



Hurworth
School

Music Development Plan

2026 - 2027

Approved by: Hurworth School LGB

Review frequency: 1 year

Date of last review: June 2026

Date of next review: June 2027

Music Development Plan Summary

The document below outlines the Music Development Plan for Hurworth School for the academic year 2026-2027. This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our pupils across the curriculum, our extra-curricular music offerings and musical experiences and our future music plans. This information is to help students, parents and carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our students' music education.

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-27
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026 – July 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mrs Joanne Wilson
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Ms Tracy Minshull
Name of local music hub	Durham Music Service (DMS)
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	n/a

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.

Every student in Key Stage 3 at Hurworth School receives a weekly timetabled music lesson of 1 hour which is taught in classes of mixed attainment. There is one Music teacher in the school who has had many years of experience and creates lessons to cater for and challenge all students. It is acknowledged that when students arrive at Hurworth School from the range of different primary schools, that prior experience, knowledge and skills in music can vary. Despite this, the Key Stage 3 curriculum is informed by both the national plan for music education and includes some of the features of the [model music curriculum](#) (March 2021) and aims to give students as broad an experience without sacrificing the need for deep knowledge and understanding. Students are given the opportunity to learn instruments in a whole class setting, including keyboards, djembe drums and singing. The KS3 curriculum is scaffolded so that prior learning is built upon lesson by lesson but also throughout each topic; this allows students to broaden their skill sets as well as deepen their understanding and musical learning. Some topics are included at KS3 that are also built on in KS4, such as African music and understanding key vocabulary. [Hurworth School KS3 curriculum](#)

Music is optional at KS4. Our KS4 curriculum includes 3 hours of music per week. GCSE students engage with performance, composition and listening and appraising over the 2-year course and we currently follow the AQA specification. Results in this subject are regularly outstanding where students achieve above the national average. Students are encouraged to access instrumental or vocal lessons either in or out of school to run alongside this course. [AQA GCSE Music](#)

We have strong links with Durham Music Service and regularly participate in some of their joint ventures with schools, for example working with Royal Northern Sinfonia and performing at Darlington Hippodrome both in 2023 and again in 2025 working with singing groups such as The Sixteen and taking part in choir competitions and becoming Northeast Secondary School Choir of the Year 2024.

Part B: Extra-Curricular Music – Music Tuition, Choirs and Ensembles

As mentioned in Part A, the school has a partnership with the local music hub; Durham Music Service. As a school we give access to peripatetic lessons across a range of instruments and for voice. Through Durham Music Service we currently have teachers for upper strings, voice, brass and drum kit. Students can play for their own enjoyment or with more academic rigour. When appropriate, students are entered for graded music exams via ABRSM or Trinity, and students are taught in groups suitable to their performance ability. Where needed, students can loan an instrument from the music service. Fees for lessons and instrumental hire can be found on the Durham Music Service website and are subsidised by the school Prices | Durham Music Trust. Students who have Pupil Premium status and are accessing free school meals get their DMS lessons for free, as these are paid for by Darlington Borough Council.

The school also has a keyboard teacher who visits the school and works for Musicworks and a freelance guitar teacher. These lessons are not currently subsidised by school, though there have been some subsidies in the past for Pupil Premium students.

The school did run a lunchtime choir with the support of DMS once a week which was open to all students free of charge (subsidised by the school). The choir recently won the award of Northeast Secondary School Choir of the Year 2024 and has performed at locations such as Durham Cathedral.

There have been drop-down days for instrumentalists to allow a variety of experiences, such as a project with James Redwood in 2024 and Michael Betteridge in 2025 (famous conductors and composers) together with Royal Northern Sinfonia. Students composed a piece of music and performed this at Darlington Hippodrome. Some of the peripatetic teachers also collapse the individual lesson time occasionally to allow students to work together on essential ensemble skills.

We also took part in an exciting event in February 2026 where we performed Vivaldi's Gloria with Gabrieli Roar. This project culminated in a spectacular choral concert at Durham Cathedral, accompanied by a professional orchestra.

The school choir was put on hold due to changes to the school day last year, though we are looking into ways of starting this up again for 2026-27, starting with a choral performance at the 2026 Y6 Open Evening together with some of our instrumentalists. These experiences beyond the classroom consolidate and extend learning effectively and give the students the experience of further developing their interpersonal skills, communication and independence.

There are 2 practice rooms in the department, and these are available for students to further improve their practical work that begins in the classroom. This practice space (which has a drum kit and piano) is also available for students to practice individually on their instruments or together to allow for the nurture of independently formed bands.

Students can also opt in to participate in the drama club which culminated in the performance of 'Matilda' in 2025 and 'The Addams Family' in 2026. This is open to all students regardless of ability and combines a range of singing acting and dancing.

Part C: Musical Experiences

Our school groups (choir and brass group) and individual students are given the opportunity to perform throughout the school calendar. Some of our big events was the production of Matilda in Summer 2025 and The Addams Family in 2026. We provide music for various events in school, from open evenings to achievement evenings and Christmas concerts which allows the students to have a platform to perform.

Singers in school are given the opportunity to take parts in different choral events throughout the year as mentioned in section B of this document.

The school regularly accepts opportunities to work with DMS and other outside agencies to be given the chance to perform with other musicians (such as Royal Northern Sinfonia and the choral group The Sixteen).

The department also hosts its own transition days for Year 6 students to introduce them to the music department and to do some singing with the school choir. In 2024, this was done in conjunction with The Sixteen who were invited to come to the school to show a range of performance pieces and to allow students to access live music.

Music calendar and plan for 2026-2027 (new events may get added as the year progresses)

Academic Year 2026-27	Performance opportunity	Students involved
February 2026	Choral event for singers – Gabrieli Roar: performing Vivaldi's 'Gloria' with a performance at Durham Cathedral	Singers: suggested £20 per person
March 2026	GCSE final performances (5/3/26 and 6/3/26)	Y11 GCSE students (coursework)
June/July 2026	School production 'The Addams Family'	Drama group (including singers and dancers) – small ticket charge
23 rd September 2026	Y6 Open Evening event	Individual and group performances – free event to prospective parents
15 th October 2026	Awards evening	Individual performance – free event
December 2026	GCSE performances Christmas concert (date to be confirmed)	GCSE performances (recording one performance to count towards final grade) Singing, brass band, soloist vocal/instrumental opportunities including dance
March 2027	GCSE performances	Final recording of performance pieces (coursework)
May 2027	Music Coursework	Submission of compositions and performances to the exam board.
July 2027	Summer Concert/Summer Show (date to be confirmed)	Singing, brass band, soloist vocal/instrumental opportunities including dance

In the Future

This is about what Hurworth School is planning for subsequent years.

We continually build on and develop our music plan each year, taking into consideration any changes in National Curriculum (including the new National Curriculum 2028). The Schemes of Work are regularly reviewed and updated based on student feedback to ensure it remains relevant and challenging to all our students. Our aim is to continue to provide as much inclusive practical music for as many students as possible.

We plan to celebrate and challenge our singers and instrumental students with extra performance opportunities to allow them to showcase their talents on a more regular basis, and to involve parents and carers more with this. We will work with DMS to incorporate their DMS Secondary Framework reward system where students will be rewarded for achieving different musical goals which can then be celebrated in assemblies and on social media.

Another school/department aim is to include Music Technology at Key Stage 3 to enable students to create music using different methods. There has been some new software purchased for teacher-use at KS4 to improve the quality of the GCSE performance recordings. This could potentially be used to record smaller ensembles too.

Extra-curricular experiences will continue to host annual musical productions and/or concerts, to allow the showcasing of student's performances and GCSE compositions.

Further Information (optional)

The department is also relocating to the Performing Arts Centre within the school with renovation being done to create the classroom and two practice rooms. This work is due to be completed in October 2026.

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.

Your local music hub should also have a local plan for music education in place from September 2024 that should include useful information.