



Music Development Plan Summary The King's (The Cathedral) School, Peterborough

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	December 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	June 2026
Name of the school music lead	Dr Martin Ratcliffe
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr Duncan Rhodes
Name of local music hub	Peterborough Music Hub
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 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 School's Music curriculum, which is equally accessible by all pupils, is informed by the Model Music Curriculum (March 2021), and published as an Overview and by Key Stage on the School's website:

[Music - The King's School](#)

Strategies for increasing access for all pupils (e.g. whole-class ukulele lessons), disabled pupils (e.g. ensuring access to all areas of the Department for those pupils with physical disabilities), individual pupils' learning styles (e.g. tailored support through strategic focus on the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic aspects of the curriculum), and supporting pupils with special educational needs (e.g. through the provision of differentiated teaching and learning resources and bespoke one-to-one support for SEND pupils) are embedded in the Department's teaching and learning methodology.

Practical music making is at the core of the curriculum. At Key Stages 2 and 3 pupils spend approximately 60% of lesson time learning to sing and play a variety of classroom instruments, including pianos, electric keyboards, ukuleles, guitars, xylophones, glockenspiels and a variety of orchestral and hand-held percussion, either through whole-class teaching or small-group demonstration.

At Key Stages 4 and 5 pupils undertake regular individual practice and ensemble rehearsals, comprising approximately 30% of their lesson time as they prepare for course work recordings and Recitals.

The School has an active partnership with the Peterborough Music Hub, which supports the development of curriculum music, and important relationships with a variety of other organisations, including Peterborough Cathedral, a range of local schools, colleges and universities.

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.

The King's School offers weekly one-to-one and small-group tuition on a range of classical and popular instruments through a team of visiting specialist peripatetic teachers who provide their expertise at competitive rates.

Department Staff

Dr M Ratcliffe (MLR): Director of Music and Head of Music Department
Mr G Jenkins (GJJ): Assistant Director of Music and Academic Head of Year 7

Visiting Music Teachers

Mr J Bamforth:	Electric Guitar / Bass Guitar / Classical Guitar
Mrs K Blumenthal:	Singing
Mr M Bright:	Percussion - Timpani & Kit
Mr C Strange:	Organ
Mrs F Henderson:	Flute / Clarinet / Oboe
Mr M Jewkes:	Saxophone
Miss C McAuliffe:	Cello
Mrs A Smith:	Violin
Mr C Torr:	Piano
Mrs J Turner:	Clarinet
Mr S Walton:	Trumpet / Cornet / Trombone / Euphonium / Tuba / French Horn
Mrs N Weston:	Violin / Viola
Mr P Weston:	Violin / Viola

In addition, members of the Cathedral Music Department deliver individual and small-group singing lessons to the Choristers.

Grade Examinations

Large numbers of pupils enter annually for ABRSM, Trinity Guildhall, Music Teacher Board and LAMDA practical examinations, and many also participate in local Music Festivals in Peterborough, Stamford and Grantham. To support pupils in their musical development the Department also offers weekly Grade 5 Theory music classes to pupils of all abilities.

Music Entry to Year 7

Three places at The King's School each year are offered through a music audition for entry to Year 7. The Music Department administers the auditions each October. For further information, please contact the Director of Music at ratcliffe.m@kings.peterborough.sch.uk.

Out-of-Hours Music Tuition

The Music Department hosts ex-Cambridgeshire Music Service Teachers who deliver lessons to pupils from The King's School and elsewhere after School hours at Madeley House. Lessons are available in Piano, Violin and Viola.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

The Music Department offers a large range of varied and vibrant extra-curricular opportunities which involve pupils of all abilities and ages. Participants are drawn not only from pupils who are studying Music at GCSE and A-Level, but also include many pupils who have instrumental and singing tuition in school, and others who simply enjoy performing music.

Pupils also use the Music Department for regular smaller ensemble rehearsals such as string quartets, vocal ensembles and brass quintets, several of which are supervised by Music Department staff. Participation in the ensembles is free for all pupils.

Choirs, Orchestras & Bands

House Music

The House Music Competition is the highlight of the School Year. The event commences with the solo competitions where each of the School's Houses, led by their House Captains, puts forward their best musicians in the categories of strings, woodwind, brass, piano, percussion, singing and guitar. A winner is selected from each category and the overall winner for the best performance is then invited to perform at the main House Music event which takes place in October and typically attracts an audience of around 1,800. The points from the solo competition contribute to the overall scores.

At the main event, which in recent years has taken place at either The Kingsgate Church and Conference Centre in Peterborough, the House Captains host performances by the Orchestra, Choir, Junior Department and Band from each of the four Houses.

The competition is judged by an external guest, typically a Head of Music from another school or a professional musician, by invitation from the Director of Music.

Carol Singing Competition

There is an annual whole-school House carol singing competition which is led by the House Captains.

Whole-School Production

The annual Whole-School Production is extremely popular. Recent shows have included *Sister Act*, *Les Misérables*, *Chicago*, *We Will Rock You*, *Grease*, *Little Shop Of Horrors*, *Footloose* and *Legally Blonde*.

Music Department Ensembles

The Senior Choir consists of over 40 talented singers, including ex-choristers, singing 4-part repertoire. The Senior Choir is involved in many of the School's services, including those at Peterborough Cathedral. Recent concerts by the Senior Choir have included works by Vivaldi (*Gloria*), Fauré (*Requiem*) and Whittaker (*Sleep*). This year the Choir will be performing Bach's *St Matthew Passion*.

The Orchestra comprises approximately 50 of the most able performers in the School. Recent performances include Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No.4*, Mozart's *4th Horn Concerto*, Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony* and *Venus* from Holst's *The Planets* Suite.

The Senior Concert Band comprises approximately forty of the most talented wind players who perform a varied repertoire from Gershwin's *Symphonic Portrait* and *Rhapsody in Blue* to Sibelius' *Finlandia*.

The school Assembly Band performs regularly in Whole-School Assemblies, supporting whole-school singing of traditional and contemporary hymns and worship songs.

In addition to the ensembles above, the Music Department runs weekly rehearsals of the following groups, which perform in regular concerts throughout the year:

Senior String Ensemble:	for players of Grade 5 and above
Primo Strings:	for players from beginner to Grade 4
Flute Ensemble:	for players of all abilities
Saxophone Ensemble:	for players of all abilities
Clarinet Group 1:	for clarinettists from Grade 4 and above
Clarinet Group 2:	for clarinettists from beginner to Grade 3
Junior Choir:	for any singer in Years 7 and 8
Gospel Choir:	for singers of any age
Chamber Choir:	for senior singers, many of whom are ex-Cathedral Choristers
Concert Band 2:	for wind players from beginner to Grade 4
‘Ad Lib’ Fridays:	comprising open mic and karaoke performances for any age group
Staff Choir:	for all members of staff

Music Collaborations

The Music Department collaborates closely with Peterborough Cathedral Music Department (e.g. for the 2026 performance of Bach’s *St Matthew Passion*) and with other local schools (e.g. for the annual Diocesan Service at Peterborough Cathedral).

The Music Department works closely with Peterborough Music Hub, sharing resources and expertise. Pupils from the School participate in regular Saturday Morning activities offered by the Hub, and perform in events organised by the Hub at different times in the year (e.g. in the production of *The Snowman* at Christmas).

Pupils are regularly invited to perform at various high-profile local events e.g. the Petriburgians’ Reunion Dinner, the Schola Regia Ladies Festival and local fundraising events.

Talented pianists are offered the opportunity to accompany hymn singing in twice-weekly whole school assemblies and the whole School takes part in regular hymn singing practices.

School Colours

At the discretion of the Director of Music, School Half and Full Colours can be awarded to pupils for outstanding commitment to Music. Criteria for receiving an award include regular attendance at one or more of the Department’s extra-curricular groups for the duration of a pupil’s time at the School, pupils’ input into the annual House Music Competition and involvement in School productions. Presentations take place in whole-school assemblies, typically at the end of the Autumn and Spring Terms.

Music Awards

In addition to School Colours, the Music Department has several other prestigious awards e.g. the Michael Lamb Organ Scholarship, which is bestowed each year to the most talented Organist, as jointly agreed by the Directors of Music from The King’s School and the Peterborough Cathedral. The scholarship recipient receives financial support for formal organ lessons.

Music Prefects

Senior pupils who are heavily involved in the musical life of the school may be invited to become Music Prefects. This important role involves supporting the running of the Music Department through leading rehearsals, taking registers for extra-curricular ensembles, producing promotional material for concerts, cataloguing the material in the Music Library, being a point of contact for younger students who have questions about the Music Department and generally being an advocate for Music within the School.

Instrument Hire

A number of School instruments are available to hire for a small termly hire charge. Instruments, which may be used for instrumental practice, rehearsals and examinations, can be hired through consultation with the pupil's peripatetic teacher and the Director of Music.

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.

Music is central to the life of The King's School. As the Cathedral School, The King's School educates the Cathedral Choristers, who rehearse daily in the Music Department. There are many more talented musicians at the school, with over 300 music lessons taught weekly by thirteen visiting peripatetic teachers, supported by two Music Prefects. Lessons support the wide range of extra-curricular groups which perform to a high standard.

Music is prepared for regular whole-school events such as House Music, concerts, Cathedral Services and assemblies. There is an annual Whole-School Production (recent shows have included *Footloose*, *Chicago* and *Sister Act*). Popular music tours take place every two years and have included performances in Normandy (Bayeux Cathedral), Rome (St Peter's Basilica) and Barcelona (the Sagrada Familia).

The Music Department has a busy annual calendar of concerts and services in which large numbers of students are involved as performers and all pupils are involved as participants. 2025-26, which is a typical academic year, comprises:

Autumn Term

- Start-of-Academic-Year Service at Peterborough Cathedral
- Speech Day Service at Peterborough Cathedral
- House Music
- Diocesan Service at Peterborough Cathedral
- Whole-School Carol Singing Competition
- Christmas Concert at Peterborough Cathedral
- End-of-Term Christmas Service at Peterborough Cathedral
- Regular Whole-School Singing Assemblies
- Junior Department Christmas Show

Spring Term

- Whole-School Production: *Legally Blonde*
- Mid-Term Concert: performances by Music Department Ensembles and soloists
- End-of-Term Concert: Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* at St John's Church
- Regular Whole-School Singing Assemblies
- End-of-Term Service at Peterborough Cathedral

Summer Term

- Regular Whole-School Singing Assemblies
- End of Term Concert
- End-of-Term Service at Peterborough Cathedral

The Music Department is also involved in various other performances each academic year e.g. Year 11 Awards Evening, the Christmas Fair and Carol Singing in Peterborough City Centre and in local care homes, and administers annually the entrance auditions for talented Year 6 musicians for admission to the school. In the Summer of 2025, the Music Department also organised a Fundraising Concert for Peterborough Cathedral, in which alumni pupils performed large-scale repertoire such as Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony* alongside current students.

All musical events are available to all year groups, either as performers or as audience members. Attendance is either free, or in the case of external venues requires a nominal fee to cover the venue hire costs of the event.

The A-Level Music students and music staff have visited London twice this year to attend concerts of wider listening relating to their A-Level set works.

GCSE Music pupils visit London annually with music staff to see a performance of *Wicked*, one of the GCSE set works.

In the Future

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

The Music Department is vibrant, challenging and forward-thinking, with clear values and objectives. It is a place where students want to spend their time and work with other like-minded musicians.

Pupils' learning and skills are facilitated and developed well. The Department is exploring through links with other schools new strategies for maximising pupil potential, ways in which Pupil Premium funding may be used even more effectively, and even greater contribution to and on-going evaluation of progress against whole-school priorities.

The Department is exploring how it can provide even more consistent support to both the peripatetic team of visiting instrumental and singing teachers and Cathedral Music staff, which complement key functions and activities within the Department.

The Role Profile of the Music Department Prefects is reviewed annually to examine how they might support the day-to-day workings of the Music Department even more effectively.

Staff are consulting with Visiting Peripatetic Teachers to see how they might feel even more empowered to make the best impact on pupils' learning, drawing on experiences from their teaching in other schools.

Staff consult with student focus groups annually on a year-group rotation to ascertain whether any aspects of the curriculum and its delivery might be improved.

The curriculum is constantly under review to ensure that it continues to engage, appeal to and motivate pupils of all abilities, and particularly those who choose Music as an option at GCSE and A Level. Progression is built on a clear educational rationale which links to Cultural Capital, cross-curricular links, and extra-curricular elements such as Gatsby, Diversity and transferable skills.

Staff continue to consider how the Music Department can become an even more bespoke location for Music study and practice e.g. in recent years through the re-purposing of the Music store rooms, improved capacity of Room

M2, the establishment of a Recital / Stage Room and the utilisation of the new IT suite (Room M4) at the rear of the Department, enhancing its local reputation as a leading school for music provision.

Further Information (Optional)

The development of Music both in and out of school at The King's (The Cathedral) School is informed at all levels by the National Plan for Music Education. The close links with the Cathedral provide musicians of all ages, and in particular Choristers in Years 3 to 8, in-school opportunities for high-quality music-making. These opportunities are complemented by the wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities on offer, supported by access to musical instruments, in the School Music Department. This offer is complemented further through the support of the Peterborough Music Hub (e.g. through musical instrument hire and access to collaborative performance opportunities with other schools). Large numbers of pupils from the School also benefit from, and contribute enthusiastically to, the Peterborough Centre for Young Musicians Saturday Morning Music School.

The relationship between the School and the Peterborough Music Hub also facilitates staff attendance at Music CPD events, regular Music Network Meetings and discussion forums about national and local initiatives. The Hub's supported membership of Music Mark provides further networking opportunities regarding excellent practice in music teaching and learning.