Music development plan summary: Castle Donington College

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	August 2027
Name of the school music lead	Daniel Neary
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Vickie Beeby
Name of local music hub	Leicestershire Music Leicestershire Music - 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.

The College works in partnership with Leicestershire Music to support instrumental tuition, progression pathways and wider musical opportunities.

Part A: Curriculum music

At Castle Donington College, pupils receive **two hours** of timetabled music lessons over a **two-week period** at Key Stage Three.

- Year 7: Two hours of music a fortnight. **One hour** is **Music**, the **other hour** is **Musical Theatre**
- Year 8: **Both hours** are Music
- Year 9: **Both hours** are Music

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.** At Castle Donington College, GCSE Music pupils receive **five hours** of timetabled music lessons over a **two-week period**.

You can find links to these programmes of study here:

National Curriculum for Music:

National Curriculum - Music key stage 3

Eduqas GCSE Music:

https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/akxduier/eduqas-gcse-music-spec-from-2016-e-050225.pdf

Key Stage 3

The school music curriculum draws upon the experience and expertise of departmental staff and is informed by key features outlined in the model music curriculum (March 2021, which is non-statutory guidance for teaching music from Key Stages 1 to 3). The programme of study at Castle Donington College focuses on the skills development of the key strands of performing, composing and listening outlined in the National Curriculum - Music key stage 3 (publishing.service.gov.uk). Our curriculum also included a fourth strand or skill, 'Understanding and developing the use of Music Technology'. This strand enables our pupils to study and apply skills in working with MIDI editor software for music technology (Logic Pro X).

Throughout Key Stage 3, pupils explore and study different genres of music through their development of music practical skills on piano, keyboard, guitar, percussion and DAW producing (music technology). The latter has recently had investment in order to develop and enhance the music technology learning opportunities.

Pupils will follow the following schemes of work:

Year 7

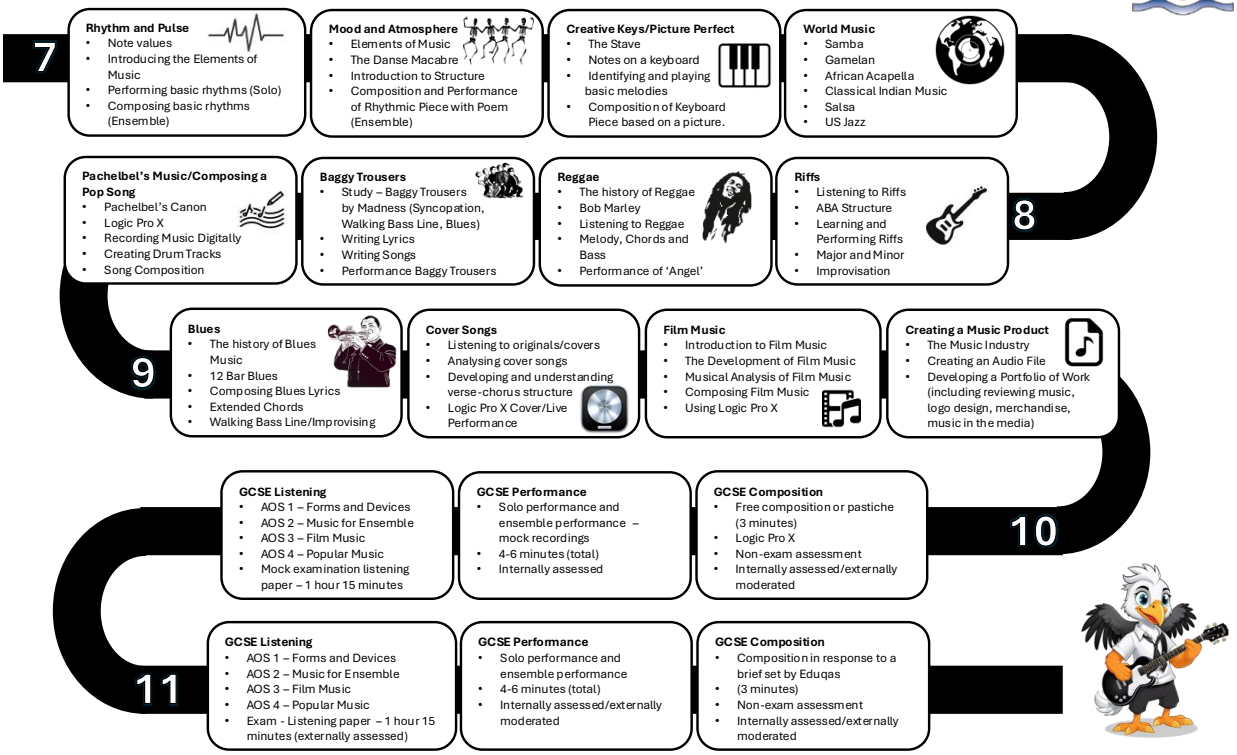
Music - **Rhythm and Pulse, Mood and Atmosphere, Creative Keys/Picture Perfect** and **World Music.**

Musical Theatre - **Unit 1: Voice (breathing, pitch, register) Unit 2: Storytelling (plot, style, semiotics) Unit 3: Characterisation (circumstances, objective, atmosphere)**

Year 8 **– Riffs, Reggae, Baggy Trousers, Pachelbel's Music/Composing a Pop Song**

Year 9 **– Blues, Cover Songs, Film Music, Creating a Music Product**

Music



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 throughout the course. They have two briefs for composition – one set by Eduqas and another free composition element. These compositions are completed using our suite of Mini Macs with MIDI keyboards. Pupils then prepare for their externally assessed listening exam which assesses pupils on their knowledge and understanding of the following:

Area Study 1: Forms and Devices (including the study of set work "Badinerie from Suite No 2 in B Minor" by J.S Bach)

Area Study 2: Music for ensemble

Area Study 3: Film music

Area Study 4: Popular music (including the study of set "Africa" by Toto)

For GCSE Music, pupils have the opportunity to take part in compositional clinics which provide opportunities for coaching and feedback on their compositional work.

We are proud that we consistently have a GCSE cohort well above the national average.

Facilities

The Department comprises 4 music rooms (1 main teaching room and 3 practice rooms). The main teaching room is equipped with keyboards and suite of Mini Macs. There are then 3 music practice rooms – a larger, fully equipped room and then two smaller practice rooms for instrumental teaching and ensemble rehearsal. The department also has a selection of instruments available for pupils to hire during their time at the College.

Adaptations

The curriculum for music at Castle Donington College supports access for pupils living with a disability and for those with special educational needs (SEND). This support is embedded into our curriculum through our approach to 'quality first teaching' which ensures that pupils of all levels and needs can access the same high quality learning experiences. All pupils are included in the musical life of our school.

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 skilled 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 the following:

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

There is also the opportunity for identified pupils in the KS3 to take part in a musical workshop where they will experience instrumental music lessons and learn about teamwork as part of an ensemble.

Financial support may be available for eligible pupils to ensure that economic disadvantage is not a barrier to participation.

Students may participate in vocal and instrumental ensembles, including the College Band and other performance groups which rehearse regularly throughout the year and perform at school concerts and community events.

Part C: Musical experiences

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

The College puts on three concerts throughout the year. In the Autumn Term, the College organises a Christmas Concert (Tuesday 15th December 2026). At the end of the Spring Term (Tuesday 23rd March 2027), there is a Rock and Pop Night. Finally, at the end of the Summer Term (Tuesday 6th July) there is a Summer Showcase. These performances are designed to give students the opportunity to showcase their musical skills, build confidence in their abilities by performing in front of an audience, maintain our long-term relationship with the local community and foster links with feeder schools.

Students have also benefited from performances by professional musicians. For the past few years, we have been delighted to welcome the international concert pianist, Renata Konyicska (https://renatakonyicska.com/). Experiences such as this allow pupils to profit from cultural capital whilst engaging with live music from a variety of genres.

In the future

Continue to develop music technology resources across the music department including specialised external training for staff. CPD is currently planned around working with Logic, as this is key piece of technology used by students are GCSE. In terms of further developing music technology, one area to that has been highlighted is recording equipment. The quality of recording of some GCSE pieces has been highlighted during moderation by examiners, so this may alleviate that issue.

The music department also plans to offer more opportunities for students to experience and engage with music outside of their usual diet. To this end, a yearly trip to a concert or musical theatre performance is being investigated. There are also plans for a professional trumpet player to present to GCSE students about their own career experiences. To further develop students awareness of music technology and careers in music, we are exploring the possibility of a trip to a recording studio. As some local colleges, have recording studios, a visit to one of these may also help support students' thoughts on destinations.

Continue and develop concert performances outside of the school premises in the local/surrounding communities, particularly with feeder schools.