

Music development plan summary: John Hellins Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	September 2025 – July 2026
Date this summary was published	September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	June 2026
Name of the school music lead	Erin King
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	N/A
Name of local music hub	NMPAT

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.

Our school's music curriculum summary can be found on our website or by clicking this [link](#).

The music curriculum has been developed by the subject lead in line with the National Curriculum 2014 for music in Key Stages 1 and 2. For each year group, music aligns with the termly projects that are taught. For example: in the Autumn Term in Year 6, pupils will learn how music was used to keep spirits up during World War II. They will also learn about some famous singers at this time, such as Dame Vera Lynn, and perform some well-known wartime songs, such as We'll Meet Again.

In music lessons, pupils are provided with opportunities to sing and play instruments. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, singing, chanting and rhyming is a common occurrence; pupils develop an understanding of music and rhythm with opportunities to explore instruments too.

In Year 2, pupils will learn how to play the ocarina (a tuned instrument). They learn about notation, timing, dynamics and performance skills. This is always a special time of year where the pupils have the opportunity to try something new and build their confidence. Training packs are provided for staff and pupils are allowed to take their ocarinas home to practise, encouraging parents and family members to get involved with the learning. At the end of this term, pupils will perform their new skill in front of staff and their peers. This is always a wonderful moment for all pupils to show off their musical understanding and develop their performance skills. Videos of these performances are always uploaded to our school blog to allow parents and family members a chance to witness in their child's music education.

In Year 4, pupils learn how to play the ukulele (through NMPAT funding), further developing their knowledge of notation, tempo, dynamics and timbre. These lessons develop previously taught skills, especially from ocarina lessons in Year 2. We welcome a music specialist into school for 10 weeks to provide the Year 4 pupils with these fun, informative and memorable sessions. All pupils are keen to get involved, challenge themselves and feel a sense of achievement at the end of the programme. After the 10 weeks of lessons, pupils from Year 4 perform their new skill to classes in school. Footage of this performance is put onto our school blog so that parents can see their children and engage in this achievement.

Alongside these tuned instrument lessons in KS1 and 2, pupils also have access to a range of un-tuned percussion instruments as well as a piano. These instruments are readily available for all staff to use during music lessons to enhance learning and provide a 'hands-on' and practical experience for all.

In addition to this, all pupils at school take part in weekly singing assemblies. During this time, the pupils are developing their ensemble singing skills, whilst learning some traditional hymns and contemporary songs. In each of these assemblies, teachers will share iconic British artists and famous songs in order to develop musical awareness, cultural awareness and appreciation.

Part B: Extra-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.

As mentioned above, our school collaborates closely with Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust (NMPAT) and Music Mark. We are proud to offer pupils the opportunity to learn the guitar at school which parents can sign up to and pay for annually. Guitar lessons are held once a week, where a specialist teacher comes into our school and teaches pupils either individually or in pairs. The cost of this for the term

is £92.85 – for the whole year the cost is £278.55. We have many pupils at the school who take part in these lessons and we provide them opportunities to share their learning with their classes regularly.

At the beginning of each academic year, we offer the chance for pupils to audition for the Key Stage 2 choir. Run by the music lead (Erin King) or Chris Knott (Year 4 teacher and music specialist), the choir will take on an additional responsibility and further develop singing skills. They sing complex songs during special occasions, such as the Christmas production, singing to the local 'Forget Me Nots' group or other celebration days (previously our May Day, Coronation party and Olympic celebration) where parents are invited. We are always keen to ensure that the wider community is engaged in the pupils' music education and always receive outstanding feedback on all pupils' performances.

At the end of their time at John Hellins, pupils in Year 6 have the chance of winning the prestigious end of year music award – an award that is deeply embedded in our school culture and has been passed on for countless years. Pupils in the past have received this award for an outstanding contribution to music both in and outside of school. This is awarded by the Head Teacher in the final celebration assembly before the summer holidays.

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.

As stated in a previous section above, we are keen to provide a wide range of opportunities for all of our pupils to sing, listen to music and compose. We are proud to have established a whole school singing assembly for many years, taking part on Tuesday afternoons. During this time, all pupils develop their understanding and skills when singing as an ensemble or in parts – call and response songs are often featured. The song selection varies throughout the year. During the autumn term, harvest festival songs are enjoyed, as well as Christmas hymns and production songs. In the spring and summer terms, more contemporary pieces are selected – such as The Beatles, ABBA and Bill Withers – to ensure we expose pupils to a range of genres. Singing assemblies are fun and enjoyable for both pupils and the teachers who are present.

For the current academic year, we have planned many opportunities for pupils to take part in musical events and experiences.

- Weekly singing assemblies
Whole school
- Auditions for the Key Stage 2 choir followed by weekly choir practises
Usually around 20 pupils are successful and join the choir

- The annual Christmas production
KS2 choir to sing throughout performance, as well as whole school songs at beginning and end
- Choir to sing for the local 'Forget Me Nots' group
KS2 choir to perform songs from Christmas production and traditional Christmas hymns to local group in Potterspurty
- Ukulele Year 4 performance
Other pupils to watch in audience
- Ocarina Year 2 performance
Other pupils to watch in audience
- Annual summer celebration day
Choir to perform a song and whole school to sing a song
- Year 6 leavers performance
Parents invited to celebrate the Year 6 leavers, including a range of songs sung by the class

In the future

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

At John Hellins, we are always keen to further develop our curriculum to ensure that all pupils are provided with high-quality learning and memorable experiences.

In music lessons, we aim to continue to enhance pupils' music theory awareness (such as notation) in Year 5 and Year 6, ensuring that they leave John Hellins with a strong foundation ready for Key Stage 3.

In terms of our extra-curricular offer, we would be keen to provide pupils with further musical experiences by introducing a music club after school, such as the recorder. This would allow those with a particular interest in music a chance to learn new skills and build in confidence.

We would be keen to continue fostering our relationship with NMPAT in the coming year, considering increasing our 1:1 tutoring offer to another musical instrument.

Finally, we are always striving to engage with our local community and schools within our cluster. Having taken part in singing events in the past, this is something we are keen to explore again this year (and in future years) with our neighbouring schools.