Music Development Plan Summary:

St. Francis Catholic Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026/2027
Date this summary was published	November 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	November 2027
Name of the school music lead	Katherine Hoolan
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music.	Rhona Miccoli
Name of local music hub	Berkshire Music Trust

This summary outlines our musical goals along with how we at St. Francis Catholic Primary School deliver music education across three key areas: our curriculum, our co-curricular activities, and musical experiences. It also shares our plans for the future and introduces the partners who help us support our pupils. We hope this information helps our pupils, parents, and carers understand and make the most of the wonderful musical opportunities available here.

Aims of National Music Curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

By the end of the EYFS, children will be able to:

- Experiment with altering sounds using their voices, instruments, and everyday objects.
- Show an appreciation for a diverse range of high-quality music and artistic styles.
- Sing a wide repertoire of well-known nursery rhymes and simple songs from memory.
- Move their bodies in rhythm and respond physically to changes in tempo and dynamics.
- Use music and vocal sounds to express their own feelings, ideas, and imagination.

Key Stage 1 (KS1)

By the end of KS1, children will be able to:

- Sing songs and recite chants or rhymes expressively and with clear vocal control.
- Play tuned and un-tuned instruments musically and in time with a steady rhythm.
- Listen attentively to a diverse range of high-quality live and recorded music.

- Create and combine sounds by experimenting with pitch, volume, and speed.
- Collaborate with peers to perform simple musical pieces together.

Key Stage 2 (KS2)

By the end of KS2, children will be able to:

- Sing and play instruments with accuracy, fluency, control, and expression in solos and ensembles.
- Improvise and compose unique musical pieces by organizing structures and ideas for specific purposes.
- Recall and reproduce complex sequences of sounds using an enhanced aural memory.
- Read and apply various musical notation alongside other formal musical layouts.
- Discuss the history, traditions, and contexts of diverse composers and musical genres.

Part A: Curriculum music

Music lessons

At our school, we celebrate music as a God-given gift that enriches our spiritual lives, builds community, and inspires joy. Children from Reception to Year 6 have weekly one hour music lessons. Children in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 are taught the music curriculum objectives in class with either their class teacher or a specialist music teacher. Reception children are taught music using a combination of music lessons, singing songs and nursery rhymes and having musical instruments in the setting that they can access independently. Our approach to music education ensures a clear, structured progression of skills and knowledge across the school. Pupils develop their expertise across five key areas: listening and evaluating, creating sound, notation, improvising and composing, and performing. In every lesson, children are fully immersed in practical music-making, with regular opportunities to sing and play instruments.

In line with Department of Education national guidelines, all KS2 pupils have the opportunity to take part in whole-class instrument lessons. This unit of work allows every child to experience the excitement of playing and performing together as a full musical group.

Music Assemblies

EYFS, KS1 and KS2 participate in structured whole school weekly singing assemblies where they are taught relevant and age-appropriate songs with live instrumental accompaniment (piano, ukulele, violin, and guitar).

Worship and Song

Alongside weekly singing assemblies, our entire school community gathers for whole school collective worship enriched by live piano accompaniment. During these sacred times, children actively lift their voices in hymns sung in both English and Latin, drawing on the rich musical heritage of the Catholic Church. This dedication to sacred song extends

seamlessly into classroom life, where hymns are purposefully mapped to the liturgical calendar. Through regular classroom worship and prayer, children consistently use song as a meaningful expression of praise, worship, and personal devotion.

Instrumental Teaching

Children across the school regularly experiment and play with a range of tuned and un-tuned instruments including percussion instruments, African drums, xylophone, recorder, piano/keyboard, ukulele, and violin. As mentioned earlier, all KS2 pupils have the opportunity to take part in whole-class tuned instrumental lessons.

Part B: Co-curricular Music

Information regarding the opportunities that our pupils are given to sing and play music outside of lesson time. This includes choir, orchestra, and music lessons taught off-timetable, highlighting how pupils make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

KS2 Choir

Children are offered the opportunity to sign up and participate in a weekly choir club. No child will be excluded due to financial barriers. The choir covers a variety of songs and performs a standalone solo piece at the annual Carol Service.

Hymn Choir

Open to children from Years 1 to 6, this free lunchtime club offers pupils the opportunity to share their God given gifts through sacred song. Members deepen their knowledge of traditional and contemporary hymns while preparing to serve as liturgical leaders. The choir plays a central role in our spiritual life, leading collective worship in school and actively participating in parish Mass throughout the liturgical year.

Private Lessons

Children who take private music lessons outside of school are encouraged to perform at various music concerts for parents and carers, as well as share their talents with peers during our informal Lunchtime Music Concerts.

Peripatetic Lessons

Historically, peripatetic lessons were a robust part of life at St Francis School. In September 2023, these lessons were temporarily paused due to the limited space available in our temporary accommodation, which we are occupying while our school undergoes an exciting rebuild due to RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete). We eagerly look forward to welcoming our peripatetic music teachers back into school as soon as the new building works are complete (building works target completion date of October 2027).

Part C: Musical Experiences

Details of musical events and opportunities that we organise, such as concerts, performances and shows and visits.

In School

Nativity

EYFS and KS1 children retell the sacred story of the Nativity from memory through song, dance, and Makaton, bringing the joyful news of Jesus' birth to life. This performance develops expressiveness, coordination, and vocal memory in line with early learning goals while helping our youngest pupils reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. The whole school community gathers to watch the dress rehearsal in shared celebration.

KS2 Carol Service

In an annual highlight of our liturgical year, children in Years 3 to 6 perform by candlelight at St Francis Church, accompanied by piano, organ, and guest musicians. Grounded in sacred tradition, this prayerful service allows pupils to share the light of Christ through song while fulfilling Key Stage 2 curriculum goals, including advanced ensemble performance, vocal control, traditional repertoire, and following a conductor. The whole school gathers to watch the service, inspiring our younger children to join in this joyful act of worship.

Lunchtime Concerts

An informal, supportive opportunity for our students to share their musical talents with their peers during the school day, whilst gaining valuable performance experience.

Singing Picnic

Every summer, the school shares a picnic and sings favourite songs alongside the KS2 choir. This event fosters a shared community repertoire and celebrates collaborative performance.

Local Musicians

Professional performers from the Windsor Music Festival, along with talented Parents, Carers and friends of the school, perform for the children. This supports the curriculum requirement to listen with concentration to high-quality live music.

Music Week

Every few years, a dedicated theme week brings diverse volunteer musicians into school. This immersive experience broadens pupils' cultural horizons and introduces them to a wide array of instruments and styles.

Secondary School Performers

We partner with local secondary schools to host visiting student musicians who showcase a range of tuned instruments. This inspires our pupils and helps them visualize their own musical progression.

Whole School Pantomime Performance

All pupils watch an annual live professional pantomime at school. This experience introduces children to dramatic vocal expression and live musical storytelling.

Ad-hoc Performances

We actively secure unique performance opportunities, such as singing for the Department for Education and our school construction team. Each year, the choir leads a singalong of book related songs for World Book Day and performs at our Mother's Day Coffee Morning. This gives children valuable experience adapting their skills to diverse audiences and real-world settings.

Mass at Church

Open to the broader community, our children attend school Mass at St Francis of Assisi Ascot Church six to eight times a year, joining together as a worshipping community. They lift their voices in a variety of high-quality hymns accompanied by piano or organ. Music is carefully coordinated with the church to ensure all hymns are liturgically relevant, aligning the spiritual life of the school directly with the parish. We are also blessed to have a musical Priest who composed the Mass setting that our pupils sing at every school Mass.

Berkshire Music Trust Junior Music Festival

Every year, Year 5 pupils attend a singing festival at the Reading Hexagon, where they perform between fourteen and eighteen songs completely from memory in two parts, working alongside a conductor and a live orchestra. To achieve this, the children dedicate significant time to preparing both in school and at home, with music regularly integrated into their homework.

Year 6 Musical

Every year, Year 6 pupils learn and perform a full musical, taking on both solo and ensemble vocal roles to develop their performance control, expression, and stage confidence. We are fortunate to host this event at the Rose Theatre at St Mary's School Ascot, providing a wonderful opportunity for the whole school to watch and celebrate their achievements. The theatre offers a proper stage complete with sound effects and professional lighting, giving the children a true theatrical experience. Our commitment to this tradition run deep; even during Covid, we persevered and performed our Year 6 Musical outdoors as an Open-Air Concert.

Out of school

Panto Performance

Each year, a class is selected to attend a high-quality pantomime performance at St George’s Ascot alongside other local schools. This experience introduces children to live musical theatre, helping to develop their appreciation for dramatic performance and creative expression within the wider community.

Local care Homes

Pupils in Key Stage 2 regularly perform for residents at a local care home, an outreach that culminates each December when our choir leads a traditional Carol Service. Sharing the joy of the season strengthens our links with the wider community while putting our Catholic values of kindness and compassion into practice.

Music Performances and Competitions

Children are fed information on relevant music competitions, and they are also supported during school-time to perform/practice in front of their peers. Most recently, 2 of 10 semi-finalists from the Berkshire music trust singing competition were from St. Francis School.

In the Future We Hope To

- Resume daytime Peripatetic music lessons once the school build is complete.
- Monitor participation data to ensure SEND, PP, and LAC student engagement in music mirrors the whole-school percentage.
- Continue to partner with Mother Teresa Academy Trust to improve resource and information sharing.
- Continue to build Senior Leadership confidence in observing music lessons and delivering feedback.
- Sequence the curriculum so music lessons consistently build knowledge and skills year-on-year.
- Foster an intrinsic love for music among all students.

Additional Information

Inclusive Music Provision

At St Francis Catholic Primary School, music is inherently inclusive, ensuring all children can achieve the aims of the National Curriculum. Through tracking and monitoring, we guarantee that Looked After Children, those eligible for Pupil Premium, and pupils with SEND have equal access to high-quality musical opportunities. Lessons incorporate adaptive accommodations for movement and expression, while song and movement are woven into everyday routines to support the Zones of Regulation and emotional readiness for learning.

To remove barriers to advanced tuition and enrichment, we provide targeted financial support for music fees:

St Francis Catholic Primary School Co-Curricular Clubs

Access to our Children's Hymn Choir is completely free of charge. Additionally, we are delighted to invite the children of our school staff to attend the Key Stage 2 Choir entirely free of charge. To ensure no child is excluded, we are always here to support families who may face financial barriers to our paid music clubs. If your child would like to join but you are unable to pay, please have a private, confidential conversation with Mrs Miccoli.

Berkshire Music Trust Tuition

Through our partnership with the trust, pupils with SEND can access individual music lessons at the lower group rate. Additionally, families in receipt of Pupil Premium, Service Pupil Premium, Tax Credits, or Income Support may qualify for a 70% discount on lesson and activity fees, while Looked After Children and Asylum Seekers are eligible for a 100% remission. Full details can be found via the Berkshire Music Trust Support with Fees page.

National Guidance

For further information on nationwide support with costs, fees, and musical access for your child, please read the guide on What the national plan for music education means for children and young people via GOV.UK.

General Resources

For additional guidance on costs, fees, and musical opportunities for your child both inside and outside of school, please explore the resources below:

National Music Guidance

The Department for Education Music Guide – A published guide for parents and young people detailing how to get involved in music and where to look for support beyond the school.

Individual Tuition & Local Music lessons

- Berkshire Music Trust Homepage – Our core local music hub partner.
- The Benefits of Music via Berkshire Music Trust – Insight into how musical education aids child development.
- Musicscool – Local private and school music lessons.
- British Suzuki Music Association – Find a registered teacher or local Suzuki method ensemble.

Local & Regional Choirs

- Berkshire Music Trust Choirs – Regional vocal ensembles for children.
- Catholic Windsor and Ascot Music and Choirs – Parish music groups and liturgy information.
- Taplow Choirs – The Centre for Singing Excellence, offering choral training for young people.
- Farnham Youth Choir – Award winning regional youth choir opportunities.