

# Music development plan summary: Arena Academy

## Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	12/09/25
Date this summary will be reviewed	14/09/25
Name of the school music lead	Miss Tanya Alam – (Head of Performing Arts)
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr Adam Stephens (SLT)
Name of local music hub	Services for Education
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Hippodrome Education Network RBC

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.

<p><b>Subject Vision:</b></p> <p><b>Year 1 priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Implementation of peripatetic Music lessons</b></li><li>✓ <b>Development of Music Ambassador team</b></li><li>✓ <b>Embed culture of performance through lessons and increased opportunities to perform</b></li><li>✓ <b>Strengthen current ensembles</b></li></ul> <p><b>Year 2 priorities: (current)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ensure all students experience live music as part of the curriculum/co curriculum (ongoing).</b></li></ul>
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- **Raise awareness of Music careers to broaden student understanding of Music industry (ongoing)**
- **To increase uptake at KS4 to Music GCSE courses and of students working towards Music grades. (ongoing)**
- **Upgrade technology in the music department (ongoing)**

#### **Year 3 priority:**

- **To submit a successful bid for the renovation of the Music room and an additional practice space.**
- **Major improvements to equipment and resources such as audio interfaces, microphones and studio accessories.**
- **Create clear pathways for students to follow post Year 11.**
- **Develop alumni links with former students successfully working in the industry.**

#### **How do we support SEND and disabled students:**

We ensure that all pupils have equal access to and enjoyment of the Music curriculum through quality first teaching. Schemes of learning throughout Key Stage 3 include instrumental skills, performance, composition and music technology. Teachers consistently use adaptive teaching strategies to ensure that all students' needs and abilities are identified and met. Learning is scaffolded through modelled demonstrations and step-by-step processes, encouraging students to complete tasks independently once knowledge has been consolidated. Retrieval practice is embedded throughout all year groups to reinforce musical vocabulary, minimise misconceptions and support students who may not yet have fully grasped the knowledge. If students are struggling with motor skills, or wish to further develop their abilities, the department can offer peripatetic 1:1 lessons to enable students to access their chosen instrument.

#### **Curriculum structure:**

In Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9) students have one hour of Music per week. Full time Performing Arts specialists teach music lessons. The Music teacher in the department is a vocal specialist who provides 1:1 vocal coaching outside of school and also leads Stagecoach.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) students have Music three hours a week. These classes work towards the WJEC Performing Arts technical award but Drama and Music are split into their chosen discipline so there is a specific Music class at KS4. All KS4 lessons are taught by the Music teacher.

**With regard to links to the model music curriculum and opportunities within lessons for performance and ensemble work please refer the following points:**

#### **Opportunities for singing, performing and playing an instrument in lesson times:**

- Our Music teacher is a vocal specialist and therefore we have an increased opportunities within schemes of vocal/singing learning.

- All schemes of learning encourage listening and an increased understanding of different world music through appraisal and listening analysis.
- Keyboard skills are embedded across KS3 to develop melodic understanding, chord knowledge and practical independence.
- Listening and understanding music literacy is developed through rhythm reading, staff notation, chord symbols and musical terminology appropriate to each year group.
- Singing, especially ensemble singing, is taught across both key stages and gives the opportunity for students to perform together through harmonisations and lead singing roles.
- Students have regular opportunities to perform solo and in ensembles; developing confidence, teamwork and stage presence.
- Expressive performance is also stressed, especially in KS4. The importance of performance with emotional execution and expression is consistent.
- Students are exposed to a diverse and inclusive range of musical traditions, cultures, composers and artists to reflect both the MMC and a broad curriculum.
- Improvisation and composition are encouraged throughout KS3 and KS4 with SOWs covered such as songwriting, film music and Year 10/Y11 coursework (Units 1,2 &3). By the end of KS3 students would have engaged in creative processes such as compositional work, improvisation and performances throughout the school year.
- Technology is used for composing, recording and sequencing, enabling students to access contemporary music-making approaches.
- Composing is taught through DAW (music technology) follows the MMC guidelines that states that the exploration of melodic composition should be touched upon.
- Repertoire from the MMC has been used in KS3 lessons, mainly for Y9 film music topic.
- Music from 'Star Wars' which cover the Western classical traditional music from before 2000. Popular musical styles are also covered including pop, rock, RnB, disco and HipHop.
- Class ensemble djembe lessons have been taught to KS3, as suggested in the MMC.

### **Summary of Partnerships which support our Music curriculum/co-curriculum:**

We have a partnership with Services for Education, who provide weekly peripatetic Music lessons across a range of disciplines, including Guitar, Keyboard, Drums and Voice. We also anticipate introducing Steel Pans this academic year. Peripatetic lessons began in September 2024 and have been successful in developing and supporting students' skills on their chosen instrument.

We continue to offer weekly SoundLab sessions at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, where up to six students network with other young musicians and

develop their performance skills on their chosen instrument. SoundLab has also provided additional opportunities for ensembles to rehearse together and perform at the Conservatoire.

We also have a partnership with Birmingham Hippodrome, which provides opportunities for students to watch theatre productions, all of which include music and musical direction. A Hippodrome practitioner works in school one day a week to support students in Drama and Music lessons, helping to develop their passion and interest in the Performing Arts. As part of this partnership, students have opportunities to participate in musical showcases, which have previously included singing, rapping, dancing and acting.

Our partnership with the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire has also provided a range of enrichment opportunities, including a Year 9 African drumming workshop, Year 8 Careers in Music workshops, a Year 10 "Band in a Day" workshop, Year 11 curriculum support for WJEC Unit 3, a live band performance for Year 8, and support with the COREus school choir. We will continue to work closely with the RBC to provide students with further ensemble workshop opportunities. The RBC has also supported the upkeep of instruments and learning environments within the department.

In the previous academic year, we launched our first whole-school production, Hairspray. This provided students with the opportunity to develop their singing and ensemble skills. In addition, a selection of Music students performed as part of the live band, playing all of the music for the production in sync with the cast performances.

We have also previously taken part in the trust-wide choir, COREus, developed in partnership with Black Voices, which involved weekly rehearsals and public performances. This year, we anticipate launching a Gospel Choir club, led by our Music teacher alongside two musically led staff members, with the aim of preparing students for live performances.

#### **Music qualifications at KS4 and other awards:**

In KS4, students study for the WJEC Performing Arts Technical Award Level ½. Summer 2024 was our first completed series, prior to this, students studied AQA Drama and OCR Music GCSEs. We do not currently offer any other musical qualifications or awards at school.

## **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.

## **Singing/ Choirs**

- We have previously offered a weekly after-school singing club led by the Music teacher. Students rehearsed as a vocal ensemble whilst also receiving opportunities for small-group and solo vocal coaching to support performances in school showcases and community events, including performances at local elderly care homes during the Christmas period. From this academic year, Harmony Heights will transition into a Gospel Choir, providing students with opportunities to further develop vocal technique, ensemble singing, harmony work and performance confidence.
- For the past four years, students have participated in the trust-wide choir, COREus, involving pupils from across all schools within the academy trust rehearsing and performing together at public events. This provision has also developed through partnership work with Black Voices, providing students with opportunities to engage with professional musicians.
- Students involved in COREus will continue to access wider performance opportunities, including trust events and performances linked to whole-school and trust celebrations.

## **Bands / Instrumental Provision**

- Peripatetic instrumental lessons are offered in guitar, drums, keyboard, voice and steel pans. These lessons provide students with specialist tuition, opportunities for progression and pathways towards graded music examinations and musical engagement. Instrumental tuition is funded through the trust in partnership with Services for Education, ensuring accessibility for students across all year groups. Student uptake for instrumental lessons continues to increase, with waiting lists currently in place due to high levels of interest and participation.
- Students receiving instrumental tuition are encouraged to apply their learning within classroom music, ensemble performance and school showcases.
- Although we do not currently offer weekend or holiday provision, students are able to access rehearsal spaces and instruments during breaktimes and lunchtimes to support independent practice and rehearsal. In some cases, instrument loans can be organised through Services for Education to support students accessing peripatetic tuition.

## **Student Leadership / Ambassadors**

- We have launched a Music Ambassadors programme to develop student leadership within the Performing Arts faculty. Music Ambassadors support departmental events, performances and enrichment activities whilst contributing ideas towards future music initiatives.
- The programme encourages students to take ownership of the musical life of the school and develop confidence, leadership and organisational skills.

## Access and Participation

- Students can register interest in extracurricular music opportunities, including Gospel Choir, COREus, school productions and instrumental tuition, through the Performing Arts team.
- We aim to ensure that extracurricular music opportunities remain inclusive, accessible and open to students of all abilities and musical backgrounds.

## 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.

- Each year the school hosts both a Winter Showcase and Summer Showcase, providing students with opportunities to perform music, dance and drama to live audiences. Students from both KS3 and KS4 are encouraged to audition and participate, promoting inclusivity. Showcase performances include solo acts, vocal ensembles, instrumental groups and student-led bands.
- Students are encouraged to rehearse independently and collaboratively using the school practice spaces during extracurricular times.
- Students are regularly provided with opportunities to perform within year group assemblies and end-of-term rewards events, allowing them to develop confidence, stage presence and performance experience in front of a wider audience of peers.
- We also staged our first school production of Hairspray, allowing students to develop skills in singing, acting, ensemble performance and confidence. School productions will continue to provide opportunities for students to engage in large-scale collaborative performance experiences both onstage and backstage.
- Students are also given opportunities to attend live performances, concerts and theatre visits in order to broaden their cultural capital and deepen their appreciation of live music and musical theatre. Students have previously been able to watch musicals such as Hairspray, Wicked, Tina Turner and Hamilton. We plan to take students to watch more live performances such as an Orchestra and musicals at the Hippodrome.

## In the future

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

We have successfully implemented the peripatetic lesson programme, ensuring lessons are well attended and that students make clear progress. Students receiving

1:1 tuition have also been given opportunities to perform at school assemblies, events and within lessons, helping to develop both confidence and performance.

We have developed a passionate and committed student leadership team within Music. These students have provided peer support in lessons, led Music events across the school and offered technical support at performances and productions. Moving forward, we will continue to expand the leadership team to ensure students are consistently involved throughout the year and can take ownership of independent music projects.

We have created more opportunities for students to perform both within lessons and in extracurricular settings, helping to build confidence and encourage collaboration. This has been particularly successful due to the positive and supportive learning environment established within the department, where students feel safe to take creative risks and work together in ensembles.

In addition, we have redesigned the main Music classroom to create a more practical and performance-focused learning space. Rather than relying on traditional classroom layouts with rows of tables and chairs, the room now includes a performance area complete with a drum kit. Keyboards have also been moved onto stands rather than tables, giving students a more authentic and professional performance experience.

We have also strengthened and developed our collaborative groups and ensembles. For example, our school band recently including a vocalist for their performance at the Summer Showcase, demonstrating growing teamwork.

### **Year 2 – Ongoing –**

- We aim to increase opportunities for students across all year groups to attend live music events and theatre performances in order to experience professional performance settings. These experiences will continue to support students' cultural capital, deepen engagement with the subject and broaden awareness of careers within the music.
- We aim to further increase uptake at KS4 by continuing to promote music enrichment opportunities, instrument tuition and performance experiences throughout KS3. The current Year 10 cohort consists of 20 students, demonstrating positive development in KS4 uptake. Maintaining and building upon this will remain a departmental priority. A significant number of Year 9 students have been prioritised for peripatetic instrumental lessons to further strengthen confidence and progression into KS4 music pathways.
- Continued investment in resources and equipment is essential to support the growth of the department and ensure students can access high-quality musical experiences. Upgrading the current MacBooks is a key priority, as existing devices are outdated and impact the delivery of music technology schemes of learning. Improved technology would enhance composing, sequencing, recording and production opportunities across KS3 and KS4.

- Additional funding for instruments, classroom resources and music technology equipment would further strengthen practical music-making and improve student engagement and outcomes.

### **Year 3**

- We also aim to renovate the Music classroom and practice room to create a more suitable, engaging and inspirational environment for teaching, rehearsal and performance. Planned developments include a larger rehearsal/practice space to better accommodate ensemble and band rehearsals, allowing students to develop collaboration, stage presence and performance confidence more effectively. We would also aim to develop a designated performance area within the classroom, including basic stage lighting and PA equipment, to support live performance opportunities and showcase work more professionally.
- Further improvements to equipment and resources would include purchasing recording equipment such as audio interfaces, microphones and studio accessories to enable high-quality recording of student performances and compositions. Upgrading Macs and music software would ensure students can continue to access contemporary music technology provision and develop industry-relevant digital music skills.
- Creating clearer progression pathways for students post-Year 11 by strengthening guidance around further study and careers within music and the creative industries. This could include promoting routes into A Level Music, Music Technology, Performing Arts courses, apprenticeships and vocational pathways, as well as increasing students' awareness of careers in performance, production, composition, sound engineering, teaching and arts management.
- Developing alumni links with former students who have progressed into music, performing arts or wider creative industries in order to inspire current students and strengthen career awareness within the department. Alumni could support through workshops, talks, mentoring opportunities or performance demonstrations, allowing students to gain insight into real industry experiences and possible progression routes.

## **Further information (optional)**

[What We Do | B:Music \(bmusic.co.uk\)](https://www.bmusic.co.uk)

[Royal Birmingham Conservatoire | Birmingham City University \(bcu.ac.uk\)](https://www.bcu.ac.uk)

[Strategy 2025 | Services for Education | Birmingham](#)

[Annual Review 2023 - Services For Education](#)

[The power of music to change lives: a national plan for music education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[What the national plan for music education means for children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Teaching music in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/level-12-vocational-award-in-performing-arts/#tab\\_keydocuments](https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/level-12-vocational-award-in-performing-arts/#tab_keydocuments)