



**KING EDWARD VI
ASTON SCHOOL**

Educational excellence for our City

Music development plan

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	March 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Marta Pirosca
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Matthew Hodgkinson
Name of local music hub	Birmingham Music Education Partnership
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Services For Education

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.

At our school, curriculum music is timetabled as follows:

- Key Stage 3: Three 50-minute lessons a fortnight in Years 7 and 8 and two 50-minute lessons a fortnight in Year 9.
- Key Stage 4 students opting for music at GCSE receive 5 lessons a fortnight.
- Key Stage 5 students opting for music at A Level receive 10 lessons a fortnight.

Our Curriculum is informed by the Model Music Curriculum (MMC)

As part of the curriculum, students have the opportunity to develop both instrumental and vocal skills during lessons. All students receive whole class tuition in:

- Singing, beatboxing and rapping – focusing on vocal technique, ensemble singing, and performance confidence.
- Keyboard – developing melodic and harmonic skills, including reading both pitch and rhythmic notation.
- Ukulele – introducing chord progressions, strumming techniques.
- Guitar – learning to read both TAB and Chord notation
- Percussion (West African drums) - focusing on djembe drums techniques, developing rhythmic and improvisational skills as well as confidence and ensemble skills.
- Music Software (technology) - focusing on composing music using stave notation as well as DAW (Charanga's YuStudio) - in preparation for the GCSE composition component where students compose using either Sibelius or Cubase (professional version of YuStudio).
- Songwriting – developing team working skills as well as creativity
- Ensemble skills in a wide variety of genres.

The music curriculum is designed to be accessible to all students, with adaptations made as necessary to support those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Lessons incorporate differentiated learning activities to ensure all students can engage meaningfully with practical and theoretical aspects of music. Where required, adaptations may include:

- Alternative notation or visual aids to support students with additional learning needs.
- Additional support or scaffolding to help students develop confidence in performance and composition.

Students work towards formal music qualifications, including:

- **GCSE Music (EDUQAS)** – providing a broad foundation in performance, composition, and musical analysis.
- **A-level Music (EDUQAS)** – offering a more advanced study of musical theory, performance, and composition.

- **Graded Music Exams** – students can progress through recognised external music grade qualifications such as ABRSM, Trinity and Rock School on their chosen instruments or voice.

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 King Edward VI Aston School, students receive individual instrumental lessons delivered by a team of 12 specialist visiting Music Teachers employed by both the school and Services to Education (Birmingham Music Hub) These lessons are chargeable. Students eligible for the Pupil Premium can use their funding to pay for instrumental lessons. Students who take GCSE or A Level music as an option, have a weekly lesson subsidised by the school. Lessons are available in 20- or 30-minute sessions, with the aim of delivering 30 lessons per year.

Over 160 students have weekly instrumental lessons at school. Lessons are available in the following instruments.

- Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass
- Flute, Clarinet and Saxophone
- French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, and Tuba
- Drums and Percussions
- Dhol
- Voice
- Classical, Electric and Bass Guitar
- Piano

For students who do not own an instrument, the school has a number of instruments to loan. Students in Years 7–11 have lessons during the school day on a rotational basis to minimise the impact on other subjects, while Sixth Form students schedule lessons outside their academic commitments.

The school has a wide range of ensembles which occur during registration, recess and lunchtimes. These are differentiated so that students of all levels have a chance to make music at an appropriate standard.

- Symphony Orchestra (mixed ability ensemble)
- Aston Voices Choir (mixed year group ensemble) - Open to all
- Group 440 (advanced choir) - by invitation and audition
- Composition Club – Open to all
- Woodwind Ensemble – Open to all
- Percussion Ensemble – Open to all
- Brass Ensemble – Open to all
- Guitar Ensemble – Open to All
- String Ensemble (Grade 3+)
- Trombone Ensemble – Open to all
- Jazz Group – By invitation
- Band Project – Open to all
- Music Theory Club – Open to students working towards Grade 5 theory

- GCSE Coursework clinic

Over 200 students regularly participate in Ensembles and Choirs weekly.

The Music Department has two dedicated teaching rooms, and the Recital Hall which is permanently set up for Orchestra and Choir rehearsals. There are 6 practice rooms which are used for both individual lessons and student's private practice.

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.

Large Scale Concerts where all Ensembles and Groups participate. Parents and Carers as well as the wider school community are invited. There is a small charge for these concerts.

- Winter Concert
- Summer Concert

School Show, Parents and Carers as well as the wider school community are invited. There is a small charge for these concerts.

- School Production every other year in collaboration with the local girl's school. The band is also made up of student musicians.

House Events

- Year 7 Christmas Song competition
- House Festival of Music soloist competition

School Events

- Year 7 Induction Evening, performance of choir/orchestra
- Prize Giving
- Foundation Ceremony
- End of Term assemblies

Community Events

- Aston Community Carol Service

Musical Experiences

- Year 7 trip to Symphony Hall to hear the CBSO
- GCSE trip to experience a musical at the Birmingham Hippodrome

Wider Opportunities

- Many students take part in out of school music ensembles provided by Services for Education

In the future

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

- Increase the number of students learning to play a musical instrument, especially those receiving Pupil Premium.
- Increase the number of students opting for Music at GCSE and A Level by reviewing the curriculum for Key stage 3 students
- Increase the number of students participating in weekly rehearsals.
- Continue to develop the standard of ensembles.
- Develop links in the wider community for performance opportunities
- Continue to develop Popular Music and Technology
- Increase the number of trips within the department so students can experience more live music.
- Academy Trust Wide Collaboration Concert
- A Music Tour