

Music development plan summary: Da Vinci Academy

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-25
Date this summary was published	July 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2025
Name of the school music lead	Catherine Cathcart
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Sophie McKenzie
Name of local music hub	Derbyshire Music Hub

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.

The Music Curriculum at Da Vinci is ambitious, thoughtfully-sequenced and created in-line with the Model Music Curriculum. It offers students the opportunity for personalisation and choice whilst providing prospects to engage with other relevant and influential forms of music in order to further widen their appreciation and understanding. Lessons are delivered weekly at KS3, with students in Years 7, 8 and 9 each receiving 1x 55-minute lesson in a dedicated music environment. Additionally there are 2 dedicated practice room spaces for visiting tutors and small-group work.

For 2024-25 the KS3 curriculum is as follows:

Year 7

Singing
The Elements
Chair Drumming
Keyboard
Guitar
Band Skills 1

Year 8

Keyboard 2
Specialism

Dance Music
Blues (complete term)
Band Skills/Structure/Texture

Year 9

Rap
Specialism 2
Minimalism (complete term)
Band Skills 3
Film Music

Within the first year of KS3 students are given a taster of four main popular instruments and supported to develop foundation skills on each. These are introduced alongside a focus on the Elements of Music and basic skills in reading and writing notation. All three strands of Music (Performing, Composing, Listening) are addressed within the first year, providing a stable foundation for these to be further explored consistently throughout KS3. Music Technology is first introduced in Year 8 and students are also given time to specialise and develop their skillset in one particular instrument. Two term-long projects are scheduled in Years 8 and 9 (The Blues and Minimalism) in order to provide students with the enhanced opportunity to experience the wide-reaching impact of each genre. Furthermore the opportunity for solo and ensemble instrumental progression is prioritised within KS3 in order to best prepare students to advance to KS4 Music and also to help foster a life-long engagement and relationship with music for all.

Additional opportunities for cultural capital are developed through Inspiration Days, where entire year groups experience topics such as Samba or Djembe Drumming workshops.

Singing is embedded throughout the curriculum, with students embarking upon class singing as part of their transition days in Year 6 and as soon as they enter Year 7. Singing is additionally used as a valuable tool with which to learn and absorb melody in other Units.

Students at KS4 Music presently study the WJEC Level 1/2 Vocation Award in Performing Arts, following the Music pathway. The course is split into 3 Units – Performing (30%), Creating (30%) and Performing Arts in Practice (40%). Assessment is based around coursework, the first 2 Units are assessed internally and the remaining Unit is assessed externally. This course is designed to provide a realistic insight into the Performing Arts industry and prepares students to plan, perform and reflect upon their professional practice as musicians. Furthermore, students develop extensive transferable skills on the course such as communication, confidence, independent research and time management. This course links very effectively to several that are offered at local colleges (e.g. Derby College, Heanor Gate Spencer Academy and Confetti, Nottingham) thus helping prepare students with an effective springboard to further study.

Students are given the opportunity to undertake additional Music qualifications and exams (e.g. ABRSM, Trinity, RSL) and have done so with great success. Students have also gained additional UCAS points contributing to college and University applications as a result of passing these at Grade 6 and above.

All Schemes of Learning in KS3 are deliberately designed to be accessible to all students, regardless of background or prior musical experience, and offer a platform for young people to advance their playing to a high standard.

Part B: Extra-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.

All students at Da Vinci are able to access instrumental lessons from visiting specialists in the following disciplines:

- Piano
- Voice
- Drum Kit

Tutors are accredited by the Derbyshire Music Hub meaning that, in addition to receiving a consistently high quality of tuition, SEND students and those on FSM are able to access a bursary and receive a discount on fees. Contracts and invoices are managed between the tutor and parent and lessons are co-ordinated by the Curriculum Leader for Music. Lessons are scheduled weekly during the school day and are on a rotated timetable to ensure fairness and equality against the rest of the curriculum. At present, students who choose Music at KS4 have their instrumental lessons fully funded by the Academy. There is also an instrumental loan scheme in place for students who are unable to purchase their own instruments for home practice, resources allowing.

Students can choose to access these lessons individually or, where suitable, in pairs or small groups. There are 2 Music practice rooms available at times during the school day where students can practise in between their lessons, in order to best support their progression. All further information regarding instrumental music lessons, including contracts, can be obtained through contacting Mrs Cathcart.

A variety of music enrichments are offered throughout the year – in the past examples of these have included choirs, rock bands and string tuition. Enrichments are determined based on pupil interest and demand, in conjunction with the relevant termly performance opportunities available, and are run by Mrs Cathcart. There is a consistent general KS3 Music enrichment where students are supported to further their development in their chosen instrument or ensembles within a fun and supportive environment.

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.

Students at Da Vinci experience regular performance opportunities with biannual concerts showcasing the progress of students from Years 7-11 to a public audience. Students are encouraged to perform in both solo and ensemble capacities across a wide range of genres, as part of pop/rock bands and vocal groups. Participants range from students who attend enrichment after school to develop their learning to those who take specific instrumental lessons with a visiting tutor and also KS4 pupils. Concert-specific tuition has also been offered where possible, based on interest and resources, for example group violin tuition for Year 7 students in anticipation of the Summer Showcase in July 24.

There is a regular presence from Music at Academy events, such as open evenings and transition evenings, again offering students with additional performance opportunities.

Leadership opportunities have recently been extended to the student body through the appointment of Curriculum Ambassadors. A number of Music Ambassadors have been appointed from Years 7-10 in order to facilitate the smooth running of the department, support the planning and execution of events as well as provide student voice regarding the department and current curriculum.

Staff from Da Vinci Academy have visited local feeder Primary Schools to offer Music sessions, linked to their own planning and requirements, in order to build and sustain partnerships. These have followed an assembly and workshop format, where students have performed for the entire school before running smaller workshops with Years 4/5 on a variety of instruments. Music features within the Year 6 Transition programme and all Year 6 students experience a session within the Music department during their Common Transfer Days. Year 6 students are supported to continue their instrumental lessons in Year 7 through effective communication and liaison with tutors prior to their arrival.

Relationships have also been developed within the local community, seeing Year 7 students visit local care homes each Christmas to sing as an ensemble. These performances support a developing sense of community for students within their first term at Da Vinci, helping them to better understand their community responsibility and foster a sense of active citizenship by spreading joy and lifting the spirits of residents at this time of year.

In the future

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

- To establish collaborative performance opportunities within the LEAD Academy Trust
- To increase uptake in peripatetic instrumental lessons across KS3, particularly students with SEND
- To increase performance opportunities within the Academy e.g. music assemblies, Rising Stars events
- To hold at least one external trip opportunity to see a live musical/show