

Music development plan summary: *St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School*

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Dr Joy Shore
Name of local music hub	Thurrock Music Education Hub

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

At St Thomas' we follow a bespoke music curriculum which has been specifically written with our diverse pupils in mind, ensuring inclusivity throughout all areas of learning and across all year groups. The curriculum has been developed to enable our pupils to grow and develop as talented and creative musicians. Music curriculum lessons take place in a purpose built Music Studio.

All lessons are adapted to ensure that every pupil achieves to the best of their musical ability. Additional support is provided throughout the curriculum for those with special educational needs (SEND) to ensure that they develop their skills and flourish as musicians, such as through additional adult support, strategic pairing and scaffolding. A weekly SEND music session is held in our Music Studio, to help support those with additional needs and enhance their ability to access the music curriculum, throughout exposure to instruments and songs. Pupils working at expected levels and higher levels of attainment are also supported to ensure that they are suitably challenged and continue to develop and strengthen their musical skills. An overview of our music curriculum can be found on our website, alongside a summary of skills progression and key music vocabulary at each key stage.

<https://www.stthomasofcanterbury.thurrock.sch.uk/page/?title=Music&pid=1777>

Music curriculum lessons take place weekly throughout the year, for EYFS, KS1 and KS2, ensuring that pupils acquire new musical knowledge and skills in short, manageable chunks and continue to develop them, week on week. The curriculum has been structured into units to achieve progression across all year groups, in four inter-linked musical skills including: **listening, singing, performing and composing**. Across all units we aim to enhance our pupil's understanding of the **inter-related dimensions of music: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations**, whilst also developing their knowledge of key music vocabulary so that they can understand music.

All year groups have opportunities to develop their instrumental playing skills, particularly during units which focus on performance. During EYFS and Year 1 performance lessons, pupils learn to play a number of untuned percussion instruments and in Year 2 pupils learn to play the ocarina and follow simple ocarina music. Year 3 pupils continue to develop their ocarina notation skills which provides a suitable grounding for Year 4 when they learn to play the recorder and read basic Treble Clef notation. Year 5 and 6 pupils learn to play the keyboard and develop their Treble Clef skills further.

All lessons taught during the performance units take place as whole-class ensembles, for a term, to ensure pupils have enough exposure to instruments. This is particularly important in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 to ensure that our pupils have sufficient time to develop their instrumental skills and are provided with opportunities to develop these skills further.

The choice of instruments in our music curriculum ensure smooth progression through key stages, with the ocarina being an instrument that is manageable for all pupils and relatively straightforward to produce a tune on, following OcPix notation. Ocarina notation and instrumental skills acquired in Year 2 and 3 ensure a smooth transition onto the recorder and reading Treble Clef notation in Year 4, before moving onto more challenging Treble Clef notation when learning to play the keyboard in Year 5 and 6. Alongside the specifically chosen instruments for performance units, all year groups have opportunities to play an array of classroom percussion instruments (including glockenspiels and xylophones) across other parts of the curriculum, particularly during units which focus on listening and composing.

Part B: Extra-Curricular Music

Through our local Music Education Hub (Thurrock Music Education Hub) we provide weekly one-to-one and small-group peripatetic lessons on keyboard, violin, guitar and drums, with lessons taking place in a music practice room. Pupils taking part in such lessons work through tutor books and have opportunities to work towards performance exams.

An external music education company called 'Rocksteady', attends our school weekly, providing our pupils with opportunities to join rock bands and perform using voices, keyboards, guitars and drums. Rocksteady bands rehearse in our Music Studio and perform a concert at the end of each term.

Internally we also run a Junior and Infant Choir, with rehearsals taking place after school (KS2) and during lunch times (KS1), in our Music Studio. Both choirs are open to all pupils, with sign-up required through Arbor. The choir ensembles provide our pupils with opportunities to enhance and extend their singing and performing skills developed throughout the curriculum. Regular choir performances include singing for celebration assemblies, the local community and the Junior and Infant Music Festivals, in Thurrock. We also run an internal Year 3 and 4 Ocarina lunch time ensemble.

Further information regarding instrumental hire, orchestras, ensembles and after school/holiday music lessons can be found by contacting the Thurrock Music Education Hub.

Part C: Musical Experiences

As a Catholic school music plays a vital role across all year groups, during times of Class Worship and Celebration of the Word, where pupils regularly perform hymns and responses. During Musical Celebration of the Word, in particular, we prepare hymns for worship and masses and our pupils are encouraged to draw upon skills developed in the music curriculum. When rehearsing and performing hymns and responses, pupils consider the inter-related dimensions of music (i.e. pitch, tempo and dynamics). Pupils also experience live piano music on entry to religious gatherings and are encouraged to develop their listening skills further. Other recorded classical or gentle piano music is experienced during class worship.

At Christmas, EYFS, KS1 and Year 5 and 6 develop their singing skills and perform nativities and carol concerts to all other year groups and parents/carers. The Year 3

and 4 pupils also develop their singing skills and perform an Easter Passion play for all other year groups and parents/carers.

The Junior and Infant Choirs perform to all year groups in the school at the end of every term and also perform for the local community. Both choirs also perform a set repertoire of songs with other schools for the Thurrock Music Festival, which is organised free of charge through the Thurrock Music Education Hub. The choirs perform in front of a large audience of parents/carers (small fee for audience tickets). Rocksteady concerts take place at the end of every term, with our pupils performing for the whole school and parents/carers.

At the beginning of every academic year St Thomas' take part in the Christus Catholic Trust (CCT) new term mass, at Brentwood Cathedral. Selected pupils perform at the mass, with pupils from other schools in the Trust. This provides our pupils with an opportunity to develop their singing and performance skills further whilst singing at a prestigious venue, in front of a large audience of parents/carers and other teachers from the Trust.

Each year we also extend and enhance our music provision by inviting music workshops and performers into our school, such as a mariachi band and steel pan drum groups. All such events enable our pupils to experience live musical events and allow them to access musical activities outside of our curriculum.

In the future

Over the coming few years we intend to continue embedding the new music curriculum. Music units and lessons will continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure our music provision suits the needs of all of our pupils. We will continue to focus on reinforcing music vocabulary across all year groups as well as reviewing pupils' understanding of the inter-related dimensions of music. This will enable our pupils to continue developing as talented and creative musicians. We will also continue to develop music oracy, encouraging pupils to be able to discuss music with greater confidence, using key vocabulary and the inter-related dimensions of music with ease.

As well as the Junior and Infant choirs and Ocarina Orchestra, we will be offering a new Tuned Percussion Club where pupils will be able to develop their ability to play bells, boomwhackers, xylophones and glockenspiels. This club will help to enhance

notation skills from the music curriculum as well as providing another ensemble opportunity for pupils.

Music Ambassadors will be nominated from the Autumn Term, with each class having a representative for music to help with setting up music resources, instruments, choosing hymns and promoting musical events. We are also looking to run a music competition to help raise the profile of music within the school and promote creativity, with the newly appointed Music Ambassadors helping to choose winners.

Further information (optional)

Thurrock Music Education Hub (Thurrock Music Services) <https://thurrockmusic.co.uk/>

Rocksteady <https://www.rocksteadymusicschool.com/>

'Music education: information for parents and young people'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/music-education-information-for-parents-and-young-people>