

Applecroft School



Music Development Plan Summary

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-2025
Date this summary was published	September 2024, updated January 25
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2025
Name of the school music lead	Juliet Keefe
Member of school leadership team with responsibility for music (if different)	Deputy Head
Name of local music hub	Hertfordshire Music Service
Name of music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Rocksteady Music School Rock Project

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

Part A: Curriculum Music

This is about what we teach in lesson time and how much time is spent teaching music.

Using the CUSP Music curriculum (which is built around the principles of evidence-led practice) and objectives from the Model Music Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage, it is our aim to develop every child as a musician. Our curriculum is designed to be accessible to all so that every child makes good progress. We believe that all pupils can achieve in music and, through their learning, will develop creatively, culturally and spiritually. Lessons are based on listening and appraisal activities, games, singing, playing instruments, composing, improvisation, music technology and performing.

Our music curriculum is ambitious and progressive, with a strong focus on vocabulary. It builds on previous learning, promoting a love of music and singing. It supports non-specialist teachers and is taught in a practical and enjoyable way, deliberately planned so that pupils revisit concepts, embedding knowledge over time. Children learn to appreciate different music forms, genres and composers and participate in a wide range of opportunities. They learn to play instruments, to perform and to develop musical skills.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), music is taught in a cross-curricular manner and is a fundamental part of pupils' everyday learning. It is used as a tool for teaching phonics and PE as well as being part of the 'Expressive Arts and Design' activities. In Years 1-6, CUSP plans detail all the knowledge, skills and key vocabulary and are used as a basis for each lesson. There are 5 lessons in each block and 6 blocks are taught across the year. Lessons are delivered on a weekly or fortnightly basis for 30-60 minutes.

Every teacher has access to interactive music and video resources to support delivery, via the CUSP website and from 'Sing Up' resources. A well-stocked music cupboard contains a class set of glockenspiels and keyboards as well as a range of untuned percussion instruments. In addition to class music lessons, First Access keyboard lessons for Year 5 pupils are funded by Herts Music Service for a term. Further lessons for identified children are funded by the school.

All children, including those who are disadvantaged, are given the support they need in order to access the curriculum. Knowledge notes and vocabulary tasks provide key learning to which pupils can refer and this reduces cognitive load. Music vocabulary is displayed in the classroom and scaffolding is used, where appropriate, to support pupils. SEND children, who struggle with noise, can wear ear defenders and are positioned in the appropriate place in order for them to enjoy full participation.

Part B: Co-curricular Music

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

Pupils can make progress in music outside of lesson time. As well as First Access keyboard lessons, Herts Music Service (HMS) provides weekly individual and group lessons at Applecroft in a range of instruments including piano, violin, cello, brass, saxophone, clarinet, flute and guitar. We have a designated music room where these lessons can take place and we also utilise other rooms such as the school halls and computer suite, when there are multiple lessons taking place simultaneously. Pupils benefit from an instrument loan system and subsidies are available for disadvantaged children through Pupil Premium funds. Music qualifications can be achieved from a range of exam boards. In addition, HMS provision includes special days such as 'Wind Day', in which the children are invited to participate, and a range of ensembles at the music centre.

We partner with Rocksteady Music School to deliver fun and inclusive rock and pop band lessons. These weekly music lessons take place in school and are led by a highly trained professional musician who knows how to inspire a love for music. Children learn new musical skills, work collaboratively and have fun, all whilst boosting confidence, wellbeing, social skills and academic achievement. Rocksteady Music School runs ten bands throughout the day, each containing 9 pupils from Years 1 to 6. No previous experience is necessary and all instruments for lessons are provided. Children can achieve an Ofqual-regulated Music qualification, accredited by Trinity College London, without having to take an exam. End of term concerts are held to showcase learning and parents receive regular updates about their child's progress, including photos and videos. Pupil Premium funding is used to enroll identified students and Rocksteady matches this offer, providing funding for more children to experience the transformative power of learning music, regardless of any barriers they face.

Up to 85 children in Years 4, 5 and 6 can attend our inclusive Applecroft Choir Club for an hour after school on a Tuesday, run by the music lead with the support of an LSA. Members are taught to sing songs with increasing confidence, skill, expression and awareness of their own contribution to the group. Children have the opportunity to learn to sing in parts and to harmonise as well as to sing solos. A wide repertoire of songs is taught, and each year the choir performs at a range of school and local community events. One of the highlights of the year is the choir's participation in the Young Voices concert at The O2.

Other music groups on offer at different times of the year are an Ocarina Club, open to children from years 2-6, and Music Technology Club for identified pupils. Children become members of a range of Google Classrooms ('Choir', 'Applecroft Instrumentalists' and 'Music Tech Club') where they can share videos and photos of music making. Resources are shared with the children so that they can rehearse at home in the lead-up to musical events and they can communicate with the music lead.

Part C: Musical Experiences

This is about all the other musical events and opportunities that we organise, such as singing in assembly, concerts and shows, and trips to professional concerts.

Additional learning takes place in music assemblies once a week with the aim of extending the children's song repertoire and providing them with an enriching experience of mass singing, often in multiple parts. Teaching opportunities are utilised, based on aspects of music such as pitch, harmony, diction and dynamics. Music assemblies also provide the opportunity to listen to live performances by visiting musicians or by Applecroft pupils, who regularly benefit from developing their performance skills.

Other musical events for this academic year include:

- Whole school trip to watch the Stevenage pantomime
- Christmas Cheer singing event for Y6 at Stanborough School (Handside Partnership schools singing to audience members from local care homes and elderly members of the community)
- Choir performance at the Isabel Hospice Light of Love service
- Y1-6 Christmas show (x3 performances)
- Nursery Christmas Sing-a-long
- Reception Nativity
- End of term Choir and Ocarina Club performance of carols on the playground
- Choir performance at the Young Voices concert at The O2
- 'Marley Magic' live stream to celebrate Bob Marley's 80th birthday
- Visit from Stanborough music students to share their learning with Year 5 pupils
- Year group sharing assemblies (one for each year group R-Y6)
- Spring and summer music assemblies for soloists and ensembles (e.g. strings, guitars and brass)
- Rocksteady launch workshops and summer concert

Musical events/lessons that incur a cost are subsidised for disadvantaged pupils from Pupil Premium funds. Ensembles that are run by the music lead are free of charge. Every other year, the school organises pupil workshops and a concert, for children and parents, by the acapella group 'The Sons of Pitches'. These workshops are funded by the profits from the concert tickets.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities are provided in house by the music lead and by the music hub. Young Voices also offer an annual teachers' workshop in preparation for the concerts in January/February.

Applecroft School is a member of the HMS Primary Music Network and works closely with the local music hub. We benefit from HMS subsidised subscriptions to 'Sing Up' and 'Charanga'.

In recognition of the high quality music provision across the school, Applecroft has been awarded the prestigious 'Music Mark' for the last three academic years.

Young Voices Pupil/Parent Voice:

"I loved the Young Voices concert at The O2! It was so much fun being part of such a big choir with schools all around England. I don't think I have been to any concert as special as that, and be able to sing it! One of my favourite things about The O2 was the little torches because when it went dark you could see every individual light and I saw them like each little light was their own unique person."

"I loved Young Voices; it is an experience of a lifetime. The guest singers were amazing and I am very lucky to have had the chance to sing with them. The atmosphere is amazing, the lights are incredible and the tiny torches are really cool. I would love to go to Young Voices next year but sadly I can't as I will be at secondary school. I would recommend going to Young Voices as, for me, it is an experience that I will remember forever."

"I just wanted to write to say a huge, heartfelt thank you for giving my daughter the opportunity to perform at the wonderful Young Voices concert! She absolutely loved every minute - it was a fantastic experience for us all and one that won't be forgotten. Thank you for all the complex organisation and hard work you put into making it such a memorable occasion - it is so appreciated!"

In the future

This is about what the school is planning for subsequent years.

Plans for the future include:

- Continue to support and develop the teaching of music across the school to ensure high quality provision for all pupils
- Develop links with St Andrews Care Home
- Explore links with Herts Philharmonic Orchestra (who use the school building for practice sessions)
- Organise a 'Sons of Pitches' event for the academic year 2025/2026
- Utilise parental expertise within the school community and create links that further enhance the teaching and learning of music by inviting relevant parents/carers into school to share their expertise

Further information

[Hertfordshire Music Service](#)

[Mid Herts Centre for Music and Arts \(Hatfield\)](#)

[Hertfordshire Music Hub](#)

[Music education: information for parents and young people - GOV.UK](#)

[Sing Up](#)

[Charanga](#)

[Rocksteady Music School](#)