

Music development plan summary: The Willows School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	October 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	October 2027
Name of the school music lead	Emily Wilkinson
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Emily Wilkinson
Name of local music hub	Rotherham

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 The Willows we have weekly timetabled lessons throughout Key Stage 2 and 3. Key Stage 4 and 5 have the potential to opt into terms of music and performing arts through our options programme, however this is through a child's individual choice.

Due to the nature of needs, being an MLD school, we use Key Stage 1 and 2 elements of the Charanga music scheme using the Model Music Curriculum. Through use of their progressive week-by-week lessons, we are meeting all statutory requirements of the National Curriculum while adapting to meet the needs of learners. This is evident through subject observations, videos of progress over time and reflective statements. Children are demonstrating a growing awareness of vocabulary in music, and this will develop over time. We use a wide range of instruments throughout school alongside weekly vocal opportunities. This enables children to take part in small ensemble time or whole class ensemble. Through our genre of the term, we share a variety of music and key composers which develops music appreciation for our learners when listening and

discussing together, supporting documents are available for teachers of music to support with key works from composers.

Alongside this further musical opportunities are supplemented into curriculum time with access to:

- Young Voices (Sheffield Arena)
- One Voice (Rotherham Music Service @ Magna)
- Nexus Choir – Hands in Harmony (Collaborative across the trust)
- Whole class rhythm lessons (Rotherham Music Service)
- Live concerts in school (Rotherham Music Service)
- School based Performances (this is currently at Christmas and during the Summer term for Key Stage 2 and 3 and termly for Key Stage 4 and 5)

For the majority of our learners the Key Stage 1 and 2 curriculum cover the elements of music our children need. However, we use some strands of the Key Stage 3 guidance to extend this offer. This is reflected in endpoints and progression steps that support the sequence of learning and are used to plan effectively.

Currently there are no graded music exams due to the anxiety and stress this puts on our learners. There are discussions with the local music service around if there are other options for our solo guitar students and the music lead has access to EPOS which allows us to see progress over time and weekly reports and logs on lessons. We cover elements of AQA UAS units that support alongside teaching to allow learners to get certificate skills in music. These are shown in the music Long Term Plan and Curriculum information.

Part B: Extra-curricular Music and Enrichment

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.

Rotherham Music service have come in and done duo guitar lessons and single peripatetic lessons for children throughout school (this is ongoing and working for a small handful of students that are interested or has been requested by parent/carers). Lessons take place in the radio room each week, a designated space to practice through the week. Learners have then performed for key staff but also in small audience performances in school. Their whole-class tuition provided high-quality music education that was adapted to meet the needs of our MLD learners.

We offer extracurricular music sessions that include, percussion focus boomwhackers and samba drums, singing and ensemble opportunities. This has always had a good uptake and has been given as core offer through staff in school. Some costs are

covered through Pupil Premium, additional EHCP funding, LAC funding and paid through parents/carers. During the year lunchtime clubs have been available to take part in our school choir, this is currently for Y9 and Post 16 students that want to take part in Young Voices in February 2027.

Moving forward in Spring 2027 there will be opportunities for bespoke access sessions, provided by Rotherham music service, which will allow for a handful of children to engage with 1:1 involvement around wider SEMH and elements of therapeutic input to meet their wider needs.

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 The Willows, we are developing links with Rotherham music service and other organisations, to provide musical experiences beyond our core offer. We are going to our fifth Young Voices concert and take on average 60 children each year from Key Stage 2, 3 and 4. This year we are also taking Key Stage 5 learners with more collaborative opportunities in Post 16. Likewise, we will attend One Voice with Key Stage 2 children this will be an average of 40 children, however different to the Young Voices choir. For Nexus choir we aim to take a range of our Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 children, on average 60 children to collaboratively sing with other MLD, PMLD and SLD children.

Our performances are well attended, and parent/carers are fully supportive of music making, there is no charge for school shows. Concerts out of school are also well attended, charges are set by event organisers. Lower School and Middle School collaborate on these (Key Stage 2 and 3) and then through Options (Key Stage 4 and 5) develop these further.

As a silver Arts Mark school, we pride ourselves in the creative opportunities our children receive weekly and beyond the core offer. Once a year we have a creative arts day where children access music, art, dance and drama opportunities. This will be held in Summer 2 this academic year and the music and art lead are in discussions around plans for this already and how wider creative arts can be incorporated. During this time, we use a range of artists to showcase varied styles, talents and incorporate workshop time. We engage with Live Music Now to get musicians into school to share live musical performances from a range of genres and showcasing a variety of instruments for all ages. The Music lead has been agreed further concerts through Rotherham Music Service and has access to the programme for lunchtime concerts at Riverside House. There are also network meetings across Sheffield and Rotherham music hubs

through colleagues within Nexus schools, which offers shared training and opportunities for our learners.

Children have shared performances in the wider community and sung Christmas carols at the local shops. This is something we have been invited back for yearly as part of our community links. Children have also been to sing at the nearby elderly residential home.

In the future

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

Moving forward Music will grow with our learners: **(Bold is updated information and steps to be taken)**

- We want to develop the success of events out of school by taking more children to these experiences but also supporting parent/carers to see their child in these events also. Termly performances are going to be developed for Key Stage 2 and 3 to include the Spring term. **(This will continue being implemented with a significant number of new students within Lower and Middle School).**
- Further links between the creative subjects to relate to With Me in Mind support around positive mental health and well-being for learners and staff. A core school choir to be developed to ensure children across all key stages and staff can come together to share musical opportunities with performances in school and the wider community. **(Weekly assemblies provide opportunities to sing a bank of collective worship songs and the developing curriculum offer highlight music and wellbeing units for older students through Options. Likewise, CPD around a choir in every school to share resources from Rotherham Music service and an 8 week block of support).**
- Curriculum opportunities in Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 to be explored and developed through AQA UAS.
- Peripatetic lessons to be expanded with small group ensembles in different instruments beyond strings. **(Explore any additional children joining these lessons that are new to school offer).**
- Music lead to attend Network Meetings and to explore wider opportunities and be proactively involved in creative opportunities with other Nexus and Special schools. **(Music lead to share key information with other teachers of music to develop effective CPD and awareness of opportunities beyond the whole school offer).**