

Music development plan summary: Castle Donington College

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	September 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	August 2026
Name of the school music lead	Matthew Hicken
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Leicestershire Music
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

At Castle Donington College, pupils receive **two hours** of timetabled music lessons over a **two-week period**. These lessons are informed by the **National Curriculum for Music** and are designed to prepare pupils for GCSE Music in Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 4, we follow the syllabus for **Eduqas Music GCSE 9-1**.

You can find links to these programmes of study here:

National Curriculum for Music:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7c869440f0b62aff6c2499/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_-_Music.pdf

Eduqas GCSE Music:

<https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/by5boopf/eduqas-gcse-music-spec-from-2016-d.pdf>

Key Stage 3

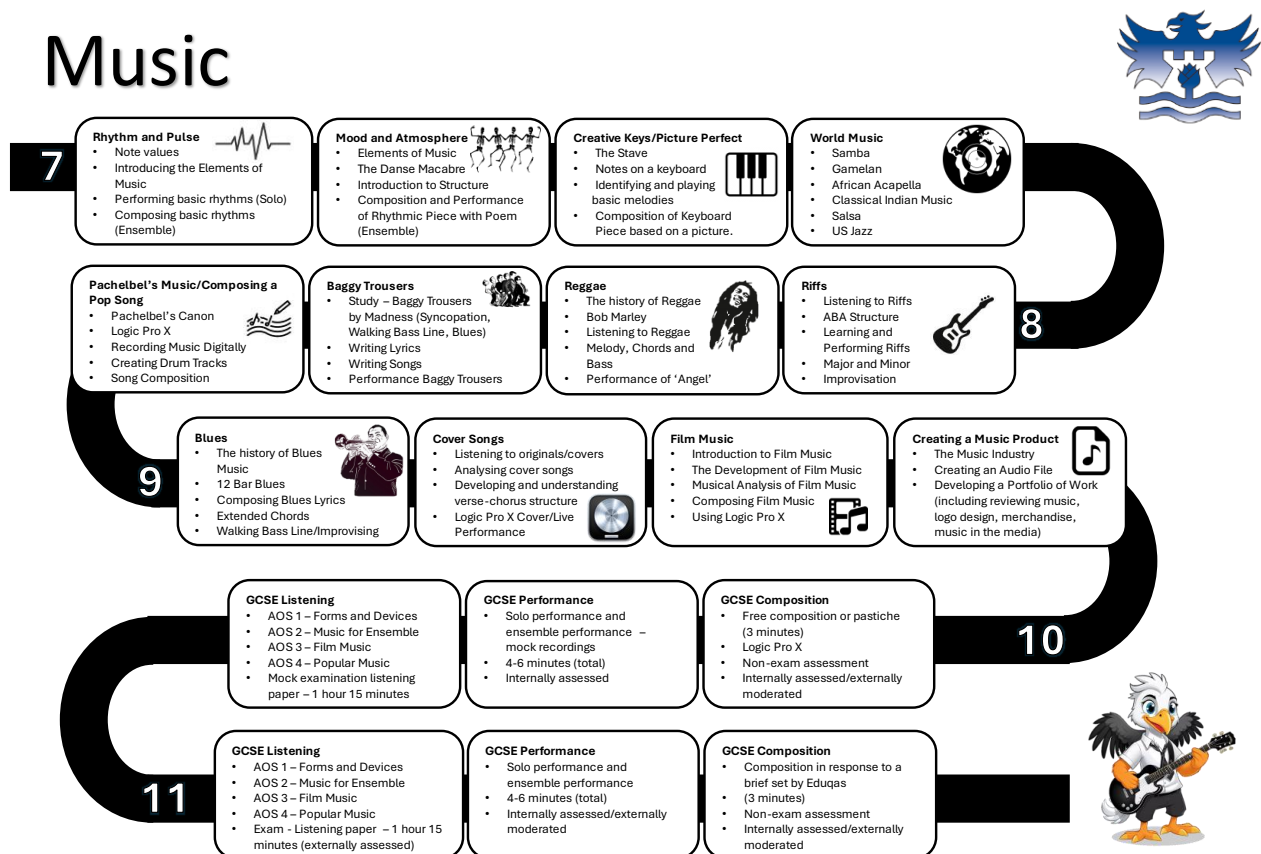
During their Key Stage 3 lessons, pupils will have the opportunity to develop their performing, composing and listening skills. They will do this across a variety of musical styles and genres from the Baroque Period through to modern popular music.

Pupils will follow the following schemes of work:

Year 7 – Rhythm and Pulse, Mood and Atmosphere, Creative Keys, Picture Perfect and World Music.

Year 8 – Riffs, Reggae, Baggy Trousers, Pachelbel's Music, Composing a Pop Song, Artist in Focus

Year 9 – Blues, Cover Versions, Film Music, Creating a Music Product



Key Stage 4

In their Key Stage 4 lessons, pupils will be following the Eduqas Music GCSE 9-1 specification. This comprises 3 elements – Performance, Composition and Listening. Performance and Composing are assessed internally and then externally moderated. Pupils complete solo and ensemble performances totally between 4-6 minutes. They have two briefs for composition – one set by Eduqas and another free composition element. These compositions are completed using our suite of Apple Macs and Mini Macs with MIDI keyboards. Pupils then prepare for their externally assessed listening

exam which will assess pupils on their knowledge and understanding of different forms and devices, ensemble music, film music and popular music including set works that have been determined by the examining board.

Facilities

The Department comprises 4 music rooms. The main teaching room is equipped with keyboards for use in Key Stage 3 lessons and suite of Apple Macs and Mini Macs which are used predominantly for Key Stage 4 lessons, but which pupils in Key Stage 3 are trained in using during some of their lessons in preparation for their GCSE course. There are then 3 music practice rooms. One of these is a larger 'band room' with a range of instruments and equipment designed for ensemble groups. There are then two smaller practice rooms – one designated for use by guitar and keyboard students and another designated for use by piano and other instrumentalists. The department also has a range of percussion instruments for use in the classroom and a selection of instruments available for pupils to hire during their time at the College.

Adaptations

Lessons in music can be adapted by pupils with special educational needs as directed by an assessment of their needs by the SENDCo and listed on their pupil passport. Examples of adaptations could range from working in a quieter area of the Department through to specific support for literacy needs such as dyslexia using ICT equipment or adapted reading resources. The College also aims to reduce barriers to those on low incomes to accessing a musical education.

Part B: Extra-curricular music

Outside of the classroom, there are opportunities for pupils to take their musical development even further. The College works with a variety of instrumental music teachers in order to offer pupils the chance to learn an instrument or develop their vocal skills. The College currently offers pupils additional lessons in:

- Guitar – Acoustic, Electric and Bass Guitar
- Band Coaching
- Drums
- Voice – Musical Theatre, Classical, Popular Music
- Trumpet, Cornet, French Horn, Trombone
- Flute, Clarinet and Saxophone
- Piano
- Keyboard
- Musical Theory

There is also the opportunity for some pupils in the lower years to take part in a musical workshop where they can experience instrumental music lessons and learn about teamwork as part of an ensemble. Pupil bands are popular at the College and pupils have the opportunity to use our facilities outside of lessons to practice their skills and take part in ensemble practice in one of our three dedicated practice rooms.

The College has a range of instruments that are available for pupils to hire to help pupils to participate inclusively in these opportunities. There is also an opportunity for lessons to be subsidised in some cases where pupils are eligible.

For GCSE Music, pupils have the opportunity to take part in weekly compositional clinics where one of our teaching staff will provide opportunities for coaching and feedback on their compositional work.

Part C: Musical experiences

Throughout the year, there are opportunities for musicians to take part in activities that will further their musical experience.

At the end of the Autumn Term, the College organises a Christmas Concert. This gives all musicians the opportunity to perform in front an audience, providing an opportunity to display the work that they have done in that term. At the end of the Spring Term, there is a Rock and Pop Night where pupils who are in a band or interested in rock and pop music can showcase the hard work that they have put into their instrumental and vocal lessons during the year. Finally at the end of the Summer Term, the Music Department joins together with our Drama team to produce a Summer Showcase, an opportunity for all Performing Arts Pupils to display their talents and the fruits of their efforts.

For some students, there is also the opportunity to perform in end-of-term awards ceremonies for their year group. We are also delighted to have invited visiting performers to the College such as the concert pianist, Renata Konyicska,

In the future

This year, the Music Department will begin collaboration with the English Department with the long term aim of producing Musical Theatre Productions again as they were such a highlight for many pupils when available. This will give pupils an opportunity to perform in a new context, opening access for many who are unable to attend local theatre groups.

One of our current aims to develop the popularity of traditional orchestral instrumental lessons with the aim of one day re-forming a College Orchestra. We aim to work actively with our primary feeder schools and instrumental tutors in order to achieve this – in fact,

making more links with Leicestershire Music and our local Primary Schools is a wider aim of the Department.

Finally, we hope that we will soon be able to offer the opportunity for pupils to experience more live musical events both internally and externally to broaden their musical education and inspire them to further their own musical journeys at the College and beyond.