Music development plan summary: Castleside Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026 - 2027
Date this summary was published	Sept 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	Sept 2027
Name of the school music lead	Jo Woodhall
Name of local music hub	Durham Music Education Hub

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.

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.

Curriculum Overview

Our aim is first and foremost to help children to feel that they are musical, and to develop a life-long love of music. An overview of the music curriculum for each year group is available on our school website. At our school, we have timetabled music lessons in all year groups each week.

In EYFS, we teach music as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year and as part of the specific area, Expressive Arts: Being Imaginative. We relate the musical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). Music contributes to a child's personal and social development. 'Counting Songs' foster a child's mathematical ability and songs from different cultures increase a child's knowledge and understanding of the world.

We use the Charanga Music scheme for our lessons to teach the National Curriculum for Music at KS1–2. Each class teacher uses the scheme and adapts it to ensure every child can access and enjoy music within our school.

When using the scheme and its progressive week-by-week lessons, we are meeting all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and progress is evident through observations and children's performances.

We explore music through the inter-related dimensions of music: performing, listening, composing, and the history of music. We focus on developing the skills, knowledge and understanding that children need in order to become confident performers, composers, and listeners. Children will develop the musical skills of singing, playing tuned and un-tuned instruments, improvising and composing music, and listening and responding to music.

Our curriculum introduces children to music from all around the world and across generations, thereby helping them to develop an understanding of the history and cultural context of the music that they listen to, and teaching them to respect and appreciate the music of all traditions and communities.

Pupils are taught musical notation and how to compose music. Composing or performing using body percussion and vocal sounds is also part of the curriculum, which develops the understanding of musical elements without the added complexity of an instrument.

As children progress through the school, we expect them to maintain their concentration for longer and to listen to more extended pieces of music. Children develop descriptive skills in music lessons when learning about how music can represent feelings and emotions.

Through music, our curriculum helps children develop transferable skills such as team-working, leadership, creative thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and presentation and performance skills. These skills are vital to children's development as learners and have a wider application in their general lives outside and beyond school.

Discussions with children demonstrate an increasing knowledge of key music vocabulary being recalled. Observations show all pupils engage and are active during the lessons, including SEND.

Instrumental Tuition

We have a wide range of instruments that can be used in music lessons and our curriculum.

The DfE's Model Music Curriculum 2021 states that: 'In Years 3 or 4, it is recommended that each class should: '*start a whole-class instrumental programme lasting a minimum of one term...Opportunities for development should continue beyond the mandatory term*.'

All children in Year 3/4 take part in whole class instrument tuition during lessons. In Year 3/4 children learn to play the ukulele and in Year 5/6 they learn to play the recorder. Ukulele lessons are taught by music specialists delivering a 10-week unit of work to our children.

Planning

Our long-term planning shows which units of the Charanga Music scheme that we have chosen to teach.

Our medium-term planning details the progression of skills and knowledge within each year group to ensure that attainment targets are securely met by the end of EYFS, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Individual lesson plans include guidance on differentiation to allow all children to access the music lessons and subject specific guidance is provided for teaching staff to allow non-music specialists to teach with confidence.

Adaptation

We recognise that there are children of widely different musical abilities in all classes, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a variety of ways by:

- Setting open-ended tasks which could have a variety of responses;
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty (not all children complete all tasks);
- Grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;
- Providing resources depending on the ability of the child;
- Using teaching assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children

SEND

We strive to remove barriers to learning for pupils with SEND. Adopting a positive and proactive approach will ensure that children with SEND are able to express themselves and take an active part in lessons. Explicit instructions and scaffolding enable all pupils to achieve and succeed in music.

Pupils with additional needs are able to participate and progress well (supported by technology, tools and adapted instruments).

Resources

We have a range of percussion instruments including: large percussion instruments, selections of instruments from other cultures, xylophones & glockenspiels, keyboards & pianos, songbooks and Christmas production packs, CDs, music stands, recorders, drums, guitars, and Charanga resources.

Space and resources allow breadth of curriculum for all students, including music technology. The school iPads are installed with applications which enable them to be used as instruments and for composition.

Extra-curricular Music and Enrichment

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 Castleside Primary School we are fortunate to have many opportunities for the children to develop their music skills. Weekly singing assemblies take place with a wide range of songs being learnt and performed. The children take part with confidence and enthusiasm.

Durham Music Service has provided various workshops and whole-class tuition in recent years, from performances in assembly to whole class music tuition in the recorder and ukulele. Their whole-class tuition programme has provided high-quality music education, tailored to meet the needs of our pupils.

We offer extracurricular activities including singing and 1:1 or small group peripatetic music lessons for brass instruments, which also provide children with experience of making music. An increasing proportion of pupils are involved.

Throughout the year our children enjoy taking part in Christmas productions, music performances and singing within class assemblies which are performed to parents and peers. We also have some children who take part in music hub performances outside of school.

Pupils across school also have the opportunity to perform with our choir. Groups of children have also performed at the local church and sung carols at the local shops.

Musical Events and Performances

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.

In addition to the planned curriculum time for music, children at our school benefit from a wide range of musical experiences throughout the year, both individually and as a whole school. These experiences are integral to the overall planning and time allocation for music across the school.

Across all key stages, pupils have regular opportunities to engage with live musical theatre and to participate in musical productions such as Christmas plays, nativities, the Year 6 summer performance, and arts-focused outcome events. We are lucky that a former pupil is a regular Glastonbury performer and often shares her talents with our children.

Music is embedded across the wider curriculum, enabling children to apply and explore musical concepts in real-life and academic contexts, such as History and PE.

Curriculum enrichment is supported by visitors and workshops. Music also features prominently in the daily life of the school, including weekly assemblies, singing assemblies, classroom routines, and special celebrations.

We make strong use of our partnership with the Durham Music Service to support pupils' progression with instrumental learning and ensemble performance.

The overall musical provision at our school is diverse and inclusive, celebrating a wide range of musical styles, genres, and traditions. This ethos is reflected in our clubs and enrichment programme, which draw on the skills, talents, and interests of staff and local stakeholders.

Music is also played and enjoyed during key moments of the school week, such as welcoming families at the school gate, during morning routines and Friday home time, helping to build a vibrant musical culture. Parents and carers are highly supportive of music-making at our school, attending productions, supporting home learning, and contributing to a positive musical environment for all.

In 2025-26, our children had the opportunity to take part in several Trust wide performances, including singing in a Trust choir at a carol service in Newcastle Cathedral and celebration event to mark the launch of our Trust's new name. In summer 2026, we also had the opportunity to take part in a Trust wide performance 'Magic at the Musicals' at the Gala Theatre, Durham. This provided children with the experience of a performing in a professional theatre to a large audience.

In the future

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

Links with external music organisations – to support recruitment of children for instrumental and after school activities, alongside inspiring future musicians and opportunity to see a live concert.

School orchestra/ ensemble – build uptake of instruments to work towards a school orchestra. Attempt a music ensemble paid for by children to be run by a visiting music teacher.

Performance opportunities – broaden the range of performance opportunities for children in school and beyond for parents to attend.

Audience Opportunities - develop closer links with secondary schools in the Trust to provide opportunities for our children to attend live performances at the secondary school.

Musical engagement with other schools in the Trust – continue to develop opportunities to work with other primary and secondary schools across the Trust in

whole Trust musical events including carol service and summer showcase event. Develop links to utilise equipment and resources at secondary schools such as recording studio and drama hall.

Additional funding from hub/charities/fundraising – proactively try to find additional funding for music (e.g. PTA; local charities; fundraising in school from performances, etc). A successful grant application in 24/25 supported the purchase of 30 ukuleles and provision to establish a ukulele café, where the local community could come along and play alongside our children!