



Music Development Plan Summary: North Ridge Community School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-27
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Kirsty Smith
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Chloe Jones
Name of local music hub	Doncaster Music Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	DARTS (Doncaster Arts) Sing, Sign, Train Soundplay

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.

North Ridge Community School, is a special day school for pupils aged 3-19 years with severe learning difficulties. At North Ridge, we have timetabled music lessons in Key Stages 1-4 as well as music embedded across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils access a planned music lesson once a week, every other half term. Please see our long-term plans [here](#). The music curriculum is informed by and adapted from the [National Curriculum](#) and the [Sounds of Intent](#) (2001).

Our music curriculum was designed from the idea that everyone benefits from developing skills so that they are able to participate and enjoy self-expression. This is particularly enriching for pupils with SEN and those who are less able to communicate through neurotypical means. Self-expression also builds a sense of wellbeing. More able pupils will also develop their critical and social skills when they take part in group and peer assessment activities.

The music curriculum is made up of 3 transferable skills; 'reactive,' 'proactive' and 'interactive.' Each transferable skill has 6 steps with a range of core concepts which are the goals pupils should reach to show they are meeting the expectations of the curriculum.

Throughout school, pupils are given a range of opportunities to experience and perform at live events using an assortment of musical instruments, including their voices and signs. Pupils in all key stages have the opportunity to attend a Key Stage sing and sign choir. Our choir is invited to perform at local events and festivals throughout the year.

At North Ridge Community School, we work closely with DARTS (Doncaster Arts) to enhance our music provision, whereby professionals deliver bespoke whole class and 1-1 music sessions.

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.

At North Ridge Community School, we are fortunate to have additional opportunities for the children to develop their love of music and performance skills.

Pupils in all Key Stages have the opportunity to attend a Makaton sing and sign lunch time club. These are a 45-minute session, once per week and are free to join. We pay for a lunchtime supervisor through our Pupil Premium grant, allowing pupils to access these sessions led by our Makaton tutor in collaboration with our communication curriculum leader. It is a perfect opportunity for pupils to practise their signing and enjoy making music together. These sessions aim to stimulate and develop pupil's natural curiosity in music through singing together and playing instruments such as glockenspiels and percussion. These activities promote musicianship, ensemble skills and teamwork and boost confidence, as well as developing singing and instrumental skills. The pupils participate with confidence and enthusiasm. Our Secondary choir is invited to perform at various local events and festivals throughout the year.

The school has a long-established and positive partnership with DARTS (Doncaster Arts) who provide peripatetic music teachers to the school as part of the 'All Aboard Music' project. This is a programme of creative opportunities designed for pupils and

young people with additional needs and/or disabilities. These teachers deliver additional creative workshops across various year groups within school.

Music is also integrated throughout our daily routine to support the needs of our pupils, such as through phonic songs, warm up activities, circle time and for transitions. Pupils also have access to outdoor musical equipment which they can explore during break times.

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.

At North Ridge Community School, we utilise strong links with our local music service “DARTS” to encourage pupils to progress to performing in ensembles. For many years, at North Ridge Community School, we have taken part in ‘Sing and Sign’. This is a fantastic mass singing event, where pupils sing original songs that they have created in school as well as their favourite pop hits that they have been rehearsing – all accompanied by a live rock band. We use Makaton throughout our development of this event so that all pupils can take part in the performance, whatever their level of ability or vocabulary. There is something incredibly special about seeing a whole room full of pupils, teachers and parents all using Makaton signing together whilst singing loud enough to raise the roof! There is always a wonderful atmosphere at this fully inclusive event and we look forward to attending every year.

Our Secondary choir is invited to perform at various local events and festivals throughout the year. One being the Don Valley Festival where we enter in the classification of inclusive music making. The festival encourages creative growth while fostering a strong sense of community. It serves as an inspiring space for young people from Doncaster and the surrounding areas to express themselves and be celebrated for their talents within the dynamic worlds of the arts.

Children from across the school community have the opportunity to go the local theatre and watch the Christmas Pantomime.

The Secondary Choir perform at the local shopping centre every December to sing and sign a variety of Christmas carols to raise funds for pupil resources in school.

Parents and carers are fully supportive of music making and we have a good turnout at concerts and external musical events.

Every pupil in school has the opportunity to watch a pantomime in school performed by an external company “M & M Theatrical Productions”. These fun, colourful and dynamic productions actively encourage audience participation, expertly combining the tradition of theatre pantomime with up to date and age-appropriate humour, music and themes.

Soundplay Projects are involved with DARTS and visit school to deliver sensory immersive music and creative innovation. Children enjoy exploring the technology to access music, sound, visual and sensory materials.

In the future

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

We are still in the implementation phase of a new music curriculum that is based on 'Sounds of Intent,' which is an inclusive framework of musical engagement. Sounds of Intent is a model of musical development that sets out how we all engage with music, from children in the early years, to those with profound learning difficulties who are still learning to process sound. Sounds of Intent is not specific to a particular style or genre of music; it is meant for music teachers, therapists, community musicians, carers, relatives and friends wherever they are, to help them: understand how children, young people and adults engage with music in different ways, differentiate what they do according to people's varying musical abilities, interests, preferences and needs and gauge the impact of their work. This framework will allow us to build an inclusive curriculum for our pupils where we can assess and identify small steps of progress. Sounds of Intent can also be used to gain a qualification through Trinity Music Awards which is something we can explore in the future for our pupils.

We will develop the CPD of our staff through observations of sessions delivered by DARTS as they work based on the Sounds of Intent model. This will allow all staff to become more confident with delivering music for our pupils.

We plan to introduce singing back into our assemblies for pupils to enjoy together and explore the idea of having a "song of the week" to enhance our pupils' awareness of music and the various genres available.

Further information (optional)

The Department for Education 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: [Music education: information for parents and young people - GOV.UK](#)

Link to our local music hub: [Doncaster Music Hub - Doncaster Community Arts](#)

Link to Doncaster's creative health charity – the largest participatory arts organisation in the UK: [DARTS - Doncaster's participatory arts charity. We create art with people in Doncaster to improve life, learning & health](#)