Music development plan summary:
St. James Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mrs J Finch
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Mr Booth
Name of local music hub	Bolton Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Sparkyard

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.

To read in more detail about the provision music at St. James Primary School, please visit our music curriculum page https://www.st-james-farnworth.bolton.sch.uk/music

Music is taught to every class every week. Lessons are a minimum of 40 minutes and are delivered by class teachers or a music specialist. Our curriculum is supported by the Sparkyard programme, which provides a structured sequence of learning designed for primary-aged pupils.

Lessons are planned to help children revisit prior learning, remember key knowledge, deepen their understanding and apply their musical skills. Through the curriculum, pupils have opportunities to sing, play instruments, listen and respond, compose and perform. Sparkyard includes musical technology units and supports coverage of the components of the Model Music Curriculum.

What pupils learn

- Singing: developing confidence, vocal control, accuracy, expression and the ability to sing individually and as part of an ensemble.
- Listening and appraising: listening carefully to a broad range of live and recorded music, identifying musical features and expressing opinions using appropriate musical vocabulary.
- Performing: developing control, rhythm, pulse, pitch and ensemble skills through voice and instruments.
- Composing and creating: experimenting with sounds, making musical choices, creating and refining ideas, and sharing compositions.
- Musical knowledge: building understanding of musical elements, notation and vocabulary progressively as pupils move through the school.

Teachers use the Sparkyard sequences to support progression and adapt teaching so that all pupils, including pupils with SEND and those who may need additional support, can participate meaningfully and experience success.

Instrumental learning and specialist teaching

Pupils in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 take part in whole-class ensemble tuition delivered by specialist teachers from Bolton Music Service through the Wider Opportunities programme. This gives children the opportunity to learn an instrument together, develop foundational playing skills and experience the discipline and enjoyment of making music as an ensemble.

We will continue to work with Bolton Music Service to identify further opportunities for specialist teaching and instrumental progression.

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.

We want pupils to be able to develop their musical interests beyond their weekly classroom lessons. Our current co-curricular offer includes:

- School choir: open to pupils across the age ranges, rehearsing every Tuesday. Choir provides opportunities to develop vocal technique, confidence, teamwork and performance skills.
- Year 5 ukulele club: delivered by a specialist music teacher at Tuesday lunchtime, enabling pupils to learn a new instrument and develop their ability to play together.
- St James also offers pupils the opportunity to take part in Rocksteady music

lessons, where children can learn to play in a band environment. Pupils develop skills on instruments such as drums, electric guitar, bass guitar and keyboard, as well as developing their vocal abilities. Through regular specialist tuition, children learn about rhythm, timing, teamwork and performance, building confidence and a love of music. These sessions provide an opportunity for children to develop their musical skills over time and work towards performing as part of a band.

We will continue to review participation so that barriers to joining clubs are identified and addressed. We are particularly committed to improving access for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, so that participation is not limited by confidence, prior experience or family circumstances.

As opportunities develop, pupils will be encouraged to progress from introductory experiences to more sustained musical learning and performance.

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.

Children will have the opportunity to perform or experience high quality music this academic year. Please see below for a list of those opportunities:

Live music, performance and shared musical experiences help pupils understand that music is part of everyday life and a powerful way to communicate and connect with others. During 2026–2027, planned opportunities include:

- Rock Kidz – a whole-school musical experience, including the ‘Dress Like a Rockstar’ event.
- Whole-school and class assemblies, including singing for Remembrance, Harvest and Christmas.
- Trust services.
- EYFS nativity performances, Key Stage 1 Christmas performance, and KS2 Christmas carols.
- Multi-faith super learning day, exploring music from different cultures and traditions.
- Year 6 end-of-year performance.
- Wiggle Worship for EYFS.
- Opportunities to attend or take part in events and concerts through Bolton Music Service.

We will seek to ensure that pupils experience a range of musical styles, traditions and cultures, and that performance opportunities are inclusive and appropriate to pupils’

ages, interests and confidence. Where possible, pupils will experience music performed live by visiting musicians or at external events.

In the future

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

In future years, our Music Development Plan aims to achieve the following:

1. Strengthen curriculum progression
2. Broaden instrumental opportunities
3. Increase performance opportunities
4. Improve equitable access and participation
5. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation