



**SIR THOMAS BOTELER**  
**CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL**  
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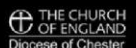
# MUSIC

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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**GRAMMAR SCHOOL ROAD, LATCHFORD, WA4 1JL**  
**01925 636414 INFO@BOTELER.ORG.UK**



# MUSIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUMMARY:

## SIR THOMAS BOTELER CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

### Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	November 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2026
Name of the school music lead	Mark McCombs
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Anna Mawby
Name of local music hub	TCAT Performing Arts Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	NA

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

## **Key Stage 3**

At Sir Thomas Boteler, all KS3 students receive two hour-long music lessons over a fortnight. They follow a curriculum where core ideas, skills, and knowledge are revisited and deepened throughout KS3. This approach ensures that students progressively develop their musicianship, as both listeners and performers, as they grow. The curriculum is designed to foster key skills aligned with government guidelines for KS3 music, focusing on three main areas:

### **Listening and Appraisal**

Students are exposed to a wide range of musical genres and listening experiences, encouraging them to think critically and discuss music using essential terminology. The focus is on understanding and applying key musical terms such as tempo, pitch, texture, and others, enabling students to define and confidently use them in class discussions.

Genres explored include pop, classical, rap, blues, and Rock and Roll, among others. Each genre is studied through its historical context and identifying key musical elements. This learning is reinforced through practical and compositional activities, as students learn to perform existing music to deepen their understanding.

### **Composition**

From the beginning, students are encouraged to explore their creativity through composition, with structured support to help them develop their ideas into musical form.

- **Year 7:** Students explore rhythmic improvisation through Samba. A scaffolded approach then introduces students to composing mood music - teaching them to intentionally create atmosphere.
- **Year 8:** Students build on these skills by studying minimalism. They compose ostinatos, and carry out metamorphosis on these osintati, to compose in the style. They demonstrate these skills on the piano keyboards. They also experiment with texture, adding layers to their compositions based on prior learning.
- **Year 9:** Students develop more complex compositions in a pop music style incorporating melody, harmony, and bass parts. They use a variety of techniques and tools, including keyboards, ukuleles, drum kits, bass guitars, and digital platforms like BandLab. They also use these platforms to create a backing track for a hip hop performance.

## **Performing/Instrumental Practice**

Performance is an integral part of KS3 music. Performance is the way the students most commonly demonstrate understanding of a key idea or idiom. Creation is key to the students' remembering, as a higher order process in Bloom's taxonomy. Every unit of work in KS3 music has a main performance task on which the students are assessed, from performing rhythms on Samba instruments to improvising over the 12-Bar Blues.

Students are expected to perform, whether privately for the teacher, in front of the class, or during larger events like assemblies and special occasions. These experiences are designed to build confidence, encourage resilience, and develop essential soft skills for life beyond school.

The department also offers specialised one-on-one tutoring in areas such as vocal and guitar/bass performance, helping students refine their skills and explore their interests.

## **Key Stage 4**

The KS4 music curriculum integrates performance, composition, and musical appraisal. Students take a GCSE qualification under the Eduqas exam board.

Complex theoretical knowledge is built on a foundation of musical terminology. Students enhance their listening and analytical skills, learning to form and articulate opinions about music with clear, musical reasoning.

Lessons are structured to include dedicated time for both solo and ensemble performance practice, offering one-on-one guidance to help students select pieces that meet exam board criteria while reflecting their individual preferences.

Students embark on their own composition journey, studying successful examples and learning new techniques to aid their creativity. They explore various methods, from live instrumental composition to online arrangements using BandLab and MuseScore.

Our KS4 course supports students as they mature as musicians, equipping them with the skills needed for further education and collaborative musical endeavours.

## **Part B: Co-curricular music**

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

### **Wider Curricular Activities**

All students are offered a range of wider curricular activities designed to enhance their confidence and performance experience. These opportunities make excellent use of our resources and skilled staff. We proudly offer the following extracurricular activities:

#### **KS3 / KS4 Band Club**

Students interested in playing or singing as part of a band ensemble are grouped together and provided with rehearsal spaces. They work on learning and practicing songs of their choice, fostering collaboration and creativity. They receive individual technical guidance on their instrument when appropriate.

#### **Guitar Club**

Led by our specialist guitar tutor, this activity caters to students ranging from beginners to intermediates. Participants play as part of a guitar ensemble and receive tailored advice to meet their individual needs, ensuring maximum progress for each student.

#### **Senior Vocal Ensemble**

This small choir for KS4 students, and selected KS3 students, challenges students with advanced pieces and provides opportunities to perform at a variety of prestigious events – both in school and in our community.

#### **Junior Vocal Ensembles**

KS3 students are able to come and express themselves, singing just about anything they can get their hands on. They are separated into Boys Voices and Girls Voices, to provide expert guidance on their vocal development during adolescence.

## 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.

Our students actively participate in numerous assemblies, services, and concerts throughout the year. At Sir Thomas Boteler, we place a strong emphasis on celebrating and supporting our young, aspiring musicians. Some of the key events include:

- **Inauguration Service** – A special occasion to welcome new Year 7 students, where they perform together as a year group.
- **Remembrance Service** – A poignant and reflective event in honour of those who served.
- **Carol Service** – A festive celebration featuring musical performances that highlight the season.
- **Cross-Curricular Events** – Collaborations such as Dance and School Shows or TCAT (The Challenge Academy Trust) events, where schools within the trust come together to perform and celebrate the achievements of our young people.
- **Community Outreach Opportunities** – An opportunity for students to give back through their performances at local care homes and disability awareness events.

All students are encouraged to take part in these performances by committing to extracurricular opportunities and developing their skills within their chosen ensembles.

Additionally, Cronton College will visit our school to deliver an inspiring performance and provide students with a Q&A session about studying music at KS5. This will give students valuable insights into what studying music beyond KS4 entails and how they can best prepare for the next step in their musical journey.

## In the future

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

We are excited about the future growth of our music department and are aiming to expand in the following ways:

- **Access to Specialist 1-1 Peripatetic Teachers** – Providing students with tailored, individual music instruction to further enhance their skills and confidence.
- **Inclusion of External Musical Experiences** – Offering opportunities for students to engage in activities such as attending live performances, or visiting music exhibitions - enriching their understanding and appreciation of music.
- **Regular Music Festivals or Competitions** - Host annual or termly music festivals or competitions to showcase student talent and foster a sense of achievement and camaraderie.
- **Integration of Music and Wellness** - Offer programs exploring the therapeutic aspects of music, including mindfulness through music and music therapy workshops.
- **Purchase of a new Music Technology Suite** – To give our students access to professional standard software, better preparing them for further musical study at KS5 and beyond.

These developments will ensure our students continue to thrive and grow as musicians, both in and out of the classroom.