

Music development plan summary: Whitemoor Academy



Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	1 Sep 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	August 2027
Name of the school music lead	Gemma Hardy
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Rachel Fletcher
Name of local music hub	Nottingham Music Hub www.nottinghammusic hub.org.uk
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Rocksteady www.rocksteadymusicschool.com

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.

In the PKC (Primary Knowledge Curriculum), musical knowledge is developed through **singing, listening, composing (including improvising) and performing**. These musical practices are woven throughout the curriculum and are carefully sequenced so that pupils can build procedural knowledge and technical skills which allow them to begin to realise and develop their own expressive intentions through music. It provides a variety of musical experiences that develop our pupils' ability to sing in tune, understand rhythm and follow a beat. Through singing songs, our pupils learn about the structure and organisation of music. Throughout the curriculum, pupils listen to a wide variety of musical genres.

Musical 'knowledge' has been described as knowing how to make music, knowing musical practices with critical insight and knowing how music enriches the inner life: in

summary music making and music thinking (Toyne, 2021). This curriculum, which is informed by the Model Music Curriculum (MMC) (2021), develops musical knowledge within this conceptual framework. A knowledge-rich curriculum can be misinterpreted as being about knowing 'facts'. Within the discipline of music this would be a misconception: an understanding of music can only begin to develop where the language of music is explored through experience. Musical knowledge which is gained through experience (which can be difficult to put into words) is sometimes referred to as 'tacit' knowledge. In this curriculum, such experience is developed through singing, listening, composing (including improvising) and performing. These musical practices are woven throughout the curriculum, and are carefully sequenced so that pupils can build procedural knowledge and technical skills through practice. This allows them to begin to realise and develop their own expressive intentions through music.

Beginning to understand the language of music might be described as becoming more 'musical'. This is the aim of this curriculum. As such, each unit has a musical focus, such as pulse, rhythm, tempo, pitch, timbre, dynamics, form/structure, texture or harmony or a combination of these. These are sometimes called the dimensions of music. Knowledge of the dimensions is sometimes referred to as 'constructive' knowledge. Pupils may explore how music is constructed using the elements of music by listening analytically or using them as components to build their own compositions. Experience of, understanding and use of these elements build gradually throughout the curriculum. For example, in year one children begin to understand pulse by marching. By the time they reach year 6 they have progressed to learn the difference between simple and compound metre. Different pieces and genres of music are explored as examples of the different musical focus in each unit. For example, in year 4, by listening to Duke Ellington's 'Take the 'A' Train', children are able to understand the concept of the 'off-beat' in swing music, which is a type of jazz. The different elements of music do not exist in isolation from each other, so, whilst a unit will have a primary musical focus on a particular dimension, other dimensions are highlighted and used alongside the primary dimension to develop the children's musical understanding. For example, whilst studying Ellington's 'Take the 'A' Train' year 4 also learn that it includes examples of improvisation, which are an important part of jazz music. It is recognised that children's understanding of and proficiency in practising music builds with repeated experience of how the different elements of music intersect. As such these elements are woven throughout the curriculum so that children can begin to build automaticity in their musical practice.

The different genres of music which are explored in the curriculum introduce them to the wonderfully diverse story of music and build pupil's declarative knowledge of musical culture and history. Music is drawn from a variety of traditions, including western and non-western classical music, folk, and a variety of modern traditions including rock, pop and jazz. Pieces are drawn from all over the world and from periods spanning six centuries. Because the driving focus of each unit is musical, music is not presented in chronological sequence. Increasing cultural contextual understanding is enhanced by learning about music which relates to other areas of the PKC curriculum.

For example, in year 5 children learn about Nigerian drumming at the same time as learning about art from the same region.

Each unit, over the course of six lessons, follows the same structure. At first the children listen to and encounter music which will form the focus of their musical learning. This is not a passive exercise: they are encouraged to actively engage with the area of musical learning which will be the focus of the unit. They then explore the key musical ingredients and cultural context of the piece of music through active music making. Practising, improvising and/or composing then allows them further to experience and investigate the key musical focus before performing the music they have made to their peers. Evaluation of their own and others' performances concludes the process.

Each lesson in the unit also follows a broadly similar structure: warming up the body and the voice using songs which relate to the musical focus of the unit; recalling prior learning; listening to, responding to and exploring music which forms the focus of learning for the lesson; creative practice based around the focus music whether by composing, improvising, practising or performing; evaluating and reflecting at the end of the lesson. A familiar structure week by week aims to create and perpetuate an effective learning environment. Lesson 6 of each unit has an emphasis on practising for performance, performing and evaluating that performance. As such this lesson is broadly the same in each unit with no or little new learning. This is deliberate: the lesson is intended for the children to practise, allowing them to build on their procedural knowledge and technical skills to be able to perform with increasing confidence and expression.

Each lesson starts with singing as this is the essential basis of musical learning. Songs are generally revisited over the course of a unit, from unit to unit and across year groups to allow for repeated practice of familiar material, allowing children to build their singing skills. Elements of the songs chosen often relate to the musical focus encountered in the rest of the lesson. Learning music through movement (as developed by the methods of Dalcroze and Kodály) is also seen as a central element of musical development and therefore forms an important part of many lessons. Western notation is learned using the methods of Kodály and introduced slowly and in relation to a gradual increase in understanding of musical elements which the children experience as the focus of each unit. It is important that 'sound' is encountered and understood before its corresponding 'symbol' is introduced. Finally, each lesson includes an element of working with others. This is central to musical practice and may be experienced as a whole class or in smaller groups which are introduced as the children get older and can manage social cooperation with more efficacy.

Alongside this curriculum, children learn a musical instrument (violins) in LKS2 and we also ensure that children have opportunities to perform.

SEND pupils' needs are considered on an individual basis and adaptations are made to allow full inclusion within lessons. e.g using a ukulele instead of a guitar in year 4 lessons.

Miss Hardy teaches from Years 1-5 using the PKC scheme of work, adapting to the children's needs.

For the last half term, Miss Hardy works with Year 6. She uses the framework of preparing for their end of year show, to recap the curriculum areas taught in previous years. Music in Year 6 is delivered through a deliberately concentrated and intensive model. This enables pupils to retrieve, apply and extend previously acquired musical knowledge and skills through sustained singing, ensemble work, rehearsal and performance. This is an intentional curriculum decision, with the provision designed to ensure that Year 6 pupils continue to experience purposeful and meaningful Music education.

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.

Our school provides a broad range of opportunities for pupils to develop their musical interests beyond the classroom. We work in partnership with **Rocksteady Music School**, which enables pupils to learn and perform as part of a real band during the school day. Rocksteady's inclusive approach develops instrumental skills alongside confidence, teamwork, wellbeing and a sense of belonging through shared musical experiences. Pupils can choose from a range of instruments and vocal roles, allowing children of all abilities and backgrounds to participate. [\[Home - Rocksteady Music School\]](#)

Through the Rocksteady programme, pupils rehearse weekly and work towards performances, developing skills in ensemble playing, listening, rhythm, composition and performance. This provision gives pupils access to instrumental and vocal tuition and regular opportunities to perform as part of a group. [\[Home - Rocksteady Music School\]](#), [\[as-sets.publish.gov.uk\]](#)

In addition, we offer a **school choir**, providing pupils with regular opportunities to develop their singing skills and perform at school and community events. The choir promotes musicianship, confidence and teamwork whilst ensuring that singing remains a central part of our musical culture. The choir performed at Young Voices and Christmas in the city, as well as in school music concerts, during the last academic year. A group of Year 6 children also wrote lyrics for, recorded and performed the RSE day song for 2026 that was widely shared with schools across the UK.

Our co-curricular offer includes opportunities to:

- Learn guitar, bass guitar, keyboards, drums or vocals through Rocksteady. [\[Home - Roc...sic School\]](#)
- Take part in weekly band rehearsals and performances. [\[Home - Roc...sic School\]](#)
- Learn to play the guitar in a small group and perform at events
- Share performances to families and the whole school from the work that they have completed in music lessons
- Year 4 children have taken part in a workshop from the Royal Ballet and Opera, who shared skills in opera singing and theatrical performance based on 'The Magic Flute.' This is an opportunity that the Nottingham Music Hub are looking to provide each year going forward also.
- Join the school choir and perform at school and community events.
- Develop confidence, resilience and teamwork through regular performance opportunities.
- Access musical experiences regardless of prior experience or ability.

Development priorities

- Increase participation in instrumental and vocal opportunities across the school.
- Further develop progression routes from Rocksteady lessons into sustained instrumental learning.
- Expand performance opportunities for the choir, Rocksteady bands and instrumental groups.
- Continue to remove barriers to participation for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Strengthen links between curriculum music, instrumental tuition and wider musical enrichment opportunities.

This co-curricular provision ensures that all pupils have access to regular opportunities to sing, learn an instrument, perform with others and develop a lifelong appreciation 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.

Music is an important part of school life at Whitemoor, and our provision reflects one of our core school principles: "**Extra Opportunities.**" We believe that every child should have access to enriching experiences that broaden their horizons, develop confidence and create lasting memories. Music provides a powerful vehicle for achieving this through performance, participation and engagement with the wider community.

All pupils take part in **regular singing assemblies**, where they develop vocal technique, musicality and performance skills through learning a wide repertoire of songs. These assemblies

foster a love of singing and ensure that music remains a visible and valued part of school life. Singing is a key element of the National Plan for Music Education and supports pupils' wider personal development.

Throughout the year, pupils participate in a range of musical performances. Our annual **Christmas and Summer Music Extravaganzas** celebrates the musical achievements of children across the school, showcasing performances from Rocksteady bands, choir members and pupils involved in instrumental tuition. This event provides an opportunity for pupils to perform to an audience and share their musical learning with families and the wider school community. Each half term, the Rocksteady musicians have a concert dedicated just to performances that they have been working on, where the rest of the school children will attend, and parents will too.

Our **school choir** performs regularly both within school and in the local community, providing pupils with valuable opportunities to perform beyond the classroom. This includes participation in events such as **Christmas in the City**, where pupils perform alongside other schools and community groups. These experiences help children develop confidence, resilience and pride whilst representing the school within the wider community.

Additional musical experiences throughout the year include:

- Whole-school singing assemblies.
- The annual Christmas and Summer Music Extravaganza performance events.
- Foundation Stage Nativity
- Choir performances in school and the local community.
- Links with our local secondary school- children in KS2 are given the opportunity to perform in a musical and watch musical performances by our local secondary school
- Year 6 show in the summer term
- Performances linked to celebrations, seasonal events and school productions.
- Opportunities for pupils to showcase instrumental learning to parents and carers.
- Opportunities to experience and participate in live musical performances.
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Development priorities

- Continue to expand the range of musical "extra opportunities" available to pupils.
- Increase opportunities for children to perform in the local community.
- Develop further opportunities for pupils to experience high-quality live music.
- Strengthen partnerships with external music providers and community organisations.
- Ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, can access enriching musical experiences and performances.

Through these opportunities, we aim for every child to experience the joy of music, develop confidence as a performer and listener, and create lasting memories through meaningful musical experiences.

In the future

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

At Whitemoor, we are committed to building on our strong music provision so that all pupils can access a high-quality music education. Our future developments will be aligned to the **seven features of high-quality music provision** identified in the National Plan for Music Education, whilst remaining true to our school principle of providing "**Extra Opportunities**" for every child.

Timetabled Curriculum Music

We will continue to ensure that all pupils receive a well-sequenced music curriculum, delivered through the Primary Knowledge Curriculum, with regular opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in performing, composing and listening. We will further strengthen links between curriculum music and wider musical opportunities.

Access to Instrumental and Vocal Lessons

We will continue to work with Rocksteady Music School and our local music service to increase participation in instrumental and vocal learning. Our aim is to expand opportunities for pupils to progress from music lessons in school to instrumental learning and ensemble participation through Area Band with the Nottingham Music Hub. We will also seek to remove barriers to participation for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. [\[Home - Rocksteady Music School\]](#)

A School Choir or Vocal Ensemble

We will further develop our choir provision to increase participation across the school and provide more opportunities for pupils to perform both within school and in the local community. We aim to build on successful events such as *Christmas in the City* and explore additional partnership and performance opportunities.

A School Ensemble, Band or Group

We will continue to grow participation in Rocksteady bands and explore opportunities for additional ensembles where pupils can rehearse and perform together. We will strengthen progression pathways so that more pupils are able to continue their musical journey beyond first access opportunities. [\[Home - Rocksteady Music School\]](#),

Space for Rehearsals and Practice

We will ensure that pupils continue to have access to suitable spaces for rehearsing, performing and developing their musical skills, enabling instrumental groups, bands and choirs to practise effectively and prepare for performances.

Termly Performance Opportunities

We will increase the range and frequency of performance opportunities available to pupils. Alongside our established **Music Extravaganza**, each half term, children will be able to perform the music they have been working on during their music lessons, and these will be performed during a weekly assembly. We will also create additional opportunities for children to share their musical achievements through assemblies, community events and school celebrations. This will ensure that performing remains at the heart of our music provision.

Opportunities to Experience Live Music

We will expand opportunities for pupils to experience high-quality live music through partnerships with local organisations, musicians and music education providers. Both the Nottingham Music Hub and Rocksteady share live performances with the children each academic year. Also, through our relationship with the Royal Ballet and Opera, we hope to provide pupils with an opportunity to view a live operatic performance. We want every child to experience the excitement and inspiration of live musical performance, both as performers and as audience members.

Through these developments, we aim to create a culture in which music is valued, celebrated and accessible to all. By strengthening curriculum music, instrumental learning, singing, ensemble performance and musical experiences, we will continue to provide meaningful "extra opportunities" that inspire pupils, raise aspirations and foster a lifelong love of music.

Further information (optional)

For more information on how you can get involved in music in and out of school, and where they can go to for support beyond the school The Department for Education publishes a guide for parents and young people [here](#) .

Access to the Nottingham Music Hub events and ensembles can be found here <https://www.nottinghammusic hub.org.uk/>