

Music development plan summary: St James' Lower Darwen

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	Hollie Smith
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Bolton & Blackburn with Darwen Music Service
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.

At St James' Lower Darwen, we provided a comprehensive music education that instils a passion for music in our students. Children gain a firm understanding of what music is through listening, singing, playing, evaluating and composing across a wide variety of historical periods, styles, traditions, and musical genres. We are committed to ensuring children understand the value and importance of music to their own and others' lives and also the impact music has in the wider community. We provide a high standard of music education and provision for our pupils, aiming to inspire a love and appreciation of music, develop talent, provide children with a tool for personal expression and understand the impact music can have on themselves and the wider community. We recognise that music supports children's social, emotional and mental health as well as improving confidence and giving children a sense of achievement.

We follow the Sing Up music curriculum which is designed to provide a sequential and coherent music education. It aims to ensure that every student, regardless of background or prior experience, has access to a varied musical education. SEND pupils are actively

encouraged to participate in music lessons and they are supported to help them achieve their full potential in this subject.

Students receive at least one hour per week of music provision. The Sing Up overview for each year group which shows the development of key skills and progression is on our website.

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 have a very popular Choir with over 60 pupils. Choir practice takes place before school weekly and the children regularly perform to the whole school, in Church and at other events. Last year, our choir took part in Last Choir Singing and were delighted to win the Best Newcomer Award at the final.

We have assemblies and worship at the start of each day either in class, the school or Church. These always involve the children singing new songs or songs they are already familiar with. We have also had outside organisations delivering whole school assemblies to broaden the children's musical and cultural experiences and encourage their passion for different types of music.

Every Friday we have a whole school assembly. During this we sing to anyone whose birthday it is that week which is accompanied by Makaton that all of the children and staff know. We also celebrate any musical achievements and certificates in this assembly. If any children in our school can play a musical instrument, they are encouraged to showcase this. For example, children in Y6 who could play different musical instruments performed to all of the children, staff and parents at the Y6 leavers service. The children also had the chance to showcase their talents in our popular J Factor competition last year.

Throughout the year, some classes will have an oracy outcome linked to the topic they have been learning about in music. Oracy outcomes are presented to an audience i.e another class or governors.

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.

All children perform regularly throughout the school year in class, at assemblies, in worship, concerts and plays, and at talent shows. This gives every child a wide and

varied performance platform, which is inclusive of all needs and abilities with our school.

Every Christmas, children have a part to play in their class or key stage Christmas production or event, which is performed for the school community and parents. The choir regularly perform for the school, at Church events and at events in the wider community. The Choir also perform at the prayer friend tea party we host in the summer for people in our local community. This experience allows them to connect with older people in our local area, spreading joy through their performances. The impact on the children is profound. This initiative helps the children to develop a greater sense of empathy and compassion, learning the importance of giving back to the community. Overall, this event not only bring smiles to the residents but also enriches the children's understanding of community and the joy of sharing moments with others.

Songs learnt during singing assemblies are performed at special assemblies, such as Carols Around the Tree and the KS2 Christmas Concert. Last year, the children had the wonderful opportunity to take part in auditions for our J Factor talent competition and many children chose to sing in this. The children who were successful in the auditions then performed at the final in Church. Our choir also took part in Last Choir Singing. They performed at the heats in Preston and the final in Blackpool where they received the Best Newcomer Award.

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:

- Broadening the children's musical experiences by exposing them to more live music performances.
- The children will take part in more musical performances.
- Children will have the opportunity to attend music lessons during school to learn how to play an instrument.
- Continue to develop staff CPD.

Further information

For more details about local music opportunities:

- 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.