

Music development plan summary: St Margaret's CofE Primary School, Toppesfield

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026 – 2027
Date this summary was published	July 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mrs M O'Reilly
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mrs S Newland
Name of local music hub	Greater Essex Music Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Charanga Essex Music Services

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.

Introduction

Music is a unique way of communicating, that can inspire and motivate children. It is a vehicle for personal expression, and can play an important part in the personal development of people. Music at St Margaret's reflects the culture and society we live in, so the teaching and learning of music enables children to better understand the world they live in and plays an important part in helping children feel part of a community. Besides being a creative and enjoyable activity, music can also be a highly academic and demanding subject. We provide opportunities for all children to create, play, perform and enjoy music, to develop the skills, to appreciate a wide variety of musical forms, and to begin to make judgements about the quality of music.

The objectives of teaching music in our school are to enable children to:

- know and understand how sounds are made and then organised into musical structures;
- know how music is made through a variety of instruments;
- know how music is composed and recorded;
- know how music is influenced by the time, place and purpose for which it was written;
- develop the interrelated skills of performing, composing and appreciating music.
- develop confidence when performing both in class and to a wider audience.

How the subject is taught and covered.

Music is taught through the Charanga programme which is in line with the Model Music curriculum. [Charanga's Musical School programme.](#)

This Scheme is based on: Listening and Appraising; Musical Activities; creating and exploring; and Singing and Performing. Charanga provides teachers with week-by-week lessons for each year group in the school. It is ideal for specialist and non-specialist teachers and provides lesson plans, assessment, clear progression, and engaging and exciting whiteboard resources for every lesson. The Scheme supports all the requirements of the national curriculum and is in line with published Ofsted guidance. The main music lessons are taught by Mrs O'Reilly across the school which ensures progression and development as the children move up the year groups.

Charanga - Throughout the year, a minimum of 4 units from the Charanga scheme are covered by each class, these fully cover the National Curriculum objectives and the Model Music curriculum. The two remaining units cover music through instrumental lessons or end of year performances. Charanga Units of Work enable children to understand musical concepts through a repetition-based approach to learning. Learning about the same musical concept through different musical activities enables a more secure, deeper learning and mastery of musical skills. Units are based around a song. E.g. Mamma Mia or Happy.

Music lessons - Music is also covered through ukulele lessons in years 3 and 4. This is also supported through the Charanga scheme which provides plans and supporting videos.

Early Years – The early years explore music in many different ways such as through action songs, singing Nursery rhymes, moving in time to music, performing with others, encouraging the children to sing their own songs (sharing experiences during carpet times), exploring musical instruments and also linking music to the topic being taught such as when looking at Chinese New Year, we explore the dragon dance and listen to traditional music.

SEND

Within Charanga there is a discrete area, teachers use the section alongside the main Musical School platform, allowing them to find the most appropriate resources for each pupil. This area provides opportunities for pupils that may not get the full impact from the main platform. This is rare however, as most pupils participate in the whole class music lessons and access the curriculum appropriately, sometimes with 1:1 support to enable access.

How teaching differs for each key stage, enabling progression.

The Charanga scheme of work ensures that the yearly objectives are sufficiently covered, and that each year group is being taught the skills necessary for being a successful learner. The scheme is in-line with research advocating a repetitive and consolidation of skills allowing knowledge to embed into the long-term memory.

Charanga encourages children to sing, play, improvise, compose and perform through the week-by-week lessons. These lessons follow a set pattern which slowly builds upon the previous learning and are part of the learning spiral, that Charanga is based upon. Over time, children can both develop new musical skills and concepts, and re-visit established musical skills and concepts. Repeating a musical skill doesn't necessarily mean their progress is slowing down or their development is moving backwards! It's just shifting within the spiral. Mastery means both a deeper understanding of musical skills and concepts and learning something new.

How the subject is delivered to give the best impact and variety.

Music is delivered weekly and through the lesson units the children learn about turn taking, anticipation, working with others, respect and appreciation of others, making choices and building self-esteem. Adults are skilled and can supplement lessons by using instruments and other necessary resources e.g. sheet music. Classes often choose to showcase their learning by preparing performances for their class assembly in the Spring Term, sharing their learning in whole school assemblies or performing to another class.

All the learning in Charanga is built around the Interrelated Dimensions of Music: pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre, texture, structure and notation. These dimensions are at the centre of all the learning in every year group.

Support

Charanga is endorsed by the Greater Essex Music hub. The Charanga team provide training as a school, community and for individuals which can be accessed by staff as appropriate to their training needs.

Part B: Extra-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.

Choir

This opportunity is for up to 30 children in years 2 and above and is held on a Thursday morning before school. Choir runs for the entire academic year. The choir perform at the Young voices concert every year at the O2 in London. The subscription for Young Voices is paid for by the school, but parents are asked to cover the cost of transport and t-shirts. Parents have to buy their own ticket if they wish to be a part of the audience. The choir also perform at all of our church services throughout the year, in a Christmas concert and a summer concert at school, at our community coffee afternoons at least once during the academic year, at the Parish Carol Service and Candlemas service and at the Church Summer fete.

Instrumental lessons

We have a large uptake of children from Reception to year 6 who participate in weekly instrumental lessons (piano and guitar) provided by Essex Music Service. These sessions are private music sessions taking place in the school day and funded by the parents.

Braintree Sing

Blossom Class (years 5 and 6) have the opportunity to sing at the Braintree Sing festival which takes place in the Spring Term. This is an opportunity to sing with a live band and with a choir made up of a minimum of 5 schools.

CVC Music festival – Year 2 take part in a collective music festival led by the Colne Valley Consortium of schools. Children pre-learn 4 songs which are then sung together with the other schools in attendance, 1 song to perform to the group and they collectively learn 2 additional songs on the day. There are usually approximately 8 schools and 120 children in total at the event.

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.

Pupils take part in the following performances:

Choir – Weekly practice for Y5 and Y6 children; Young Voices at the O2; school church services, parish church services; fetes; community coffee afternoons; school Christmas concert; school summer concert.

School church services – All pupils attend 4 church services led by the school and supported by the Parish Priest during the academic year (harvest, Christmas, Easter and leavers services). Within these services, all children join in with singing rehearsed songs, both as a whole school and also as classes. Additionally, year 6 instrumental pupils also perform solos or duets at the Christmas and leavers services.

Nativity – Children in reception and Key Stage 1 perform a nativity play to parents and the school community every year. Within this, children sing, speak and move to music.

Production - Children in Key Stage 2 perform a play to parents and the school community every year. Within this, children sing, speak and move to music.

Whole school and class worship – Every day children are part of either a w worship session. All of these include singing at least one song.

Singing practice – Every other week, a whole school singing practice is led by school staff on rotation which teaches the children to sing well as well as teaching new songs.

Braintree Sing – Blossom class (years 5 and 6) take part in the Braintree Sing Music festival which takes place annually. This is an opportunity to sing with a live band and with a choir made up of a minimum of 5 schools.

CVC Music festival – Year 2 take part in a collective music festival led by the Colne Valley Consortium of schools. Children pre-learn 4 songs which are then sung together with the other schools in attendance, 1 song to perform to the group and they collectively learn 2 additional songs on the day. There are usually approximately 8 schools and 120 children in total at the event.

Class assemblies – All children take part in one class assembly in the spring term. Within this, children share learning from the year. As part of this, they will perform to demonstrate some of their music learning.

Concerts – as a school we host two concerts for parents each year (Christmas and Summer). The choir and all children that have private music lessons in school perform at these concerts. Sometimes, other classes also perform items they have been learning.

School talent show – Children are able to opt to take part in the school talent show (organised by the school council).

Pupils watch the following performances:

Church services – All children attend four church services throughout the year. In addition to singing, they listen to performances by other classes, the choir and instrumental pupils.

Professional Pantomime – In alternate years, FOSMs arrange for the children to attend a pantomime performance at the Mercury Theatre in Colchester. This is heavily subsidised by FOSMs to enable all children to attend.

Dress rehearsals – throughout the year we allow the different year groups to watch the dress rehearsals of the up-and-coming events. This is where the children have an opportunity to perform in front of an audience and the children are welcomed to share their views and thoughts on the events. This helps them to identify their favourite parts but also elements that they feel could be different.

Young Voices – Members of the school choir attend Young Voices where, in addition to singing, they are able to see performances by professional musicians and dancers.

School Concerts – Children attend both concerts to watch the items being shared by members of the school community.

School talent show – Children are able to buy tickets to the school talent show (organised by the school council) where they are able to watch the acts.

CVC Music festival – Children watch the individual performances prepared by other schools.

In the future

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

As a school, we are always thinking about how we can improve our offer to the pupils in all areas. For music, we are currently considering the following actions:

To explore opportunities for pupils to experience more live music, including performances by professional musicians.

To speak with staff about taking a recorders club within school time.

To investigate a new music scheme following feedback from staff about the fact that Charanga is devised for single year group teaching and can be tricky to manage at times for mixed-age classes. (Sing up and kapow identified to explore)

Further information (optional)

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.

The Greater Essex Music Hub publishes [information for schools](#) on what is available to them.

Essex music services publish [information for parents](#) regarding music lessons.