

Music development plan summary: Herschel Grammar School



Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-25
Date this summary was published	April 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	October 2025
Name of the school music lead	Mr A Piggott
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr G Parsons
Name of local music hub	Slough
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	N/A

This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our learners 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 learners and parents or carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our learners' 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 learners can achieve.

Music at Herschel Grammar School, is an all-inclusive subject that encourages all of our learners to develop their musical skills, through a practical and musically analytical scheme. The Music curriculum gives our learners the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge across a range of musical genres. Music at Herschel Grammar School aims to provide an experience and understanding for learners to become ambitious, creative adults.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 Music is offered an hour per week. At KS4, Music is offered through the Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Music syllabus.

The curriculum is informed by the Model Music Curriculum and follows the core areas:

- *Singing*
- *Listening*
- *Composing*
- *Performing/Instrumental Performance*

Learners are given the opportunity to sing in lessons as a class, play keyboard as part of our KS3 keyboard skills unit. We offer an exciting experience as a musical journey comprising of lessons based around core knowledge, performance, composition and appraisal through listening and score reading.

In Years 10 & 11, learners have to perform solo and produce a group performance for their NEA coursework and are expected to either play an instrument or sing.



Part B: Co-curricular Music

This is about opportunities for learners to sing and play music, outside of lesson time, including choirs, ensembles and bands, and how learners can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.



Herschel Grammar School offers learners Instrumental lessons through The Berkshire Music Trust. These lessons are typically 20 minutes long and offered either in small groups or individually. Learners eligible for the Pupil Premium funding may have their lessons subsidised or paid in full. Instrumental provision includes:

- ***Strings***
- ***Piano***
- ***Keyboard***
- ***Drums***
- ***Woodwind***
- ***Voice***
- ***Guitar***

Learners can opt to enter for exams from the following awarding bodies:

- ***Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music***
- ***Rock School***
- ***Trinity College***
- ***London College of Music***

We offer the loan of instruments to our learners who are starting out on their musical journey, or parents/carers can hire them from the Berkshire Music Trust.



Part C: Musical experiences

This is about all the other musical events and opportunities that we organise, such as singing concerts and shows, performing at local events and trips to professional concerts.

Our musicians take part in many school events and are well known within the local community for their exceptional performance skills. We attend shows and concerts throughout the year. Our annual Spring Concert is always a climax in our school calendar and we are proud to visit local Residential Homes during this period to share our learner's musical talent with our elderly community.

We also perform concerts around the local community including village fetes in the summer and Eton College Chapel at Christmas as we aim to celebrate the joy of music with all of our local partners.

The standout moment in our school calendar is our phenomenal Musical School Production. This extravaganza of music and drama is open to all learners of all abilities across Herschel Grammar School. Learners engage in specialised Musical and Acting rehearsals to prepare them for a three-night professional performance to our community. Each production has up to 100 learners engage in this exciting opportunity and co collaborate with numerous other departments to create a Musical experience for both cast and audience.

We have recently started developing our learners' technical abilities in Music. This involves learners operating the sound and music throughout productions, building up technical skills and using a range of sound software.



We are particularly proud to welcome Year 6 learners from our Feeder Primary Schools to attend a matinee performance of our Musical productions. This builds excellent links with our Primary Schools in terms of Music and helps to develop our Primary School learners' interest in Music and Performing Arts prior to them joining us in Year 7.

We have performed numerous musicals ranging from Bugsy Malone to The Wizard of Oz to our most recent production Matilda.



At Herschel Grammar School, there are opportunities to join the school choir, orchestra and smaller ensemble groups and learners are actively encouraged to form their own groups. There are no auditions to join, but it is expected that learners wanting to join the orchestra, will have some knowledge of reading notation.

We have a large music classroom, equipped with keyboards a computer and four other practice rooms, one with a drum kit.



In the future

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

In the future, we are looking to further develop links with our Feeder Primary schools and plan to take the choir into some of our local feeder schools to perform for them. We have developed our presence in the local community by performing at our neighbouring senior residential home and at numerous village fêtes in the area. In the future, we are hoping to encompass more of these performances.

Some feedback from students:

A former GCSE student

I like how we get to learn about different aspects of music such as genres from around the world and certain musical features and I like how we get to explore that deeper at GCSE.

I'd like to have more interactive lessons to teach these, especially in the younger years. For example, going to practice rooms and developing music according to genres or musical features that we're learning about.

A former GCSE student

The Music department has a really welcoming and creative atmosphere. Mr Piggott is genuinely passionate and supportive, making it a great place to develop musical skills. There are loads of opportunities to get involved, whether through choirs, or school productions. The Spring Concert is also great - always well-organised and feels like a big celebration of everyone's hard work.

It would be amazing to have more student-led initiatives, like the chance to form small bands or ensembles. More contemporary and cultural music in the curriculum or concerts could make things even more engaging. Also, practice room availability can be a bit tricky—having more accessible time slots or a better booking system would be really helpful. I think maybe, investing in new instruments would be good.



A current Year 11 GCSE Music student

I like the current practice spaces, and the learning environment, and the classroom setup, as well as the GCSE spec. I also think the equipment for drums and piano are exceptional.

I'd just say a few more instruments, like guitars, could be useful, and also maybe make the y7-y9 specs encompass a wider range of things, although I understand this can be difficult due to limited musical knowledge of most of the pupils.

A current Year 11 GCSE Music student

What I like and what I want to improve are similar: I appreciate there being a drum kit and amp and practice rooms, in general the fact that there are resources for music, but I would find it useful if there were, for example, more working guitars in the rooms or amps etc.

Using the above feedback, students appear happy with the content of the curriculum and appreciate the resources on offer. But they would like to see a wider range of instruments (beyond the drumkit, pianos and keyboards). They would also like to see more “interactive” learning, by which I think they mean group work and more opportunity to be creative.

We are strongly committed to expose all learners in our school to the wonders of music, be it through participation, watching or creating music.

