

Music development plan summary: Lancaster Royal Grammar School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025 - 2026
Date this summary was published	August 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	August 2026
Name of the school music lead	Rose Martin
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	n/a
Name of local music hub	Lancashire Music Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	n/a

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.

At LRGS, all pupils in KS3 study Music. Pupils in years 7-8 have three 45-minute lessons per fortnight in a well-equipped music classroom, in a specialised Music block with additional practice rooms. This is in line with recommendations from the National Curriculum and the Model Music Curriculum (March 2021). At year 9, this is reduced as pupils enter an Expressive Arts carousel, of which Music is one of four components, timetabled for around nine double lessons (1.5 hours) per year.

Curriculum overviews are published on the school website, with more in-depth overviews of curriculum intent sent to parents to accompany grades as these are issued. These are informed by the Model Music Curriculum (March 2021) and the National Curriculum for Music.

Lesson time at all stages of our Music provision is split between three main areas – Performance, Composition and Appraising - each of which builds skills that transfer

across to the other areas. Our curriculum is ambitious and accessible, taking into account the learning journey of each individual child, from the tentative to the experienced, planning to pick up from KS2 foundations and extend as far as specialist music higher education and beyond into high-level music careers. As a department, we believe music can enrich the lives of every student; their individual learning journeys in this subject are valued and of equal importance. Our curriculum is designed to allow pupils from all backgrounds to thrive, including pupils with SEND, with clear visual, aural and in some cases physically modelled instructions embedded and repeated throughout each unit, a focus on individual target-setting in practical tasks, and inclusion of a wide variety of musical styles and approaches. We offer both GCSE and A-level, building the earlier stages of our curriculum to enable opportunities to study our subject further where there is the desire of our pupils to do so. By the end of Key Stage 3, our curriculum equips our students to enter GCSE study having mastered written musical analysis, performance and composition in a broad range of styles, from musical theatre to minimalism.

We design our formative assessments to promote self-reflection and further learning, using these to shape and steer our ongoing curriculum. These align with our school assessment strategy. There are opportunities for both self and peer assessment in lessons, and pupils are encouraged to engage with the schemes of assessment which are shared via their booklets, discussing, questioning and developing an understanding of how they are assessed in Music.

The department uses a range of instruments during lessons, aimed to provide a diverse experience and to underpin musical understanding; the class set of keyboards are particularly beneficial here, encouraging the development of coordination and skill. We frequently use electronic composition software, empowering pupils to develop their skills in these platforms as they learn to both compose and perform within them. There are several rooms for music tuition and individual/small group practice within the department, with pupils also encouraged to develop their software composition skills in two lunch time composition clubs.

Our curriculum is designed to give as broad as possible an introduction to music from places, times and styles from across the world. We aim for our pupils to understand the human history of music – for example through the study of folk or blues traditions – as well as the function in the industry today – via our video game unit. Pupils immerse themselves as learners, analysing as well as reproducing these styles throughout their KS3, KS4 and KS5 curricula.

Our performance strand includes regular singing, clapping, body percussion and performing on keyboards, ukulele and other instruments, to allow pupils to develop control, self-awareness, problem-solving skills, a team work ethic and strong ensemble skills.

Our music department works with a range of technology, with a specialism in using Ableton software in the classroom, in one-to-one lessons and at clubs, as well as

Bandlab and Musescore – a software that teaches all pupils to engage with traditional music notation, regardless of prior experience with this.

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.

At LRGS we offer a very wide range of specialist tuition, each discipline reinforced by extra-curricular ensembles and performance opportunities. Pupils have the opportunity to learn violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, cornet, trombone, tuba, piano, drumkit, electric or acoustic guitar, bass guitar, singing or music production. All pupils have the opportunity to work as soloists, in small ensembles or larger ensembles as part of the range of performances included in the department schedule – from concerts to services, festivals, Open Day, assemblies, informal performance clubs and the Young Musician of the Year competition. In the Summer term of each year, we offer a taster series, which is a unique opportunity for our pupils to sign up for a trial run of individual instrumental lessons without needing to commit beyond half a term of lessons. This is a popular initiative which inspires families to try out lessons without a longer-term commitment.

Ensembles and clubs on offer include two choirs (open to any level of ability, taking part in formal choral services twice a year), composition club (open to every pupil in the school), joint schools' symphony orchestra, big band, brass ensemble, woodwind ensemble, string group, folk group and chamber music coaching.

Our clubs welcome and encourage the involvement of pupils from all backgrounds, with all levels of experience, and allow pupils with SEND to get involved and succeed with, for example, Album Discussion Club and Composition Club offering a quiet space for individual, supported, work at any level; choirs encouraging singing for wellbeing; and our higher level ensembles, such as orchestra and Big Band, tackling ambitious and important repertoire to stretch and challenge advanced musicians.

Pupils have access to practice rooms to develop their individual skills, rehearse together as ensembles and work on their composition. These spaces are booked with music staff, who supervise these sessions as necessary.

Local and national ensembles are advertised within the department, and pupils are encouraged to find out more about these. Staff links with the Royal Northern College of Music keep the very highest level of workshops, summer schools and possibilities for further study on the radar for our pupils. Our links with Lancashire Music Service help encourage the involvement of our pupils with county ensembles, courses, workshops and other opportunities.

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.

The musical experiences of the school extend widely beyond the curriculum, forming part of our pupils' cultural, social, spiritual and moral development in a number of ways. The department has several annual performance opportunities on offer, including Youth Jazz night as part of the Lancaster Music Festival, Autumn and Summer concerts, Young Musician of the Year (including informal heats that run for several weeks and a grand final judged by an external adjudicator), choral carol services at Lancaster Priory, Founders' Day, Speech Day, Grammarfest, Open Day and other, smaller opportunities such as regular playing in assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to perform to their year group at the beginning of KS3 assemblies.

The department takes an annual trip to see a professional musical, concert or opera – both to tie in with curricular study of these but also to offer opportunity and awareness of musical careers for students not directly involved with their study.

The pupils in the school choir have the opportunity to take part in an annual workshop and performance with Leeds Conservatoire Contemporary Pop Choir, learning new repertoire, singing with children from other local schools and engaging with performance at a professional level.

In the future

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

While we are proud of the ambition, range and accessibility of our music offer, we are a reflective department, and regularly strive to adapt our curricula year-on-year to support, challenge and inspire our pupils by changing and extending our units of work, assessed activities and reviewing our co-curricular offer to add new groups that meet the demand of our pupils. Similarly, we continue to review our trips and visits, developing ideas for new workshops and experiences that will educate and inspire our pupils.