

# St Helen's Catholic Primary School Music Development Plan

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025 - 2026
Date this summary was published	
Date this summary will be reviewed	
Name of the school music lead	Bethany Pace/Phil Faulkner
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Music on Sea ( Local hub)
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Greater Essex 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.

## 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 speaks to children in a unique and powerful way, offering them opportunities to express themselves freely. Through music-making and musical appreciation, children engage on many different levels, taking away experiences that are deeply personal to them. Music also nurtures creativity, teamwork, and the development of personal skills. Regular practice helps children understand the value of perseverance and concentration, while performing with others highlights the importance of collaboration and striving to achieve their best.

Music is taught across the school from Reception through to Year 6. Lessons range from 30 minutes to 1 hour and typically take place weekly, with additional opportunities for music-making and appreciation offered throughout each term. As children progress through the school, they experience a variety of tuned and untuned instruments and may also access instrumental lessons through the Music Hub. Children explore multiple genres through Charanga and Musician of the Month, alongside further opportunities linked to topics and wider experiences. We are fortunate to have several music specialists on the staff who support teachers in adapting lessons to meet the needs of all learners and enhance music education across the school.

### EYFS

Children learn a wide range of songs and rhymes used throughout the day. These include songs to support learning, traditional and playful songs that build vocabulary, and songs for movement and dance. Children also have opportunities to explore musical instruments, rhythm, and sound effects independently or with an adult, both indoors and outdoors.

### KS1

In KS1, children follow Charanga in weekly music lessons, focusing on pulse, tempo, rhythm, and dynamics. They begin to experiment with improvisation and graphic scores. In Year 2, children

start learning the recorder during the second half of the summer term, exploring how to produce musical sounds and change notes.

### KS2

Throughout KS2, children are introduced to a wide range of musical genres and are encouraged to listen critically, expressing their own thoughts and responses. They learn about composers and their lives, identifying key musical features. Charanga and Musician of the Month continue to provide the foundation for these experiences, supporting the development of aural skills, composition, and improvisation.

### **Year 3**

- Introduction to part singing.
- Use of tuned and untuned percussion to accompany singing.
- Early notation work: understanding the stave, bar lines, crotchets, minims, and time signatures.
- Composition focus on 4 beats per bar and pitch direction in improvisation.
- Term 3: Recorder playing (notes B, A, G) and introduction to reading these notes on the stave.

### **Year 4**

- Glockenspiel work revisiting the stave, bar lines, crotchets, minims, time signatures, and introducing the treble clef and quavers, along with crotchet, minim, and quaver rests.
- Introduction of notation for notes C, D, and E.
- Composition and improvisation using the pentatonic scale.
- Introduction to the pBone: assembling the instrument, correct hold, and sound production.
- Application of music-reading skills combined with slide positions to play simple tunes.

### **Year 5**

- Recorder playing with a recap of musical notation and introduction of semibreves.
- Revision of notes learned in Year 3 and introduction of new notes.
- Exploration of Motown, Hip-Hop, and Jazz.

### **Year 6**

- Ukulele playing: chords C, F, G7, and G.
- Focus on correct technique, including posture and strumming.
- Understanding the difference between chords and melody lines, both aurally and in notation.
- Djembe work exploring technique and call-and-response patterns.

## **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.

1:1/small group lessons

We offer guitar, piano and violin lessons in 1:1 or small groups using peripatetic teachers through the Hub. These lessons are usually 10 minutes to try and reduce the cost to parents and take place in our music room. Instruments are available to hire at a subsidised rate.

#### KS2 Choir

Our KS2 choir practices after school and take advantage of a range of opportunities to perform both in school and in the wider community.

#### Liturgical Choir

This choir meets every week and leads the congregation in mass at St. Helens church once a month.

#### Orchestra

This group meets after school and gives children the opportunity to make music together playing a variety of instruments.

Extra curricular experiences including: Conductive Music, live events through the Music Hub

## 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.

Developing musicianship is a valued part of life at St Helen's. We believe that performing and listening to others helps children understand the importance of practice, build confidence in performance skills, and develop attentive listening habits. As pupils move through the school, they experience a wide range of opportunities to rehearse, perform, and celebrate music.

### Hymn Practice

We hold separate hymn practices for KS1 and KS2 to ensure sessions are tailored to each age group.

- **KS1** hymn practice includes plenty of actions and physical movement, using a mix of traditional and modern hymns.
- **KS2** sessions explore a broad range of musical genres, again drawing on both traditional and contemporary styles.

### Class Assemblies

Every class from Year 1 to Year 6 prepares an annual assembly to showcase their learning. Each assembly includes at least one musical performance.

### Patron Saints' Day Assemblies

Each KS2 year group prepares an assembly celebrating one of the four patron saints of the United Kingdom. These assemblies feature traditional music from each nation, and for St George's Day we welcome a local Morris dancing troupe to perform.

### Christmas Performances

All year groups take part in a Christmas celebration:

- **EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2** rehearse and perform a Nativity.

- **Years 3 and 4** present outdoor carols, with parents invited to enjoy hot chocolate as they listen.
- **Years 5 and 6** lead a more formal carol service, often following the structure of *Nine Lessons and Carols*.

#### **Other Annual Performances**

- **Year 4** presents an Easter performance each spring.
- **Year 6** marks the end of their time at St Helen's with a full end-of-year production.

#### **Choir and Community Engagement**

The KS2 choir performs at community events and local care homes—an experience enjoyed by both pupils and residents.

They also take part in the **Junior Music Festival** and the **MAT Choir Celebration**, gaining valuable experience performing in new venues and in front of larger audiences. Singing as part of a massed choir is a particularly enriching opportunity.

Similarly, **Year 2** pupils participate in the **Infant Music Festival**, where they sing alongside other schools and perform their own pieces.

#### **Wider Musical Experiences**

We make the most of opportunities offered by the Music Hub. This year, for example, **Year 5** will attend a professional performance at the Palace Theatre.

## **In the future**

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

To support the diverse musical talents within our school, we aim to broaden the range of peripatetic lessons available. Our goal is to extend instrumental tuition to include both woodwind and brass, giving pupils greater choice and the opportunity to explore new musical interests.

We are also working to develop a dedicated SEND music programme focused on building musical skills, communication, and self-expression. This initiative will draw on the full range of creative arts, offering children multiple ways to engage, participate, and express themselves through music and movement.

Several classes have already taken part in *Musical Mondays*, and we are excited to expand this initiative further in the coming year. This programme provides pupils with enriching musical experiences and helps nurture a love of music across the school.