

Poole High School Music Development Plan 2026-2027

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	June 2027
Name of the school music lead	Fay Robert
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	James Mosley
Name of local music hub	SoundStorm
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	n/a

Current offer:

Curriculum music

Music is taught within the Performing Arts department and is housed in a dedicated building comprising three teaching rooms and four practice rooms. These practice rooms are used for one-to-one instrumental and vocal lessons delivered by peripatetic teachers and are also available for pupils to use during social time and after school. The department benefits from a professional recording studio, and one teaching space doubles as a specialist Music Technology studio.

The department is staffed by a full-time Head of Music, a Music Teacher and a team of specialist peripatetic teachers.

In Year 7, pupils receive two one-hour music lessons per fortnight. The curriculum is designed to inspire and engage pupils, often introducing them to new musical experiences and genres. Learning balances practical music-making with theoretical understanding, focusing on the key musical elements represented by D.R.C.S.M.I.T.H. (Dynamics, Rhythm, Context, Structure, Melody, Instrumentation, Texture, Tonality, Tempo and Harmony). The curriculum is informed by the Model Music Curriculum (March 2021) and uses its principles as a guide rather than following it prescriptively. Topics include the Elements of Music, Singing, Samba, Folk Music, and the Instruments of the Orchestra

In Year 8, pupils continue to receive two one-hour lessons per fortnight. The curriculum builds upon knowledge and skills developed in Year 7, while laying foundations for GCSE study and further musical development. Topics include Blues, Singing, Music for Space, and Film Music.

In Year 9, pupils receive one one-hour lesson per fortnight. The curriculum complements the broader Performing Arts programme, enabling pupils to experience different art forms and make informed choices about their GCSE options. Topics include Songwriting, Game Music, and Performance Skills

Across Key Stage 3, the core strands of Performing, Composing, Listening and Appraising are developed through all topics. Teachers explicitly connect new learning to prior knowledge and future study. For example, the Year 8 Blues unit builds on keyboard work introduced in Year 7, extending pupils' understanding of chords and accompaniment.

Each topic is typically delivered over six lessons and includes developing subject-specific vocabulary alongside an exploration of how the Elements of Music contribute to particular styles and genres. Assessment is ongoing and incorporates teacher, self and peer assessment, with dedicated opportunities for reflection and improvement through Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time.

At Key Stage 4, pupils study the Eduqas GCSE Music qualification. The course offers students the opportunity to explore a wide range of musical styles and traditions through listening, performing and composing. The Listening and Appraising component places particular emphasis on developing aural skills and musical understanding, enabling pupils to identify, analyse and evaluate musical features across different genres.

These skills are valuable not only for those who continue their musical studies at A Level and beyond, but also for pupils who pursue music recreationally through performance and ensemble participation. There is currently one Year 10 GCSE Music group comprising 13 students and one Year 11 group comprising 8 students.

Poole High School's vision for Music is to develop "musical learners who, regardless of background or musical ability, engage in a range of musical activities through a broad curriculum."

The department is committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with SEND, have full access to the curriculum. Staff work closely with the school's SEND department to implement appropriate support strategies, including additional time for listening assessments and adapting instrument choices to suit pupils' physical needs.

One of the department's most effective approaches is collaborating with pupils and parents. Discussions before introducing new skills or activities enable staff to identify potential barriers to learning and make appropriate adaptations, helping to ensure success and meaningful participation for all learners.

Poole High School has established strong partnerships with local churches, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and SoundStorm, providing pupils with valuable enrichment opportunities beyond the classroom. More recently, the school's membership of Twynham Learning Trust has further expanded opportunities for collaboration and the sharing of best practice with like-minded educational institutions.

Co-curricular offer:

This covers opportunities for pupils to sing and play music outside lesson time, including choirs, ensembles and bands, and how pupils can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

The Music Department provides a broad and inclusive co-curricular programme that enables students to develop their musical skills beyond the classroom. Pupils can sing, perform, and collaborate through a variety of ensembles, clubs, and instrumental activities, supporting musical progression and fostering a vibrant musical culture within the school.

Poole High School facilitates individual peripatetic music tuition in a wide range of instruments, including piano, keyboard, voice, classical guitar, electric guitar, bass guitar, flute, clarinet, brass, saxophone, strings, ukulele and drums. Lessons take place weekly and provide personalised instruction to support students' musical development. Financial support is available for students receiving Pupil Premium funding through a subsidy towards the cost of lessons.

The department offers a range of regular extra-curricular groups, including Choir, Orchestra/Ensemble and Band Club, giving students of all abilities and experience levels opportunities to make music outside lessons. In addition, targeted groups support specific interests and curriculum needs, such as the Year 10 Pop Band, Year 11 Coursework Support Group and Staff Choir.

Looking ahead, the department aims to continue developing and expanding its co-curricular provision, encouraging greater participation across all year groups and providing more opportunities for students to perform, collaborate and develop their musical talents beyond the core curriculum.

Musical Experiences:

This covers the other musical events and opportunities organised, such as singing in assembly, concerts and shows, and trips to professional concerts.

This aspect of the department's provision includes a range of musical events, performances and enrichment opportunities beyond the classroom, such as singing in assemblies, concerts, shows and trips to professional performances.

Students in Years 7 and 8 participate annually in a Carol Service and singing performance, while students across all year groups can perform in the Poole Schools' Music Association Christmas Concert through the school choir and orchestra. Students involved in Performing Arts clubs and ensembles can also take part in the annual PHS Christmas Concert.

The department provides further large-scale performance opportunities through an alternating cycle of whole-school musical productions and Summer Arts Evenings, both open to students from all year groups. In addition, Key Stage 3 students have recently

participated in the Twynham Learning Trust Music Concert, performing alongside students from across the Trust.

Looking ahead, the department intends to build on these opportunities through continued collaboration with external partners, including SoundStorm, with planned workshops in Dhol and Samba drumming to broaden students' musical experiences and engagement with diverse musical traditions.

This covers what the school is planning for subsequent years.

The department aims to increase uptake at Key Stage 4, enabling the continued delivery of GCSE Music and ensuring students have access to a high-quality, engaging music curriculum. By raising the profile of music across the school and promoting the subject's creative, academic and personal development benefits, we hope to encourage more students to pursue music qualifications and continue their musical journey beyond Key Stage 3.

Another further priority is to establish viable cohort sizes for appropriate Sixth Form courses, providing a clear pathway for students wishing to continue their musical studies post-16. This will support progression into higher education, vocational training and careers within the creative industries.

The department is also committed to extending its extra-curricular provision. This includes developing a wider range of ensembles, clubs, performances and enrichment opportunities that cater for students of all abilities and interests. By broadening participation and increasing opportunities to perform both within school and the local community, we aim to foster a vibrant musical culture that enhances student confidence, achievement and enjoyment of music.