Music development plan summary: West Meadows Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025/2026
Date this summary was published	September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2026
Name of the school music lead	Jo McCormack
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Hanna Marsh (Headteacher)
Name of local music hub	Barnsley Music Education Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Charanga

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.

At West Meadows Primary School, we have meticulously reviewed the guidance from the Model Music Curriculum to refine and enhance our approach to music education.

Our approach to the Music curriculum ensures that it is taught discretely to ensure depth and rigour. Each year group throughout school has a minimum of 1 hour of music weekly. Our curriculum begins in Foundation 1 (nursery) where pupils are exposed to a range of nursery rhymes and repetitive songs across the curriculum and then follows the Charanga curriculum across school. Our Year 5 pupils access whole class ensemble practice through Barnsley Music Education Hub sessions where they have the opportunity to learn to play the cornet.

Our curriculum is designed with a strong emphasis on listening and appraising. Pupils have opportunities to explore a range of musical genres, play a range of instruments and develop the musical skills of improvisation, composition, performance and appraisal. Our music curriculum is built around the interrelated dimensions of music: pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre, texture, structure and notation. Pupils experience these elements of music across each unit of study with the curriculum designed in a spiral approach, allowing for the consolidation and revisiting of previous learning which is then built upon in each unit, each half term and each year. This approach ensures that our pupils develop a broad and deep understanding of music, fostering a lifelong appreciation and love for the subject.

Our music curriculum sets out pathways for progression that enables pupils to develop their musical knowledge. As a result, the progress of children in music requires them to develop musically across 3 pillars that interrelate in musicianship: 'Technical' development for pupils to translate their intentions successfully into sound. 'Constructive' development for pupils to understand how musical components come together both analytically and in the creative process. 'Expressive' development to allow children to focus on the more indefinable aspects of music: quality, meaning and creativity.

Our musical curriculum content supports pupils in developing these 3 essential pillars, which in turn support the activities of performing, composing and listening. As a result, the Music curriculum we offer is designed to meet the needs of all our pupils. It is rich, varied, imaginative and ambitious and meets the needs of individual learners but can also easily be adapted for pupils with additional needs.

Our curriculum also has a strong focus on the acquisition, understanding and use of a range of technical musical vocabulary. Pupils are introduced to new musical vocabulary through a whole school approach to language development and opportunities are built in within all lessons to consolidation past vocabulary and learn new words.

Our curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those children with SEND. Curriculum designers and teachers have high expectations of what SEND pupils can achieve and the curriculum is not diluted or unnecessarily reduced for SEND pupils. Every pupil is different and so what works for each pupil varies. Pupils' individual needs are considered and adaptations are planned to ensure the success of pupils in all areas of the music curriculum.

The way that our curriculum is designed ensures that chunks of learning are sequenced in a coherent way to enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to build on prior knowledge. Where pupils are identified with having complex needs, it may be appropriate to provide a personalised curriculum which will be based on individual needs and will retain ambition for the pupil.

Adaptations may include supporting pupils to pay attention to key aspects as well as reducing excessive or unhelpful demands on working memory. Time is also planned to ensure pupils with SEND are pre taught instructions and vocabulary to support their understanding.

In terms of qualifications and awards, our pupils have the opportunity to achieve various music qualifications and participate in music-related awards. These opportunities not only recognise their achievements but also motivate them to strive for excellence in their musical endeavours. Through our partnership with the Barnsley Music Education Hub, pupils can access further instrumental and vocal lessons through small group and one to one tuition, enhancing their skills and broadening their musical experiences.

In summary, our Music Curriculum is designed to provide a robust and comprehensive music education that nurtures the musical talents and interests of all our pupils. By focusing on listening and appraising and ensuring a structured and progressive approach to teaching music, we aim to develop well-rounded musicians who appreciate and engage with music on a deep and meaningful level.

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.

At West Meadows Primary School, we are committed to providing a rich and diverse musical education that extends beyond the core curriculum. Our co-curricular music programme is designed to offer pupils numerous opportunities to sing and play music, fostering a lifelong love for the subject and enabling them to make significant progress in their musical journey.

Whole School Music Assemblies
One of the cornerstones of our music provision is the whole school singing assemblies. These assemblies are not just a time for collective singing but also an educational experience where children learn about the dimensions of music: pitch, pulse, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, timbre, texture and structure. The collective experience of singing and instrument playing together also builds a sense of community and shared joy in music-making. Whole school assemblies also provide opportunities for our children who have individual music tuition to perform with their instruments.

Instrumental Learning Opportunities
We believe in the importance of instrumental learning as part of a well-rounded music education. At West Meadows Primary School, we provide whole-class ensemble teaching and small-group lessons to ensure that all pupils have the chance to learn an instrument. Through our music curriculum, pupils are introduced to a range of percussion instruments, recorders, xylophones and glockenspiels. By Year 5, pupils progress to learning a brass instrument, the cornet, which further develops their technical skills and introduces them to ensemble playing and provides the opportunity to perform at Barnsley Music Festival for a live audience.

Individual and Small Group Tuition
To cater to pupils who wish to pursue music more intensively, we offer individual and small group tuition for a variety of instruments. These sessions are tailored to the needs of each pupil, allowing for focused and personalised instruction. Pupils can choose from a range of instruments including guitar, woodwind and brass instruments. This one-to-one or small group setting ensures that pupils receive the attention and guidance they need to progress at their own pace and achieve their musical goals.

Musical Theatre Performances
Throughout their time at school, pupils have opportunities to take part in musical performance. These begin with whole school celebrations and festivals such as Harvest festival and Key Stage Christmas Performances. As children enter Key Stage 2 they have the opportunity to attend drama club which provides an opportunity to work towards a musical theatre performance at Barnsley Drama Festival each year. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 also have the opportunity to practice and perform an end of year musical production which takes place at a local theatre.

Our co-curricular music activities are designed to complement and enhance the core curriculum, providing pupils with a comprehensive musical education. Through regular practice, performance opportunities, and exposure to a variety of musical styles and instruments, pupils can develop their skills and deepen their understanding of music. The structured progression from whole school singing assemblies to instrumental learning and performance opportunities ensures that pupils build a solid foundation in music and are well-prepared for further musical study.

In conclusion, West Meadows Primary's co-curricular music programme offers a wealth of opportunities for pupils to engage with music in meaningful and enjoyable ways. By providing a variety of singing and instrumental activities, we aim to nurture each child's musical potential and instil a lifelong appreciation for the art of music.

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.

At West Meadows Primary School, we are committed to nurturing confident, lifelong learners who are proud of their heritage and ready to make a positive contribution to society. As part of our holistic approach to education, we provide a rich diet of experiences that nurture the whole child and provide a core offer of enrichment opportunities to set children on their journey to the next stage of their education in preparation for adulthood. A crucial component of this is our comprehensive music programme, which includes a variety of musical events and opportunities designed to expose students to the joys of performance and foster a deep appreciation for music.

Attending live performances is an integral part of our music curriculum. It exposes children to new crowds and environments, helping them develop a sense of belonging and build emotional intelligence. These experiences, which form part of West Meadows' core enrichment offer to pupils, are well-planned, coherent, and progressive, ensuring that all students benefit from them. For instance, we have held whole school performances and workshops from both Barnsley Music Hub and performance groups/companies within school, including providing opportunities for pupils to experience and learn about music from a range of cultures. This has provided children with the opportunity to experience live music in a familiar setting. Additionally, the entire school has the opportunity to attend a pantomime performance at our local theatre, which not only entertains but also educates students about different forms of theatrical expression.

Our commitment to exposing students to high-quality performances extends beyond the school premises. As part of our commitment to pupils undertaking the Arts Award each year, pupils have had opportunities to attend a range of professional musical theatre productions in a number of cities, for example Year 5 and 6 pupils undertook a trip to Liverpool to watch 'Annie the Musical' and previous visits include to Manchester to see 'Beauty and the Beast'. These experiences are invaluable in developing students' appreciation for the arts and enhancing their cultural literacy.

We also offer numerous performance opportunities for our students. Our drama club perform a musical theatre production each year at the Barnsley Drama Festival while our oldest children in Years 3, 4 and 5 perform a musical theatre production at The Academy Theatre at the end of each academic year, providing experience not only of singing and performing in front of a live audience, but also developing a technical understanding of live theatre backstage. Pupils in Year 5 also have the opportunity each year to perform at Barnsley Music Festival held at The Metrodome with a live audience, the culmination of their opportunity to learn the cornet with Barnsley Music Hub. These performances provide students with a platform to express themselves and gain confidence in their abilities. Within school we also provide musical opportunities for pupils who learn an instrument through tuition to perform in front of the school and parents.

Seasonal performances are another highlight of our music programme. In the autumn term, we have an EYFS and KS1 harvest festival performance at the local church, followed by EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 musical performances at Christmas, all of which bring the school community together in celebration. Our classes in Key Stage 2 also have opportunities to perform as choirs at various local events, singing for example at our local dementia café, residential care homes and within the local community retailers at Christmas. These events not only celebrate students' musical achievements but also strengthen community bonds and develop pupil confidence.

To ensure that music education is accessible to all, we subsidise the majority of our events and live performance visits. We also use Pupil Premium funding to allow our disadvantaged pupils to access one to one and small group music tradition at a reduced cost and subsidise musical instrument hire for all pupils. This commitment to inclusivity ensures that every child at West Meadows Primary School has the opportunity to experience the transformative power of music.

These opportunities that we provide for our children have also contributed to the school achieving the Artsmark Gold Award which recognised our commitment to providing pupils with a wide range of high quality and diverse opportunities in the arts and music.

In conclusion, our comprehensive music programme at West Meadows Primary School is designed to provide students with a wide range of musical experiences. From attending live performances to participating in their own live musical performances, our students are immersed in a vibrant musical culture that nurtures their talents and fosters a lifelong love of music.

In the future

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

At West Meadows Primary School, we are dedicated to continuously enhancing our music education provision to ensure that it meets the highest standards and provides enriching experiences for all our children. In the coming years, we plan to implement several key improvements in curriculum music, co-curricular music and musical experiences to further develop our students' musical abilities and appreciation.

Further Refine and Develop the Music Curriculum:
As a school we have introduced the use of Charanga music curriculum for the delivery of music across school from Foundation Stage to Year 6. We plan to refine this further to meet the needs of our own pupils, including through devising a bespoke and progressive compilation list that our children will explore and appraise throughout their time at school. We will also develop the Charanga music curriculum by personalising it to meet the needs of our pupils, selecting those units of study which we believe provide breadth and depth and allow pupils to consolidate and build upon key knowledge and skills each term and each year.

Professional Development for Teachers:
We will conduct regular CPD sessions to enable us to embed the use of Charanga music curriculum across school, including developing teachers' subject knowledge, curriculum knowledge, use of musical terminology and confidence in delivering music lessons. Personalised coaching and professional development will also be used to target teachers' individual needs for development based upon rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the subject. Enhancing teachers' skills and confidence in delivering music education will lead to more effective teaching and better student outcomes. CPD that focuses on developing teachers as musicians will be particularly beneficial, as highlighted by OFSTED's research review.

Subject Leadership Development:
We will also continue to develop subject leadership of music to ensure that there is strong and effective leadership of the subject which positively impacts standards and outcomes in the subject. Coaching from senior leadership will focus on the development of key leadership skills including monitoring and evaluation of standards and providing effective CPD to staff while professional development through the use of Charanga training will also develop an in depth understanding of the curriculum and progression within music across school.

Develop a school choir to provide opportunities for choral singing and performance:
We will develop an after school choir club, open to pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 to provide an opportunity for children to develop their vocal skills, learn to sing in harmony, and perform in front of live audiences, giving pupils the chance to experience the thrill of performing in both the local community and larger venues as well as being part of a larger musical community. Our aim for this choir is not only to enhance pupils' musical skills but also to build confidence and develop a sense of teamwork, collaboration and belonging.

Continue to introduce a wide range of new instruments:
Starting from the next academic year, we will gradually introduce new instruments from a wider range of instrument families. This will be accompanied by appropriate training for teachers. Learning new instruments will broaden students' musical experiences and skills, fostering a greater appreciation for music.

Further information:

To supplement our offer at school, 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.