

Music development plan summary: North Oxfordshire Academy

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	James Stevenson
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	David Murphy
Name of local music hub	Oxfordshire County Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	United Learning

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, how much time is spent teaching music and any music qualifications or awards that pupils can achieve.

Key Stage 3

At Key Stage 3, students are taught one hour of music per week. The curriculum is based on United Learning's Key Performance Indicators (henceforth referred to as KPI's) for success in music performance, composition and analysis.

The musical content students are taught is diverse, and builds incrementally in difficulty with regular opportunities to revisit and develop earlier taught skills and knowledge. The projects taught offer a balance of performance and composition, and utilise all of the equipment housed in our well-resourced department, including Apple Mac computers equipped with Logic Pro X and Ableton Live 11 (as well as MIDI keyboards,

Push controllers and audio interfaces), electric and acoustic guitars and basses, keyboards, drums and international percussion, woodwind, brass and strings.

The Key Stage three curriculum is shown below.

Year 7 Term 1	Year 7 Term 2	Year 7 Term 3	Year 7 Term 4	Year 7 Term 5	Year 7 Term 6
Elements and Notation 1	Band Skills 1	Hip Hop	Reggae	Music and Meaning	Rock and Pop
Year 8 Term 1	Year 8 Term 2	Year 8 Term 3	Year 8 Term 4	Year 8 Term 5	Year 8 Term 6
Elements and Notation 2	Band Skills 2	Club Dance Music	Klezmer	Classical Time Period	Four Chord Progressions
Year 9 Term 1	Year 9 Term 2	Year 9 Term 3	Year 9 Term 4	Year 9 Term 5	Year 9 Term 6
Elements and Notation 3	Band Skills 3	Remixing	Music of the Indian Subcontinent	Modernism	Songwriting

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, students are taught five hours of music per fortnight. We run the courses Eduqas GCSE Music as a music option, and Pearson BTEC Music Practice, with a technology focus as a music technology option.

Key Stage 5

At Key Stage 5, students are taught eight hours of music per fortnight. We run the Pearson BTEC National Extended Certificate in Music (Performing), again as an option subject.

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.

We have a large-scale operation for instrumental tuition, run entirely in-house. We have tutors for guitar, bass, keyboard, drums, vocals, brass, woodwind and strings, and we currently have over 100 students taking lessons.

We currently run many after-school and lunchtime co-curricular programmes: brass group, woodwind group, strings group, funk band, samba band, jazz band, choir and DJ club. We also offer use of the recording studio and practice rooms on a drop-in basis during breaks, lunches, before and after school, and our classrooms are equipped with heavy duty PA systems and lighting rigs, meaning they are easily transformed into performance spaces. We run a weekly after-school concert in one of the music classrooms, Friday Night Live, during which students can improve their live

performance skills to an audience in a low-stakes, low-pressure environment. All our co-curricular ensembles are free to attend, which is central to our inclusive musical ethos.

Students taking instrumental lessons are able to borrow equipment if necessary, and we are constantly improving our arsenal of music equipment; we will not let finances be a barrier to music learning.

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.

As well as the aforementioned Friday Night Live performances, we run three annual large-scale music events:

The Winter Showcase (Term 2) – a loosely Christmas-themed event in the main hall. We put on 250 tickets, and typically sell all of them.

The Big Gig (Term 3) – A musical showcase in the main hall, featuring all of our cocurricular ensembles and other performers. Again, we put on 250 tickets for this.

NOA Fest (Term 6) – A festival-styled event, with four stages (Main Stage, Acoustic Stage, Orchestral Stage, Electronic Stage). For this event, we showcase all of the school's musical activity that has taken place over the year, as well as inviting former students and industry artists to perform. For this, we sell 400 tickets.

All of our events are ticketed at a cost; however, we make concessions for pupil premium and students from low-income families, offering students the opportunity to work at the event in order to obtain a ticket. Students frequently take up this offer. The proceeds from live music events are channelled back into the department and are used for paying external providers to run co-curricular sessions and towards the purchase of new equipment.

We enjoy a good relationship with the local council's events planning team, and typically take students to perform at three or four events outside of school per academic year: the town's Christmas Lights Switch-On event, a lantern parade with the samba band and at least one festival-type event, normally in a park with other local organisations and industry artists.

We run at least one trip to see an orchestra each year, and have taken students to events in Birmingham and London in the past. This is typically for KS4 and KS5 Music students and students learning an orchestral instrument; however we wish to expand this to eventually take all KS3 students to one of these events.

We enjoy a positive working relationship with our MAT, United Learning, and take students to take part in a group-wide event each year. In the past, these have included

a staging of Bizet's Carmen, a collaborative "Festival of Creativity", in which schools from local clusters presented collaborative music performances and performances of original works by in-residence composer Alexander L'Estrange.

In the future

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

Our main priority moving forward is to build on our already good outcomes at Key Stages 4 and 5 to a level of excellence in a national context.

Alongside this, we are working to increase the number of students taking academic musical qualifications at Key Stages 4 and 5 to mirror the high levels of co-curricular participation we see across the school.

We are working with a range of subject specialist and non-subject specialist experts in our school and MAT to support these outcomes.

We plan to expand our already successful orchestra performance trips to include all of Key Stage 3; by the time any student leaves NOA, they will have been to at least one orchestral performance.

We are working to improve our facilities, and looking towards refitting our recording studio with more modern hardware.

We are already more than fulfilling the 7 features of high-quality music education, and now strive to elevate our provision from "great" to "nationally significant".