



Priestley Smith Specialist VI School

Music Development Plan

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, taking into account the key features in the National Plan for Music Education :- www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-power-of-music-to-change-lives-a-national-plan-for-music-education

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	26 - 27
Date this summary was published	May 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	May 2027
Name of the school music lead	Jonas Aaron
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Alison Hannington
Name of local music hub	Birmingham Music Education Hub https://www.sfebmech.co.uk
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Music Services for 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.

More information about our curriculum can be found here:

https://www.priestleysmith.com/files/ugd/ce7de6_5d1f1c071da348659ac8ff5a8b5775df.pdf

Curriculum Structure

Time per week is allocated for curriculum music for each key stage as follows

EYFS – 1 hour per week music, 1 hour per week Music and Movement

Infants - 1 hour per week music, 1 hour per week Music and Movement

KS2 – 1 hour per week

KS3 – 3 hours per fortnight

KS4 (music options) – 5 hours per fortnight

KS5 (music options) – 5 hours per fortnight

The curriculum is informed by the [model music curriculum](#) but adapted for children with a vision impairment and additional needs.

Our curriculum intent for music is to nurture every pupil's holistic development through meaningful musical experiences that build creativity, confidence, communication, fine-motor skills, social interaction, and aesthetic appreciation. Across all key stages, the curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils can *develop and be enriched through* their musical learning, gradually developing the skills, knowledge, and independence needed to express themselves musically and appreciate the wider musical world.

Specialist teaching

Our Music curriculum is developed by and taught by our specialist teacher in music, Mr Aaron and supported by Mr Adams, QTVI, who has a deep understanding of how children with a vision impairment access music at an early age.

In KS4 students have the option to study Performing Arts BTEC Level 1, and in KS5, students have the opportunity to study for the Arts Award, Bronze or Silver.

Additional qualifications

Pupils taking peri lessons have the opportunity to be entered for exams through Trinity College London, which now offers Awards and Certificates in Musical Development, which co-inside with mainstream criteria. These exams are open to all learners from those with profound learning difficulties to those on the autism spectrum with advanced musicianship skills, these qualifications enable everyone to have their musical achievements and progress formally recognised.

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.

All children from KS1 onwards are given meaningful and fully accessible opportunities to learn a musical instrument. Through our partnership with the Services for Education Music Hub (SFE), pupils can learn piano, guitar, violin, and ukulele, as well as take part in singing lessons. This provision is further strengthened through generous funding from the Amber Trust, ensuring that pupils can receive tailored musical support, adaptive resources, and specialist teaching that enables every child the opportunity to participate, progress and experience the joy of making music.

Through the Service for Education Music Service, the school also proudly runs a vibrant choir, open to all secondary pupils, which provides a nurturing space for children to develop confidence, vocal skills and a sense of belonging. Our choir enthusiastically embraces public performance opportunities, including singing at prestigious venues such as Birmingham's Symphony Hall, Elgar Concert Hall at the University of Birmingham, and the CBSO Centre, allowing pupils to share their achievements with the wider community and experience the thrill of performing on a professional stage.

Each summer term, pupils take part in weekly workshops with *Orchestra of the Swan*, <https://orchestraoftheswan.org> a professional ensemble known for its inclusive and creative approach to music-making. These sessions immerse pupils in live instrumental music, encourage listening and creative responses, and culminate in a collaborative summer performance, an uplifting celebration of pupils' musical growth and partnership with professional musicians.

Alongside these specialist opportunities, children are encouraged to showcase their developing talents during our annual Christmas and summer performances, as well as our annual pre-Christmas talent show: Priestley's Got Talent. These community events play a vital role in building self-esteem, allowing pupils to celebrate progress, express themselves proudly, and experience the shared joy of performing in front of peers, families, and staff.

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.

Beyond the school's own music-making, pupils also benefit from theatre visits and annual Christmas pantomime trips. These experiences broaden children's cultural understanding, expose them to diverse musical forms and storytelling traditions, and allow them to explore and enjoy different mediums of music in rich, sensory, and memorable ways.

Mr Aaron, our music lead ensures that all groups having singing included in their curriculum ([please see curriculum map for details](#))

Every year, we take KS2 to the CBSO Relaxed Concert Presentations at the CBSO rehearsal centre, which introduces them to the sounds of the orchestra, and for many is their first experience of a live orchestra in an environment specifically and acoustically designed for musical performances, delivering a sensory rich experience.

We have visits from the SFE 'Performing in Schools' with live rock music experience, which inspires further cohorts of pupils to sign up to learn a musical instrument in school.

Through the Arts Award we invite visitors from the arts community in every year, including Adam Ockelford (founder of the Amber Trust), Hugh Blackwell (singer in a professional band, as well as a teacher of Drama), and DJ Bradley Smith in, to run DJ workshops for the whole school.

We have the school jamming club, which allows pupils to come in during lunch time and try out different instruments, both in a group, and independently.

With the Orchestra of the Swan workshops that we have over the summer term, it culminates in a final performance for parents, to showcase the work, and celebrate pupil's achievements.

Our school choir joins in with the SFE Birmingham wide school Gala concerts twice a year, which are outside of school hours. Concerts are ticketed events, which helps raise money from parents for future projects led by the SFE.

Our peri lessons are funded in part by the Amber Trust, as well as a few select opportunities through SFE's partner charity Music of Life, as well as additional funding from individual parents paying the outstanding difference, which Amber doesn't cover.

Birmingham Virtual School and Services For Education have been working in partnership to provide 1:1 funding for instrumental music lessons for children in care. Schools are able to access fully-funded provision for Birmingham children in both year 4 and year 7 at no cost to the school. For all remaining year groups (year 5, 6, 8, 9 10 and 11) schools are able to access a 50% subsidy, which can be funded using the child's PP plus termly allocation.

At Priestley, we believe music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. A high-quality music education should engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. As pupils progress, they should develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon.

Studies by Prof Adam Ockelford of Roehampton University suggest:

'... music is especially enriching for the life of a child who has a visual impairment.'

In the future

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

We are continuing to embed the above to enrich the music curriculum and experiences of our pupils, and will continue to endeavour to explore musical options and experiences available.

We aim to expand our ensembles to include instrumental groups, such as a school rock and pop band, and enrich and give direction to pupils starting out their journey with peri lessons, and inspiring other pupils, as well as gaining independence. We plan to introduce this over the next couple years.

Starting from next year we are open to pupil suggestions about what instruments we can request and offer from our partnership with the SFE music hub.

Our commitment to music education remains firmly rooted in the belief that every pupil should have the opportunity to access, enjoy and succeed in music. We will continue to reflect on and develop our provision, ensuring that it evolves to meet the diverse needs of all learners. By seeking new approaches, embracing inclusive practice and responding to pupil voice, we aim to remove barriers and create meaningful musical experiences for everyone. We remain dedicated to ongoing growth, ensuring that music within our school is accessible, engaging and enriching for all.