

Music development plan summary: John Taylor Free School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-7
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2027
Name of the school music lead	Anne-Mette Mogelmosse
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Stuart McAusland
Name of local music hub	Entrust Staffordshire (Burton-upon-Trent region)
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	

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 JTFS music curriculum is available on our website,
www.johntaylorfreeschool.co.uk

In year 7, the aims are to:

- To learn to perform using a variety of instruments including using their voices
- To learn to perform in an ensemble
- To learn how to create and compose music in a range of styles
- To develop a deeper understanding of music from a broad range of different genres and cultures
- To instil the STRIPE habits in students' learning in music

The music curriculum is connected to our Driving Questions, which are “Who creates my image” in term 1, “What are the challenges facing our world” in term 2 and “Why do we celebrate” in term 3. The content of the course covers fundamental musical techniques and cultural understanding of disparate and distinct areas aimed at providing an inclusive experience, aiming to increase access and accessibility. These include reggae; the impact of war on musical creativity; and orchestral instrumentation. Students sing together frequently in lessons. Students should feel a sense of belonging in the world of music as they progress through our course. Students have one 50-minute lesson of music each week.

In year 8, the aims are to

- To perform accurately, fluently, and confidently
- To develop ensemble awareness
- To appraise music with maturity
- To compose music in a variety of genres
- To understand the content and context of music from a variety of cultures
- To instil the STRIPE habits in students’ learning in music

The music curriculum is connected to our Driving Questions, which are “What makes Britain Great” in term 1, “What keeps me healthy” in term 2 and “How does the past and present inform your future” in term 3. The content of the course builds on the fundamental musical techniques from year 7 and expands cultural understanding of disparate and distinct areas aimed at providing an inclusive experience, aiming to increase access and accessibility. These include sections of work on samba, blues, rock’n’roll and ragtime; students all develop their fluency through the use of keyboards to play and compose music (including film music, giving consideration to the effect on chord progression and choice on mood). They begin to explore modern compositions through the lens of their developing understanding of cultural influences, and focus for some time on musical theatre and selected pop pieces. Students continue to sing together frequently in lessons. Students should feel a sense of belonging in the world of music as they progress through our course. Students have one 50-minute lesson of music each week.

In year 9, the aims are:

- Students will perform effectively on their instrument/voice; rehearse and display musicianship skills in a number of professional scenarios;
- Students will compose music appropriately and creatively, satisfying the demands of the genre and/or purpose;
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of theoretical and contextual issues relating to music style, genre, audience and the music industry.

The year 9 curriculum is designed to give students a purposeful understanding of the benefits of further study and potential careers in music and creative industries.

Students will have several performance opportunities and explore music technology and its role in composition, sampling and production. They will experience digital and analogue composition. This year introduces the Minimalist movement for all students, but allows them also to explore areas of music in which their own passions are starting to develop.

Year 10 and beyond

Music students at JTFS follow the OCR J536 qualification, which enables them to perform; compose; and demonstrate and apply musical knowledge; they use appraising skills to evaluate and critique music. The qualification aims to encourage active performance, composition, collaboration and ensemble playing. Music GCSE students are expected to take a full and active part in school productions and performances.

To date we have not had sufficient uptake at post-16 to run a music course, but the school has only had a post-16 provision for two years and we plan to build on this in future. JTFS is aware of the minute numbers of students taking post-16 music nationally and we would consider running smaller classes to keep the subject alive in further education.

Including everyone and improving access

JTFS has a highly inclusive approach to its curricula, and all students attend the same offer of lessons. Students with Individual Needs are supported by our central team to attend and engage with lessons, and the school recognises the importance of high-quality teaching which supports the “five a day” SEND approach. All students, including those with physical, sight or hearing impairment, are fully engaged in the music curriculum.

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.

Access to instrumental and vocal tuition

JTFS has an established and strong relationship with the local Entrust Music Service Staffordshire. Dozens of students receive instrumental or vocal co-curricular lessons onsite, with fully subsidised lessons for any student eligible for Pupil Premium. We strongly encourage other families to make use of charitable support from FOSYM if finances would be a barrier.

Some students receive one-to-one lessons, and others receive more economical small-group lessons. Students are provided musical instruments to use whilst they are

receiving lessons (or to access our practice suites for instruments such as piano and drums). All students are welcomed to perform music

To encourage uptake and break down barriers to starting instruments, our school orchestra and choir perform at partner primary schools and in front of every one of our own students in school assemblies early in the year. We have had performance showcases from the Entrust Music Service Staffordshire team in our theatre to further engage our students in playing music.

Access to ensembles and performance

Students in JTFS are encouraged to perform music regularly and in public. We have dozens of performers who prepare solo pieces for our two major concerts in winter and summer, with additional live performances throughout the year in assemblies and special events, such as visits to primary schools.

As well as our soloists, we have two larger ensembles in school: the orchestra and the choir. These are fully inclusive groups, with music arranged to provide a low requirement for access but challenge for the more able students (including improvised solos). We have students from year 7 to year 13, playing instruments on all orchestral sections in our orchestra, and we have dozens of students who attend choir each week, comprising all year groups. Our newest ensemble, the rock band, is gaining interest; we also have musical theatre weekly rehearsals led by an experienced director/performer.

Music is a natural part of JTFS, and it is not unusual to see a student in the restaurant before school strumming their guitar, or students using our practice rooms to rehearse for musical events. We have several weekly ensemble rehearsals scheduled to allow students to attend even if they travel by bus.

The school has staged several musical theatre productions and we plan to do so at least once every two years. On the off-year, we focus on increasing the numbers of students who are starting their performance journey and may not have been successful in auditioning for the show.

Students at JTFS are encouraged to progress musically, and we support them to take their music grades, including performance grades which we record in school in partnership with the Music Service. Students at JTFS generally start from beginner level, even when having had prior tuition at primary school, but we now have some older students progressing through grades 6-8. We do not set a requirement that students prepare for grades.

Through our strong relationship with the Music Service, we host the Burton Music Centre which is attended by students across the region (many from JTFS) and has more than doubled in size since we have been working with them. To facilitate students remaining for the Centre activities, a bridging activity is provided for JTFS students at the end of the day. Our theatre is well-equipped and is used for Music Service concerts at which we also host primary school collaborations.

Start with what music tuition your school offers outside of what is taught in lesson time, including one-to-one, small-group and large-group tuition for instruments or voice.

Set out what ensembles that pupils can join outside of what is taught in lesson time, such as choirs or vocal ensembles, as well as instrumental ensembles, bands and groups, and other forms of music-making.

Set out how pupils can make progress in music outside of lesson time, including instrument loans, weekend, after-school or holiday provision such as Saturday music centres, and any qualifications or awards pupils can achieve.

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.

Students in year 7 and 8 all regularly sing in their music lessons, with opportunity for wider performance. Our ensembles get multiple opportunities each year to perform in public and/or to peers, at open evenings, concerts, our annual festival and offsite, at primary schools and community locations. Our choir are accompanied by the orchestra in a number of pieces in the repertoire.

Our annual Thrive week in summer is expected to provide a live workshop and performance opportunity for students, and we periodically have visiting musicians who will perform to year groups. We are developing a relationship with the Lichfield Gospel Choir which we hope will increase engagement from new students (especially male voices).

For concerts and performances in school, we prioritise those who are studying for grades or GCSE but we also welcome other students to audition their pieces. Even where they are not yet ready to perform, we provide constructive support for a subsequent event and encourage their engagement in our ensembles.

In general, we try to provide access to music without a charge, and we make good use of pupil premium finding to improve access. Where costs are unavoidable, we encourage families to make application to FOSYM charitable bursaries – these have only very rarely been rejected.

Students at JTFS, as part of JTMAT, perform at the Trust showcase annually.

We also perform the Last Post as part of Remembrance celebrations in front of the whole school. To date this has been performed by a senior leader in the school, but we expect students to be ready to do so next year.

In the future

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

JTFS is proud to have a strong relationship with the local music community, and has strong support from the senior leadership to make further improvements. From this platform, the next steps are:

- Increase the visibility of music performance in school, to naturalise musical diversity and appreciation amongst the whole community. This will include assembly and newsletter/social media publication.
- Increase the frequency and scope of access to seeing live music. This may include improving our relationship with the military bands which reside locally, and other community groups such as the Lichfield Gospel Choir.
- Increase the number of staff who regularly contribute to music and performance enrichment activities and ensembles (although there are about a dozen who regularly contribute already)
- Increase the curriculum provision time in year 9 to increase the number of students who continue to study it as a GCSE option.
- Use this space to include any information on any improvements you plan to make for subsequent years in curriculum music, co-curricular music or musical experiences, including when you plan to introduce changes.
- Engage our prospective students in music at JTFS and establish ourselves as the home of music education in the region
- Allow for students to perform more frequently, by building another concert into the Spring term (although this will require an increase in the rate that students in core ensembles learn repertoire, as well as the term dates being amenable)

Longer term goals are:

- Establish a corps of strong musicians in younger years, planning for Further Education courses involving music.
- Establish a relationship with a wider range of visiting artists who perform in the region, improving access to genres that we currently feel are underrepresented, such as jazz, rock, folk and world music.
- Establish ourselves as a grassroots source of young musicians who can join intermediate bands (or junior branches of adult ensembles)

Further information (optional)

Click for more information about our partners in:

- [Entrust Staffordshire Music Service](#)
- [Friends of Staffordshire's Young Musicians](#)

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.