



Music

School Music Development Plan 2025/26



Introduction

Academic year this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	December 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Sam Clarke
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music	Sam Clarke
Name of local music hub	Kent Music
Name of other music education partnerships	n/a

This document presents a summary of how Amherst School delivers music education to all our pupils across three areas - curriculum music, extracurricular provision and musical experiences - and what changes we are planning in future years.



Music is all around us. It is the soundtrack to our lives, a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. Music can be many things: an enjoyable creative pursuit; a rigorous and demanding academic subject; a vehicle for personal expression; a safe way in which to experience and understand complex emotions; and an important way through which children can grow to feel part of a community. We aim to offer this whole picture to every child, developing the musical potential of all pupils through high-quality curricular and extracurricular opportunities. Musical skills are transferable and can lead to academic gains in other subjects, but this is not the reason for its study: music is worth learning in and of itself.

At Amherst School, we believe in the priority of *doing*, rather than talking *about*, music. We provide opportunities for children to create, play, perform and enjoy music, and to develop the skills to critically appreciate a wide variety of musical forms. Music brings our school community together through whole-school singing, ensemble playing and listening to friends and fellow pupils performing. Music nourishes the soul of a community, and we hold it in the highest regard in ours.

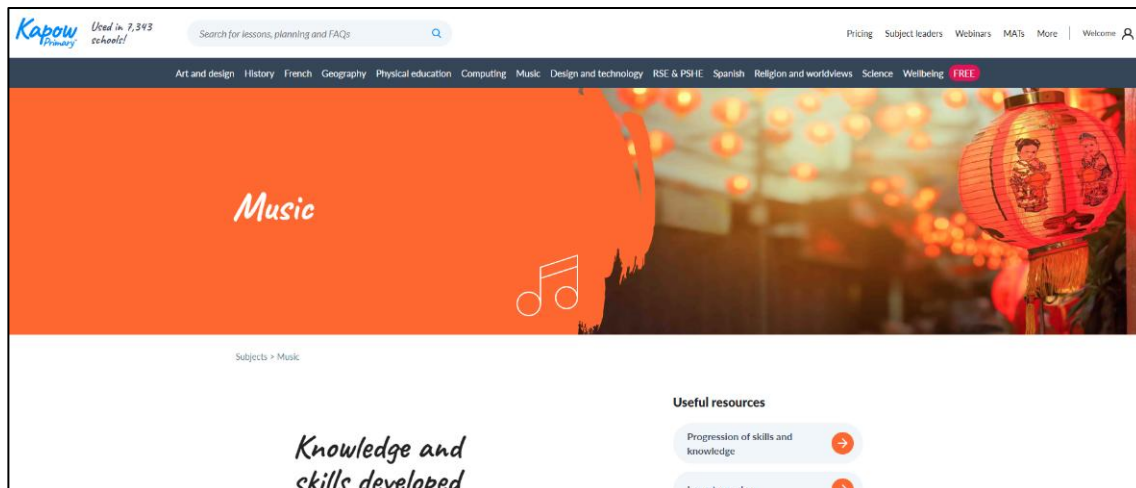
Part A: Curriculum

Overview

At Amherst School, curriculum music is taught by class teachers in lesson time to **all** pupils.

Year group	Time dedicated to curriculum music teaching each week
Year 3	All terms: 30 minutes fortnightly
Year 4	All terms: 30 minutes fortnightly
Year 5	All terms: 30 minutes fortnightly
Year 6	All terms: 30 minutes fortnightly

Curriculum music lessons are based on the online **Kapow Music Scheme**:



These lessons are informed by the **Model Music Curriculum** (non-statutory guidance for music teaching). It provides pupils with opportunities to:

- Listen to and evaluate music from diverse time periods and cultures.
- Learn how to create and control sound using their voices, as well as tuned and untuned instruments.
- Understand how music is communicated through various notation systems.
- Improvise and compose music.
- Perform musically in front of audiences of varying sizes.

Part A: Curriculum

Amherst Music Scheme

Year 3	Lesson opportunities to sing and play instruments	Lesson performance opportunities
<u>Autumn 1:</u> Ballads	Singing in time and in tune with a song and incorporating actions.	Performing their own ballad in groups and incorporating actions.
<u>Autumn 2:</u> Creating compositions for an animation	Playing melodies and rhythms on tuned instruments which represent a section of animation.	Performing a group composition to represent an animation.
<u>Spring 1:</u> Developing singing technique	Practising different warm ups and learning a song using a variety of different pitches.	Performing a song about the Vikings with associated actions.
<u>Spring 2:</u> Pentatonic melodies and composition	Practising playing a pentatonic melody.	Performing a piece of music to represent the Chinese New Year.
<u>Summer 1:</u> Jazz	Experimenting with scat singing and syncopated rhythms.	Performing a jazz version of a nursery rhyme.
<u>Summer 2:</u> Indian music	Practising a traditional Indian song.	Performing the song 'Anile Vaa'.

Year 4	Lesson opportunities to sing and play instruments	Lesson performance opportunities
<u>Autumn 1:</u> Body and tuned percussion	Experimenting with combining body percussion and tuned percussion instruments to create rhythms of the rainforest.	Performing group rainforest compositions to the class.
<u>Autumn 2:</u> Rock and Roll	Learning a walking bass line on instruments.	Performing a Rock and Roll song as a class using their voices and instruments.
<u>Spring 1:</u> Changes in pitch, tempo and dynamics	Creating and practising vocal and percussive ostinatos.	Performing different ostinatos to represent a river in groups.
<u>Spring 2:</u> Haiku, music and performance	Creating music to complement a Haiku, using voices and instruments.	Performing music outside to celebrate Hanami.
<u>Summer 1:</u> South America	Practising a piece of music with four layers.	Performing a samba piece as a class.
<u>Summer 2:</u> Romans	Learning to sing a song with a variety of pitches.	Performing 'The Road building song' as a class.

Part A: Curriculum

Amherst Music Scheme

Year 5	Lesson opportunities to sing and play instruments	Lesson performance opportunities
<u>Autumn 1:</u> Composition notation	Creating and practising a piece of music using graphic notation.	Performing a composition to represent a pharaoh as a group.
<u>Autumn 2:</u> Blues	Practising the 12 bar blues chords and accompanying bass line on instruments.	Performing the 12 bar blues and improvisation in pairs.
<u>Spring 1:</u> South and West Africa	Singing unaccompanied and incorporating movement.	Performing 'Shosholozza' as a class.
<u>Spring 2:</u> Composition to represent the festival of colour	Creating a vocal piece to represent a picture.	Performing a vocal class composition.
<u>Summer 1:</u> Looping	N/A - using technology.	Sharing compositions.
<u>Summer 2:</u> Musical theatre	Creating a musical theatre scene.	Performing a scene as a group to create a short class musical.

Year 6	Lesson opportunities to sing and play instruments	Lesson performance opportunities
<u>Autumn 1:</u> Dynamics, pitch and tempo and Songs of WW2 (Combining two Kapow units of work)	Creating a group composition. Singing a song with a simple harmony.	Performing compositions as a group based on the piece 'Fingal's cave.' Performing the 'White cliffs of Dover' as a class.
<u>Autumn 2 and Spring 1</u>	[Weekly rehearsals towards the year group trip to the O2 Arena for Young Voices]	
<u>Spring 2:</u> Film music	Devising different musical ideas to represent a film.	Performing compositions to represent different scenes within 'Wallace and Gromit.'
<u>Summer 1:</u> Baroque	Playing instruments using graphic and staff notation (and their own notation).	Performing 'Funky fugue' as a class.
<u>Summer 2:</u> Composing and performing a leavers' song	Creating and practising a leavers' song.	Performing leavers' song in assembly.

Part B: Extra-Curricular

Instrumental Tuition

At Amherst we support over 120 instrumental lessons each week and offer tuition on a range of instruments. We are fortunate to have recruited some world-class music teachers and performers, many among the top instrumentalists in the country, having played in film soundtracks, on BBC television and with orchestras such as the London Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.



We are incredibly proud of the quality of our peripatetic music teachers and hope our pupils will make the most of this opportunity to learn an instrument to a high level.

Brass	Ian Fasham	07885 620441	ian@littleturret.co.uk
Cello	Catherine Brooker		catherinebrooker@ymail.com
Clarinet/ Saxophone	Andrew Harper	07912 304256	andrewharper44@hotmail.com
Drums	Billy Cunningham	07751 881706	billy@sevenoaksdrumschool.com
Flute/ Recorder	Philippa Henderson	07525 836419	philippalhenderson@gmail.com
Flute/ Recorder/ Piano	Mark Underwood	07985 563063	mcunderwood@me.com
Guitar	Tom Murray		tomrmurray@hotmail.co.uk
Piano/Oboe	Sarah Harper	07501 332102	sarahlucyharper@yahoo.com
Piano	Connie Brooks	0208 464 5102	cbrooks@kent-music.com
Piano	Kirsty Stanger	07734 080797	kirstypayne@btinternet.com
Violin	Rosalind Killpack		roshind@hotmail.com

Part B: Extra-Curricular

Singing

Whole-School Singing

At Amherst, all children sing daily in assemblies and have a weekly music assembly led by a specialist music teacher. All children perform each year as part of a musical production: separate productions performed by Year 3 (Easter) and Year 4 (Christmas), with all children taking part in the whole-school choir for our Year 6 summer production.



Amherst Choir

The Amherst Choir sings to an extremely high standard and has previously reached the televised finals of the BBC's Young Choir of the Year, finishing as Runners Up. The choir regularly takes part in local competitions and has won multiple classes of the Maidstone Music Festival, Tunbridge Wells Arts Festival and Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival. The choir has previously performed at the Royal Albert Hall, in Trafalgar Square, at the Green School Awards, live on the BBC's Children in Need and alongside the Pembroke College Chapel Choir at Cambridge University. During lockdown, the Amherst Choir was chosen to premiere a new song by Michael Rosen and composer Russell Hoplewhite, and our performance of *Invention* was broadcast in full on BBC Radio 3. In 2021, the choir were invited to perform *Silent Night* on BBC One for the final full news programme before Christmas.



Children must have sung in the Training Choir in order to audition for the Amherst Choir, and we particularly encourage our experienced instrumental musicians to do so. In addition, all children in school are given the opportunity to sign up to various musical clubs through the year.

Part C: Musical experiences

Overview

This section shows all the other musical events and opportunities we organise, such as singing in assemblies, concerts, shows and trips to professional concerts.

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Whole School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flute Assembly• Harvest Festival• Remembrance Assembly• Christmas Orchestra Assembly (singing to carols)• Carol Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mothers' Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Singing Day• Summer Production
Year Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christmas Performance (Year 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easter Production (Year 3)• Young Voices (Year 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summer Production (Year 6)
Choirs & Ensembles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barnardo's Young Supporters Concert• Maidstone Music Festival• Littlecourt Lunch Club• Sevenoaks Christmas Lights Switch-On• Joint concert with adult choir (<i>Sevenoaks Sings</i>)• Carols in Trafalgar Square• Carol Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tunbridge Wells Arts Festival• Amherst Music Festival• Flute Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival• Hillview Primary Arts Festival



In the future

Amherst School is committed to continually enhancing musical provision for all pupils. The table below outlines the key improvements planned for the 2025-26 academic year. We welcome feedback from parents, pupils and staff to help us further develop and refine our musical opportunities.

Improvement	Who will benefit?	Is the change to A: curriculum music B: extra-curricular music C: musical experiences?	When will the change be introduced?
Embed high-quality resources for whole-class recorder teaching in Year 4, including establishing a clear skills progression and defined end-of-year expectations.	Year 4 pupils	A: curriculum music	2025-26
Continue trialling Sarah Watts' accessible orchestral materials to broaden participation and enable more pupils to experience ensemble playing.	All pupils	B: extra-curricular music	2025-26
Apply Kent Music funding to appoint an 'Ensemble Leader', with a focus on establishing a higher-ability ensemble (in consultation with PH).	All pupils	B: extra-curricular music	2025-26
Plan and apply for Kent Music funding for the 2026-27 academic year, considering options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist Consultancy • SingUp! Membership • Ensemble Leader • MusicPlus 	All pupils	A: curriculum music	2026-27
Introduce a simple, consistent assessment system using Kapow's progression tools to track musical development each term and ensure accountability for curriculum delivery.	All pupils	A: curriculum music	2025-26
Expand opportunities for pupils to perform in daily assemblies by formalising a recruitment process for "daily musicians" and increasing participation.	All pupils	C. musical experiences	2025-26