

Music development plan summary: Bishop Thomas Grant School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Aimee Presswood
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Anne O'Donovan (Assistant Headteacher)
Name of local music hub	Lambeth Music Hub

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.

Music is a key part of the ethos of our school, and we encourage students of all ability and experience levels to participate fully in the musical life of the school.

Part A: Curriculum music

KS3

All students have 2 periods (50 mins per period) of Music every fortnight from Year 7 to Year 9, taught by specialist teachers in devoted Music classrooms.

The KS3 curriculum is always being reviewed and adapted, with the following principles at its heart

- Everyone is musical, and everyone can improve.
- Music is fundamentally *enacted and practical*. Therefore, musical concepts are best learned and assessed through students *making and engaging with music*.

- Nevertheless, verbal knowledge can clarify and deepen our understanding of music and its contexts. Verbal and symbolic knowledge is best learned *after aural concepts are embedded*.
- We recognise that each student brings existing musical experiences, values, tastes and skills, which we honour and incorporate into lessons where possible. We also aim to broaden students' musical and cultural horizons by teaching them about musical styles they otherwise wouldn't encounter.
- A large part of developing any musical skill in any style is *practice*.
- The ultimate aim of school music is to set up musical habits, interests, and skills which will enrich students' whole lives, as listeners, performers, creators, and scholars.

As such, our curriculum emphasises **practical music-making** and dedicates significant time to **practising skills**, in the light of **continuous verbal feedback**.

These key strands run through the curriculum from Year 7 to Year 9:

1. Rhythmic understanding (aural/physical, then symbolic)
2. Pitch and tonality understanding (aural/physical, then symbolic)
3. Technical facility on instruments/voice and software
4. Skills and attitudes for rehearsing and practising, in a group and individually
5. Knowledge of/encounters with a range of musics – through performing, listening and creating
6. Listening to music in an informed, curious, enriching way
7. Improvisation/composition techniques and mindsets
8. Understanding links between music and other practices, culture, beliefs etc.
9. Performing reflectively and expressively, listening to ourselves and reacting in the moment
10. Describing and representing music symbolically (ie stave notation) and verbally

Most of these skills, attitudes and knowledge are best expressed and assessed through practical music-making. These units are always evolving.

End points

It is our aspiration that all students have the opportunity to achieve well at Music GCSE, without having taken one-to-one instrumental lessons. To this end, we aim for all students to leave KS3 Music having learned to

- sing confidently
- play a piece with two hands on the keyboard
- analyse music aurally using specialist vocabulary
- appreciate and build familiarity with a range of musical styles, including popular styles, those of the Western classical tradition, and some non-Western musics
- use the basic functions of a DAW
- generate and refine original musical ideas

- perform on their own and in a group with fluency, accuracy, expression and self-reflection, using their voice or an instrument
- practise effectively, independently and as part of a group
- read and write stave notation, lead sheets and Roman numerals for chords

Progression

Broadly, the curriculum is designed so that

- each scheme of work revisits, embeds and builds on prior learning
- students learn to execute increasingly complex composite musical activities, to a progressively higher standard with each unit

However, the physical resources available require that the order of some units be changed for some classes, including any that use the computer suite, the djembes, or the ukeleles.

Year 7

The Year 7 curriculum has a strong focus on building students'

- **enthusiasm, confidence, independence and respect** for others' musicing
- **singing technique**
- **keyboard technique**
- ability to **maintain pulse and pitch** independently and in a group
- ability to **maintain an independent part** within an ensemble
- physical and aural understanding of **syncopation and polyrhythm**
- conceptual understanding, performance, aural/visual identification and verbal description of the basic constituents of **melody, rhythm and simple metre**
- aural understanding and performance of the following tonalities: **major and minor pentatonic, major diatonic, natural minor diatonic**
- understanding of the principles of **stave notation**, and an emerging fluency in reading it
- use of the basic functions of a **DAW**
- skills in **practising performance** individually and in a group
- ability to **perform with confidence, fluency and self-reflection**
- ability to **listen respectfully and curiously** to a range of music, including peers' performances
- ability to begin discerning and describing **layers, timbres and structures** in music

Genres encountered this year include: folk songs, orchestral classical music, hip hop, West African traditional music

Year 8

This year embeds and builds on all the learning from Year 7, with a particular focus on building students'

- aural and conceptual understanding of **major and minor chords** and their symbolic representation, and the ability to play any given triad on the keyboard
- aural and conceptual understanding and notation of **accidentals**
- the concept of **keys**, and the fact that G major/E minor uses an F#
- ability to discern and describe layers (**texture**) and **structure** in a range of styles
- fluency in reading and writing **stave notation**
- **technique and solo performance skill** on at least one instrument / voice
- ability to **sing** a piece in at least **four parts**
- emerging understanding of how **genre** is suggested by specific musical features and how genres develop and are related
- ability to **sight sing** pitch
- ability to **generate and refine** original musical ideas
- **group rehearsal and performance** skills

Genres encountered this year include: Indian classical music, minimalism, pop songs, blues, techno

Year 9

This year embeds and builds on prior learning, with a particular focus on building students'

- **composition** skills, especially their ability to match **melody and harmony**, and to compose **effective melodies**
- understanding of how to **suggest mood and narrative when composing**
- ability to use **notation software**
- understanding of **sonority**: the ability to **discern instruments aurally** and describe their different **playing techniques and articulations**
- understanding of **genre** and subgenre, and the development of musical styles over time
- ability to identify genre by **analysing features aurally**
- **group singing and performance skills**, with an emphasis on **independent** preparation and practice

Genres encountered this year include: film music, Baroque music, Jazz, musical theatre

KS4

We offer GCSE Music and study the Eduqas specification. Students have 6 periods of Music every fortnight.

KS5

A Level Music has run in the past and we are looking to run it again in the future. We will follow the Eduqas specification.

Music examinations

Students are supported to take ABRSM, Rock School and Trinity performing exams in school.

Access and inclusion

Information about how we support students with SEND can be found in our policies on the website: <https://www.btg.ac/Information/Policies/>

Part B: Co-curricular music

Instrumental and singing lessons

One-to-one lessons are offered on the following instruments

- acoustic guitar
- electric guitar
- bass guitar
- drum kit
- piano
- voice
- violin
- cello
- flute
- clarinet
- saxophone
- trumpet
- tenor horn
- French horn
- trombone
- euphonium

These lessons are taught by visiting teachers in 20-minute lessons and are paid for by students' families. Each lesson costs £18. Most instruments can be loaned for a small fee.

We are committed to providing these opportunities to all students, regardless of background. Some disadvantaged students have funded lessons and these are decided on a case-by-case basis. The instrument hire fee is reduced for Pupil Premium students and waived for Looked After Children.

Students come out of different curriculum lessons each week for their instrumental lessons to minimise disruption to curriculum learning. Many students choose to take graded examinations on their instrument/voice.

Extra-curricular ensembles and clubs

We currently offer the following, which meet weekly and are free of charge

- Drumming club (Monday 1-1.30, all welcome)
- Pops orchestra (Monday 3.15-4.15, all years, please speak to Ms Presswood)
- KS3 Choir (Tuesday 1-1.30; Y7-9, all welcome)
- Chapel Choir (Tuesday 3.15-4.15; all years, by audition)
- Ukelele club (Wednesday 1-1.30, Y7-8)
- Bands club (Thursday 3.15-4.15, all welcome)
- Music production club (Friday 1-1.30, all welcome)
- Keyboards club (Friday 1-1.30, Y7-9)

These clubs may change slightly during the year. Students can check the posters in the Music Department for the most up-to-date information.

Students are also welcome to use the practice rooms before school, at break, at lunch and after school, with permission. They may also use the computer suite to compose, with permission.

Several students participate in ensembles outside of school, such as the Brixton Music Centre, Lambeth Youth Orchestra, Youthsayers and numerous others.

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.

Opportunities to perform

Informal opportunities include

- Tea-time concerts open to all students, taking place every term in the Music Department
- Cabaret concert

More formal performance opportunities include

- Year 7 Welcome Mass
- Autumn Concert
- Prizegiving
- Carol Service
- Spring Concert
- End of Year Mass
- Performances in assemblies and other school events
- Singing hymns in Year Group Masses

Other musical events which have happened in recent years and/or are planned for this year include

- A trip for GCSE Music and Y7 students to watch a concert performed by the LSO

- A musical theatre production
- A workshop for feeder Primary schools
- A house music competition
- A musical theatre experience day at Trinity Laban Conservatoire for Y9 and Y10 students
- A trip to watch *Hadestown*
- A performance by the school choirs for the Archbishop's visit, including a premiere of a piece by a local composer

We regularly pass on opportunities offered by other organisations, such as

- Trinity Laban Conservatoire
- National Youth Jazz Orchestra
- National Youth Choirs
- Lambeth Music Service

In the future

Our plans over the next few years are to

- Embed the new KS3 curriculum and continue refining it
- Build a culture of singing across all year groups
- Sustain and build numbers participating regularly in extra-curricular music
- Sustain and build numbers of students taking instrumental lessons
- Sustain and build numbers of students taking GCSE
- Service the instruments owned by the department
- Improve our music technology offer
- Update resources where needed and possible, eg keyboards
- Reintroduce A Level
- Develop further wider musical opportunities such as collaborations with local arts organisations