Music Development Plan Summary

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	Mrs V. Bates (Music and Performing Arts Lead) Mr D. Gillson (Music Specialist and Choir Lead)
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr S. Houghton
Name of local music hub	Durham Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Wood wind – Alex Baxendale Rocksteady – George Griffith

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.

- Music is taught through discrete lessons in Ribbon's own spacious music room (as part of the PPA timetable).
- Children in Early Years sing and engage with music every day through the continuous provision. They are also taught a discrete music lesson each week (30 minutes) by music specialist teacher Mr Gillson.
- Mrs Bates (Music Lead) and Mr Gillson (Music Specialist) have worked together to carefully create Ribbon's own Music Curriculum. This is based upon The National Curriculum KS1 to 2 and includes elements which were carefully chosen from Charanga (a multi-award-winning music teaching and learning platform). Its sequential approach and carefully supports children's progression in knowledge and skills across a range of musical competencies.
- In Early Years the children begin their musical journey with 'An introduction to music', followed by 'Exploring Music', progressing to 'Music Appreciation' and in the spring term with 'Chants and Rhymes'. In the Summer term they are introduced to 'Boomwhackers' and then 'Ocarinas'.

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- ❖ Each term from Years 1 to 6, the children then focus upon a given tuned and untuned instruments (which are revisited each year in greater depth to build confidence and upon previous skills learnt):
    - Year 1: - Ocarinas, Samba Drums, Boom-whackers and Glockenspiels
    - Year 2: - Recorders, Boom-whackers and Glockenspiels and Samba Drums
    - Year 3: - Boom-whackers, Samba Drums, Recorders and Glockenspiels
    - Year 4: - Recorders, Ukulele, Samba Drums
    - Year 5: - Ukulele, Glockenspiels, Samba Drums, Recorders
    - Year 6: - Samba Drums, Recorders and Ukulele
- ❖ Each lesson begins with a flashback activity which aims to revisit and prompt the children to talk about previous musical learning.
- ❖ After the flash back activity, children then spend some time learning a focus song ready to sing as part of a musical ensemble, for their year group musical performance. Songs chosen for the children to sing are of a different musical genre with the intention of exposing them to a wide range of music that will inspire them and connect them to the world around them. Singing is accompanied by Mr Gillson on our smart piano.
- ❖ Core areas of study include singing, listening and appraising, composing and improvising and instrumental performance. These are built cumulatively throughout the curriculum to ensure that all pupils develop their engagement with, and knowledge of, music over time.
- ❖ Our music curriculum aims to build a strong and rich musical culture in our school so that pupils can thrive.
- ❖ Music in this school is not just for those with a musical talent; all children appraise, compose and perform.
- ❖ Those with musical talent are recognised, supported and stretched through the curriculum and also through personal invitations to extra-curricular clubs such as choir.
- ❖ Music is a key part of our school culture; it is played from the moment you step through the entrance doors across the school's speakers' system.

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.

There are many opportunities outside of our directed Music curriculum that children are able to participate in:

Additional Instrument Tuition

Ribbon has a partnership with Durham Music Service who offer private tuition funded but parents/carers (including woodwind) music lessons to children in KS2. Ribbon also offers a small number of scholarships to children who demonstrate a high level of musical talent generally beginning in Year 4. On afternoon each week, Mr Gilson supports 8 pupils each week in composing music using Garage Band on iPads.

External Music Organisations

Rocksteady

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At the beginning of Spring 2024, eighteen students from Year 1 to 6 joined 'Rocksteady' tuition. Parents/carers pay for this tuition which allows children to jam together, as a small rock band focusing on drums, guitars, keyboards, keyboards or singing. Ribbon have also funded a further five children, with the aim of broadening musical horizons. They play on stage to parents and carers every term and parents receive regular updates via email. There are currently 19 children, across. 4 bands now attending Rocksteady sessions from Year 1 to 6.

Ensembles

School Choir – Ribbon's Music lead, Mr Gillson, runs our school choir on a Thursday after school. They rehearse and work towards a termly performance: for our Christmas celebrations, at our local care home, and at summer events across school.

Further Progress Outside of lessons

Singing is strong across the academy. Ribbon has its own 'Singing Overview' which is an important part of the curriculum, supporting understanding and appreciation of different genres, artists and cultures around the world.

In the summer term, carefully selected senior pupils are given the honour of the title Ribbon Radio DJ's. They produce a weekly show using high tech equipment under the guidance of the school's network manager, Mr Williams. The show includes a range of musical genres which is played over the speakers' system on a Friday afternoon.

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.

Assemblies

During Friday's 'Celebration Assembly' the children currently enter listening to music played by Music Specialist Mr Gillson, on the electric piano. During the summer term, each year group will take it in turn to sing their focus 'Virtue Song' (selected by Ribbon's own MPs).



Reception: Communication – Unwritten
Year 1: Teamwork – One Call Away
Year 2: Excellence – On Top of the World
Year 3: Positivity - Believe
Year 4: Self-awareness – It's my Life
Year 5: Empathy – A Thousand Years
Year 6: Resilience - Try Everything

During the spring term, all children will also begin to sing the new Ribbon Anthem title 'Ribbon Academy' in Friday's assembly. It based on the chart-topping hit by Myles Smith 'Nice to Meet You' and lyrics are written by Mrs Bates.

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Special Assemblies

Ribbon pupils all come together to celebrate key times including Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Year groups each perform one song to the school based on the theme songs sung are often written by teachers to accompany chart songs.

Performances

Each year group has the opportunity to perform on stage, twice a year to an audience including family and friends.

The first performance happens near the end of the autumn term. Under Mr Gillson's guidance the children will sing three songs and they will performance one piece on a tune or untuned instrument, reading musical notation. In the same performance the children will sing a further three songs based on a theme. The 2025 theme was 'Christmas Music Legends' with previous themes being and 'Musicals', and our future 2026 performance being 'Christmas Big Bangers'.

The second performance will take place in the summer term. Under Mr Gillson's instruction the children will again sing three songs and they will play a different tuned or untuned instruments.

Durham Music Service children receiving private tuition will also perform for their families during both the autumn and summer terms. Durham Music Service private tuition pupils travel to Easington Academy during the spring term, to play as part of an ensemble with pupils from other schools in the county.

Rocksteady pupils will perform on stage during all three terms, through the calendar year.

Choir have the opportunity to perform at the local care home, local churches and assembly performances.

End of Year Show

During the autumn term, children in years groups 2 to 6 have the opportunity to audition for the 'End of Year show'. Up to 60 children are selected and attend weekly rehearsals with Mrs Bates. Every Monday evening after school, children follow a script written by Mrs Bates which is 'The Wizard of Oz' this Year. Previous shows have included 'The Elves and the Shoemaker', 'Rumplestiltskin', 'Into the Woods' and 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. The show includes singing, dancing, speaking parts and people playing instruments. The show takes place at the end of the summer term and includes scenery, lights, music and costumes. As a treat the cast will visit the local cinema for all their hard work!

In the future

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

Music at Ribbon can be described as impressive! Perfection is hard to achieve and we aim to make sure that music at Ribbon is current, skilful and children thrive in this area.

Goals

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Beginning Autumn 2026 all children in each year group, will know their Ribbon Virtue song to sing confidently in assembly.

Each child will also know the new Ribbon Anthem to be sung in class and during Friday's celebration assembly.

In class, Mr Gillson will implement playing the ukulele as one of the tuned instruments for years 4 to 6 which is progress from the Boom-whackers in Year 3.

The Ultimate Goal for the Future of Music

We would like to be able to include more music technology as we understand that this is the current focus of the world we live in today! Children need these skills to be able to be employable in the music industry as it stands. We therefore would aim to ensure up to 12 children (currently there are 8) access Music Duolingo and Garage band. On such apps the children will be creating their own songs, learning to read music at a higher level and they will learn distinguish between notes and sounds.

In addition, some of the instruments at Ribbon need refreshing and renewing, particularly the samba drums therefore grants will be applied for in order to ensure these resources are useable. Tickets will be sold during the summer term performances and the money raised will be used to purchase new stock.

Further information

For further information about Durham Music Service, see their website: https://www.durhammusic.org.uk/ or Rocksteady, see their website: https://www.rocksteadymusicschool.com/

The Department for Education publishes a guide for parents and young people on how they can get involved in music in and out of school, and where they can go to for support beyond the school.