

Music Development Plan

Saint Aidan's Church of England High School

Academic Year 2026–2027

Dear reader,

This document outlines the Music Development Plan for Saint Aidan's Church of England High School for the academic year 2026 - 2027. It builds upon the progress and developments achieved during previous academic years and reflects our continued commitment to delivering a broad, ambitious and inclusive music education for all students.

At Saint Aidan's, we believe music plays an important role in developing creativity, confidence, resilience and community. Through curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, students are encouraged to explore music practically, develop their musicianship, and experience the personal and social benefits that musical participation can provide.

Over the past year, student engagement with music has continued to grow across lessons, ensembles, concerts and wider school events. The department has also strengthened its links with external partners and expanded opportunities for live performance and instrumental learning.

During 2026–2027, the department will continue to focus on:

- Increasing participation in curricular and extra-curricular music
- Developing progression pathways for students across all key stages
- Expanding ensemble and performance opportunities
- Enhancing the use of music technology
- Increasing student leadership opportunities within music
- Strengthening links with external organisations and the wider community

Should you have any questions after reading this summary, please feel free to contact the Music Department.

Phil Dalton

Subject Lead for Music

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026–27
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mr P. Dalton
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music	Mr A. Lord
Name of local music hub	Lancashire Music Service

Part A: Curriculum Music

This section outlines what students are taught during lesson time, how much curriculum time is allocated to music, and any qualifications or awards students can achieve.

Saint Aidan's continues to provide a broad and engaging music curriculum that aligns with the National Plan for Music Education and the Model Music Curriculum. The curriculum is designed to ensure all students develop practical musicianship, listening skills, creativity and cultural understanding through a range of musical experiences.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9)

Students in Years 7–9 continue to receive one hour of music per week.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum follows a spiral approach, revisiting and developing key musical skills and knowledge in increasingly challenging contexts. Students continue to engage in practical music-making through:

- Whole-class ensemble performance
- Singing and vocal activities
- Keyboard, guitar, ukulele and percussion performance
- Music technology and digital composition
- Songwriting and arranging
- Listening and appraising activities
- Exploration of music from different cultures, genres and historical periods

Students are encouraged to develop independence and collaboration through group performance and composition projects. The department continues to embed aspects of the Musical Futures approach, supporting practical, student led learning experiences.

Music technology remains a central aspect of the curriculum. Students use sequencing and recording software to compose, edit and produce music, developing skills relevant to contemporary music-making and the wider creative industries.

During 2026–27, curriculum priorities include:

- Further embedding retrieval, oracy and literacy strategies within music lessons
- Strengthening listening and analytical skills
- Increasing opportunities for improvisation and composition
- Continuing to develop adaptive teaching approaches
- Enhancing opportunities for practical music-making in every lesson
- Developing music with collective worship

An updated curriculum overview will continue to be available on the school website.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11)

Students in Key Stage 4 continue to study the Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Performing Arts (Music Pathway), accredited by WJEC/Eduqas.

Students receive 2.5 hours of curriculum time per week across the two-year course.

The qualification enables students to develop:

- Solo and ensemble performance skills
- Rehearsal and refinement techniques
- Composition and arrangement skills
- Event planning and production knowledge
- Understanding of roles within the performing arts industry
- Collaborative and leadership skills

Students continue to develop confidence through live performance opportunities and practical project work.

During 2026–27, the department aims to:

- Continue to increase uptake at Key Stage 4
- Improve transition between Key Stage 3 and examination courses
- Strengthen assessment and feedback processes
- Increase opportunities for collaborative performance projects
- Develop stronger links between curriculum work and extra-curricular performance opportunities

- Raise awareness of progression routes into further education and creative careers

The department will continue to monitor progress carefully and provide intervention and support where appropriate.

Part B: Extra-Curricular Music

This section outlines opportunities for students to participate in music outside of lesson time.

Saint Aidan's continues to offer a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities that support students' musical development, confidence and enjoyment.

Instrumental Lessons

Students continue to have access to individual and small-group tuition in:

- Guitar
- Bass guitar
- Piano/keyboard
- Drum kit
- Voice
- Brass instruments
- Woodwind instruments

The school continues to subsidise instrumental tuition where possible and remains committed to supporting students eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

The department has also established a partnership with UpBeat Rock Academy, who deliver rock and pop instrumental tuition, vocal lessons and band sessions within school. This partnership has expanded opportunities for students interested in contemporary music performance and collaborative music making. Students also have opportunities to perform as part of UpBeat events, allowing them to gain valuable live performance experience in professional and community settings.

Working alongside Lancashire Music Service, the department aims to further expand access to instrumental learning opportunities.

Priorities for 2026–27 include:

- Increasing participation in instrumental lessons across Key Stage 3
- Developing clearer progression routes for students receiving tuition
- Exploring opportunities for additional ensemble provision
- Increasing awareness of financial support available for tuition
- Encouraging students receiving lessons to participate regularly in performances

- Further developing opportunities through partnerships with external music providers such as UpBeat Rock Academy

Ensembles and Clubs

The department currently offers:

- Worship Band
- Brass and Woodwind Ensembles
- UpBeat led band sessions

Students continue to access practice spaces during lunchtimes and after school for rehearsals, mentoring and independent practice.

The Worship Band remains an important part of the school's Christian ethos and contributes regularly to Eucharist services, worship assemblies and wider school events.

Development Priorities for 2026–27

The department plans to further develop extra-curricular provision by:

- Establishing vocal based clubs
- Increasing participation across all year groups
- Developing a more consistent rehearsal timetable for ensembles
- Expanding opportunities for small-group and student-led ensembles
- Providing leadership opportunities for older students through mentoring and peer support
- Increasing informal performance opportunities within school
- Encouraging wider participation from students with no previous musical experience

The department remains committed to ensuring all students feel able to participate in music regardless of background, confidence or prior experience.

Part C: Musical Experiences

This section outlines the wider musical opportunities and events available to students.

Saint Aidan's remains committed to providing students with meaningful opportunities to perform, create and experience music both within school and beyond the classroom.

School Concerts and Performances

Following continued growth in participation, the department will continue to provide expanded concert opportunities throughout the academic year.

Concerts will continue to include:

- Solo performances
- Ensemble and band performances
- Vocal performances
- Examination performances
- Whole-class ensemble work where appropriate

Where possible, concerts will continue to be organised across separate evenings to allow increased participation and a broader range of performances.

These concerts provide students with valuable opportunities to:

- Develop confidence as performers
- Work collaboratively with others
- Perform to live audiences
- Celebrate musical achievement

Families, carers and members of the wider school community are encouraged to attend and support these events.

Worship and Community Events

Music continues to play an important role within the spiritual and community life of the school.

Students regularly contribute to:

- Worship assemblies
- Eucharist services
- Seasonal celebrations
- School showcases and open evenings
- Community and charity events

These opportunities help students develop confidence and contribute positively to the wider school community.

External Performance Opportunities

The department plans to continue participation in:

- Lancashire Music Service events and ensembles
- Collaborative performances with local schools and community groups where appropriate
- UpBeat Rock Academy showcases and live events

The department will continue to seek additional opportunities for students to perform beyond school and experience larger-scale performance environments.

Live Music Experiences and Visits

During 2026–27, the department aims to expand opportunities for students to experience live music.

Planned developments include:

- Visits to professional concerts and musical performances
- Opportunities to observe rehearsals and workshops where available
- Exposure to a wider variety of musical genres and performance settings
- Further links with local arts organisations and performance venues

These experiences aim to broaden students' cultural understanding, inspire creativity and deepen appreciation of live music.

In the Future

This section outlines priorities for future development.

The Music Department remains committed to continuous improvement and ensuring all students have access to high-quality musical experiences.

Curriculum Development

The department will continue to review and refine the curriculum to ensure it remains:

- Broad and balanced
- Inclusive and accessible
- Ambitious and engaging
- Aligned with national guidance and best practice

Areas for further development include:

- Strengthening assessment and feedback strategies
- Embedding musical literacy and vocabulary
- Increasing opportunities for practical music-making
- Further developing culturally diverse curriculum content
- Strengthening progression between key stages

Development of Music Technology

The department aims to continue developing the use of music technology across curricular and extra-curricular provision.

Planned developments include:

- Expanding opportunities for recording and digital composition
- Increasing student confidence using music production software
- Developing opportunities linked to live sound and recording
- Supporting students interested in contemporary music production and technology-based careers

Student Leadership and Musical Identity

The department plans to continue developing student leadership opportunities through:

- Student-led ensembles
- Peer mentoring and rehearsal support
- Student involvement in concert organisation
- Leadership roles within performances and rehearsals

These opportunities aim to develop confidence, responsibility and communication skills alongside musical ability.

Inclusion and Accessibility

The department remains committed to ensuring music is accessible to all students.

Future priorities include:

- Increasing participation from underrepresented groups
- Continuing financial support where possible
- Developing adaptive teaching strategies
- Providing varied musical pathways to suit different interests and abilities
- Promoting music as an inclusive and supportive environment for all students

Partnership Working

The department will continue to strengthen relationships with:

- Lancashire Music Service
- UpBeat Rock Academy

- Local primary schools
- Community music organisations
- Parents and carers

These partnerships will help support transition, progression and wider engagement with music beyond the classroom.

By continuing to review and develop its provision, the Music Department at Saint Aidan's aims to ensure every student has the opportunity to experience, create and enjoy music throughout their school journey.

Further Information

The Department for Education publishes guidance for parents and young people on opportunities to engage with music both in and out of school.

Lancashire Music Service also publishes information for parents and carers regarding instrumental tuition, ensembles and wider musical opportunities available within the local area.