

# Music development plan summary: St Polycarp's Catholic School

## Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025 - 2026
Date this summary was published	Sept '25
Date this summary will be reviewed	July '26
Name of the school music lead	Jessica Ridgeon
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Martyn Peebles
Name of local music hub	Surrey Arts
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Farnham Rock and Pop Foundation Farnham Youth Choir

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. At St Polycarp's we have taken the 'National Plan for Music Education' 7 key features of an 'high quality music provision' as a basis for the provision we should aspire to offer.

Our commitment to inclusivity and Gospel values ensures that every child, regardless of background, is given the opportunity to flourish. Rooted in our STARR values—Self-belief, Tolerance, Active Respect, and Relationships, we actively support disadvantaged pupils by offering free access to enriching musical experiences. This approach removes financial barriers and reflects our belief in nurturing each child's unique potential, fostering creativity, confidence, and a sense of belonging within our vibrant school community.

## Part A: Curriculum music

At St. Polycarp's, our music education focuses on teaching the technical, constructive, and expressive elements through a varied and well-sequenced curriculum. Our curriculum is informed by 'The Model Music Curriculum' (2021) and taught through weekly, timetabled lessons with our music specialist as well as Key Stage and whole school singing during collective worship. As such, our children enjoy one hour of timetabled music a week.

We set high expectations for music proficiency, creating an environment where students can embrace their musical talents and cultivate a genuine love for music both in and out of the classroom. Recognising the social learning opportunities music presents, we value each student's contribution and aim to instil enthusiasm and enjoyment for music in all its forms. Through musical experiences, we provide students with skills and attitudes that support broader curriculum learning and develop essential life skills like listening, concentration, creativity, self-confidence, and sensitivity towards others.

Musical skills and knowledge are taught sequentially using an active 'hands on' learning approach which promotes performance as a primary discipline whilst integrating composition and listening also.

Our approach is adapted and taught with our children in mind to make learning music inclusive and enjoyable. Children build up their musical understanding, knowledge and skills through listening, improvising, composing, practising and performing both individually and collaboratively. Many opportunities are given for children to share their work both in class and to the wider school, to celebrate achievement and instil a sense of pride in themselves and their work.

### **Key Stage 1:**

In KS1 we use the 'Jolly Music' curriculum to practically introduce our young musicians to pulse, rhythm and pitch through singing, movement, and musical games. This is combined with a more topic-based cross-curricular approach later in the year where children are encouraged to build on their prior learning and combine voices with tuned and untuned instruments to create, select and combine sounds.

More specific details about our Key Stage 1 curriculum can be found on our school website by accessing our EYFS and Key Stage 1 learning journey. <https://www.stpolycarps.surrey.sch.uk/page/?title=Music&pid=57>

### **Key Stage 2:**

As students progress into KS2, we encourage a more critical engagement with music through a specially designed curriculum, enabling them to compose, discerningly listen, and perform with confidence.

Our KS2 children are fortunate to receive WCIT (whole class instrumental tuition) on the recorder (in years 3 and 4) and ukulele (in years 5 and 6). These 'gateway' instruments are used to introduce the reading of staff notation and the technical aspects of woodwind and string playing. Many choose to continue with playing these instruments

for enjoyment during lessons (where schemes of learning in the Winter and Summer terms lend themselves to it) and extra-curricular clubs, some may progress on to having lessons with one of our many visiting instrumental teachers.

Our curriculum in Key Stage 2 aims to highlight many eras of music (such as Classical music in year 4 and Twentieth Century in year 5) cultures (such as Chinese music in year 3, Indian music in year 4 and Reggae in year 5) and genres also (such as 'Vocalise' in year 3, 'Musical Theatre' in year 5, and 'Opera' in year 6). More detail about our KS2 'learning journey' can be found on our school website: <https://www.stpolycarps.surrey.sch.uk/page/?title=Music&pid=57>

### **Singing:**

Singing is highly valued at St Polycarp's, where we join together weekly to sing as a Key Stage and then also, as a whole school during Collective Worship. Singing is a huge focus of our worship, with all children singing during masses and liturgies both at School and in St Joan of Arc's Church. Singing is promoted during lessons as the most accessible and universal way to make music. Good technique and a range of repertoire (both sacred and secular) is taught by our specialist teacher and our year 3 choir is led by one of the Diocesan Choral Directors, Fraser Ellson, who visits weekly to take choir lessons based on the National Schools Singing Programme.

As a singing school, we engage wherever possible in performance, especially for outreach, singing at local and school events (such as Christmas and Summer fayres) and also in local care homes for example.

### **Support/Challenge:**

In music at St. Polycarp's, children are both challenged and supported to ensure that all can access music and become well-rounded musicians. Learning is consciously challenging to stretch musical ability whilst accommodating for various learning styles and levels. This learning may include open-ended tasks, special tailor-made instrumental parts and a variety of playing techniques, opportunities for solos, small groups (which allow for more support) and class performances and peer teaching and demonstrations. Teachers provide constructive feedback, individualised guidance, and collaborative opportunities, creating a space where each child's unique musical journey is nurtured.

Our SEND pupils are encouraged to achieve full musical potential through this support (in addition to adapted instruments where appropriate) and our gifted and experienced musicians are also stretched. All children are given the opportunity to perform individually, and in groups, to both small and large audiences.

### **School Partnerships:**

Alongside our curriculum provision for music, children are also able to participate in additional 1:1 or small group music teaching by being offered the opportunity to learn a

musical instrument with peripatetic teachers. Our peripatetic music teaching is organised by Surrey Arts and Farnham Rock and Pop Foundation. We encourage our pupils to participate in external musical examinations where appropriate. Our children take ABRSM, Trinity and Rock School gradings with their peripatetic teachers, the results of which are often shared with us at school. As part of their exam preparation, our students often perform to the rest of the school during collective worship.

We also have a relationship with Farnham Youth Choir, who come in annually to deliver workshops to our students and who invite us every June to their 'Singing Spree' at Farnham Maltings, with other neighbouring schools.

As previously mentioned, we have also partnered with the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton for the delivery of the National Schools Singing Programme (NSSP).

## Part B: Music Tuition, Choirs and Ensembles

Our students are offered a range of opportunities to make progress in music outside of lesson time and beyond the core curriculum.

### **Music Tuition:**

Our students are offered a range of instruments to learn through our partners: cello, trombone, saxophone, flute, clarinet, piano, drums, classical guitar and electric guitar.

We want all children to have equal opportunities to access music so have information on our website about the Surrey Arts remissions scheme which can offer support for pupil premium students, SEND ensembles, discretionary funds and bursaries (for example, through the Cheryl King Trust). We have accessed some of these funds for certain of our students for this coming year (namely pupil premium and refugee support).

We have a store of clarinets, trumpets, violins and guitars at school which we loan out for free to those having lessons. This removes a barrier to education for some children.

### **Choir:**

All students in KS2 are invited to join 'Poly's Polyphonics', our school choir, which rehearses weekly during lunch and numbers currently stand at 90 students for the Autumn Term. 'Poly's Polyphonics' regularly perform out of school at events such as the Farnham Christmas Lights Switch On and also, for collaborative concerts with other schools and other community events.

**Ensembles:**

We also have a revolving extra-curricular club, so that all can access extra-curricular music no matter their interests, at some point during the year:

*Autumn Term - 'St Polycarp's Music Group'*

An orchestral band that meets ad hoc as performance opportunities arise; for those who have lessons on orchestral instruments outside of the classroom. This group is used to accompany our School Masses and Liturgies.

*Spring Term - 'Rock Experience'*

'Rock Experience' provides the opportunity for students to play and sing popular songs (rock, pop and musical theatre) as a whole band with a choir.

*Summer Term – 'Ukulele Choir'*

Integrating singing of simple, fun songs accompanying ourselves on the ukulele.

**Workshops:**

Our children also experience musical workshops at times throughout the year. For instance, those offered by Farnham Youth Choir and Surrey Arts.

**Practise Space:**

Our Pope Francis Hall is open for students to practise when our specialist teacher is working, and it is not being used for our musical ensembles or choir. We have a sign-up system to ensure noise levels are managed and all have access to instruments that they should like to try, like the drum kits.

## Part C: Musical experiences

**Masses, Liturgies and Celebrations:**

There are 6 whole school masses per year, during which our entire cohort enjoy singing together at St Joan of Arc's church. Our instrumentalists also have the opportunity to play for these masses, for which music is written out and rehearsed as an ensemble in advance.

Our liturgical celebrations, such as our Remembrance Service, Christmas Carol Liturgy, Easter Liturgy, a Marian celebration and a mass to celebrate the Year 3 children's First Holy Communion provide musical opportunities for all. Our children sing during every whole school collective worship and at least one student will perform on an instrument or voice, as the whole school enters. If there has been a particular event

or achievement (e.g.: a group of students winning the 'Rising Star' award at Farnham's Got Talent) then this performance may also be repeated for the whole school to enjoy at whole school collective worship.

This provision aligns with the guidance in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory of the Arundel and Brighton Diocese, which encourages that "music and song are integral to the prayer life of the school and should involve the active participation of pupils" and that "liturgical celebrations should reflect the richness of the Church's tradition and the gifts of the school community."

### **Arundel and Brighton Diocese's National Schools Singing Programme:**

As part of our involvement with the NSSP, our Year 3s attend a Choir Festival in May and also perform the repertoire that they have worked on throughout the year to their parents in a concert at School in July. When relevant to the season/occasion, our Year 3s also sing what they have learnt with Fraser Ellson during School Masses (e.g.: leading the communion antiphon).

### **Performance Opportunities:**

**The Christmas Fayre:** our year 2s, EYFS classes and choir perform every Christmas at our Fayre.

**The EYFS Nativity:** our reception classes perform a nativity to their parents every year in December.

**Carol singing:** Our Year 2 students take a trip to a local care home (Waverley Grange) every year to sing carols to their residents.

**Farnham Christmas Lights Switch On:** The Polyphonics (choir) perform annually at this event for the local community, alongside other local schools.

**St Polycarp's Lent Concert:** we hold an annual fundraising concert as part of our Lent Almsgiving. Every single child in the school participates in both class, year group and Key Stage songs/musical performances and there is also the opportunity for soloists to perform. This is a celebration of music in our school.

**Farnham's Got Talent:** We participate in Farnham's Got Talent with other schools from the Farnham Confederate.

**Musician of the MAT:** This Xavier Trust event takes place every year in June. We rehearse and put forwards two young performers to compete against other Key Stage 2 musicians.

**Singing Spree:** every June our year 2 children get the opportunity to work with Farnham Youth Choir and perform songs with other local schools at The Maltings in Farnham.

**The St Polycarp's Careers Fayre:** Our choir performs in the Summer Term at the School Career's Fayre.

**The Summer Fayre:** Our year 1 children perform dances that they have learnt as part of their curriculum lessons (music of the British Isles, centring on finding the pulse and moving in time to music) and our choir also sing at this event.

**All Hallows Musical:** Our choir performs as a 'warm up' act for All Hallow's School musical every year. After their performance, the choir can sit and enjoy the musical for free as part of the audience. This is a fabulous opportunity as it takes place in an auditorium and introduces our children to the Secondary School that a lot of our cohort attend.

**The Year 6 Leavers' Musical:** every year our year 6 students spend time preparing for a musical which they perform to their parents just before the very end of the year.

#### **Musical Performances:**

We often invite in professionals to demonstrate live music making. Farnham Rock and Pop Foundation provide us with an annual demonstration of electric instruments, Surrey Arts often come to showcase instruments of the orchestra and one of our parents who is a professional worship singer also comes in to perform for our children.

## **In the future**

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

- **Further develop music in mass and liturgies;** to continue to draw on the Fraser Ellson's expertise (in particular to use him to build a repertoire of psalms to sing in mass) and, to develop the use of the NSSP Choral Programme within the School so that Year 3 are able to lead hymns at key masses.
- **Extend and develop peripatetic lessons** to include one-to-one voice and violin tuition, and restore engagement in drum lessons to the levels seen prior to the Pope Francis Hall building work.
- **Enhance links with All Hallows Secondary School** by embracing joint performance opportunities.