

Music development plan summary: The Westminster School

Dear reader,

The document below outlines the Music development plan for The Westminster School for the academic year 2024-2025. This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our pupils across curricular and extra-curricular music. This information is to help students, parents and carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our student's music education.

I hope you find this Music development plan informative and forward looking for our school, and should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the school.

I have been the head of music at The Westminster School for over ten years and I am proud of how the department has developed over this time and the opportunities that all our pupils have in music as part of their curriculum and the growing extra-curricular provision. As a single person department this is challenging and would like to acknowledge the growing links we have with Sandwell Music and Arts Service and BigTop Music who support the work and the growth of the department. All pupils can succeed in music and develop a lifelong passion for the subject.

Mr Michael Hill (Music Lead and TLR for My Creativity)

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024 -2025
Date this summary was published	September 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2025
Name of the school music lead	Michael Hill
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Joanna Flowers (SLT Lead for My Creativity)
Name of local music hub	SIPS Music and Arts Services
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	BigTop Music Birmingham Hippodrome

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 Westminster School provides a quality music education to all our pupils from KS2 right the way through to KS4 and 5 through relevant accreditations. Music is part of the Area of Learning (AOL) My Creativity which is one of six AOL that we deliver as part of our curriculum. The Head of music is also the lead for My Creativity which is a post shared with a TLR Buddy Amy Noke.

All pupils receive a weekly specialist lesson in music in KS2 and 3 and this is delivered by the school music specialist or with our specialist music provider BigTop Music. Our curriculum has undertaken a number of revisions over the past few years as part the whole school curriculum development, we are currently developing a knowledge-based curriculum. On the whole the school music curriculum is informed by the [model music curriculum](#) (March 2021) which is a piece of non-statutory guidance for teaching music from KS1 to KS3. Our curriculum model operates on a termly basis which enables our learners who all have SEND needs the time to develop the relevant knowledge and skills to be able to succeed in music. Throughout the music curriculum pupils have a wide range of opportunities to learn how to perform on instruments and voice, this includes whole class Keyboard, Brass Band (pBone, pTrumpet and pBuzz), African Drumming, Steel Pan and Ukulele. These interlink and build on pupils knowledge and skills through creative and explorative topics including Rhythm, World Music, Rap Hip Hop and EDM and Graphic Scores and the Elements of Music. As part of their musical learning journey pupils will regularly perform, compose, listen and sing and these principles are embedded into each and every scheme of work.

Our KS4 curriculum is based on a transition model and enables pupils to begin to make informed choices on their favoured art form before selecting this in KS5 and taking part in an appropriate accreditation. Pupils take part in three lessons of their chosen subject each week. Through this KS4 curriculum pupils will opt into music, art, drama or dance and continue to develop through termly SOW. These SOW build on previous knowledge acquired in KS3 and aim to prepare the learners for the coursework requirements for the RSL Group Performance or the WJEC Entry Level. Pupils develop the relevant knowledge and skills that will prepare them for a solo music performance, ensemble music performance, composing music and appraising music.

At KS5 pupils will opt into their chosen area from the arts: music, art, drama, media or dance and will take part in an accreditation at an appropriate level for our pupils which is entry 1 up to level 1. Pupils take part in a double session of their chosen art each week. In music pupils will take part in the RSL Group Performance and/or the WJEC entry level certificate. This includes specialist units in Solo Music Performance, Ensemble Performance, Composing Music and Appraising Music. At this level pupils

are encouraged to complete all performance units by taking part in live performances in a range of school events to their peers, parents or visitors.

Our music curriculum is published along with the whole of our curriculum each year on the school website: [Westminster curriculum](#)

We have a strong and growing link with Sandwell Music and Arts Service which is part of SIPS and is known as SIPS Music. They provide us with peripatetic instrumental lessons in guitar/bass, drum kit, keyboard and singing. Pupils are selected for these based on their talents and abilities or a keen interest and passion for music. We have been part of SIPS music for two years and this is having a marked and noticeable impact on our pupils and the profile of music throughout school.

Through our link with SIPS Music we have an established partnership with BigTop Music who are specialists in music for complex needs children and young people with autism. They also run an inclusive community ensemble which we encourage pupils to be part of.

We are passionate about inclusivity and believe strongly that all pupils should be given the opportunity to be part of high quality music education and musical opportunities regardless of their ability level. Many pupils at The Westminster School will not have the same life opportunities as their mainstream peers and we should endeavour to provide them with a rich and stimulating music curriculum which enables all to succeed and revel in the joy of music.

We believe in the therapeutic nature music provides and selected pupils take part in music therapy provided by Music Therapy Works on a weekly basis.

We have an established relationship with Birmingham Hippodrome and throughout the year pupils have the opportunity to visit the theatre to watch high quality musical theatre, ballet and opera performances, this is part of the Hippodrome Education Network (HEN) which we are currently Bronze level members. They provide an annual SEND work experience and pupils from the Westminster take part in this each year.

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.

As mentioned in section A we have an established and growing partnership with SIPS Music who provide us with peripatetic instrumental lessons to our pupils. They also

provide us with support to put on concerts in school and opportunities for our pupils to be part of concerts and festivals in the community of Sandwell.

Pupils are selected to take part in instrumental lessons based on their talents which are seen in the classroom to enable them to develop further as a musician. Pupils are also selected if they have a keen passion for music. We currently offer instrumental tuition in guitar/bass, drum kit, keyboard and singing and pupils have the opportunity to take part in a weekly lesson 1 to 1 or in a small group. All instrumental lessons are funded free of charge for the pupils and is taken from the My Creativity budget.

The quality of the instrumental tuition is outstanding and the progress pupils are making is profound. Through the inclusion of SIPS music into our school we now have a large number of pupils who are capable and confident musicians who are excelling far beyond the expectation of pupils with special educational needs. Although currently not provided we are aiming for our pupils to take part in graded music examinations in RSL Rock School and Trinity. Through the impact of SIPS Music, we now have a number of pupils who are rehearsing and performing regularly in a school band or will be able to have this opportunity from this year onwards.

We currently have 2 ensembles in school:

- The Warriors – Mainly made up of P16 pupils, they write their own songs and perform regularly in school events and within the community.
- KS3/4 band – Pupils from KS3 and 4 who perform cover versions of songs, these pupils have been having instrumental lessons for two years and are growing in confidence.

We also set up a choir which takes part in Young Voices each year at the Resorts World Arena. This ensemble currently does not run all year.

With the growing number of musicians and singers in school the further development of school ensembles is a priority for us. As many of our pupils travel to and from school on local authority transport this needs to be timetabled in the school day or in an organised and supported after school club.

We recognise this in an area of development and it is at the forefront of our plans for the coming years. We have established the ground work by providing pupils with a quality extra-curricular music education and the opportunity to learn to play an instrument through lessons with SIPS Music and we must now ensure that every pupil with the knowledge, skills and talents have the opportunity to be part of an ensemble and share this remarkable ability with others both in and outside of our school community.

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.

At the Westminster School we pride ourselves on the opportunities and experiences we provide for our pupils. We have a number of special events throughout the year where our pupils have the opportunity to perform and we also through our established partnership with Birmingham Hippodrome give pupils the opportunity to experience live quality music and performance. We are keen to increase the school ensembles and run our choir all year round, this will enable us to put on a wide range of performance opportunities for the pupils and allow parents to attend.

Date	Opportunity	Details
October	Birmingham Hippodrome to see Disney's Aladdin	Pupils in KS3 will have the opportunity to attend Birmingham Hippodrome to see the hit Disney musical Aladdin during its uk tour.
November	Presentation Afternoon and Evening	Our annual presentation ceremony returns. Pupils will have the opportunity to perform in extra curricular ensembles, solos and as whole classes.
December	Birmingham Hippodrome to see the Jingle Claw	Pupils in KS2 and 3 will have the opportunity to see this specially produced show at Birmingham Hippodrome
January	Birmingham Hippodrome to see Peter Pan	Pupils from a mixed complex need cohort of pupils to attend Birmingham Hippodrome to see the annual pantomime.
February (Provisional)	Young Voices at the Resorts World Arena	The school choir will take part in the annual Young Voices. Parents will be invited to purchase tickets to attend.
February	Cinderella Ballet at Birmingham Hippodrome	Pupils from KS4 and P16 will have the opportunity to attend this performance and experience live ballet by Birmingham Royal Ballet.
March (Provisional)	Inclusive Concert with BigTop and SIPS Music	The second of these events which will hopefully become an annual event. Pupils from across the school will have the opportunity to perform, this will include pupil from our complex

		needs cohort will have the opportunity to perform with BigTop
June	Leavers celebration	Ensemble and choir performances as part of our in-school event.
July	Annual SIPS Music Festival at Oak House in West Bromwich	The second of these where our school ensemble The Warriors will perform a set of their own composed songs.
July	End of year Oscars	Ensemble and choir performances as part of our in school event.

In the future

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

The music department at The Westminster School has been on an upward trajectory for the last ten years and quite recently has seen some of its most notable developments. With the introductory of SIPS Music instrumental lessons to our pupils over the last two years the number of pupils who are able to competently perform on an instrument or their voice has increased significantly. This growth in pupil musicians in school has encouraged our goal to increase the number of ensembles in school and the formation of a choir that will run all year round, this in turn will enable us to take part in more performances both in school and within the local community. Parents will be able to attend and this will increase parent engagement with school which is an ongoing area for development across the whole school. Pupils will be able to gain accreditation for their instrumental progress through recognised exam boards. Our targets for the next two years are as follows:

1. Establish a knowledge-based curriculum in music
2. Establish a school choir and extend the provision for pupils to be part of musical ensemble
3. Establish regular performance opportunities for pupils but in school and within the community
4. Establish links to provide opportunities for pupils to experience live music and performances

Objective 1: Establish a knowledge-based curriculum in music

We are currently undergoing curriculum development across the whole school where we are enhancing our curriculum to become a Knowledge based curriculum. In music the schemes of work are being adapted to ensure that topic knowledge is embed in the

teaching but still enables pupils to use that knowledge and demonstrate it through a practical skills-based assessment.

Objective 2: Establish a school choir and extend the provision for pupils to be part of a musical ensemble

With the growing number of musicians in school who are having SIPS Music lessons there is a need to introduce more ensembles so pupils have the opportunity to perform with others and gain the experience of being part of an ensemble or band. With a review of the timetable some space has been found during the week to run multiple bands which will rehearse then perform in school events. Our more able and confident ensembles will perform out in the community in a variety of events through our partnership with SIPS Music. We have annually run a school choir to take part in Young Voices but this only occurs for a short period before the event, we are keen to introduce a year-round choir supported by a number of staff. This will take part as a weekly after school club.

Objective 3: Establish regular performance opportunities for pupils both in school and within the community

With our growing number of ensembles and choirs forming from Objective 2 we are keen in turn to share the music making more frequently in showcases and performances. This year we are re-introducing the Westminster Awards where we celebrate the exam success of the pupils, as part of this our ensembles and choir will perform. With the introduction of a year round choir we will not only provide the opportunity for pupils to perform at Young Voices but also perform throughout the year at other events within the community, raising the profile of the school through music. We aim to work alongside our partner BigTop Music and our links with our other local special schools to be able to host an inclusive concert. This will enable us to be at the forefront of inclusive music making in Sandwell. We aim to be able to give pupils the opportunity to perform each week in our KS3 and KS4/5 assemblies, this will give pupils the opportunity to perform as a soloist and highlight the fantastic music making that is occurring through the SIPS Music lessons.

Objective 4: Establish links to provide opportunities for pupils to experience live music and performances

We have a fantastic range of musicals that we enable our pupils to see through our partnership with Birmingham Hippodrome as a member of the HEN. Throughout the year we provide the opportunity for pupils across the whole school to have the opportunity to experience quality live performance through this link. This has been established now for a number of years and we are keen to be able to offer pupils new experiences to enjoy live musical performance. We aim to reach out to musical ensembles and performance venues that will enrich the experience for our pupils.

Further information

In this section we highlight what you should expect from your child music education and the partnerships we have in school that enhance and support your child's musical journey at the Westminster.

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. This parent guide also highlights what they should expect through music for their child while they are at the Westminster School.

We are supported by our local music hub [SIPS Music and Arts](#). Information about the role of music hubs can be found [here](#).

Our pupils from our complex needs cohort are supported on their musical journey by [BigTop Music](#) their website not only explains the work that they do but also gives information on music making opportunities outside of school that our pupils are able to join.

We pride ourselves on the number of live theatre performances we give our pupils access to each year as a member of the [Hippodrome Education Network](#) from their website you can browse up and coming shows many of which have a performance suitable for SEND pupils called relaxed performances. each year a small cohort of pupils from KS4/5 take part in their specialist work experience.