

Music development plan summary: Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	
Date this summary will be reviewed	
Name of the school music lead	Becky Ball
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Sandwell Music Services
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.

Music Curriculum Overview

The Music curriculum at Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy is designed to develop practical musical skills, creative expression, cultural awareness, and industry understanding through a structured journey from Key Stage 3 (KS3) to Key Stage 4 (KS4), underpinned by the values and needs of the local Sandwell community. Music at KS3 is taught twice a fortnight as part of a two-week timetable. At KS4, music is optional study and taught for 5 hours over a two-week period.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9)

Focus Areas:

- Year 7:
 - Foundations in rhythm, notation, and vocal skills.

- Introduction to the orchestra, classical music, and keyboard skills.
- Creativity through graphic notation and original sound creation.
- Year 8:
 - Develop performance skills using A Capella, ostinato, and chanting.
 - Application of the Elements of Music in analysis and creation.
 - Increased complexity in rhythm and notation understanding.
- Year 9:
 - Exploration of music's social and cultural contexts (e.g., Jazz, Reggae, Video Game Music).
 - Greater emphasis on analysis, ensemble performance, and original composition.
 - Preparation for BTEC pathways with deeper study into musical genres and media contexts.

Key Skills Developed:

- Listening, composing, performing, evaluating
- Use of musical devices like syncopation, motifs, and hooks
- Understanding of cultural relevance and British values through music

Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11)

BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice

- Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles
 - Study of genres, styles, and musical techniques
 - Analysis of live and recorded performances
 - Development of appreciation for diverse music
- Component 2: Musical Skills Development
 - Focused workshops in performance, creation, and production
 - Ongoing self-evaluation and portfolio creation
 - Skills refinement for a musical product
- Component 3: Responding to a Commercial Music Brief
 - Practical project responding to a given brief
 - Application of musical and production skills
 - Presentation of final product and reflective evaluation

Skills & Learning Outcomes:

- Songwriting, lyric writing, ensemble performance
- Use of technology in production
- Understanding and responding to commercial and social contexts
- Development of industry-relevant skills like organisation and self-reflection

Local and Cultural Context

Our curriculum integrates and addresses the needs of our wider community. Through our music curriculum, we explore:

- Popular culture and social representation

- Community engagement and local performance opportunities
- Emphasis on inclusion, diversity, and social justice
- Vocational ambitions and progression to FE and HE institutions

Progression and Aspirations.

Our curriculum:

- Prepares students for further study in A-Level Music or vocational music courses.
- encourages ambition, independence, and cultural capital.
- Emphasises real-world relevance and personal growth through music.

Supporting SEND Learners in the Music Curriculum

The Music curriculum at OSCA is inclusive by design, offering multiple entry points, modes of expression, and scaffolded progression pathways that support SEND learners throughout KS3 and KS4. The curriculum aligns with the local Sandwell values, emphasising access, diversity, and opportunity for all.

The Music curriculum is purposefully designed to meet the diverse needs of SEND learners by:

- Emphasising creativity over written expression
- Allowing for individual pacing and flexible assessment
- Fostering emotional resilience and confidence through performance
- Providing inclusive cultural content and aspirational pathways

Curriculum Features that Support SEND Students

Practical, Hands-On Learning

- Performance-based learning through voice, keyboard, ensemble, and digital composition allows students to engage physically and creatively, supporting varied learning styles (kinaesthetic, auditory, and visual).
- Workshops and rehearsals provide structured, repeated practice that reinforces key concepts, ideal for students with working memory or processing challenges.

Scaffolded Skills Development

- Skills such as rhythm, notation, and performance techniques are introduced progressively from Year 7 onwards, allowing students to build confidence incrementally.

- Clear progression from basic note values and posture to ensemble skills, chord structures, and composition ensures accessible learning steps.

Differentiated Content and Assessment

- Use of graphic notation, improvisation, and musical storytelling allows non-verbal or less literate students to participate and excel.
- Portfolio-based assessment in BTEC Music supports students who may struggle with formal examinations, offering multiple opportunities to demonstrate understanding over time.

Opportunities for Self-Expression

- Emphasis on original composition and songwriting (e.g. creating original work) gives students freedom to express emotions and perspectives in a supportive medium.
- Regular reflection and self-evaluation tasks promote personal growth and self-awareness, key for emotional regulation and development.

Social and Emotional Support through Music

- Music is positioned as a tool for identity, confidence, and social integration—students explore diverse cultural genres and themes of social justice (e.g. Black Lives Matter, LGBTQIA+ representation), fostering empathy and understanding.
- Collaborative performance and ensemble work help SEND students develop communication skills, reduce social anxiety, and build peer relationships.

Sandwell Spotlight and Local Priorities

- Sandwell's focus on reducing antisocial behaviour and broadening vocational access supports inclusive music education, particularly for students who may face social or behavioural challenges.
- Access to local performance spaces and partnerships (e.g. BOA) provides aspirational pathways and exposure to real-world musical experiences for all students, including those with SEND.

Adaptability Within the BTEC Framework (KS4)

- BTEC Tech Award components are highly adaptable:
 - Component 1 allows exploration at an individual pace.
 - Component 2 emphasises self-paced skills development and reflective practices.
 - Component 3 promotes collaboration, but also supports independent contributions, helping students work in ways that suit their needs.

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.

OSCA work in partnership with Sandwell Music Services (SIPS) and provide students with the opportunity to have private instrumental lessons. They are offered to all students at affordable prices and give students access to specialist tuition and performance opportunities.

Music at OSCA sits within the Performing and Production Arts Department, which offers a rich and diverse extra-curricular programme. From ensemble singing and instrument practice, to band clubs and Musical theatre groups, students can engage with a variety of music focussed opportunities. OSCA is home to 4 specialist spaces, an IT suite and a small practice room that allow for intimate one to one tuition and larger group workshops. Our highest attended extra-curricular club is our whole school production which is open to all year groups and attracts between 100-200 students each year. Through this opportunity, students can learn to sing as solo performers and understand and enjoy the demands of singing as a large choral group. Students can also operate as sound engineers to support the technical aspects of the production.

Students regularly share their classwork and compositions created in extra-curricular clubs through lunch time performances in our large studio spaces.

We are incredibly proud to hold both the Music Mark and The Artsmark in acknowledgement of our outstanding provision.

Our extra-curricular programme focusses on 7 key areas of student development.

1. Enhancing Musical Skills and Confidence

- Provides additional time to develop instrumental or vocal technique.
- Encourages risk-taking and experimentation in a lower-pressure environment.
- Builds performance confidence, especially through regular showcases or public events.

2. Developing Teamwork and Social Skills

- Ensemble activities (choir, band, group projects) require listening, collaboration, and communication.
- Promotes a sense of belonging and community, particularly important for SEND and shy students.
- Encourages peer mentoring and allows stronger musicians support others.

3. Boosting Cognitive and Academic Skills

- Studies show a correlation between music participation and improved memory, focus, and literacy/numeracy skills.
- Reinforces classroom concepts (rhythm, harmony, structure) in applied contexts.
- Supports neurodiverse learners with structured, multi-sensory learning opportunities.

4. Promoting Personal Growth and Wellbeing

- Music offers a powerful outlet for emotional expression and mental health support.
- Encourages resilience, especially when preparing for performances or competitions.
- Fosters independence and self-regulation through practice and goal setting.

5. Building Cultural Capital and Broadening Horizons

- Allows students to explore genres or traditions not covered in the core curriculum (e.g. jazz, world music, musical theatre).
- Provides exposure to local performance spaces, artists, and industry professionals.
- Enriches students' understanding of music as a global and historical art form.

6. Supporting Progression and Future Aspirations

- Helps students develop a portfolio or CV for post-16 music courses or performance opportunities.
- Encourages exploration of different musical roles: performer, composer, producer, technician.
- Prepares students for auditions, applications, or further study.

7. Inclusion and Accessibility

- Can be tailored to offer non-traditional routes into music
- Welcomes students who may struggle in academic lessons to shine in a creative space.
- Creates a safe, expressive environment for SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged learners.

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 OSCA, there are many opportunities for students to engage in musical experiences throughout each academic year.

Performing and Production Arts (PAPA) Production

This event is the musical highlight of the year. Involving over 100 students, our school production is the culmination of a year of musical rehearsals, ensemble singing workshops, band practices and music engineering training. We welcome 400 members of our local community to enjoy two evenings of performance, celebrating the talents of our young people. Main roles are selected through an audition process that requires solo singing. Ensemble and technical roles are available to all students, across all year groups.

Sandwell College Taster Days

On our calendar this year, this trip allows students to visit our local college to explore life after OSCA and enquire about courses in Music and Music Technology.

Summer Awards Evening

Our Summer Awards Evening provides an excellent opportunity to showcase instrumentalists and singers in a celebration that is open to parents and careers and reflects on the successes of the academic year.

First Give

OSCA works with First Give annually to promote the importance of charity work to our students. This opportunity encourages students to create and perform in a bid to win £1000 for their chosen charity.

Assemblies

From Black History Month to Mental Health Awareness Week, OSCA holds weekly assemblies that regularly benefit from the live performance of our students.

MOVE IT Festival London

MOVE IT is an annual festival held at the Excel Centre in London. Whilst predominantly a celebration of Dance, the festival is also home to a musical theatre stage and stalls from every specialist Performing Arts FE and HE provider in the country. This is an excellent opportunity for our students to explore what to do next after their KS4 music studies.

Culture Day

OSCA holds an annual culture day to celebrate Music, Dance, fashion and food from all around the world. The Performing and Production Arts (PAPA) department hold a fashion show, accompanied by a diverse range of music.

World Theatre Day

Annually celebrated at OSCA, this is accompanied by a week of assemblies that showcase segments from our school production.

BTEC Showcases

Students perform throughout the year as part of their BTEC examinations. This provides students with the opportunity to formally celebrate the work they have created towards their BTEC qualification and experience the demands of professional performance.

Workshops with WOW Studios Liverpool

In recent years, OSCA has forged links with WOW Studios Liverpool. Home to seasoned West End performers, WOW deliver musical workshops and provide industry talks for students. We have been fortunate enough to have visits from their instructors and visit the studios for larger group workshops. This will take place annually.

Workshops with BOA Stage and Screen

We have recently built a relationship with Birmingham Based BOA Stage and Screen. We will be welcoming their teachers to prepare students for college interviews and auditions for performance-based courses. We also look forward to visiting the FE provider with larger groups to enhance student studies.

Trip to Disneyland Paris

We aim to run this trip again in the academic year 25/26. The trip provides students with the opportunity to work alongside Disney performers in a workshop that explores musical performance. This cultural experience allows students an insight into the performing arts industry and highlights musical career opportunities.

Trips to London's West End and other national theatres

Trips to the theatre are common practice in PAPA. From local theatre's such as the Wolverhampton Grand and Birmingham Hippodrome to Liverpool's Empire and London's West End, students in our Performing and Production Arts department are fortunate enough to regularly access musical theatre. We always try to ensure students have a backstage opportunity attached to each theatre visit to see the inner workings of the theatre and understand that there is more to musical performance than just singing. Students can enjoy educational talks from musicians and bandleaders and workshops with sound engineers and SFX operators to further develop their wider appreciation for music beyond our curriculum.

In the future

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

Moving forward we aim to further enhance our music provision at OSCA by:

1. Strengthening Industry Links and Real-World Music Experiences

Rationale: The BTEC framework offers strong vocational grounding, but real-world music application can be deepened.

Actions:

- Formalise more partnerships with local venues, studios, and musicians.
- Run student-led showcases or live performance events at local spaces (linked to Sandwell's Vision 2030).
- Develop a work experience or mentorship scheme with BOA or similar institutions.

2. Introduce Music Technology Earlier in KS3

Rationale: Music technology is heavily emphasised in BTEC but underrepresented in KS3 due to limited resources. Introducing it earlier would build continuity and engagement—particularly for learners who struggle with traditional performance.

Actions:

- Enhancing access to DAWs (like BandLab or Soundtrap) in Year 8 and 9 composition projects.
- Provide a clearer tech-focused pathway alongside instrumental work.
- Train staff and invest in digital music CPD.

Further information (optional)