

Music development plan summary: Milton Keynes Academy

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026 - 2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Shannon Cooper
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Shannon Cooper Donna Singleton
Name of local music hub	BMLK HUB
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Music Cooperative

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.

Our curriculum is built around the philosophy that practical and independent opportunities are at the heart of learning, helping students to develop a deeper understanding of the meaning and purpose of music (Rogers, 2019). These experiences are essential for developing physical muscle memory, supporting cognitive development and building confidence in performance.

Within this approach, we explore three key areas of musical development: **practical, listening and performance**. The practical element focuses on the physical experience of playing an instrument, composing and creating music through doing. Listening enables students to develop a broad repertoire of musical knowledge, providing the foundations for understanding, appreciation and emotional connection. Performance brings these elements together, allowing students to apply their developing skills, communicate musical ideas and build confidence.

At KS3, students receive two hours of music education each fortnight. This time is used to explore a variety of instruments, musical styles, music theory and key areas of development across practical music- making, listening and performance. Lessons are designed to be inclusive and accessible, enabling **ALL** students to develop confidence, creativity and independence as individuals. To support students with additional needs we plan and adapt our lessons using appropriate strategies to ensure that all students have the same opportunity to experience making progress in their lessons.

In Year 9, we extend these lessons with a focus on GCSE preparation and instrumental development. Students are introduced to the key areas of study they will encounter at GCSE, including performance, composition, listening and appraising, allowing them to build a strong foundation and develop confidence before beginning their formal BTEC/GCSE course.

This link takes you to the bridging document that explains the sequence of learning from Year 7 – Year 9 – [Sequence of Learning](#)

At KS4, students can continue their music education and gain a Pearson BTEC qualification in Music. The course has been carefully chosen to provide an inclusive and accessible pathway for all students, regardless of their previous musical experience or level of instrumental ability. Students develop a broad range of practical and creative skills through three key areas: composing, performing and music production. This allows students to explore music in a variety of ways and discover areas that best suit their individual strengths, interests and aspirations. The practical nature of the course enables students to develop their confidence, independence and creativity, while working with industry-standard equipment and technology within our newly developed music facilities.

The course also encourages students to develop their understanding of the wider music industry and the skills required to work collaboratively and professionally. By offering a combination of performance, composition and music production, the BTEC provides students with a diverse and engaging musical education, while equipping them with valuable transferable skills and a strong foundation for further study or progression into the creative industries.

This link takes you to the specification document for the BTEC Level 1-2 tech award in Music [Pearson]

[https://ceatcloud-my.sharepoint.com/personal/shannon_cooper_miltonkeynesacademy_org_uk/Documents/Downloads/btec-tech-award-music-practice-2022-spec%20\(1\).pdf](https://ceatcloud-my.sharepoint.com/personal/shannon_cooper_miltonkeynesacademy_org_uk/Documents/Downloads/btec-tech-award-music-practice-2022-spec%20(1).pdf)

Part B: Co-curricular music

Extra-Curricular Opportunities.

We are delighted to have recently completed a **brand-new renovation of our Music facilities**, creating an inspiring and modern environment for students to develop their musical knowledge, skills and confidence. Our newly refurbished Music practice rooms are equipped with **new instruments, equipment and resources**, including pianos, guitars, bass guitars and drums, giving students access to high-quality facilities to support their musical development.

Our facilities now include a dedicated recording studio equipped with Apple Mac technology, Logic Pro and a state-of-the-art mixing desk and recording equipment, enabling students to experience professional recording, production, mixing and editing. We also have a fully equipped ensemble room, providing a dedicated space for rehearsals, performances and collaborative music-making, alongside a number of practice rooms that allow students to develop their individual instrumental and vocal skills. In addition, our new digital computer suite is equipped with modern computers, headphones and recording equipment, providing students with the technology and resources needed to explore composition, sequencing, music production and digital creativity.

In addition to our curriculum provision, we are proud to offer fully funded one-to-one peripatetic music lessons to all students who wish to develop their skills on a particular instrument or through voice and singing coaching. At MKA, we passionately believe that music should be accessible to all, regardless of a student's background, prior experience or financial circumstances. This belief is at the heart of the decisions we make about our music provision and ensures that every student has the opportunity to discover and develop their musical potential. Our fully funded instrumental and vocal lessons provide students with high-quality, individualized tuition from specialist teachers, allowing them to build technical skills, confidence and musical independence.

Our music enrichment programme is currently undergoing an exciting period of development as we continue to build on the recent renovation of our music facilities and the appointment of new teaching staff. As the new Head of Performing Arts, a key part of my role is to reshape and develop the department's enrichment offer, creating a wider range of opportunities for students to engage with music beyond the classroom. Our aim is to establish a vibrant and inclusive programme that encourages students of all abilities to participate, develop their skills and, most importantly, enjoy making music together. With our newly renovated facilities and specialist resources, we are exploring a range of new clubs and activities, including band club, ukulele club and choir, alongside further opportunities for instrumental ensembles, music production, composition and performance.

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.

This enrichment offer is complemented by a broad programme of wider musical experiences throughout the school year, including singing in assemblies, concerts, school productions and performances, as well as opportunities to attend professional concerts and musical events through educational trips and visits. These experiences allow students to see music in a professional context, broaden their musical horizons and experience live performance as both participants and audience members. Our aim is to create a thriving musical culture across the school, where students are encouraged to participate, perform and explore their individual musical interests, regardless of their previous experience or ability. As the programme develops, we will continue to respond to student interests and identify new opportunities, ensuring that music remains a visible, accessible and valued part of school life.

In the future

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

Please see above for additional information.

Looking to the future, our ambition is to continue growing the department and reshape Performing Arts into a vibrant, ambitious and inclusive area of the school that provides opportunities for every student to discover and develop their creativity. As the new Head of Performing Arts, I am keen to build on the foundations that have already been established through the renovation of our facilities, the introduction of new resources and the development of our curriculum and enrichment offer. Our vision is to create a department where Music, Drama and the wider Performing Arts work collaboratively, providing students with meaningful opportunities to perform, create, collaborate and experience the arts at a high level.

We aim to expand our enrichment programme, increase the number and variety of performances and productions, develop stronger links with professional organisations and provide greater opportunities for students to experience the creative industries first-hand. We will also continue to explore ways of increasing participation, encouraging more students to engage with Performing Arts regardless of their prior experience or confidence. Ultimately, our goal is to establish a thriving Performing Arts culture within the school, where students are inspired to take creative risks, develop their talents and recognise the value of the arts in their education and future lives.