

# Music development plan summary: St Christopher's CE Academy and Sixth Form

## Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025 - 2026
Date this summary was published	September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Helen Davies
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Lancashire Music Hub – several pupils play in the County's Music Ensembles
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Blackburn Cathedral - We have close links with the choral tradition at Blackburn Cathedral and several pupils and students are choristers or members of the Cathedral Youth Choir. The Cathedral Youth Choir is 80% students from the Sixth Form.

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.

Music and Performing Arts are regarded highly at St. Christopher's and are well supported by the Senior Leadership Team, staff, governors, parents and pupils. Music education is seen as a vital part of a pupil's or student's development both academically and socially. Music runs throughout the school in worship, concerts, performances, events in the community, school productions and on other occasions and this offers all pupils and students the ability to experience music and the arts.

The Department is well equipped with two specialist classrooms and two practice rooms in the main school. The classrooms each have a suite of keyboards and computers. The Sixth Form has a specialist teaching room with both PCs and MACS allowing for a variety of composition programmes to enable student success.

As a school and Sixth Form, we deliver high-quality provision in curricular music from KS3 to KS5. At KS3 pupils have 1 hour of music a week in Years 7 and 9 and in Year 8 1 hour a fortnight with 1 hour of Performing Arts covering Dance, Drama, Physical Theatre and Musical Theatre. The curriculum is ambitious, progressive and ensures that all pupils gain an understanding of music composition, performance and listening to and appraising music.

At KS3 all pupils have access to a scaffolded curriculum which allows them to develop skills in the Elements of Music upon which all music is based and created from. The KS3 curriculum covers notation, the music of the great classical composers, instruments of the orchestra, learning to read notation and play the keyboard and this is then developed and built upon into Year 8 with study of the music of the Blues, Sea shanties and Folk Music and Film and Popular Music in Year 9. All of this builds strong foundations upon which pupils can embark on GCSE music and then A-level at KS5.

At KS4 music is taught for 5 hours over a fortnightly timetable and the AQA GCSE specification is followed. You can find a link to the specification below.

[GCSE Music 8271 | Specification | AQA](#)

Pupils can opt to study GCSE Music towards the end of Year 9 when option choices for GCSEs become available

The curriculum for GCSE Music is structured around the three main components of Understanding Music, Performing and Composing.. Understanding music covers the Western Classical Tradition from 1650–1910, Popular music, Traditional music and the Western classical tradition since 1910. There is a wide variety of music covered and something for everyone in the pieces studied. The music studied builds on the foundations and skills learnt at KS3 and is a natural progression with all music rooted in the Elements of Music and musical analysis.

In Performance, pupils study with one of the departments many instrumental teachers or can access an instrument tutor of their own choice outside of school. The department work closely with the instrumental staff to monitor progress as pupils prepare for the final examination.

Composition allows all pupils to explore creating music within a structure, handling instrumentation and working in a style that suits their individual needs.

The KS4 curriculum is adaptable to the needs of the pupils and class and a 'music for all' department policy is evident. The specification and opportunities it affords, alongside the extra-curricular programme, allows all pupils to foster creativity, build confidence and to be culturally aware.

There is strong tradition of instrumental music and all pupils are encouraged to learn an instrument from the wide range available. This compliments that taught in class lessons and allows pupils and students to further their musical experiences by getting involved in one of the departments many ensembles.

At KS5 students follow the OCR specification and this builds upon the foundations and development of skills studied from Key Stages 3 and 4. The link to the specification is below.

### [A Level - Music - H543](#)

Students will study Listening and Appraising which covers the Instrumental music of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven, Jazz Music, Blues, Swing and Big Band, Instrumental Jazz from 1910 to the present day and Programme Music within the European classical music from 1820 – 1910.

Students will also study composition and performance. Both of these are assessed by examiners and are submitted as NEA at the end of the two-year course. In performance students will give a recital demonstrating their strengths and skills in performing music on an instrument or voice of their choice.

There are two options of programmes of study available to students and they can opt for a weighted to performance option or, if they prefer, a weighted to composition option. This enables all students to play to maximise their strengths within the curriculum.

All pupils and students are also encouraged to study for grade examinations through the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College of Music or the London College of Music examinations. These offer valuable UCAS points to students in the Sixth Form from Grade 6 upwards.

All pupils within the main school and sixth form experience live music regularly whether that is at a Spirituality Day where we have visiting bands, a workshop with an African Children's Choir, the school music, assemblies and Eucharists, Valedictory Communion, Lunchtime Concerts or trips out to experience orchestral concerts, musicals or choral concerts.

## **Part B: Extra-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.

There are many opportunities for pupils and students to make music beyond the classroom, and the department has a good number of visiting instrumental staff offering one to one and small group tuition in the following instruments.

Violin / Viola / Cello / Double Bass

Flute / Clarinet / Oboe / Bassoon / Saxophone / Recorder

Trumpet / Trombone / Tuba / French Horn / Tenor Horn and Euphonium

Percussion and Drum-Kit

Piano and Keyboard

Voice (Singing)

The Department's team of instrumental staff liaise directly with parents and are all highly qualified and experienced in their field. All play or sing within the Music Profession, ensuring they can model and demonstrate for all pupils and students. Lancashire Music Service also delivers lessons to pupils within the school and we work closely together to ensure that all pupils and students get high - class tuition which enables good progress.

Pupils who have free school meals are eligible to have one to one music lessons for 20 minutes a week in an instrument of their choice. Students in the Sixth Form who attract the 16 – 19 Bursary can have one set of music lessons paid for by the bursary if it is appropriate to their programme of study. Lessons are 20 or 30 minutes in length and the cost of lessons is kept to a minimum. Pupils can opt for shared lessons or individual and you can find out more about these by clicking the link below.

[Instrumental Lesson Booklet](#)

The department has a good stock of instruments which can be loaned out to pupils and students who wish to learn an instrument.

The department has two practice rooms in which instrumental lessons are delivered and these are both equipped with a piano. One has a drum-kit and various percussion instruments and there is also a Drum-Kit in the Lecture theatre in the Sixth Form which is available for students use.

There are a variety of ensembles and bands that pupils and students can get involved in. There are no auditions and EVERYONE is welcome. There are no charges for any of the ensembles and they are all free to attend. There are three choirs;

**Junior Choir** – for all pupils in Year 7. This meets at lunchtime, weekly.

**Senior Vocals** – Upper Voices choir meeting twice a week at lunchtime.

**Cantores** – SATB choir for Sixth Form students and all pupils from Year 10 upwards meeting after school and during form time.

Instrumental Ensembles vary throughout the year but include;

**Jazz Band** – all pupils from year 7 to Upper Sixth who play at a standard of Grade 3 and above. Pupils may shadow a player in the band to gain experience and this helps them develop their instrumental skills whilst sat next to a more experience4d player who can mentor them..

**Wind Band** – all players of any ability may play in this ensemble; some players join after only a few lessons. All woodwind, brass and percussion players are welcome and the ensemble meets one lunchtime a week.

**String / Flute Ensembles** – these are run by the instrumental staff and meet for several weeks once a year to prepare for concerts or events.

**Concert Band** – This meets in the second half of the Summer Term or in the Christmas Term and involves all wind, brass and percussion players from across the school and Sixth Form playing repertoire from the symphonic wind band composers including film music scores.

The department is not averse to having student led ensembles and this is by pupil demand and in the Sixth Form is student led forming part of enrichment.

**School Musical** – This is a bi-annual event and all pupils and students from across the school and Sixth Form are welcome to get involved. We normally have around 150 pupils and students involved from being on the stage in a role to helping backstage or with sound and lighting. Our most recent production was Frozen the West End Musical for which we won a competition to represent the schools in the North West of England staging the first production out of the West End. Auditions are held for principal parts but all other roles, including the chorus are open to all.

We have close links with Lancashire Music Hub and pupils and students play in the County's ensembles. This is encouraged across the department and the Hub runs several groups from beginner to advanced that pupils and students can get involved in. The link to the Lancashire Music Hub is below:

[Lancashire Music Hub | Music Activities In & Out Of Schools](#)

We also have close links with Blackburn Cathedral and then Music Department and have choristers and members of the Youth Choir who sing weekly services and give concerts. You can find out more about the music department at the Cathedral by clicking on the link below or asking one of the school music staff for information.

[Music at Blackburn Cathedral](#)

The department looks for every opportunity to build the skills of our musicians and workshops have included the African Children's choir, The National Youth Jazz Orchestra, Percussion Day with Lancashire Music Hub and we hope to build on these in future years to make the musical experience of our pupils as rich and fulfilling as possible allowing all to flourish musically. Many of our pupils and students have gone on to study music at Conservatoire and University.

## Part C: Musical Performances and Events

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.

All pupils and students will sing in various assemblies, in Eucharist Services and will get the opportunity for musical workshops and to hear performances throughout the year.

### Musical Events 2025 – 2026

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event / Concert</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> September	Open Evening	Jazz Band
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	Archbishop of York Visit	Senior Vocals – Anthems and Mass Setting
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	Archbishop of York at Cathedral	Cantores
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> October	Sixth Form Open Evening	Sixth Form Solo performances and Cantores
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	Concert at All Saints Church, Clayton	Senior Vocals, Cantores, Jazz Band
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Sunday Parade, Accrington, Rishton War Memorial	Solo Trumpets
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Day	Instrumentalists – The Last Post; Back Yard, Entrance Hall Sixth Form
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> November	Accrington Lights Switch on	Cantores and Trumpet
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> December	FOSC Christmas Markets	Jazz Band
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Concert	Senior Vocals, Cantores, Junior Choir, Jazz Band, Wind Band and more!
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Carols by Candlelight	Cantores, Senior Vocals, Junior Choir
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Services	Senior Vocals
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> January	Speech Night	Senior Vocals

Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	Sixth Form Open Evening	Sixth Form Solo performances and Cantores	
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> February	Watoto Children's Choir	KS3 and 4 workshops	
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> February	Accrington Pals Memorial Service	Senior Vocals	
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Easter Services	Cantores, Senior Vocals	
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> May	Upper Sixth Valedictory	Cantores, soloists	
Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> June	Band and BBQ Evening	Jazz Band	
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> July – Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	CONCERT TOUR to Lake Garda and Venice in Italy	Cantores, Jazz Band. Senior Vocals	
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	Summer Concert	Cantores, Jazz Band, Senior Vocals, Junior Choir, Wind Band, Concert Band	

Several visits to watch performances are organised through the year and open to all. The A-level Music Group will attend a recital at Blackburn Cathedral in March.

Certain concerts have a nominal charge of between £3 and £5 and the Band and BBQ evening is £5 and has refreshments and a BBQ.

## In the future

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

Our plans for future musical provision include:

- Further increase the numbers of pupils undertaking music lessons
- Constantly revise the extra-curricular offer available for pupils and students.
- Increase the participation in extra-curricular lessons for students who attract the bursary and for those pupils who have free school meals and pupil premium funding.
- To further develop links in the community and beyond.
- To arrange another Alumni Concert.
- To encourage and grow all the ensembles within the department.
- Continue to work with Lancashire Music Hub and Blackburn Cathedral.

## Further information (optional)

The Department for Education publishes a [guide for parents and young people](#) on how they can get involved in music in and out of school, and where they can go to for support beyond the school.

Please email the department on [music@st-christophers.org](mailto:music@st-christophers.org) for any information on the musical offer for all pupils and students.