

Music development plan summary: Kimbolton School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024 – 2025
Date this summary was published	January 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2025
Name of the school music lead	David Gibbs
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Catherine Thomas / Ruth Taylor
Name of local music hub	Cambridgeshire Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Bedfordshire Country Music, NMPAT

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

Prep School Music:

Reception music lessons take place once a week for 20 minutes. Stories are used as the starting point for a journey of musical discovery. They explore the sounds instruments make, focusing on careful listening and watching as a musician would when playing in an ensemble. Most lessons involve singing and movement.

KS1 pupils have 40-minute lessons once a week. Their musical development continues through further study of percussions instruments with the focus on learning the names of the instruments; the sounds they make; and how they are played. Contrast is a key feature of the Year 2 curriculum with the pupils beginning to learn the differences in high and low, loud and quiet for example. We continue to include singing in much of our lessons.

Upper Prep pupils have one 50-minute lesson per week.

Year 3 pupils start to learn how to read basic rhythm notation using this as a basis for listening, performance and composition tasks. They then explore other ways in which music can be written such as graphic score. During this topic there is a great deal of focus on ensemble skills and the importance of working as a team. Pupils learn how to create their own graphic scores incorporating their knowledge of the elements of music. During the final term the pupils learn to read basic staff notation through the playing of the recorder.

Year 4 pupils learn about the instruments of the orchestra in detail. This is taught through written, listening and performance tasks. During the spring term the pupils prepare songs for their school production with the focus being on clear diction and secure tuning.

Year 5 pupils continue to develop vocal, composition and performance skills. The first term is about a deeper understanding of rhythm notation and how to create a 16-bar composition. Using the knowledge gained they write their own music and look at ways in which this can be improved; they then perform this as a soloist and within an ensemble. The focus for this project is looking at how to add and maintain interest using the elements of music to enhance their pieces. Towards the latter part of the year the pupils learn about staff notation and put this into practice through the playing of keyboards.

In Year 6, pupils develop their understanding of musical styles from around the world, including Samba, Gamelan and Indian Classical Music. They learn how to read different notation systems, in order to play pieces from these styles of music as a class, improving their instrumental and ensemble skills. Pupils continue to build their overall musicianship through singing, improvisation and rhythmic activities.

Senior School Music:

In the Senior School, pupils in the lower years (1st to 3rd Form) have one weekly music lesson, equating to approximately 14 hours in the Autumn Term, 11 hours in the Spring Term, and 10 hours in the Summer Term. They learn how music works through a rich and balanced diet of listening, composing and performing. The curriculum covers units of work such as melody writing over a 12-bar Blues pattern, exploring textures using pentatonic ostinatos, harmonisation of melodies introducing concepts of parallel motion and inverted chords, and pop song writing.

At GCSE, Music is an optional subject wherein pupils follow the Eduqas syllabus in three lessons a week, equating to approximately 42 hours in the Autumn Term, 33 hours in the Spring term, and 30 hours in the Summer Term. The course is assessed via one written exam, one performance (non-examined assessment, minimum one solo and one ensemble, 30%), one composition (non-examined assessment, comprising two contrasting compositions, 30%). Through this course, pupils develop their skills in listening, analysis, and their knowledge and understanding of the history of music, composition and performance. There are four interrelated areas of study: musical forms and devices, music for ensemble, film music, and popular music.

At A-level, the AQA course is delivered in six lessons a week, equating to approximately 84 hours in the Autumn Term, 66 hours in the Spring term, and 60 hours in the Summer Term. The syllabus is broken down into the three components akin to GCSE Music: performance, composition and listening/analysis. Much of the classwork is discussion based and investigative. Pupils learn how composers go about their craft, understanding their techniques and how their work has been influenced by society. In doing so, they learn how to write analytically and meaningfully about music as well as develop their own skills as a composer in a response to the studies.

An overview of the Senior School's Music curriculum can be found online.

Access for disabled pupils and supporting pupils with special educational needs (SEND): - The Music Dept is predominantly based on the first floor so lessons are moved to accommodate pupils for whom this is not accessible. The curriculum involves a wide range of activities to accommodate the needs of different pupils including a mixture of practical and scaffolded theory work, group and individual learning, a variety of visual, tactile, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches, and an inclusive approach for all pupils.

Pupils have multiple opportunities to learn to sing or play an instrument during lesson time, such as through Ingrams House singing, use of the keyboard lab, a wide range of percussion instruments available in lessons and incorporated into appropriate projects.

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.

Individual tuition:

We provide individual tuition on all orchestral and band instruments as well as piano, jazz piano, harpsichord, organ, guitar, electric guitar, drum kit, percussion and voice. With a team of 22 dedicated musicians on the staff, we offer coaching in almost every instrument and style, helping to build skills that will enrich lives and potentially fuel a desire for a future career in music. We charge an additional fee for these lessons (approx. £38 per 40-minute lesson at the Senior School, and approx. £23 for a 25-minute lesson at the Prep).

Tuition starts from Year 3 onwards, with the exception of Stringlets (Year 1) and Ministrings (Year 2), which give early experience of learning the violin and cello in a fun and pro-active way. Over 55% of our Upper Prep pupils and 20% of our Senior School pupils receive weekly lessons and many learn a second or even a third instrument.

We have an enviable stock of instruments available for hire so that pupils can try an instrument before parents are committed to paying for one. Priority is given to beginners.

Ensembles:

Our ensembles and groups meet weekly and cover a wide range of orchestral and band instruments plus choirs. We even have the occasional opportunity for parents to become involved, particularly through the community choral society, *The Kimbolton Singers*.

A full list of ensembles can be found on our website here: [Kimbolton School - Music](#)

Exhibitions:

We award Music Exhibitions to our most talented musicians.

These are in the form of four terms of instrumental/vocal tuition funded by the School and are awarded to all those who pass exams at Grade 5 or above with a merit or distinction having been entered for the examination by the School. They are open to both Prep and Senior School pupils and exhibitions for more than one instrument may be held at the same time. On achieving each higher grade at merit or distinction, further exhibitions are awarded.

All Music Exhibitioners are expected to be active members of one or more school ensembles so that, while experiencing the fun of performing with others, their music-making experience and repertoire are extended.

Performance opportunities:

We encourage children to take part in as many extra-curricular musical activities as they wish, even if they receive external tuition. Our regular concerts and other performing opportunities provide all our pupils with a forum to express themselves through music. Those involved find themselves part of a close-knit social group and leave with many lasting memories.

For a list of our regular performance and musical opportunities, see Part C below. There are ample rehearsal spaces in the Music School and the Prep School for pupils to rehearse or practise individually or in groups.

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.

Please see the school calendar for full information about current and upcoming musical events.

In any academic year, our performance opportunities would typically include:

Prep School:

- House Singing Competition
- After-School Concerts
- Evening Concerts
- Year 6 Production
- Carol Services
- Reception to Year 2 Nativities

Senior School:

- Junior and Senior House Music Competitions (includes House singing, individual and group performances)
- Annual Drama and Musical Productions
- Weekly Informal Lunchtime Concerts
- Ensemble Recitals in the Local Community
- Evening Concerts and Choral Evenings
- Choral Evensong in Regional Places of Worship
- Choral Tours, including Edinburgh Fringe Festival and overseas
- *Kimbolton Presents...* - charity talent show
- Carol Services, Easter Services

Many of these opportunities involve pupils from all year groups (such as House Music competitions), and all of the events listed above involve opportunities for pupils to participate and be members of the audience. The vast majority of these events are free to attend, though a nominal charge is made for events that are primarily charitable fundraising events (such as *Kimbolton Presents*)

Pupils sing in assembly as follows:

- Prep School: fortnightly hymn practice
- Junior School: twice half termly in House assembly
- Full Senior School: once every half term in whole school assembly
- Senior School pupils also sing in Chapel services fortnightly

Trips for Music students:

- Live performances – exam classes would expect at least one trip per year to either The Barbican or the Symphony Hall in Birmingham

In the future

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

The departmental development plan lays out the plan for the continued growth of Music within the school. Key areas of focus currently include:

- Increase the uptake of individual music lessons; whilst this is already a considerable area of strength within the department there is a continued appetite for growth through presentations and assemblies in the Prep School and developing relationships with local feeder schools.
- Creating a research area for pupils within the department to further support and develop their music studies.