Music development plan summary:
Shirebrook Academy

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	May 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mr Kieran Davis
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr Damian O'Reilly
Name of local music hub	Derbyshire Music Hub

Part A: Curriculum music

The music curriculum at Shirebrook Academy is ambitious and demonstrates a strong foundation in both the National Curriculum and the Model Music Curriculum (2021). The curriculum is designed with a seamless transition from Key Stage 3 (KS3) into a Key Stage 4 (KS4) BTEC Music Practice course.

The Shirebrook Academy music curriculum offers a comprehensive and well-rounded approach to studying music. The curriculum aims to develop both theoretical and contextual knowledge through the strands of composing, listening, appraising, and performing. Through this curriculum, Shirebrook Academy has led in the development and creation of the Aston Community Education Trust's secondary music curriculum.

In Year 7, students explore diverse topics such as Basic Skills, where they learn fundamental music concepts and techniques. They also explore the world of music through the lens of popular television shows and movies in the "Big Music from the Small Screen" unit. Additionally, students engage with string instruments in the "Things with Strings" topic, experience ensemble playing in the "Band Lab" module, learn about different orchestral instruments, and explore the history and characteristics of the march.

Moving into Year 8, students further develop their musical skills and knowledge through topics like Basic Skills 2, where they expand on their foundational understanding. They delve into the rich heritage of Baroque music and explore the expressive nature of Blues and Jazz. In the "Band Lab 2" unit, students continue their ensemble playing, and they also explore the unique musical world of computer game music. The curriculum culminates with a study of the innovative and energetic art form of Stomp.

By Year 9, students have developed a solid foundation in music and continue to explore and expand their musical horizons. They further refine their fundamental skills in Basic Skills 3 and delve into the captivating world of film music, discovering the creative techniques employed in composing for the silver screen. Additionally, they are introduced to the art of songwriting, allowing them to express their creativity and develop their own musical ideas.

The department's focus on the development of musical skills and the progressive building of prior knowledge is evident throughout the curriculum. The department has implemented adaptive teaching strategies that ensure all students, including those with SEND, can access an enriching musical experience.

For the academic year 2026-2027, music is timetabled for one hour a week in Years 7 and 8, providing students with consistent exposure to musical learning. In Year 9, music runs on a rotation with drama, equivalent to half of the year. The sequencing of the KS3 curriculum is well designed, enabling students to build on prior knowledge and develop their musical skills progressively.

Students at Shirebrook Academy actively engage with the Schemes of Learning and are encouraged to explore their areas of musical interest and skills.

The music curriculum at Shirebrook Academy in KS3 is broad, balanced, and rich in content, giving all students access to a wide range of opportunities to explore and develop new musical skills.

Our curriculum objectives, end points and resources for each Scheme of Learning are aligned to the National Curriculum for Music and allow students the opportunity to progress and develop a set of skills and knowledge linked to Singing, Composing, Performing and Appraising musical extracts and performances.

At KS4, students opt for music and study the BTEC Music Practice course. As an Arts Faculty, we believe this course best suits the needs and talents of our students: its practical, vocational approach builds performing, creating and music industry skills, and provides them with the best opportunities to progress after Key Stage 4. It allows students to go on to study music at Level 3, including A level and vocational courses, and beyond if they so desire.

Both curriculum maps can be found on our website via the links below:

KS3 Curriculum Map

KS4 Curriculum Map

Part B: Co-curricular music

Shirebrook Academy offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for our students to make music in ensemble and group settings.

The instrumental and vocal lessons offered at Shirebrook Academy are in partnership with Derbyshire Music Hub.

The following instruments and vocal training options are available:

1. Drums and Percussion

2. Guitar and Bass Guitar

3. Woodwind

4. Upper Strings

5. Piano and Keyboard

Co-curricular provision at Shirebrook Academy encompasses various activities and opportunities for students to make music outside of regular classroom lessons. There are weekly rehearsals and dedicated spaces for students to participate in music. These offerings include the Wind Band, Choirs, Ukulele Club, Talent Shows and whole-academy musicals, as well as open-door rehearsal times available during lunch breaks. All these activities are provided free of charge for students.

Shirebrook Academy provides regular performance opportunities for students to showcase their musical talents throughout the year.

Part C: Musical experiences

Christmas Concert (Term 2)

Christmas Fayre (Term 2)

Carols in the marketplace (Term 2)

Carols in the Care Homes (Term 2)

Summer Festival (Term 6)

Shirebrook's Got Talent (Term 6)

We hold annual end-of-term showcase events, which include Christmas and Easter concerts and a Summer Festival of talents within the academy entitled Shirebrook's Got Talent.

As well as performing in the academy for parents and the wider community, we maintain strong local links, performing in the marketplace at Christmas and in local care homes.

The academy values external support and welcomes visiting musicians and performances throughout the academic calendar – for example, the world-famous Black Dyke Band has visited and performed for our students and community.

Enrichment benchmarks and live music

The Department for Education's enrichment framework and benchmarks, published in June 2026, set out what a strong enrichment offer looks like: strategic, broad and well rounded, accessible and engaging, shaped by the school community, delivered in partnership and focused on outcomes. Arts and culture, including experiencing live performance, is a core strand of the framework, and from September 2026 Ofsted will consider how schools have regard to it when evaluating personal development. We have used the benchmarks to review our music offer and to strengthen the link between what students learn in the classroom and the music they experience beyond it.

Our curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 3, is central to this. Each KS3 unit gives students the knowledge, listening skills and musical vocabulary to understand and appraise live performance – from the orchestral instruments and marches studied in Year 7, through Baroque music, Blues and Jazz and Stomp in Year 8, to film music and songwriting in Year 9. Live performances will be planned to link directly to these units,

so that what students hear in the concert hall, theatre or academy hall brings their learning to life, and their learning helps them listen with greater understanding and enjoyment.

Over the life of this plan, we will enable many more of our students to visit and listen to live musical performances across a wide range of musical styles, countries and ensembles. This will include:

- **Orchestral and choral music:** concerts by professional orchestras and choirs, including the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester.
- **Music from around the world:** performances and workshops that introduce students to musical traditions from different countries and cultures, such as African drumming, Indian classical music, gamelan and Latin American music.
- **Musical theatre and popular music:** West End and touring productions, contemporary bands and singer-songwriters.
- **Visiting musicians in the academy:** bringing professional performers into Shirebrook so that every student, not only those who can travel, hears high-quality live music.

In line with the benchmark for an accessible and engaging offer, we will prioritise students who are disadvantaged or who have not previously attended a live performance, and we will use pupil premium and other funding, where available, to remove cost and transport as barriers. Working with Derbyshire Music Hub, local venues and professional ensembles, we aim for every student to experience live music during Key Stage 3.

In line with the benchmarks for an outcomes-focused and continually improving offer, we will track participation by year group and student group (including pupil premium and SEND), gather student voice after each experience, and review the impact each year as part of this development plan.

In the future

We will continue to review and develop the curriculum in line with students' interests and the BTEC Music Practice specification. We will also continue to develop connections with local bands and external music providers and performers.

Music plays a key role in the lives of our students and the community we serve. Our pupil premium strategy is grounded in our values and tailored to meet the unique needs of a close-knit community that prioritises loyalty and character but faces significant challenges.

Ranked among the bottom 10% nationally for deprivation (IDACI index), the community is geographically isolated, with limited transport links impacting access to post-16 education and other opportunities.

Widening participation in instrumental lessons: it is important to provide a wider range of instrumental lessons for students. By broadening the choice of instrumental lessons,

more students, whatever their circumstances, can have the opportunity to explore and develop their musical talents.

Socio-economic and geographical barriers limit students' opportunities for personal development and enrichment, which can affect their self-esteem, social confidence, and motivation while fostering isolation and mistrust. In response, we are committed to providing meaningful opportunities that bridge these gaps, enabling all students to develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed for success.

This includes trips to live performances such as West End shows and the annual GCSE set work concert hosted by the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester.

Increasing uptake of music at KS4: to enhance the music department, efforts should be made to increase the number of students choosing music as a subject at Key Stage 4. This could involve promoting the benefits and rewards of studying music, showcasing successful musical alumni and their achievements, and organising workshops or taster sessions to ignite interest among students. By boosting the uptake of music at this stage, the department can grow and diversify, creating a more vibrant and dynamic learning environment.
Enhancing the use of music technology in the classroom: to enrich the KS3 curriculum and improve musical outcomes, it is important to incorporate music technology into the teaching and learning process. This could involve providing training and resources for teachers to effectively integrate music technology tools such as digital audio workstations, music composition software, and electronic instruments. By using technology, students can explore different styles and techniques, create their own compositions, and develop digital music production skills.

To implement these improvements, the music department should consider the following actions:

- Provide professional development opportunities and resources for teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in music technology.

- Collaborate closely with senior leaders to ensure adequate funding is allocated, providing all students with opportunities to learn musical instruments and attend professional concerts and events. These experiences aim to deepen their love for music and expand their knowledge of the subject.

- Allocate budget to invest in suitable equipment and software to support the integration of music technology into the curriculum.

- Review and update the KS3 curriculum to include music technology as a key component, ensuring students have opportunities to develop proficiency in using music technology tools.

- Foster partnerships with local music technology experts or organisations to provide workshops, guest lectures, or mentoring opportunities for students and teachers.

- Regularly assess and monitor the impact of music technology integration on student engagement and progress, adjusting as necessary.

1-Year Development Plan:

1. Widening instrumental lessons:

- Conduct a comprehensive survey to assess student interests and demands for additional peripatetic instrument lessons.

- Source and employ additional qualified music teachers through the Derbyshire Music Hub, specialising in the identified instruments, to provide bespoke one-to-one peripatetic instrumental lessons. These lessons can be offered with financial subsidies where applicable.

- Develop opportunities to accommodate a broader range of instrumental lessons. These lessons can be offered with financial subsidies on a case-by-case basis for students, ensuring that any potential barriers to participation are removed.

- Market and promote the expanded instrumental lesson offerings to students and parents.

2. Enhancing the use of music technology in the classroom:

- Provide professional development workshops for teachers to familiarise them with music technology tools and applications.

- Acquire necessary music technology equipment and software for classroom use.

- Integrate music technology into existing KS3 curriculum units, incorporating hands-on activities and assignments.

- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of incorporating music technology on student engagement and learning.

3-Year Development Plan:

1. Widening instrumental lessons:

- Monitor and financially support the uptake and engagement of students in the expanded instrumental lessons.

- Assess the need for further diversification of instrumental offerings based on student demand and interests.

- Collaborate with local music organisations to provide additional performance and ensemble opportunities for students.

2. Increasing uptake of music at KS4:

- Develop targeted marketing campaigns to raise awareness about the benefits and opportunities of studying music at KS4.

- Enhance collaboration with feeder schools to ensure a seamless transition and continuity in music education while supporting primary colleagues in delivering Music as a subject at Key Stage 2.

- Offer tailored guidance and support to students interested in pursuing music at KS4, including subject selection advice and relevant resources.

5-Year Development Plan:

1. Widening instrumental lessons:

- Continue to evaluate the demand for instrumental lessons and expand offerings accordingly.

- Establish strong relationships with local music tutors and institutions to offer specialised lessons and masterclasses.

2. Increasing uptake of music at KS4:

- Develop mentoring programmes, connecting KS4 music students with experienced musicians or industry professionals for guidance and inspiration.

- Extend community outreach programmes to share the achievements and success stories of music students, encouraging more students to take up music as a subject.

This development plan will be reviewed regularly. We will monitor progress, gather feedback from students, parents and staff, and adjust as necessary to ensure the ongoing improvement and effectiveness of the music department at Shirebrook Academy.

Further information

Derbyshire Music Hub

Shirebrook Academy Arts Faculty/Music Curriculum