

Music Development Plan Summary



Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025/26 – 2026-27
Date this summary was published	July 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2027
Name of the school music lead	Jamie Thomas
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Alice Amos
Name of local music hub	Devon Music Hub

This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all students 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 students and parents or carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our students' music education.

Curriculum music

What we teach in lesson time, how much time is spent teaching music and any music qualifications or awards that students can achieve.

We believe that music plays a vital role in shaping and enriching the lives of our students. The music curriculum is ambitious, broad and challenging and inspires students to pursue their passion beyond the classroom environment.

The music curriculum can be found on our website [The Spires College - Music](#)

At KS3, students have two, one hour music lessons per fortnight and the curriculum is centred around the musical elements which underpin performance, composition and appraising music. These elements are strands of learning that we consistently revisit through different schemes of learning and our extracurricular programme.

Starting in Year 7, students learn the fundamentals of music theory and how they link to the associated elements. Students learn how to read multiple forms of notation and apply these in performance, listening and composition tasks. Chords and music theory are introduced in the second term, and students are given the chance to use their knowledge in short songwriting and listening tasks. From here, students go on to learn about music production and how to create music on a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation).

In Year 8, students perform using their voice, drums, keyboard, guitar and ukulele. The musical elements, along with their associated musical theory attributes are revisited and new learning is built on prior knowledge. Students use traditional notation software and DAW to develop their understanding of arrangement and composition. The final scheme in Year 8 is a 'Battle of The Bands' project where students create their own bands, choose a song to learn and work together in groups for several lessons. The project culminates in a live 'final' where bands perform to a panel of staff judges and the year group in the main hall. The event is a highlight of the College calendar, and the students learn teamwork and communication skills as well as developing their overall musicianship.

In Year 9, students continue to build upon previous knowledge and skills for the musical elements and there are ample opportunities for students to extend their musical vocabulary. Students begin working through less traditional styles of music such as minimalism and film. These topics provide students with new challenges and a chance to further improve their skills in genres that may be less familiar to them. The second term delivers a wide range of popular genres such as punk, reggae and EDM and students create, appraise and listen, whilst revisiting the elements of music. Year 9 concludes with a remix and arrangement topic in which students refine and improve their existing skills for composing and arranging using a DAW. This scheme provides students with an opportunity to holistically recap all the elements of music and corresponding music theory before embarking on KS4.

At KS4 students study the vocational course BTEC Level 2 Music Practitioners and at KS5 Students study the BTEC Level 3 Music. Our schemes of learning continue to embed the elements of music and music theory which are interwoven throughout the coursework preparation and the coursework itself.

Co-curricular music

Opportunities for students to sing and play music, outside of lesson time, including choirs, ensembles and bands, and how students can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

Our students regularly collaborate in both curricular and extracurricular opportunities, balancing their knowledge with opportunities and experiences to practise what has been learnt.

Peripatetic lessons for piano, singing, guitar and drum-kit are delivered during the school day and tuition is subsidised for students who are entitled to Free School Meals. Instrument loan can be arranged through the Devon Music Hub.

Ensembles are delivered at lunchtimes and after school in clubs and extra curricular enrichment including:

Singing club

Guitar club

DJing and Producing club

Keyboard club

Soul and Funk band

Tech club

Saxophone club

Brass club

Musical Theatre club

All students are welcome and there are no financial costs for any of these clubs.

Rehearsal spaces are available freely at break, lunch and after school and these have a very busy uptake of students regularly planning their own rehearsals and forming bands together.

Musical experiences

Musical events and opportunities, such as singing in assembly, concerts and shows, and trips to professional concerts.

We seek to provide exciting opportunities for students through partnerships with local and national organisations and inspirational musicians giving students the confidence to pursue future ambitions beyond their time at the College.

The 'Spires Sessions' provide an opportunity for students to perform in front of their peers one lunch-time every half term. There are at least two gigs per year organised at local music venues and Sixth Form bands often perform at the Devon County Show and at local Primary Schools. Many of our musicians perform in the annual College production either as part of the live band or as performers on stage and we host an annual Arts and Technology 'Summer Festival' for soloist, duets, and small and large ensembles.

Our ensembles often perform at events in the local community including Abb Fest, the Royal Armed Forces Day, Babbacombe Downs Fayre, Torre Abbey and the Devon Music Hub Battle of The Bands competition.

For the past four years we have worked with local venues in Torquay to arrange live gigs. Our rock bands across the key stages have performed at The Griffin Bar and The Foundry several times with sell-out audiences exceeding 300 people.

We are also keen for our students to experience watching live music and theatre and all students are offered the opportunity to watch a live orchestra perform in the Great Hall in Exeter. In addition to this, we often collaborate with the Drama department to provide trips to watch musicals, and we provide the opportunity for Sixth form students to watch at least one live band perform live.

In previous years, we have worked with a local company called Sound Communities on a radio show and song writing workshops and we have had several students take part in performances run and organised by Sound Communities. outside of school.

We are keen for our students to be inspired by careers in the creative industries and have organised an 'Inspirational Talks' series: a two-week programme of talks by

industry professionals including famous musicians, actors, songwriters, film composers and producers.

We firmly believe in the power of children being able to experience music live, be that as a performer or as a member of the audience. These experiences supplement and highlight the most exciting and important aspects of what we do each day in the classroom.

In the future

What the College is planning for subsequent years.

We recently redesigned our KS3 curriculum to raise the academic rigour for onward study. The impact of this has been very positive and we are looking to further refine this next year.

We have recently purchased class sets of brass and woodwind instruments and have set up brass and saxophone clubs which are accessible to all year groups. We are ultimately aiming to implement brass and saxophone schemes of learning into KS3. We feel it's important for children to experience different types of instruments particularly those that aren't as easily accessible as traditional rock and pop instruments.

We are always looking for new experiences, trips and performance opportunities for our students and look forward to continuing our work with the Devon Music Hub to support this.