

Music Development Plan: September 2024

Rationale

At Northampton School for Girls (NSG), we believe that music is a fundamental element of a broad, balanced and rich education, essential for every student, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds and students with SEND. Music has the unique ability to touch hearts and minds, to inspire and challenge, to connect and move us. Beyond its intrinsic value, research indicates a strong link between arts education and overall academic achievement.

Our team of highly skilled music specialists is dedicated to providing a high-quality music education through a well-structured, ambitious curriculum. We are committed to offering a comprehensive music program that includes curriculum music, co-curricular activities, and enriching musical experiences, all aligned with the key objectives of the [national plan for music education](#).

Every student at NSG will benefit from:

- Weekly curriculum music lessons throughout the school year for Key Stage 3
- Access to peripatetic lessons across a variety of instruments and voice
- Participation in a school choir and/or vocal ensembles
- Involvement in a school ensemble, band, or group
- Dedicated space for rehearsals and individual practice
- A termly school performance
- Opportunities to experience live performances at least once a year

Through these opportunities, we aim to nurture our students' musical abilities and foster a lifelong love of music.

We hope you will support us by encouraging your child to take advantage of our incredible Music offer. You may also find the following links useful:

The Department for Education [guide for parents and young people](#) on how they can get involved in music in and out of school, and where they can go to for support beyond the school.

[Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust](#) exists to deliver the promises of the National Plan for Music Education, for the children and young people of Northamptonshire by providing exceptional musical opportunities for all children

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024 to 2025
Date this summary was published	September 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2025
Name of the school music lead	Robert Reid
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Glen Giles
Name of local music hub	Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust (NMPAT)

Links

- [The Power of Music to Change Lives](#) – the National Plan for Music Education in England 2022-2030
- [Music Mark's resource page](#) for the English National Plan for Music Education
- [Model Music Curriculum: Key Stages 1 to 3](#) - DfE non statutory guidance 2021
- [EEF Arts Participation](#) - Teaching and learning Toolkit

Music at NSG

This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our students 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 students and parents or carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our students’ music education.

Part A: Curriculum Music

Area	What happens now	Quality assurance and next steps for improvement
<p>Curriculum</p> <p>This is about what we teach in lesson time, how much time is spent teaching music, assessment information and any music qualifications or awards that pupils can achieve.</p>	<p>Key Stage 3</p> <p>Northampton School for Girls (NSG) delivers a three-year Key Stage 3 Music curriculum where all students learn to sing, play an instrument and create music together. Through our Music curriculum and extensive co-curricular offer all students have the opportunity to progress their musical interests and talents. The Key Stage 3 curriculum has been carefully designed to provide a foundation for GCSE Music so that students who wish to continue to study music beyond Key Stage 3 have the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be successful. The curriculum map can be found HERE</p> <p>Year 7, 8 and 9 students have 1 lesson of music each week. The curriculum covers a wide range of genres and styles designed to develop contextual information, understanding of the elements of music, performing and composing skills. The music curriculum is influenced largely by the DfE’s Model Music Key Stage 3 curriculum non statutory guidance.</p> <p>The content has been developed by our team of highly skilled music specialists using a range of published and created courses. These include lessons/schemes from Musical Contexts, the NMPAT Secondary Music Hub and Composing/Music Matters classroom textbooks.</p> <p>Assessments for KS3 are linked to the national plan for music . They are designed to assess and grade performing, composing and listening/appraising skills. All topics have elements of performing/composing running through them which are monitored and contribute towards our data collection points so that progress can be monitored which, in turn, informs curriculum development, lesson planning and student feedback.</p>	<p>Every year we review and refine the curriculum at all Key Stages by scrutinising the curriculum against the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are threshold concepts introduced in the most effective sequence? ● Does this align with the foundational knowledge needed to attain mastery of those concepts? ● Does the curriculum deliver a rich narrative around building up the skills that comprise the essential mindset for success: creating students who think, feel and act like Masters of Music? ● Are all students, particularly students from a disadvantaged background and students with SEND accessing the Music curriculum in a way that results in the same outcomes as their peers? ● Does the curriculum encourage participation in the extra-curricular offer, particularly students from a disadvantaged background and students with SEND? <p>We will continue to embed academic literacy, oracy and writing as part of the whole school focus on improving literacy across the curriculum.</p>

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	<p>Assessments are graded out of 16 with 4 subcategories marked from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent). Subcategories change from topic to topic, but all performing assessments include timing, and accuracy for example. Progress and achievement are communicated with students within their music work booklets. This consists of scores against each assessment criteria. Assessment criteria has been produced in accessible, student friendly language.</p> <p>Key Stage 4 Students can opt to take GCSE Music at Key Stage 4 starting in Year 10. As part of our commitment to inclusivity, particularly for students from a disadvantaged background or students with SEND, there is no requirement for students to be able to play an instrument for them to be able to take GCSE Music at NSG. We use the Edexcel exam board specification for GCSE Music. This provides a framework for the Key Stage 4 curriculum, which builds upon the Key Stage 3 curriculum. Students will build their knowledge of musical theory, gain a solid understanding of the basic principles of performance, refine their practical skills, study and practice composition, and expand their knowledge of music history through listening and appraisal. Students will submit two practical elements each contributing to 30% of the final GCSE grade. The first is a solo & ensemble performance and the second consists of two compositions. This will culminate in a final examination on appraising music which will contribute 40% to the final GCSE grade. The Key Stage 4 curriculum map can be found HERE. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is delivered over 3 lessons (2 hours 30 minutes) per week.</p> <p>Key Stage 5 We offer A level Music at Key Stage 5. Students will need to have achieved a grade 5 in GCSE Music or have a Grade 5 in a musical instrument, including voice, to be accepted onto this course. The curriculum builds on the skills developed throughout GCSE and Key Stage 3, that is the three skills: performing, composing and appraising (listening) and is examined in the same way as the GCSE with two practical elements each contributing</p>	<p>This will be supported with whole school CPD.</p> <p>We will develop and implement a new platform focussing on sound. This will provide home learning tasks that can be set more frequently (weekly) to enhance understanding and recall of the music curriculum.</p> <p>At Key Stage 3 we intend to change marking criteria to include a score out of 20 – enabling those students who show a good aptitude for music and who are making excellent progress to achieve higher marks. We will also include a 0 for students who do not participate/engage so that this can be tracked, and appropriate interventions put in place to support these students to benefit from the music curriculum.</p> <p>We intend to improve formative feedback to accelerate progress with a ‘How to improve...’ section in the Key Stage 3 booklets. Students will engage with their feedback by completing a ‘Next time I will...’ section.</p>

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	<p>to 30% of the final A level grade. The first is a solo performance recital and the second composition portfolio. This will culminate in a final examination on appraising music which will contribute 40% to the final A level grade. A guide to Key Stage 5 music can be found HERE</p> <p>The Key Stage 5 curriculum is delivered over 6 lessons (5 hours) per week.</p> <p>Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 music lessons are delivered by fully qualified teachers with music as their specialism.</p>	
Resources/equipment	<p>Students play an instrument in every lesson. Our music curriculum has a practical element threaded throughout to support highly effective implementation. All students experience using our comprehensive set of musical instruments during lessons through whole-class ensemble teaching as well as individual and small group projects. These instruments include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 x computer suites (1 full size, 1 for smaller groups up to 10) with midi keyboards, individual headphones, drum kits and PA system ● A piano suite with 15 full size electric pianos and headphones. Drum kit and PA system ● 2 x class sets of ukuleles ● 1 x class set of guitars ● X15 xylophones ● Large quantity of small percussion ● X10 practice rooms with pianos, amps, 4 with drum kits. ● Recording studio with drum kit, guitar amps, mics, mixing desk and computer 	<p>We must continue to maintain our current resources to the highest standards. We will also continue to explore opportunities to enhance and add to our resources through local and national funding offers.</p>
Technology	<p>Music technology is used extensively across the Key Stages. Booklets and resources are used electronically where they can be. Homework is set via technology (classroom/forms). The technology rooms are equipped with a full computer suite (x30 machines) with midi keyboards and individual headphones.</p> <p>At Key Stage 3 all units can be delivered in the technology room. At Key Stages 4 and 5 technology is mainly used for composition-based activities.</p>	<p>We will look to embed the use of Focus on Sound alongside existing Google forms for weekly homework.</p>

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	<p>This results in improved keyboard skills, performing skills and composition skills. Students also develop greater independence in their approach to music as their musical problem-solving skills are enhanced.</p> <p>At Key Stage 3 the music technology element of the curriculum is assessed in the same way as performance/composition tasks. There are 4 subcategories scored out of 4 giving a combined maximum score of 16.</p>	
Singing	<p>Students sing regularly through whole-class ensemble teaching from an extended repertoire, particularly at Key Stage 3. All Year 7 students also participate in our annual 'Eurovision Song Contest' when the Modern Language Faculty make cross curricular links with music to perform Disney Classics in either French or Spanish. Each Modern Language class is recorded performing their song after weeks of practice and rehearsal which is shown to the rest of Year 7 during assemblies.</p> <p>At all Key Stages students have the opportunity to perform in front of a live audience; in front of their class, at assemblies or in any of our 5 annual concerts or our biannual musical theatre production.</p> <p>Students regularly hear their music teacher sing when explaining or modelling key concepts in a lesson or as part of the process for teaching students a song.</p> <p>The school often collaborates with performers external to the school for musical events, and students will hear adults sing at these times.</p>	<p>We will review the singing module at each Key Stage as part of our annual curriculum review. Singing would benefit from an enhanced emphasis at Key Stage 4. This would hopefully increase the number of students auditioning for our highly regarded choirs.</p>

Part B: Extra-curricular and Co-curricular Music

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<p>Music tuition</p>	<p>Any student wishing to engage with music tuition will be provided with the instrument they need if they do not have their own, these include instruments from the woodwind, strings, brass and percussion families, alongside classical and electric guitar, electric bass and piano/keyboard. Tuition sessions are taught by our partners NMPAT apart from Piano/Keyboard lessons which are delivered by NSG Music teachers. Tuition sessions are taught as either a shared 20 minute lesson (in a pair) for grade 1-3 standard. An individual 20-minute lesson for grade 4-5 standard or an individual 30-minute lesson for grade 6+ standard. The take up for music tuition sessions is very high with 223 lessons taking place each week in 2023/24.</p> <p>Many students continue to make progress with their music outside of the school week by attending the Saturday Music school hosted by NSG which is delivered by NMPAT.</p> <p>The impact of the tuition sessions is excellent. Over 90% of students make a grade of progress per year and take ABRSM/Rock School/Trinity examinations.</p> <p>There are also 'soft' outcomes. Behaviour monitoring and tracking indicates a strong, positive correlation between students who have a music lesson and high behaviour for learning scores from across the curriculum.</p> <p>We encourage all students to take up an instrument, including voice. Music tuition is promoted throughout the year to all students and their families through newsletters, music lessons, tutor time activities, the school website and through our many performances throughout the year. The school actively encourages students from a disadvantaged background and students with SEND to take up Music tuition. The school has a Remissions policy for instrumental and vocal tuition which can be found HERE</p> <p>Students in receipt of the Pupil Premium can use part of their funding to go towards music lessons. This is currently £100.</p> <p>Students who are just outside the remissions policy can still apply for financial support to meet the cost of music tuition; this is means tested.</p>	<p>There are some students who arrange their music tuition independently. We will work hard to identify these students and encourage them to make use of the practice facilities in school.</p>

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	<p>NMPAT also provide bursaries for students who meet the eligibility criteria. More information about the financial support available from NMPAT can be found HERE</p>	
<p>Ensembles, groups and bands that students can join outside of lessons.</p>	<p>All ensemble groups are promoted during tutor time and during music lessons. All groups are advertised on notice boards. Tutors and music teachers actively target students who may need extra encouragement to participate, particularly students from a disadvantaged background or students with SEND. Groups are also promoted with live performances at assemblies.</p> <p>All students who have singing lessons are actively encouraged to join a group.</p> <p>Choirs</p> <p>Madrigalis (SSA close harmony choir) for high ability singers. Students from all Key Stages are represented. Students are auditioned to be offered a place in the choir. Many students graduate from other school choirs into Madrigalis as their singing improves. Madrigals rehearse one hour each week, afterschool. This frequency increases in the run up to a performance.</p> <p>Youthphonics (SSA choir) for all ability ranges. The choir sings a mixture of pop, jazz and classical music. Youthphonics rehearse for 1/2 hour each week at lunchtime.</p> <p>Real Group (a Capella group) for Key Stage 4 and 5 music students. All sixth form music students attend to improve aural skills and harmony skills. Real Group rehearse 1/2 hour each week at lunchtime.</p> <p>Instrumental ensembles</p> <p>Concert Band – Lead by RRD – Grade 4 and above. Rehearsal 1 hour per week, afterschool</p> <p>Wind Band – Lead by NMPAT - Grade 1-3. Rehearsal 1 hour per week, afterschool</p> <p>Celestial strings - Lead by by NMPAT – Grade 4 and above. Rehearsal 1 /2 hour per week,lunchtime</p>	<p>We continue to Increase numbers participating in the choirs with promotional performances at assemblies and in music lessons.</p> <p>Youthphonics will be directed by an NSG music teacher from September 2024 to encourage participation.</p> <p>The department will continue to increase numbers in the groups to maintain the rich and extensive repertoire of ensembles. We will develop rigorous tracking systems so that we are aware of every student who has music tuition outside of the school provision.</p>

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	<p>Senior Strings – Lead by NMPAT – Grade 4 and above. Rehearsal 1 hour per week, afterschool</p> <p>Junior Strings – Lead by RRD – Grade 1-3. Rehearsal 1/2 hour per week, lunchtime</p> <p>Guitar Ensemble – Lead by NMPAT – Grade 1 and above. Rehearsal 1/2 hour per week, lunchtime</p> <p>Ukulele Group – Lead by RRD – Any ability. Rehearsal 1/2 hour per week, lunchtime</p> <p>Clarinet Choir – Lead by NMPAT – grade 4 and above. Rehearsal 1/2 hour per week, lunchtime</p> <p>Tie Rack – Jazz ensemble – Lead by PPR – Grade 4 and above (invited students) - Rehearsal 1/2 hour per week, lunchtime.</p> <p>Big Band - Lead by RRD – Grade 4 and above. Rehearsal 1 hour per week, afterschool</p> <p>Academy - Songwriting and recording Lead by PPR - open to all - Rehearsal 1 hour per week, afterschool</p> <p>2023/4 Figures <i>256 students involved across music groups of which 33 are PP and 46 are SEND K/E</i></p>	
Impact of music tuition	Performance skills are usually higher than composition skills. High standards of timing and accuracy are achieved, and there is a positive trajectory for students over the year, they get better at performing as the year progresses.	

Part C: Musical experiences

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<p>Opportunities to perform and experience live performances</p>	<p>A range of concerts throughout the year are organised and delivered by the NSG music department. All ensembles and soloists will perform in at least one of the concerts. All of Year 7 are invited to perform as part of the Year 7 choir at the Christmas concert. This gives them experience of being on stage and is part of the promotional campaign for participating in Music at NSG. There is a box office charge for concerts, but concessions are available for OAPs and children.</p> <p>The concerts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Christmas Concert ● Jazz Café ● Midsummer Concert ● Gala Concert ● Biannual Musical Theatre production <p>Musical performances by NSG students also take place during assemblies, at our Open Evenings, Induction Days, Transition Days and Awards Evenings.</p> <p>Every other year students are given the opportunity to go on a 'Music Tour' led by the NSG music department. Students will travel to a European country, France in 2023, where they attend classical concerts and concerts celebrating local, cultural music. The students in return perform at different venues in the host country.</p> <p>NMPAT also organise concerts which take place in the local community, in our own Spinney Theatre and at venues across the country. NMPAT, along with numerous schools in Northamptonshire are represented at the highest level in National competitions/festivals and schools' proms performances at the Birmingham Symphony Hall and The Royal Albert Hall, London.</p>	<p>Restructuring of concerts in 2024/25 to avoid clashes with key national and international events.</p> <p>It is our intention is to invite some primary schools to perform and watch our performers at the Summer Concerts with the potential for a singing collaboration.</p>