

Music development plan summary: John Mason School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	29 th September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	2 nd September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Sam Spacksman
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Lou Gibson
Name of local music hub	Abingdon Music Centre
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Oxfordshire Music Service

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.

The curriculum vision and curriculum overview can be found on the music subject page of the school website.

The curriculum follows the model music curriculum in offering Schemes of Learning under the three components; Performing (including singing), Composing and Listening (Appraising).

The curriculum covers the following things per each component:

Performing	Composing	Listening (Appraising)
Interpreting music notation.	Creating a chord progression using chords I, IV, V & vi.	Dictating and writing rhythms.
Keyboard Skills.	Creating a melody over a chord progression (composed by students).	Musical characteristics of Celtic folk music.
Vocal Skills.	Use varied instrumentation in compositions.	Understanding different metres.
Percussion Skills.	Improvise over a chord progression (blues).	Musical characteristics of blues.
Ukulele/Guitar Skills.	Composing a piece of film music.	Musical characteristics of pop music.
Ensemble skills.	Composing using loops/samples.	Ethnomusicology (including Gamelan, Japanese music and Reggae).

Access

We offer free instrumental/vocal lessons to pupil premium students.

To ensure access to the curriculum for our SEND students, we use a variety of methods:

- Regular and positive check-ins in class,
- Key information clearly identified on the board for tasks,
- Tasks broken down into manageable chunks to develop learning,
- Being wary of noise levels to those who are sensitive to it,
- Clear routines and expectations,
- Pair or group SEND students with supportive and able students,
- Accessible resources (when required).

Opportunities

Students learn a variety of instruments in the curriculum, focusing on different skills within that (such as specific techniques, improvisation etc.) This can be seen in the table above (on page 2).

Students also learn compositional skills, with the aim to create well-produced music of different styles.

Allocated Time

In KS3, all students have 2 hours of Music every fortnight. This equates to 13 hours per whole term.

In KS4, all students have 5 hours of Music every fortnight. This equates to 32.5 hours per whole term.

In KS5, all students have 8 hours of Music every fortnight. This equates to 52 hours per whole term.

The music curriculum goes beyond the national curriculum in the depth and range of offer and details can be found on the music subject page on the website.

Music Services

We have instrumental and vocal tutors from the Oxfordshire Music Service. We have also linked with Abingdon Music Centre, getting involved with performance opportunities (an orchestra involving schools from the surrounding area, finishing a public performance).

Qualifications

Students are able to take instrumental/vocal performance grades via their peripatetic teachers.

We offer GCSE Music (Eduqas) and A Level Music (Eduqas).

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.

We offer a range of instrumental and vocal tuition at John Mason School. This includes singing, piano, guitar, bass, ukulele, drum kit, brass, violin, flute, clarinet and oboe. These lessons are 1-1 or small groups. The pricing of lessons varies between tutors, but the average price is £15 for a 20-minute lesson. Some tutors offer 30-minute lessons for a slightly higher fee.

As mentioned under access in Part A, the school has provision to fund music lessons for Pupil Premium students.

The school offers a variety of ensembles that any student can join. This includes an orchestra, jazz band, choir, brass band. We will soon be running a folk club, as requested by students. These clubs are all free to join.

Out of lesson time, students can book and use practice rooms during the school day (in which we have 4 small rooms and two classrooms available). Students are also able to book and rehearse after-school. Abingdon Music Services offer services on Saturdays and during summer holidays.

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 John Mason, there is a Music concert every whole term. This includes a Christmas concert, and Spring concert and a Young Musician Competition in the summer. The school is also active in community musical events including involvement in the Lord Mayor's Show, Big Band events and the Christmas Concert at a local residential home.

Every year the school (excepting during Covid) the school puts on a major productions either a dramatic play (Lord of the Flies, 2023-24) or a music. Recent musicals include The Addams Family (2019-20) and Jesus Christ Superstar (2024-25). This year's production (2025-26) will be Arabian Nights with original compositions from students.

These concerts are open to all students, generally via an audition process. Regarding the musical, there is also the opportunity for students to take on backstage roles. There is also cross-curricular activity, with the art department involved in set design, graphics designing the programme and Computing supporting with technical aspects. Ticket sales cover the costs of production and support purchase of additional equipment for the music department, including widening our range of musical instruments available for student use, such as ukeleles. Tickets are available to students and their families.

A key development goal for 2025-2026 is to increase the number and range of external trips on offer for students in order to build students' cultural capital and experience of live music – including plans developed with the Associate Headteacher for Inclusion for trips to London, including the West End and the Royal Albert Hall.

We have links with Oxfordshire Music Service and Abingdon Music Centre, with tuition and performance opportunities arising from that. We also have a few students in TVYO (Thames Valley Youth Orchestra) and TVIO (Thames Vale Intermediate Orchestra), who put on fantastic concerts with excellent repertoire. They invite Heads of Music and Headteachers to every performance, allowing them to experience the hard-work of students from their schools.

In the future

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

To further develop the curriculum, I plan on introducing computers with a DAW for students to compose with – meaning students will produce high quality compositions.

Implementing more school trips to musical experiences during the school year is another target, and something which is currently being worked on.

I have applied for the Music Department to take part in Pitch Up, which is a musical development framework for schools (run by Oxfordshire County Council). It is a self-evaluative framework to support curriculum (and extra-curricular) development. I will use this as a measure for the quality of Music at John Mason School.

In 2023-24 we developed a process to allow PP students to engage with music lessons using PP funding to offer sampling units of instrument learning and then funding ongoing lessons if the student wished to pursue their instrument. This scheme is in place, with PP students accessing free instrumental/vocal lessons.

Further information

Below are links to local music hub partners;

- Oxfordshire Music Service:
 - <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/music-service>
- Abingdon Music Centre:
 - <https://abingdonmusic.org.uk/>