

Music development plan summary: St James CE Primary School Haydock

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026 - 2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mrs Battersby
Name of local music hub	St Helens Music Education Hub

Our school provides high-quality music education to all pupils through three key strands: curriculum-based music lessons, co-curricular music programs, and enriching musical experiences. This overview highlights our current provision and outlines our plans for future development, helping pupils and their families appreciate the wide-ranging opportunities available and the importance of music within our school community.

Curriculum music

Through the progressive development of pupils' understanding of a wide range of musical genres, alongside the enhancement of their skills and performance abilities, music at St. James is designed to be fully inclusive. The long-term planning for the subject aligns with the Model Music Curriculum and incorporates the teaching unit outlines from the Charanga scheme of work, ensuring a coherent, structured, and engaging musical journey for all learners.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the primary focus is on developing rhythm and singing, while also providing opportunities for pupils to explore and experiment with musical instruments through continuous provision and structured Charanga music lessons. Singing is integrated throughout the school day and often linked to other areas of learning, such as number rhymes, to reinforce cross-curricular connections. All EYFS children are encouraged to move to music, listen attentively, and express their emotions and responses, fostering early musical confidence, creativity, and a lifelong appreciation of music.

At St. James, we follow the guidelines of the Model Music Curriculum 2021 and deliver all aspects of the National Curriculum for music within our Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes. Music lessons are taught for one hour each week.

In KS2, every pupil has the opportunity to learn a variety of musical instruments, including the glockenspiel, recorder, and djembe drums. In addition, all children participate in a weekly singing worship session, complemented by five minutes of music listening during daily worship. Our subject progression document clearly outlines the aspirational musical figures that each year group will encounter, alongside the sequential development of skills, ensuring that pupils make consistent

progress and experience a rich, structured, and engaging musical journey throughout their time at St. James.

Extra-Curricular Music

During church events and whole-school worship, all pupils sing confidently and melodiously, demonstrating both skill and enjoyment. Singing is also used across the curriculum to reinforce learning in other subjects, whether through songs linked to history lessons, geography songs to learn the names of oceans and continents, or musical mnemonics for times tables—supporting the retention of “sticky” knowledge.

In addition to class assemblies, pupils have the opportunity to perform in larger productions, including the KS1 Nativity and KS2 Carols and Song, showcasing their musical skills to a live audience.

KS2 pupils also have access to extended musical opportunities through instrument-specific tuition, band practices, rock and pop ensembles, and youth orchestras, further supported by the free services offered by the St Helen’s Music Hub. These experiences allow pupils to develop their musical skills, collaborate creatively, and perform confidently in a range of contexts.

Musical experiences

Each week, pupils at St. James participate in collective worship, engaging with carefully selected entry and exit songs that span a wide range of genres and musical eras. During singing sessions, children receive vocal coaching from the music lead, helping them to develop their technique, confidence, and expressive abilities. This approach ensures that musical learning is integrated with worship, enriching both pupils’ spiritual and artistic experiences. As part of the school’s Golden Shell Experiences program, Year 6 pupils attend a live theatre musical performance, while Year 3 experience an orchestral concert with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, exposing children to a wide range of professional musical experiences.

Pupils also enjoy live music during visits from a visiting clergy member, who shares religious stories through song several times each term, allowing children to listen, sing along, and engage with music in an interactive way.

In the future

To support teaching staff in expanding their expertise and enhancing the quality of their instruction, targeted CPD opportunities will be provided as required. These professional development sessions ensure that teachers remain confident, well-informed, and equipped to deliver high-quality learning experiences for all pupils.

Following the success of the KS2 Carols and Mince Pie event in December 2025, additional fundraising activities are planned to further support the school’s music provision. Pupils, staff, and families will come together to celebrate music and raise funds during the upcoming Carol and Song events, scheduled on two dates in December 2026.

Singing is an area of focus for development at our school. Students participate in singing activities as part of the curriculum, including daily worship and worship services. The "Charanga" program provides valuable support for non-specialist music teachers in delivering the singing curriculum. Improving the quality and breadth of the school's singing program and performances is a key priority. This will be done with the support of the Music Subject Champion.

We are actively exploring opportunities to welcome professional musicians into school, offering pupils the chance to experience live performances up close. These encounters aim to deepen musical understanding, spark creativity, and provide engaging, memorable, and immersive learning experiences that leave a lasting impact.

We will strengthen links with local high schools to provide more opportunities for listening to live music performances.

Additionally, we aim to continue to expand our connections with the wider community, enabling children to showcase their musical skills and perform confidently in front of diverse audiences, further enriching their learning and performance experiences.