

Music development plan summary: St Thomas' Church of England Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Katie Hayde
Name of local music hub	Sefton Music Services
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	- Liverpool Cathedral Schools Singing Programme - Rocksteady Music School

Part A: Curriculum music

At St Thomas', our high-quality music curriculum engages and inspires pupils to develop an appreciation of music and increases their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. Our long-term planning ensures that we teach all aspects of the National Curriculum and adhere to the recommendations in the Model Music Curriculum (2021). To enhance our music curriculum, we work in partnership with the Liverpool Cathedral Schools' Singing Programme, Rocksteady Music School and Sefton Music Service – providing djembe drumming whole-class sessions and ukulele whole-class teaching.

St Thomas' is proud to hold the Artsmark Gold Award, a national recognition of our commitment to delivering an ambitious, inclusive and culturally rich arts and music curriculum. This award reflects the strength of our provision and our dedication to nurturing creativity and artistic expression across the school.

As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we have introduced a Diverse Listening Spine, mapped from EYFS to Year 6. Each year group now learns one carefully chosen piece of music per half term, exploring its culture, genre, instrumentation and the background of the composer or musician. This approach celebrates the rich diversity of global music, ensures representation across the curriculum, and exposes children to a wide range of traditions and identities. Through structured listening, discussion and creative responses, pupils develop cultural understanding alongside musical knowledge, strengthening our whole-school ambition to reflect and value the diverse world around us.

In the Early Years, children engage with musical opportunities throughout the day via continuous provision. In Nursery, children are encouraged to listen to and recognise sounds, describing their thoughts and feelings and making comparisons between different sounds. Within the provision, our learners have ongoing access to a variety of musical instruments, allowing them to explore and learn how to play while discussing the sounds produced. Pupils are taught to listen atten-

tively and to express their responses to music through movement and discussion. They are provided with various opportunities to perform and sing both in groups and independently. Daily activities include singing nursery rhymes and matching tone and pitch, as well as listening to diverse music genres while discussing their emotional responses and preferences. In Reception, we implement the Hullabaloo music scheme, which lays the foundational elements of music education, preparing our learners for the musical curriculum as they progress through primary school. The Diverse Listening Spine begins here, ensuring that even our youngest learners encounter music from a range of cultures and traditions.

In KS1, specialist practitioners deliver all aspects of the National Curriculum for music, following the recommendations set in the Model Music Curriculum 2021. The long-term planning for this subject has been collaboratively developed in partnership with our music lead and teaching specialists. Our music curriculum not only meets the National Curriculum requirements but also extends beyond them, featuring exceptional teaching practices and providing all children with the opportunity to learn an instrument under the guidance of professionals.

On a termly basis, our Key Stage 1 learners engage with the Liverpool Cathedral Schools' Singing Programme, where they identify rhythmic and melodic patterns through singing, examine and compare various pieces of music, and demonstrate their learning through performance opportunities. Additionally, students receive whole-class sessions in playing the djembe drum from a practitioner at Sefton Music Services. These lessons encompass both the historical and cultural significance of the drum and practical playing techniques, ending in performances for the school community and parents at various events. Alongside this, the Diverse Listening Spine supports pupils in learning about music from a broad range of cultures, enabling them to make meaningful connections between what they hear, sing and play.

In KS2, learners now take part in hour-long ukulele sessions. Our ukulele teacher brings fresh energy to music lessons, using the instrument to deliver the Model Music Curriculum in a way that really supports the development of musical skills and knowledge. Pupils build on the foundations from the Early Years through a wide range of activities, including music appreciation, composition, performance and instrumental practice. They also gain a strong understanding of the ukulele — exploring how it works and learning about its background. By the end of their primary school journey, children grow into confident musicians with a real enthusiasm and love for music. Throughout KS2, the Diverse Listening Spine ensures that pupils continue to study a structured sequence of global musical traditions, composers and genres, fostering a deep and respectful understanding of the world's musical heritage.

Music is accessible to all of our learners, including those with SEND. Our inclusive and progressive curriculum is thoughtfully designed to provide individualised support tailored to the unique needs of each SEND student. To ensure that all learners' requirements are effectively met, our music lead conducts regular learning walks. We have identified the core knowledge and skills necessary for children to become successful musicians, and we are dedicated to creating an environment where every student can flourish. The Diverse Listening Spine further enhances this inclusivity by offering multiple entry points for engagement - through listening, movement, discussion and creative response - ensuring that every child can access and enjoy music from a diverse range of cultures.

Part B: Co-curricular music

At St Thomas', we provide a wide range of extracurricular opportunities in music to enrich our students' learning experience. Every week, we hold whole-school singing assemblies where students come together to practise various songs and hymns, which also serve as a form of collective worship, allowing them to reflect on their faith through music.

Additionally, all children are offered the chance to take part in band sessions through Rocksteady Music School. Working as part of a band, children learn a range of instruments in a fun, supportive environment led by skilled music practitioners. We make sure that pupil premium children and more vulnerable learners are supported in accessing these opportunities, promoting inclusivity for all. This experience has a positive impact on classroom learning, helping pupils build confidence with musical notation, develop teamwork skills, and gain practical experience on different instruments, all of which enhance their musical knowledge and ability.

Our school choir is open to pupils from Year 1 through to Year 6, providing a wealth of opportunities for musical performance and personal growth throughout the academic year. The choir regularly participates in a range of events, an example being our annual Christmas carol performance at our church, in collaboration with other schools. This event not only allows our students to demonstrate their musical talents but also strengthens the bond between the school and the wider church community. Such experiences contribute significantly to the children's confidence, fostering a deeper appreciation for music while reinforcing a sense of belonging and community.

Part C: Musical experiences

Our school organises a variety of musical events and opportunities to enrich students' musical experiences and foster community connections. The school choir has numerous opportunities to perform throughout the year, such as carol performances at the local church and participating in the Young Voices Concert, the world's largest choir experience, enabling thousands of children to perform alongside world class artists at Manchester Arena. To ensure accessibility for all, the school covers the admissions for all participating children. Across Early Years, Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2, there are further opportunities for performance, including events such as the Harvest Festival, Mother's Day Tea Party, Grandparents' Bingo, and the Summer Fair. Students who have received specialised training from the Liverpool Cathedral Singing Programme also perform at the Cathedral, with parents invited to attend and celebrate their children's achievements. Additionally, we hold termly class worships, where parents are welcome to join and watch their child lead worship and offer prayers through song. These events not only showcase the children's talents but also strengthen the partnership between the school, families, and the wider community.

Year 6 students have the opportunity to participate in an end-of-year show, where they creatively portray a Bible story through song and movement. This performance allows them to demonstrate their musical skills, storytelling abilities, and teamwork, while also providing a memorable, musical end to their primary school journey.

In the future

As a school, we will continue collaborating with Sefton Music Services, Rocksteady Music School and the Liverpool Cathedral Singing Programme to deliver an extensive music curriculum that exceeds the expectations of the National Curriculum. Alongside this, we remain committed to developing a diverse, inclusive and culturally rich music offer that reflects both our school community and the wider world.

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue to embed and strengthen our Diverse Listening Spine across all year groups, ensuring pupils regularly encounter music from a wide range of cultures, genres, traditions and identities. This includes both historical and contemporary composers from diverse genders, ethnicities and backgrounds.
- Deepen pupils' exposure to global musical traditions, including African, Caribbean, South Asian, East Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American music, ensuring that children experience music beyond the Western classical tradition.
- Provide further opportunities for pupils to work with musicians from diverse communities, such as world music specialists, drumming ensembles and visiting workshop leaders, offering culturally authentic, enriching musical experiences.
- Increase representation within curriculum materials and school displays, celebrating musicians from different cultures, ethnicities, faiths, genders and abilities, helping all pupils see themselves reflected in the curriculum.
- Continue providing whole-class instrumental learning through Rocksteady Music School and Sefton Music Services, ensuring all children have access to enjoyable, high-quality and inclusive instrumental tuition.

Our commitment remains to offer the most inspiring, equitable and culturally rich musical experiences possible - nurturing a deep love of music, celebrating diversity and enabling every child to flourish as a confident, creative musician.