The specification is designed to appeal to, and cater for, a wide range of interests, instruments, personalities and directions. It offers a range of opportunities to study diverse and traditional fields, with an integrated approach. The course will encourage students to experiment in their own performing and listening as well as develop interest in and enthusiasm for all aspects of their musical heritage.

Students will have access to practical and wider project-based assessment opportunities, as well as examined units on prepare to work in the performing arts sector, proposal for a commissioning brief and influential performance practice.

At St Joseph's College we follow a two-week timetable with 60-minute lessons, and so the time allocated for each subject is per fortnight.

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
3 x 60	2 x 60	2 x 60	5 x 60	5 x 60	10 x 60	10 x 60

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.

This section addresses the opportunity pupils at St Joseph's College have to sing and play music outside of lesson time. Within St Joseph's, students have access to a number of opportunities to make, create, perform and play music, this is through a variety of vocal and instrumental ensembles, that allow students to make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

St Joseph's College offers a range of instrumental and vocal groups that are offered free of charge which are open to all students across all year groups. Rehearsals and clubs take place in specialist music areas in the music department.

- **School Choir**

The School choir is a school-wide singing group open to students from all year groups. The repertoire includes songs specifically chosen to accommodate multiple-part harmonies, providing a rich and layered vocal experience. Additionally, the group offers opportunities for solo performances, allowing students to showcase their individual talents within the ensemble. This inclusive group fosters a collaborative environment where students can develop their vocal skills and experience the joy of collective music-making.

- **Senior Orchestra**

Senior Orchestra is an ensemble that integrates traditional orchestral instruments with rock and pop instruments. Students perform using written notation, tablature, or chords, preparing for performances at various school and community events. This diverse group provides a platform for students to develop their musical skills in a collaborative setting, blending different musical styles and techniques. This group is open to students who are playing at grade 4 level or above on their instrument.

- **Studio Choir**

The Studio choir is a female singing group open to students in KS4 and 5. The repertoire includes challenging songs in a range of genres, specifically chosen to accommodate multiple-part harmonies in upper voices, providing a rich and layered vocal experience. Additionally, the group offers opportunities for solo performances, allowing students to showcase their individual talents within the ensemble. This inclusive group fosters a collaborative yet aspirational environment where students can really develop and refine their vocal skills and experience the joy of collective music-making.

- **Studio band**

Studio band is an invitation only ensemble that integrates traditional orchestral instruments with rock and pop instruments. Students perform challenging music, using written notation, tablature, or chords, preparing for performances at various school and community events, particularly the school production. This diverse group provides a collaborative yet aspirational platform for students to develop their musical skills in a smaller setting, blending different musical styles and techniques. This group is open to students from all year groups by invitation.

- **Junior Choir**

The Junior choir is a singing group open to students in KS3. The repertoire includes songs specifically chosen to accommodate simple multiple-part harmonies whilst nurturing good vocal technique. Additionally, the group offers opportunities for solo performances, allowing students to showcase their individual talents within the ensemble. This inclusive group fosters a nurturing and collaborative environment where students can develop their vocal skills and experience the joy of collective music-making in a supportive environment to build confidence.

- **Junior orchestra**

The Junior orchestra is an ensemble open to students in KS3 that play an instrument. Students perform simpler music, using written notation, tablature, or chords, preparing for performances at various school and community events, whilst developing confidence and ensemble skills. Additionally, the group offers opportunities for solo performances, allowing students to showcase their individual talents within the ensemble. This inclusive group fosters a nurturing and collaborative environment where students can develop their individual instrumental and ensemble skills and experience the joy of collective music-making in a supportive environment to build confidence.

- **Studio Strings**

Studio strings is a chamber ensemble that focuses on the string players across all year groups. Students perform a variety of chamber music, using written notation, preparing for performances at various school and community events. This group provides a platform for string players to develop their specific musical skills in a smaller setting, focusing specifically on string styles and techniques.

- **Boys' Vocal group**

The Boys' Vocal group is a singing group open to boys across all year groups. The repertoire includes songs specifically chosen to nurture boy's voices at all stages of their vocal development and accommodate simple multiple-part harmonies whilst nurturing good vocal technique. Additionally, the group offers opportunities for solo

performances, allowing students to showcase their individual talents within the ensemble. This inclusive group fosters a nurturing and collaborative environment where students can develop their vocal skills and experience the joy of collective music-making in a supportive environment to build confidence and develop technique.

- **Rock Bands**

Students have the opportunity to form their own bands with peers, supported by dedicated teacher guidance. Practice room space is made available to facilitate the development of their ensemble, instrumental, and vocal skills. This structured environment encourages students to refine their musical abilities and collaborate effectively, preparing them for performances and further musical pursuits. This group is open to all year groups

- **School production**

The school production is an annual/biannual event that is open to all students from all year groups. There is an audition process to be part of the production, but everyone is allowed to take part, with principal roles being decided by the audition process. It is a huge collaborative project that fosters an environment of discipline and excitement where students can develop performance skills and stagecraft.

Peripatetic Offer

St Joseph's College offers peripatetic music lessons delivered by specialist instrumental teachers designed to enhance students' musical education through individualised instruction. This offer provides opportunities for students to receive tuition in a variety of instruments, fostering a diverse and enriching learning environment on a one-to-one basis.

Current Instrument Choices

- Piano and Keyboard: Students can learn classical and contemporary styles, focusing on technique, reading music, and performance skills.
- Guitar: Acoustic, electric or bass guitar lessons are available, covering a wide range of genres from classical to rock.
- Strings: lessons emphasise technique, musicality, and ensemble playing.
- Woodwind: Flute, clarinet and saxophone instruction focuses on technique, breath control, and ensemble playing.
- Percussion: Drum kit lessons cover rhythm, coordination, and reading percussion notation.
- Voice: Vocal lessons are tailored to individual student needs, including classical, pop, and musical theatre techniques.

Additional instrument choices from 2024

- Brass: A range of brass instruction focuses on embouchure, breath control, and ensemble playing

Charging and Remissions Information

St Joseph's College employs instrumental teachers on a self-employed basis, therefore lesson fees are agreed directly with the teachers.

Parents or carers interested in enrolling their child in peripatetic music lessons should email the teachers directly (contact details available through the music department). Peripatetic lessons at St Joseph's College are designed to nurture students' musical talents and foster a lifelong appreciation for music. Through these lessons, students receive high-quality instruction tailored to their individual needs, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to develop their musical abilities to the fullest.

Music Badges

Students are able to work towards bronze, silver and gold music achievement badges. Students can achieve these by

- regularly attending rehearsals & arriving on time with only very occasional absences
- becoming familiar with the Mass setting and supporting liturgical music in school
- willingly performing in concerts, gigs, assemblies, Masses and events
- assisting others with their skills development
- helping to set-up the rehearsal room and pack away safely
- assisting the teaching staff by coordinating an ensemble
- helping Mr Eyden and Mr Cooke with technical support for events when required
- displaying a positive and enthusiastic attitude in the music department

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.

This section covers additional musical events and opportunities that we organise, such as concerts, shows, trips and events. Within the academic year there are several additional musical opportunities that take place.

- Singing as part of Hymn practice in Assemblies - Students across all year groups participate in singing during hymn practice assemblies. This allows students to develop singing skills as a large group.
- Performing in Assemblies - Students across all year groups are encouraged to perform for other students in assemblies. This platform allows them to showcase

their talents and share the pieces they have rehearsed. It is also an opportunity for students to gain confidence performing whilst celebrating their achievements in a supportive environment.

- Masses – These include welcome mass, Feast day mass and leavers mass amongst others. Students are given the opportunity to perform a full mass setting as part of the senior orchestra or singers to support the liturgy. Students not involved in the orchestra or as vocalists will participate as a school community in the hymn singing. St Joseph's College has its own mass setting which is unique to our school and has a school song which all students and staff learn and sing at all masses
- Christmas Carol Service – St Joseph's College's annual Christmas Carol service, held at the Victoria Hall, offers students the chance to perform before a large public audience. This prestigious event includes large scale ensemble performances, with solo opportunities for exceptional students, ensuring a high standard of performances. All extra-curricular groups present their work, providing them with valuable performance experience. The Carol Service is a highlight of the school's cultural calendar, fostering a sense of community and pride among students, staff, and attendees.
- Summer Concert – The summer concert offers students the chance to perform in front of family and friends. This more informal, but high calibre event includes large- and small-scale ensemble performances, with solo opportunities for exceptional students. All extra-curricular groups present their work, providing them with valuable performance experience.
- Performing Arts showcase – This is an opportunity for our students studying the Level 2 and 3 Performing Arts course to showcase their talents, performing pieces they have been diligently practicing throughout the year. This event features a variety of bands, allowing students to demonstrate their musical progress and creativity for friends and family.
- Prize night gathering recital – This is a small-scale performance preceding the school's annual awards ceremony, allowing our A Level and GCSE students to perform some of their pieces that they are preparing for their performance exam to an audience.
- Trips to Musicals and Performances – St Joseph's College offers students the chance to attend live music performances spanning a range of genres. These trips are designed to build cultural capital and enrich students' life experiences. By exposing students to professional performances, these outings aim to inspire and enthuse them, enhancing their appreciation for the performing arts and motivating them in their own musical pursuits. These trips range from free to a small fee – students that come from low income families are offered subsidised or free tickets on a case-by-case basis.
- International Trips – St Joseph's College runs a bi-annual music tour, providing students with the opportunity to experience the musical, artistic, and cultural offerings of different countries. These trips are designed to broaden students'

cultural perspectives and deepen their understanding of global arts traditions. By immersing themselves in diverse cultural environments, students gain invaluable insights and inspiration that enrich their artistic education and personal growth in addition to offering more exciting performance experiences. These trips are charged, and students that come from low-income families are offered subsidies on a case-by-case basis.

- School production – This is a large scale, licensed production of a full musical. Students can perform as part of the ensemble, or auditions to be a principal role. There is also the opportunity for our higher-level students to perform as part of the band. This is a fantastic production, using professional standard material. Students rehearse for 5 months and perform for 4 nights to paying audience.

In the future

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

The music department at St Joseph's College is very strong but we still have plans to develop the department in the coming years. We are aiming to:

- Engage with more industry professionals to offer workshops and masterclasses for students
- Use our senior orchestra more to demonstrate instruments of the orchestra to our year 7 students and hopefully increase engagement with orchestral instruments and peripatetic music lessons
- Increase uptake of individual lessons in brass and woodwind
- Encourage students to participate in more community-based performances where possible
- Continue to work with primary schools and schools without sixth forms where possible to ensure positive transitions to year 7 and 12 and hopefully continue to increase numbers of music students learning instruments in y7 and opting for A level music.