Music development plan summary:
The Acorns Primary and Nursery School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	November 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Sian McCartney
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Emma Leslie
Name of local music hub	Love Music Trust
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	

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.

Where to find the published curriculum online

You can read the school's full music curriculum and our information on the school website here: https://www.theacornsprimary.co.uk/page/music/145046

Guidance for schools about what they must publish online is provided by the Department for Education; this includes expectations for curriculum information and for the SEN information report. GOV.UK+1

What we teach and how (summary)

- **Key Stage 1 (Years 1-2):** We follow the same principles as our KS2 provision (practical, exploratory, singing and simple tuned/untuned instruments). The DfE's Model Music Curriculum recommends a minimum of **one hour a week** of

curriculum music in KS1 and KS2; schools use that guidance when setting their timings. However, in Key Stage 1, Music lessons are blocked and are taught each afternoon for one full week per half term. GOV.UK+1

- **Key Stage 2 (Years 3–6):** Curriculum music lessons are **1 hour per week**. We use the *Kapow Primary* music scheme to plan lessons and run a **two-year rolling programme,** so pupils get broad, sequenced coverage of musical skills and knowledge. Children learn to use a variety of tuned and untuned instruments and work on composition, listening and performance. Kapow Primary+1
- **Singing for all:** We hold a **weekly singing assembly** from Reception to Year 6. Children sing to live accompaniment (piano / guitar) or backing track.
- **Whole-class and small group opportunities:** We provide whole-class ensemble activities during lesson time and offer extra-curricular choir for KS2. The choir takes part in an annual Young Voices concert in Manchester (usually in February).
- **Performance opportunities:** KS1 children perform a nativity at Christmas; KS2 children prepare repertoire for a choir concert and other school performances.
- **Instrument provision:** Year 5 receive **10 ukulele lessons in the Autumn term** and are given access to a ukulele for those 10 weeks at no cost (parents are informed when arrangements apply).

How the curriculum is informed

- Our planning is **informed by the DfE's Model Music Curriculum (March 2021)** and by best practice for primary music teaching. The Model Music Curriculum offers non-statutory guidance and exemplification to help primary schools design sequenced and ambitious music provision. GOV.UK+1
- We use **Kapow Primary** as the scheme of work and daily lesson planner for KS2; Kapow's materials are aligned with the Model Music Curriculum and provide teacher resources and whole-class instrumental units. Kapow Primary+1

How we increase access for disabled pupils and support pupils with SEND

We aim to make music inclusive and to remove barriers so every pupil can participate meaningfully. Typical approaches we use include:

- **Differentiated tasks**: activities are scaffolded so pupils can join at different levels (simpler rhythms, body percussion, choice of role).
- **Accessible instruments & technology**: tuned/untuned instruments that require less fine motor control, apps and switch-activated sound makers where appropriate.
- **Multi-sensory teaching**: visual cues, gesture, movement and call-and-response to support communication and memory.

- ** predictable structure and pre-teaching**: routines, visual timetables and pre-lesson introduction for pupils who need them.
- **Sensory adjustments**: lower volume options, supervised quiet spaces or headphones for pupils sensitive to loud sounds.
- **Alternative performance roles**: contributing via technology, conducting, choosing repertoire, or helping with sound rather than front-of-stage performance.
- **Assessment adapted to the child**: we focus on personalised outcomes such as engagement, maintaining a beat, confidence, and communication as well as musical skill.
- **Team working**: class teachers work with the SENDCo, and other professionals as needed to personalise provision and to align music targets with pupil EHCPs or SEND support plans.

If you would like the school's detailed SEN Information Report (our SEND offer and named SENDCo contact), it is available on the school website as required by DfE guidance. GOV.UK+1

Partnerships and additional support

- **Kapow Primary** provides our curriculum planning and teacher resources. Kapow Primary
- Where applicable we work with local music education organisations and the **Love Music Trust Music Hub** for additional instrumental tuition, progression pathways and ensemble opportunities.
  If you'd like details of any external providers we use (music hub services or Young Voices logistics), contact the school office or the subject lead and we'll share specifics.

Part B: Co-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.

Music tuition, choirs and ensembles

Our school offers a rich programme of extra-curricular music opportunities, open to pupils who wish to explore music beyond their weekly curriculum lessons. These opportunities help children develop their musical skills, confidence and enjoyment of performing as part of a wider musical community.

1. Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Beyond Lesson Time

Whole-class and Large-group Tuition

- **Year 5 Ukulele Programme:**
  All Year 5 pupils take part in **large-group ukulele tuition**, delivered for **10 weeks in the Autumn Term**. Each pupil is loaned a ukulele free of charge for the duration of the programme. Tuition focuses on developing basic chords, strumming patterns, ensemble playing, and performance confidence.

Small-group or One-to-one Tuition

At present, we do not run additional one-to-one or small-group peripatetic lessons on site. However:

- We can signpost families to **local music hub teachers**, who offer paid tuition in a range of instruments.
- Where pupils show strong interest in continuing with ukulele or learning another instrument, teachers can help families make contact with the right local provider.

If the school begins offering on-site instrumental tuition, details of instrument availability, pricing, and remissions will be added to this section.

2. Choirs, Ensembles and Music Groups

School Choir (Key Stage 2)

- Open to all pupils in **Years 3–6**.
- Rehearses **one hour each week** after school (depending on the term).
- Free to join, with no audition required.
- We particularly encourage pupils with an interest in singing to join, including those receiving pupil premium funding.

Performance Opportunities for the Choir

Pupils who take part in the choir enjoy a full programme of performance events, including:

- **Young Voices, Manchester (February):**
  Our choir performs as part of the world's largest school choir concerts, singing alongside thousands of children and professional musicians.
- **Christmas Performances:**
  - A performance at a **local residential home**, sharing festive music with older members of our community.
  - A **whole-school Christmas Carol Concert** where the choir leads key songs.
- **Summer Serenade (Year 5):**
  Year 5 pupils take part in the **Ellesmere Port College Summer Serenade**,

learning songs during the summer term and performing alongside other school choirs.

- **School Events:**
  Choir pupils often support celebrations and community events.

How to Join

- KS2 pupils may join at the beginning of the academic year.
- Parents will receive information via School Spider.
- All rehearsals and performance opportunities (except Young Voices, which is heavily subsidised by our PTA) are **free**; there is no charge to take part.

3. How Pupils Can Make Progress Outside Lesson Time

Practice and Rehearsal Spaces

- Pupils may practise ukulele pieces or singing **in classrooms at break or lunchtime**, with staff supervision when required.
- Choir rehearsal spaces include the school hall or assembly space.

Instrument Loans

- **Year 5 ukulele loans** are free for all pupils during the 10-week programme.
- Additional short-term instrument loans may be offered where possible to support extended learning, via our local music hub.

Progress Pathways Outside School

We are able to work with our **local music hub**, which offers:

- **Saturday music centres**
- **Holiday workshops**
- **Beginner and progressing ensembles**
- **Instrument hire schemes**
  Parents interested in these opportunities can request contact details from school.

Awards and Qualifications

Although the school does not currently run graded music exams on site, we fully support pupils who wish to work toward:

- ABRSM / Trinity instrumental grades
- Choir awards (e.g., Young Voices certificates)
- Local music hub progression pathways
  Teachers can provide information and support where needed.

4. Charging, Subsidies and Support for Families

What's Free

- School Choir (weekly rehearsals and all performances)
- Year 5 Ukulele tuition and ukulele loan
- Performances at school and community events
- Participation in the Ellesmere Port College Summer Serenade

Possible Costs

- Young Voices tickets for families and optional accessories.
  (The school works to keep costs low).

Remissions and Support (Pupil Premium)

- We aim to ensure **no child is prevented from participating** in musical activities due to cost.

5. Partnerships That Support Extra-curricular Music

Our co-curricular music is strengthened through partnerships with:

- **Local Music Hub** – support with Whole-Class Ensemble Teaching, CPD for teachers, advice about instrumental learning and community ensembles.
- **Young Voices** – national organisation providing the large-scale performance experience.
- **Ellesmere Port College** – organiser of the **Summer Serenade**, providing songs, rehearsals and the final performance venue.
- **Local residential care home** – annual Christmas visit supporting community engagement and real-world performance experience.

Summary

We believe music should be inclusive, joyful and accessible for every child. Our extra-curricular programme enriches children's education by giving them the chance to:

- learn an instrument,
- sing with others,
- perform in real venues,
- grow in confidence, and
- take part in musical life beyond the classroom.

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.

Autumn term

- Weekly **singing assembly** for Reception → Year 6 (in-school).
- **Year 5: 10-week ukulele block** (large-group tuition) — culminating in short in-school performances.
- **KS1 Nativity** (Christmas performance) — KS1 pupils as performers; parents/carers invited as audience.
- **Choir visits a local residential home** to perform before Christmas (selected choir members / KS2).
- **Whole-school Christmas Carol Concert** — choir leads; audience includes parents and community members.

Spring term

- **Young Voices, Manchester** (February) — large-scale external concert for choir members (KS2).
- Ongoing choir rehearsals and in-school singing opportunities.

Summer term

- **Year 5 Summer Serenade / Ellesmere Port College** — Year 5 sing and perform alongside other local choirs.
- End-of-year concerts / class performances (may include KS2 choir and instrument groups).
- Informal performance slots in assemblies, community events and school celebrations.

Throughout the year we may add smaller concerts, community events, or trips to local concerts depending on opportunity and partnerships.

Regular in-school musical experiences and how pupils take part

- **Weekly singing assembly (Reception–Year 6):**
  All pupils attend and take part by singing; accompaniment by piano/guitar or backing track. This is part of the school day and there is no charge.
- **Class music lessons:**
  Curriculum lessons (KS1 and KS2) include singing and ensemble work; pupils participate as part of their year group.
- **KS1 Nativity (Christmas):**
  Pupils in Reception–Year 2 are the performers. Parents are invited to watch;

usually free or with a nominal ticketing system to manage numbers (details communicated each year).

- **KS2 choir performances and concerts:**
  Choir members (Years 3–6) rehearse weekly and perform in school concerts, assemblies and community visits. Choir is open to KS2 pupils; no audition required.
- **Year 5 ukulele showcase:**
  Pupils in Year 5 who took part in the Autumn ukulele block perform short pieces in school events and, at the end of the teaching sequence, we invite parents in to watch a small performance, showcasing what the children have learned.
- **Year 6 end of year performance:**

  At the end of the Summer Term, Year 6 children perform a show to the other pupils and teachers at the school, and also to their parents, family and friends.

Out-of-school performances, trips and large-scale events

- **Young Voices (Manchester, February):**
  Choir members participate as performers. The school organises group travel and a rehearsal schedule. Parents/carers usually buy tickets if they wish to attend as audience; the school provides full information and support in advance.
- **Residential home visit (pre-Christmas):**
  Selected choir members and staff perform carols for residents. Participation is usually offered to choir members; risk assessments and safeguarding arrangements are in place.
- **Summer Serenade / Ellesmere Port College (Summer):**
  Year 5 pupils perform alongside other local choirs. Pupils taking part are those in Year 5 (usually the whole year group for the ukulele/choir pathway). Parents are invited to the concert.
- **Trips to concerts outside school:**
  Where arranged, trips may include school visits to local concerts or workshops; participation depends on age and suitability and will be communicated in advance.

Who is a performer vs audience

- **Performers:**
  - KS1 Nativity: KS1 pupils (performers).
  - Choir concerts, Young Voices, Summer Serenade: choir members (Years 3–6) and Year 5 ukulele participants perform.
  - Residential home visit: selected choir members perform.
  - Curriculum lessons and assembly items: pupils from relevant classes perform in-school.

- **Audience:**
    - Parents, carers, other pupils, staff and community members are invited to attend concerts and performances as the audience. For large external events (e.g., Young Voices) parents usually need to buy their own tickets to the external venue.

How pupils join and how participation is organised

- **Signing up:**
    - Choir: open to Years 3–6. Sign-up information is circulated via School Spider.
    - Year 5 ukulele: automatic for Year 5 pupils as part of the taught 10-week block.
    - Other events: teachers may nominate or invite pupils for specific roles (e.g., solo, community visit) and parents are informed.
- **Selection & inclusion:**
  Most activities are open to all pupils (no audition required for choir). For particular roles (e.g., solo parts, small ensemble spots, particularly for the end of Year 6 show) teachers may hold short in-school auditions or select pupils to ensure suitability, fairness and to give a range of pupils performance opportunities.
- **Rehearsals & expectations:**
  Choir members rehearse weekly (1 hour). Additional rehearsals for trips or concerts are scheduled in school time or after school as needed; parents are given notice of rehearsal schedules.

Charging, subsidies and remissions

- **Free participation:**
    - Curriculum music, the weekly singing assembly, Year 5 ukulele tuition during the 10-week block (including ukulele loan), choir rehearsals and in-school performances are **free** for pupils.
    - Community visits (e.g., residential home) and most school concerts are free for pupils to take part in.
- **Possible parent costs:**
    - **Transport, tickets or venue charges** for some external events (for example, tickets for Young Voices for parents, coach costs for some trips) may be charged to families. The school will always notify parents in advance of any costs and explain what is covered by school funds.
- **Subsidies and remissions:**
    - Where charges apply, the school or PTA may be able to fully or partially fund pupil participation so that no child is excluded on financial grounds.

Parents should contact the school office or Headteacher in confidence to discuss remissions.

- **Transparency:**
  Full details of any chargeable event (what is charged, why, and how to apply for financial support) will be provided with event letters and consent forms.

Inclusion and SEND considerations for events

- We make reasonable adjustments so pupils with SEND can participate in performances and trips: quieter roles, adapted travel arrangements, extra adult support, sensory adjustments, or alternative contribution options (e.g., backstage roles, recordings). Parents of pupils with SEND should contact the SENDCo or music leader to plan support for specific events.

Partnerships that support musical experiences

- **Local Music Hub:** supports whole-class ensemble teaching guidance, may provide instrumental teachers, and helps signpost weekend/holiday music activities.
- **Young Voices:** provides the large-scale concert opportunity and resources for participating schools.
- **Ellesmere Port College / local colleges & venues:** collaborate on the Summer Serenade and joint performances.
- **Local residential homes / community organisations:** host community performances (e.g., the pre-Christmas visit).

These partnerships allow pupils to access high-quality rehearsal and performance experiences and sometimes provide subsidised or specialist opportunities.

Practical information for parents

- **How you will hear about events:** newsletters, the school website, letters home via School Spider.
- **Who to contact:** music subject lead / school office / SENDCo (contact details published on the school website).
- **Tickets & consent:** for any off-site trip or large external concert, written consent and payment information (if applicable) will be requested in advance.

Final note

We aim to offer a broad range of musical experiences that are inclusive and affordable. If you have questions about any specific event, need financial support to enable your child's participation, or want to discuss SEND adjustments, please contact the school office or music lead — we will always work with families to remove barriers to involvement.

In the future

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

We are committed to continually developing the quality and breadth of music education at our school. Each year we review our curriculum, co-curricular activities and musical experiences against national guidance, including the **Model Music Curriculum**, the **National Plan for Music Education**, and the **7 features of high-quality music provision**. Over the next 1–3 years, we aim to make the following improvements:

1. Strengthening Curriculum Music (one of the 7 features: *timetabled curriculum music for all*)

- **Maintaining one hour of curriculum music each week in KS2.**
- **Increasing practical musicianship**, including more whole-class work on tuned instruments (e.g., glockenspiels) so pupils develop secure technical and ensemble skills.
- **Embedding more opportunities for composing**, ensuring each year group experiences regular, structured composition tasks.

2. Broadening Instrumental Opportunities (feature: *a broad range of instruments and singing*)

- Exploring the **introduction of a second whole-class instrument** (e.g., recorders, glockenspiels or djembe drums) to complement the Year 5 ukulele unit.
- Working with the local music hub to increase access to **small-group instrumental lessons** on site if demand grows.
- Investigating possible **instrument loan schemes** for pupils who want to continue learning beyond Year 5.

3. Expanding Singing and Ensemble Work (feature: *schools singing culture*)

- Strengthening our **singing culture** by introducing new repertoire in assemblies and adding a structured singing progression from Reception to Year 6.
- Exploring the possibility of launching a **KS1 singing club**, giving younger children a stepping stone before joining the KS2 choir.
- Providing **more regular performing opportunities**, including inviting families to termly mini-performances, sharing concerts at the end of each unit or launching an annual “Summer Music Celebration”.

4. Increasing Performance Opportunities (feature: *regular musical performances*)

- Introducing a **termly performance opportunity** for each Key Stage, either in an assembly, a sharing concert or a community-based event.

- Seeking additional partnerships with local venues, secondary schools or community organisations to give pupils **more chances to perform beyond school**, particularly for choir and instrumentalists.

5. Enhancing Inclusion and SEND Support (feature: *inclusive access for all pupils*)

- Continuing to strengthen our **inclusive approaches** by reviewing resources, adapting instruments, and ensuring pupils with SEND have equal opportunities to participate in performances, choirs and trips.
- Exploring the use of **assistive technology** (such as music apps or switch-based instruments) for pupils who need adapted instruments.

6. Strengthening Leadership and Staff Expertise (feature: *staff who are supported and confident*)

- Providing teachers with additional **CPD from the local music hub and Kapow**, particularly around leading whole-class instrumental lessons and singing.
- Supporting new staff with **training in curriculum sequencing, conducting, classroom percussion and vocal warm-ups**.

7. Building Partnerships (feature: *strong partnerships with music hubs and wider organisations*)

- Deepening our partnership with the **local music hub**, exploring more co-curricular opportunities such as workshops, visiting musicians and links with local ensembles.
- Continuing the strong partnership with **Young Voices** and the **Ellesmere Port College Summer Serenade**, while seeking additional opportunities in the community.

8. Long-term Vision (2025–2028)

Across the next few years, our goals include:

- Offering **multiple performance experiences** for every year group annually.
- Ensuring all pupils leave primary school able to **sing confidently, read basic musical notation**, and perform as part of an ensemble.
- Creating a **music-rich school environment**, where displays, celebrations and community links highlight and promote pupils' musical achievements.

How we will monitor progress

- The music lead will review progress termly and report to senior leaders and governors.
- Pupil voice, staff feedback and parental feedback will help shape future improvements.
- Updated plans will be published on the school website each year.

Further information (optional)

Our school is committed to providing high-quality music education for all pupils, both during curriculum time and through co-curricular activities. We regularly review our provision and work in partnership with local organisations and music hubs to ensure children have access to a wide range of musical opportunities.

Local Music Hub and Partnerships

We work closely with our **local music hub, Kapow** and other music education organisations to support curriculum and extra-curricular music. These partnerships provide:

- Guidance for curriculum planning and sequencing
- Whole-class ensemble teaching support
- Access to specialist instrumental tuition
- Workshops, concerts, and community performance opportunities

Parents and pupils can explore these opportunities further via:

- **Our Local Music Hub:** [Insert your local hub link here]
- **Department for Education – Guide for Parents and Young People:** https://www.gov.uk/guidance/learn-music-in-schools

Showcasing Pupils' Music Learning

We celebrate and share our pupils' musical achievements with the wider community. Parents and pupils can explore examples of performances, recordings, and compositions on our **school SoundCloud page**:

Nathan Painter – The Acorns Primary School Music:
https://soundcloud.com/the-acorns-primary-school?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing

This page includes recordings from:

- Curriculum music lessons
- Choir performances
- Year 5 ukulele sessions
- Concerts and assemblies

It is regularly updated so families can see and hear the progress pupils make throughout the year.

Supporting Music Participation Beyond School

Families looking for extra musical activities outside the school day can contact:

- Local music hubs for tuition, Saturday centres, and holiday workshops

- Local music organisations, community ensembles, and concert venues
- Online resources such as the DfE guidance linked above

We encourage parents and pupils to engage with these opportunities to complement the music experiences offered at school and support progression in performance, composition, and music appreciation.