

Music development plan summary: Chesterton Community College



Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Miss Catherine Wilson
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Miss Colleen Lehane
Name of local music hub	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Music Hub

This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our pupils across three areas – curriculum music, extra-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 section covers timetabled classroom music lessons.

Our KS3, KS4 and KS5 music curriculum can be found here.

<https://ccc.tela.org.uk/student-life/curriculum/music/>

Music is taught for 100 minutes per fortnight at KS3. In addition, all KS3 students have a timetabled Music Technology lesson for a term in either Year 8 or 9, for 100 minutes per week, as part of the DT rotation. This is being further developed this year so that they will instead receive 8 weeks in both Years 8 and 9.

Pearson Edexcel GCSE Music is taught for 400 minutes per fortnight as a timetabled option subject at KS4.

AQA A-level Music is taught for 500 minutes per fortnight as a timetabled option subject at KS5.

Our school curriculum is informed by the model music curriculum, national curriculum, and Ofsted music research review, as well as responding to our local context. Students are able to develop their musical knowledge and skills in a way which enables them to feel like musicians and promotes a life-long enjoyment of music.

Singing is an important part of the KS3 music curriculum. Students have opportunity to learn to sing as well as to play various instruments in classroom music lessons with a focus on keyboard, ukulele and steel pan skills.

We are a lead school for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Music Education Hub, recognising our strengths in music provision.

Part B: Extra-curricular music

This section covers music activities outside of timetabled compulsory lessons. Extra-curricular music is thriving at Chesterton, with a significant proportion of our school community regularly involved in musical activities outside of the classroom.

Extra-Curricular Ensembles

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular ensembles, free of charge for students to participate in. These included in 2025-2026:

- Orchestra
- Jazz Band
- Senior Jazz Group
- Junior Choir
- Senior Choir
- Chesterton Singers
- Year 7 Steel Pans
- Year 8-11 Steel Pans – two bands
- Samba Band
- Guitars and Ukuleles
- Recorder Ensemble
- Flute Ensemble
- Brass Ensemble
- Cello Ensemble
- Folk Fiddle Band
- Simply Strings
- Senior Strings

- Band Project

Students are welcome to join extra-curricular groups throughout the year.

Music practice rooms are available for student use before and after school, as well as breaks/lunchtimes if space permits.

Instrumental/Vocal Lessons

Chesterton has a team of seventeen visiting peripatetic music teachers, teaching the following instruments:

Strings: violin, viola, cello, harp

Woodwind: flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, saxophone

Brass: trumpet, cornet, French horn, tenor horn, trombone, baritone, euphonium, tuba

Percussion: drum kit, orchestral percussion

Guitars: electric and acoustic guitar, bass guitar, ukulele

Piano

Voice

Some of our teachers are from Cambridgeshire Music and others are self-employed.

Instrumental/vocal lessons are advertised to students and parents/carers every summer term for the following September, as well as periodically during the year should vacancies arise. Lessons are very popular, with over 200 lessons taking place each week. Lessons largely take place during the school day, on a rotation basis.

Lessons tend to range from £20-23 for 30 minutes. Financial assistance is available for PP/FSM students.

Part C: Musical experiences

This section covers additional musical events and opportunities that we organise. Within the academic year there are many additional musical opportunities that students can take part in.

Assembly Music

We have a rota of pianists who play to welcome students to their weekly house assemblies.

In addition, Year 7 and 8 have a series of singing assemblies to prepare students for the annual Multi-Faith Celebration.

Large-Scale Concerts

Our termly large-scale performances offer students in our school ensembles and choirs the chance to perform before a public audience. These are a highlight of the music department and school calendar. We usually use external venues or go outdoors at school for these to accommodate the large number of performers and audience members.

Autumn Term:

- Carol Service at St John's College, Cambridge – typically 200 students perform. This year we are replacing this with a carol service at Great St Mary's Church and a Christmas Live Lounge in school as St John's is not able to accommodate us. Most ensembles perform in these events.

Spring Term:

- Spring Concerts at The University of Cambridge's West Road Concert Hall – typically 250 Chesterton students and 100 primary students perform. There are two concerts, one in the afternoon involving a feeder primary choir alongside our students, and one in the evening involving our students. All ensembles perform in these events.

Summer Term:

- Summer Outdoor Concert at school – typically 200 Chesterton students and 20 Y6 students perform. The Y6 students join our school orchestra, as a transition activity. All ensembles perform in this concert.

Community Performances

Music department ensembles regularly perform at local events, including Chesterton Festival, the summer solstice swim at Jesus Green Lido and the North Cambridge Community Partnership summer fete. We also performed at the Corn Exchange again last year for Refugee Week, in a concert curated by HistoryWorks and Michael Rosen.

External Collaborations

We are a Gabrieli Roar partner choir. We participate in the bi-annual Gabrieli Roar Christmas tour at Ely Cathedral, usually taking around 90-100 members of our choirs to sing in these very special concerts, alongside other school/youth choirs and the professional Gabrieli Consort and Players. This is not running this year in Ely but we hope to visit another cathedral with the choir if possible. We also take part in the annual summer choral residential course, again, culminating in a large-scale performance at Ely Cathedral.

Last year Chesterton Singers took part in a joint Compline with Great St Mary's Youth Choir, and we hope to take part in a joint Evensong this year.

The King's Men came to Chesterton to give a fantastic workshop for our choirs last year, and we hope to maintain this partnership next year.

We have also bi-annually taken the Junior Choir to perform in the Music for Youth Creative Project at the Royal Albert Hall.

Solo/Small Ensemble Concerts

Students have regular opportunities to perform as soloists. We host termly or twice-termly Live Lounge/Teatime Concerts; these are informal concerts where students from all year groups have the opportunity to perform music of their own choice to a small, friendly audience. These take place typically in the music block. This year, we hope the Year 7 concert may also include some whole year group singing, with all Year 7s invited.

We also have an excellent relationship with St Andrew's Church, Chesterton. We usually give two solo/small ensemble performances at the church each year, one in November and one in June/July. These each typically feature 20-30 students.

Trips

We regularly run trips to concerts, performances and workshops. These are chargeable in most, but not all, cases, with a discount applied for those receiving Pupil Premium. These trips are designed to motivate and inspire students.

Recent trips include:

- Year 8 gamelan workshop at The University of Cambridge Music Faculty
- Year 9-11 visit to the Aurora Orchestra at the Southbank Centre, London
- KS5 visit to Six the Musical at the Vaudeville Theatre, London
- GCSE Music visit to Wicked the Musical at the Apollo Victoria Theatre in London
- Annual all years trip to the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, London

In the future

In future years, we hope to be able to maintain our excellent musical provision, whilst continually reflecting and responding to the needs of our school community.

Particular areas for consideration will include:

Continuing to build the profile of singing in the department

- Reintroducing an acapella singing group for advanced singers

Continuing to consider strategies for continued positive instrumental lesson uptake

- Maintaining and developing links with local primary schools – if possible, through our role as a lead school
- Continuing to refine extra-curricular ensembles to support emerging needs
- Further build the uptake of 'rare breed' instruments

Continuing to build KS4 and KS5 music uptake, despite the often concerning national trends

- Continuing to look at ways to inspire and motivate KS4 and 5 pupils to continue with their musical studies, such as trips, workshops and continued consideration of curriculum development
- Further build the use of music technology at KS3, including a 'tech team'
- Consider whether further outreach can be done with local KS4 providers, especially those without a sixth form, with an aim to further boost KS5 music at Chesterton
- Continuing to build upon our music leadership roles for students from Year 8 and above

Music is a huge part of life at Chesterton, and we hope students feel a sense of pride in being part of our music department.