

St Thomas More Catholic School
Music Development Plan 2026/27

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Sarah Olsen - Head of Performing Arts

Richard Lennox - Assistant Head Teacher with link responsibility for music



Rationale

“Music is a cornerstone of the broad and balanced education that every child should receive. It touches hearts and minds, it celebrates and challenges, and it connects us and moves us” *The Power of Music to Change Lives - DFE*

Throughout their school experience students will develop skills as **performing**, **composing**, and **appraising** musicians. Pupils will acquire performance skills on a range of instruments and vitally the ability to read musical notation fluently for performance, composing and appraising purposes. They will secure understanding of the musical elements in order to analyse music independently, as well as develop a basic toolkit of compositional skills using notation and sequencing software.

Students will be inspired to appreciate both the performance of music and the joy of listening enabling them to realise their musical potential at school and hopefully beyond into further education and industry.

Our Catholic ethos is at the heart of our music curriculum, extra-curricular offer and in the accompaniment students and staff offer to the range of spiritual events taking place across the year including the Carol Service and accompaniments for Mass and Collective Worship.

Part A: Curriculum Music

Current Provision KS3

- Students in KS3 currently receive 1 hour of Music per week from Year 7-9
- All students in Year 7 begin their STM music experience by receiving a musical instrument to borrow and lessons focus on the mastery of playing
- Curriculum Model [Music Curriculum Overview](#)
- At the beginning of the Y7 Music curriculum a baseline assessment is conducted with all students to ascertain prior musical experience and these baseline assessments are used to make adaptations where necessary

The key concepts are the musical elements which apply to all 3 skill areas: **Performing, Composing, Appraising**:

- Musical Notation
- Dynamics
- Rhythm, Tempo and Metre
- Structure
- Melody
- Instrumentation/Sonority
- Texture
- Harmony and Tonality

Current Provision KS4

- As part of the Options process students can choose to study GCSE Music in Year 10 and 11
- Year 10 students currently receive 5 lessons per fortnight with Y11 students receiving 4 per fortnight
- The department currently offers the Edexcel specification

Current Provision KS5

- No students currently study Music in KS5
- The A Level Edexcel Music course was offered for the academic year 2026/2027
- Our Chamber Choir, Orchestra, Musical and Bands allow students with a passion for music to continue their extra curricular enrichment into KS5

Part B: Co-curricular music

Peripatetic Lessons

- We have a team of talented and dedicated self-employed musicians and we also offer peripatetic lessons from Year 7-13. Our current provision can be found below:

Tuesdays - Strings and Guitar	Wednesdays - Percussion, Brass and Piano	Thursdays- Woodwind	Fridays
Violin	Brass - Trumpet/Cornet/ Trombone/Tuba/ Euphonium/Tenor Horn	Flute	Singing
Viola	Piano	Clarinet	Piano
Cello	Keyboard	Saxophone	
Guitar	Drum kit		
Guitar Ensemble			
Electric Guitar			

- Students can be entered for ABRSM grades - <https://www.abrsm.org/en-gb>

Current Costs:

Individual Tuition

Between £90-108 per term based on 9-12 lessons per half term.

Paired/Small Group Tuition

Approximately £65 based on 9-10 lessons per term.

- If your child is currently in receipt of free school meals, we may be able to make arrangements to fund/subsidise music tuition through school. All

requests can be considered via Sarah Olsen - Head of Performing Arts or Nicholas Thrall our Associate Assistant Head Teacher with responsibility for Pupil Premium.

Extra-Curricular Music Clubs

- Students wishing to expand their love of music can also access our many free extra-curricular clubs. Our current timetable is below:

	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
Lunchtime	Chamber Choir		Junior Choir Guitar Ensemble	Rock Bands GCSE Music Support	
After school		Orchestra		Whole School Musical	School Show Band

- For more information please see any of the Performing Arts staff.
- In addition to this we have 3 Practice Rooms which are available for small groups wishing to rehearse - these can be booked through Performing Arts staff.

Part C: Musical experiences

Enrichment Opportunities

- Students are invited to take part in our two end of term celebrations of Music scheduled in December and July. These performances allow our musicians the opportunity to perform to an audience of parents, friends and family as well members of our wider community. Families can purchase tickets via Arbor, proceeds help to support the Music department and replace vital equipment.

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- In addition, we have our Whole School Musical production in March. Students audition in September and can take on a singing role, be involved backstage or perform in the show band. Past productions include; Grease, We Will Rock You, Fame, Oliver, Les Miserables, Beauty and the Beast, The Addams Family and Back to the 80s. This academic year we welcome over 100 students as our cast of Grease: The School Edition as well as roles backstage include sound technicians.
- As part of the school's Catholic life the Performing Arts department contributes to Collective Worship. Musicians and singers perform regularly as part of our Celebration of the Word Assemblies and help to support songs of praise. Our annual Carol Service is held at St Joseph's Blaydon and our Masses feature performances from a variety of our bands and ensembles.
- As part of our whole school Enrichment programme, our Year 7 Cohort visit The Glasshouse in April 2027 to attend their school's concert with the Royal Northern Sinfonia. This provides an opportunity to experience live music in an iconic local venue played by professional musicians in the Royal Northern Sinfonia. This enriching experience will support their study of orchestral instruments in the Year 7 Music curriculum, and further develop their cultural capital through engagement with the arts.

Additional Information

We are pleased to receive support from our local networks and are able to share resources and opportunities through links with Rob Kitchen at Gateshead Music Service.

- [Music education: information for parents and young people - GOV.UK](#)
- [Policies — Gateshead & South Tyneside Music Hub](#)