Music development plan summary: Darton Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026/2027
Date this summary was published	15th September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Staci Halford
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Nicole Creamer
Name of local music hub	Barnsley Music Education Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Rocksteady Music School Young Voices Barnsley Youth Choir

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 Darton Primary School, we have reviewed the guidance from the Model Music Curriculum to refine and enhance our approach to music education. We have adopted the HCAT music curriculum overview. Our curriculum is designed with a strong emphasis on listening and appraising, and, through our Music units, children will explore and be exposed to throughout a range of songs, genres and musical pieces during their time at school. This approach ensures that our pupils develop a broad and deep understanding of music, fostering a lifelong appreciation and love for the subject.

Our approach to the Music curriculum ensures that it is taught discretely to ensure depth and rigour. Each class throughout school has up to 1 hour of music weekly, with Year 4 accessing whole class ensemble practice through Barnsley Music Education Hub with Ukeleles.

Our Music Curriculum uses Charanga and the HCAT music curriculum units each half term to teach music. The Darton progressive curriculum document supports the progression of substantive content and concepts, which have been carefully selected and well-sequenced, so a child should know more and revisit knowledge and concepts to ensure depth and rigour over time. The key concepts, principles and themes have been developed from the National Curriculum and model Music Curriculum into a range of progressive knowledge and skills

through which the children are helped to grow and develop to succeed in 21st century Britain. This progressive curriculum allows a purposeful way of teaching and learning, enabling us to provide a more meaningful and sequential approach to the scheme for Music.

Our music curriculum sets out pathways for progression that enables pupils to develop their musical knowledge. As a result, the progress of children in music requires them to develop musically across 3 pillars that interrelate in musicianship: 'Technical' development for pupils to translate their intentions successfully into sound. 'Constructive' development for pupils to understand how musical components come together both analytically and in the creative process. 'Expressive' development to allow children to focus on the more indefinable aspects of music: quality, meaning and creativity.

At Darton, we have segmented these pillars further to scaffold and support pupils development in music into 6 key areas:

- Singing
- Listening
- Composing
- Musicianship
- Performing
- Musical History

Our musical curriculum content supports pupils in developing these 3 essential pillars, which in turn support the activities of performing, composing and listening. As a result, the Music curriculum we offer is designed to meet the needs of all our pupils. It is rich, varied, imaginative and ambitious and meets the needs of individual learners but can easily be adapted for pupils with additional needs.

Our curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those children with SEND. Curriculum designers and teachers have high expectations of what SEND pupils can achieve and the curriculum is not diluted or unnecessarily reduced for SEND pupils. Every pupil is different and so what works for each pupil varies. Pupils' individual needs are considered, and adaptations are planned to ensure the success of pupils in all subjects.

The way that our curriculum is designed ensures that chunks of learning are sequenced in a coherent way to enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to build on prior knowledge. Where pupils are identified with having complex needs, it may be appropriate to provide a personalised curriculum which will be based on individual needs and will retain ambition for the pupil.

Adaptations may include supporting pupils to pay attention to key aspects as well as reducing excessive or unhelpful demands on working memory. Time is also planned to ensure pupils with SEND are pre taught instructions and vocabulary to support their understanding. The Charanga units are well presented with enhanced visuals, and opportunities for revision and repetition across the music curriculum. Our pupils enjoy their music lessons.

In terms of qualifications and awards, our pupils can achieve various music qualifications and participate in music-related awards through their involvement with Rocksteady Music tuition, and the Class 3 recorder. These opportunities not only recognise their achievements but also motivate them to strive for excellence in their musical endeavours. Through our partnership with the Barnsley Music Education Hub, pupils can access further instrument lessons, enhancing their skills and broadening their musical experiences.

In summary, our Music Curriculum is designed to provide a robust and comprehensive music education that nurtures the musical talents and interests of all our pupils. By focusing on listening and appraising and ensuring a structured and progressive approach to teaching music, we aim to develop well-rounded musicians who appreciate and engage with music on a deep and meaningful level.

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 Darton Primary School, we are committed to providing a rich and diverse musical education that extends beyond the core curriculum and is in line with the Enrichment Benchmarks. Our co-curricular music programme is designed to offer pupils numerous opportunities to sing and play music, fostering a lifelong love for the subject and enabling them to make considerable progress in their musical journey. We also make important links with Music and the wider curriculum to embed and enrich our pupil's musical experiences.

School Choir Club
Our after-school choir club, open to KS1 & KS2 pupils, is a vibrant part of our music programme throughout the academic year. The choir provides an opportunity for children to develop their vocal skills, learn to sing in harmony, and perform in front of live audiences. Notably, our choir participates in prestigious events such as Young Voices, giving pupils the chance to experience the thrill of performing in large venues and being part of a larger musical community. These performances not only enhance their musical skills but also build confidence and teamwork.

Instrumental Learning Opportunities
We believe in the importance of instrumental learning as part of a well-rounded music education. At Darton Primary School, we provide whole-class ensemble teaching and small-group lessons to ensure that all pupils have the chance to learn an instrument. This includes both un-tuned instruments and glockenspiels from EYFS and KS1. In Year 4, pupils further develop their musical journey by learning the ukelele, which helps them develop basic musical skills such as reading notation and playing in time.

Rocksteady Music Sessions
Our partnership with Rocksteady Music brings an exciting dimension to our music provision. Rocksteady delivers sessions where children can learn to sing and play contemporary instruments such as drums, keyboards, and electric guitars. These sessions are highly engaging and allow pupils to explore different genres of music, fostering creativity and enthusiasm. The hands-on experience with modern instruments also helps to keep pupils motivated and interested in their musical development.

Individual and Small Group Tuition
To cater to pupils who wish to pursue music more intensively, we offer individual and small group tuition for a variety of instruments. These sessions are tailored to the needs of each pupil, allowing for focused and personalised instruction. Pupils can choose from a range of instruments including guitar and keyboard. This one-to-one or small group setting ensures that pupils receive the attention and guidance they need to progress at their own pace and achieve their musical goals.

Our co-curricular music activities are designed to complement and enhance the core curriculum, providing pupils with a comprehensive musical education. Through regular practice, performance opportunities, and exposure to a variety of musical styles and instruments, pupils can develop their skills and deepen their understanding of music. The structured progression and performance opportunities ensures that pupils build a solid foundation in music and are well-prepared for further musical study.

In conclusion, Darton Primary's co-curricular music programme offers a wealth of opportunities for pupils to engage with music in meaningful and enjoyable ways. By providing a variety of singing and instrumental activities, we aim to nurture each child's musical potential and instil a lifelong appreciation for the art 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.

At Darton Primary School, we are committed to nurturing confident, lifelong learners who are proud of their heritage and ready to make a positive contribution to society. A crucial component of this is our comprehensive music programme, which includes a variety of musical events and opportunities designed to expose students to the joys of performance and foster a deep appreciation for music.
Attending live performances complements our music curriculum and exposes children to new environments. It is our aim that pupils will have the opportunity to visit a theatre to experience a high- quality performance.

We also invite musicians into school to offer our pupils workshops using drums, which enable pupils to experience live music and also learn skills to perform it ensemble. We also have a live theatre performance from a theatrical group who visit school.

All our pupils have the opportunity as a class to perform music to their parents as part of a curriculum sharing assembly each year. These assemblies have been well attended and have allowed pupils to showcase their musicianship alongside other curriculum experiences.

We also offer numerous performance opportunities for our students. Our choir participates in events such as Young Voices, where they perform alongside thousands of other children, creating a memorable and inspiring experience. Additionally, we host concerts by our Rocksteady Bands, where students showcase their talents to the whole school and parents. These performances provide students with a platform to express themselves and gain confidence in their abilities.

Seasonal performances are another highlight of our music programme. In the Autumn term, we have an EYFS and KS1 nativity performance, which brings the school community together to celebrate the festive season. These events not only celebrate students' musical achievements but also strengthen community bonds. We also visit the church at Christmas as a whole school to take part in prayer and song to celebrate as a community. Our pupils rehearse and practice for these occasions to maximise their singing performance .
Our Year 6 students have the opportunity to participate in an end-of-year production, performing on stage with musical accompaniment and vocals.

To ensure that music education is accessible to all, we subsidise the majority of our events and live performance visits. Additionally, through our partnership with the Rocksteady Organisation, we offer bursary places to disadvantaged pupils who might otherwise face barriers to accessing music tuition. This commitment to inclusivity ensures that every child at Darton Primary School has the opportunity to experience the transformative power of music.

In conclusion, our comprehensive music programme at Darton Primary School is designed to provide students with a wide range of musical experiences. From attending live performances to participating in seasonal concerts, our students are immersed in a vibrant musical culture that nurtures their talents and fosters a lifelong love of music.

In the future

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

At Darton Primary School, we are dedicated to continuously enhancing our music education provision to ensure that it meets the highest standards and provides enriching experiences for all our students. In the coming years, we plan to implement several key improvements in curriculum music, co-curricular music, and musical experiences to further develop our students' musical abilities and appreciation.

Develop opportunities for musical experience under the Arts & Culture Benchmark
It is our intention to build more provision into giving our pupils opportunities to attend live performances of a range of music throughout the year, as well as offering workshop-based experiences where pupils get to explore a wider range of instruments. We also aim to further develop opportunities for our pupils to showcase their musical skills by introducing more events into our social calendar. It is our intention that several year groups will visit a live theatre event in the coming year.

Professional Development for Teachers:
We will continue to conduct regular CPD session, focusing on identified needs through learning walks and staff feedback. These sessions will cover various aspects of music education, including new teaching strategies, assessment techniques, and use of technology in music. Enhancing teachers' skills and confidence in delivering music education will lead to more effective teaching and better student outcomes. CPD that focuses on developing teachers as musicians will be particularly beneficial, as highlighted by OFSTED's research review.

Assessing the Music Curriculum
The music subject leader will regularly review assessment data to pinpoint areas where students potential gaps in students' learning needs to be addressed. Pupils will perform with both voices and instruments each term, and a recording will be made to snapshot their progress at that time. Pupils will also be given opportunities to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through pupil voice activities.

Continue to introduce a wide range of new instruments:
Starting from the next academic year, we will gradually introduce new instruments from a wider range of instrument families. This will be accompanied by appropriate training for teachers. Learning new instruments will broaden students' musical experiences and skills, fostering a greater appreciation for music.

Further information:

To supplement our offer at school, the Department for Education publishes a guide for parents and young people on how they can get involved in music in and out of school, and where they can go to for support beyond the school.