Woodlands School
Music Development Plan

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	1st September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	1st September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Natalie Cairns
Name of local music hub	Blackpool Music Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Lancashire Music Service

This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our pupils across three areas:

- Curriculum music
- Co-curricular provision
- Musical experiences.

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

Music is a vital part of education as it supports communication, self-expression, emotional regulation, and social interaction, making it especially powerful for learners with SLD. Our music curriculum is designed to be fully inclusive, meeting the needs of very early learners (Voyagers) through to more advanced learners (Pioneers). For Voyagers, music provides sensory-rich experiences, encouraging engagement through rhythm, sound exploration, movement, and cause-and-effect play. As learners progress, the curriculum develops skills such as turn-taking, listening, pattern recognition, and using music as a tool for communication. For Pioneers, music offers opportunities to deepen understanding of rhythm, structure, and collaboration, enabling them to participate more independently and creatively. This progression ensures that all learners access music at a level appropriate to their developmental stage, while gaining the wider cognitive, social, and emotional benefits it provides. Music has a particular power to inspire and stimulate young people with Special Needs.

Introduction of "Charanga" Music Scheme:

Since January 2026, teachers have been following the **Charanga** music scheme, focusing on delivering an integrated, practical and structured approach to music education that aligns with the UK National Curriculum for music and is adaptable for the needs of our students through

- Listening and Appraising
- Musical Activities and Games
- Singing
- Playing Instruments
- Improvisation and Composition
- Performing

This scheme is tailored to the diverse needs of our pupils, ensuring that everyone can participate and progress in their musical journey. It aims to nurture fundamental music techniques as well as setting high expectations of pupils regardless of prior attainment.

It is built around the Interrelated Dimensions of Music, or core musical elements, which are explored and extended across all units of work:

- Pulse
- Rhythm
- Pitch
- Tempo
- Dynamics
- Timbre
- Texture
- Structure
- Notation

Charanga is designed as a flexible music curriculum, allowing teachers to select and adapt units, activities and resources to meet the individual needs, developmental stages and abilities of their learners, rather than following a rigid, sequential programme. Following Charanga training, teachers utilise this flexibility to ensure that music provision is relevant, accessible and purposeful across all stages of our school, from early Voyagers through to Navigators. We also us Charanga's **Everyone Can Play** scheme, which offers a more exploratory, sensory-based approach to music-making. This is particularly beneficial for our earliest learners, providing opportunities to explore sounds, instruments, rhythm and cause and effect through practical, hands-on experiences. Teachers draw on the different elements of Charanga to create meaningful musical experiences, ensuring that all pupils can access, engage with and make progress in music at an appropriate level.

We strive to remove barriers to learning for all students and adopt a positive and proactive approach so that all students can express themselves and be able to join in and take an active part in lessons. Music is used to support pupils' sensory tolerances, attention and engagement, communication and thinking skills. We use audio cues to help children understand parts of their daily routine, such as dinner or home time.

Assemblies allow the children opportunities to develop their singing and communication skills.

Performances, such as Christmas Plays, School Choir and School Discos demonstrate that music is important to the life of the school.

Christmas Performances:

Students develop specific music and dance skills for our annual Christmas performance.

Pupils learn singing, choreography, and stage presence, concluding in a production for parents and carers.

Our Voyagers classes take part in a sensory nativity, ensuring that all pupils are involved.

Whole School MADD Week:

MADD Week (Music, Art, Drama, and Dance) is held annually, with a different theme each year.

MADD Week serves as a unique cross-curricular opportunity where students explore music alongside other art forms.

Part B: Extra-curricular music

External Theatre and Musical Visits:

Students visit local theatres, where they are exposed to live performances, enhancing their understanding and appreciation of different musical forms.

These trips also include opportunities to see music integrated into various art forms, such as musicals and plays.

Park School Band performs regularly at our school, offering students the chance to enjoy live music and engage with musicians.

These performances help students experience the joy of live music and inspire their interest in learning instruments.

Performing Arts
Music is integrated into our performing arts activities. Students have the opportunity to learn about music as part of larger productions, combining drama, dance, and vocal performance.

Lancashire Music Bus
We arrange a visit from the Lancashire Music Bus once a year, giving pupils the opportunity to explore and experience a variety of different instruments they may not have come across, as well as a variety of digital software.

School Visits
We actively seek and take advantage of opportunities for musical visits and experiences offered through Blackpool and Lancashire, including visiting musicians, performers and music organisations. These visits provide valuable opportunities for pupils to experience live music, engage with different instruments and musical styles, and participate in shared musical experiences beyond the classroom. Last year, we welcomed Playground Proms, whose visit was incredibly engaging and accessible for pupils across the school. We aim to build on this by developing links with external providers and ensuring our pupils have regular opportunities to experience high-quality, inclusive live music.

Part C: Musical experiences

Songs, rhymes and actions support pupils' early communication and cognition skills, building on areas of engagement and being a valued part of their time in school. Music facilitates opportunities for pupils to join in with a group and self-regulate through music and movement.

As a whole school we regularly attend pantomimes at the local theatre. We have also had visits from Tramshed Theatre Company who deliver workshops as well as performances.

It is important to allow students exposure to as many music-based opportunities and musical performances as possible. This includes bringing external musicians into school to run workshops and perform.

Our performing arts group participates in events like the **Local Dance Festival**, **Schools Alive Performance**, and the **Special Needs Music Festival**, where students showcase their talents alongside other schools in the area.

In the future

Our school's music development plan is designed to ensure all pupils, regardless of their abilities, have access to high-quality, varied, and inclusive music education. By embedding the "Charanga" music scheme, expanding co-curricular opportunities, and enhancing musical experiences, we are fostering a love for music in our pupils and equipping them with the skills and confidence to express themselves through this powerful art form.

Our priorities for this year to further develop the Music provision are:

- To fully embed the "Charanga" scheme across all year groups, allowing for consistent and progressive musical development.
- Create more opportunities where students can perform (both in school and within the local community).
- Extend opportunities of educational visits to view performances. Providing additional opportunities to build engagement and support encouragement in music.
- Develop Music expertise within our staff team.