

Music development plan summary: Thornden School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-27
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Mrs M Gale
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	-----
Name of local music hub	Hampshire Music Service
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

A musical education mixes creativity, academia and sensitivity. Our intentions are for every student to –

- Promote a lifelong love and appreciation of Music.
- Think in an artistic and open-minded way.
- Develop a wider understanding of other cultures through studying their musical traditions.
- Increase confidence and self-esteem by performing in small groups/ensembles.
- Develop teamwork, communication and discipline.
- Improve concentration skills.
- Increase emotional expression and empathy through both performance and composition.
- Develop focus, perseverance and resilience through learning to play an instrument.

All music lessons are centred on discovering how music works through practical music making – singing and instrumental. Teachers interact musically with students both in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities and concerts. All students are taught in fully equipped music classrooms, including keyboards, guitars, a drum-kit, African drums and both sequencing and notation software. Our schemes of work are designed so that students learn through practical based activities. All students learn to play the keyboard in class at key stage 3 and are taught musical notation. Students can also learn other instruments outside of the classroom if they wish to do so and are encouraged to use these instruments in the classroom where possible. Funding is available for those students who wish to learn but who need financial assistance.

Our schemes of work have been designed to build on skills studied in previous topics and they follow a pattern of listening, performing and composing. Each scheme of work explores a different genre or musical style. We cover a wide range of musical styles including Western Classical Music, Film Music, Pop and Jazz Music and World Music. Our aim is to increase cultural capital through a study of various musical genres from around the world and from different eras. The elements of music and the understanding of common musical devices are always the focus, and links are made between different styles of music to deepen student's understanding of how music works.

In Years 7 and 8 all students have one 70-minute Music lesson a week. In Year 9 this lesson carousels with Dance and Drama every half term. From Year 10 students can opt to take GCSE Music (Eduqas). GCSE Music students receive 2 X 70-minute Music lessons a week. There is a weekly afterschool workshop for GCSE Music students who need additional support with preparing recorded performances and compositions.

Part B: Co-curricular music

We offer a wide range of instrumental lessons including vocal tuition outside of the classroom. These lessons are delivered by teachers from Hampshire Music Service and take place during the school day (and occasionally after school). Lessons are 20 minutes long and are usually paired. Students will have the opportunity to take either graded exams through ABRSM or Trinity or they can complete the Hampshire Music Service Stage Certificates which are designed to be in line with the external exam boards.

There is a charge for these lessons which stands at £300 for the academic year 2026-27 (£100 a term), and there will be additional costs payable to the exam boards if they wish to take any exam. Financial support is provided to students who qualify for pupil premium.

Currently students can learn to play any of the following instruments as well as vocal tuition: Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Saxophone, Recorder, Brass, Violin/Viola, Cello,

Guitar, Bass Guitar, Drums and Keyboard/Piano. We currently have 216 students enrolled for instrumental/vocal lessons.

We are also running an 'endangered species' project in partnership with Hampshire Music Service to increase the number of students learning both brass instruments and the clarinet. These are offered as small group lessons to Year 7 at a significantly reduced cost, and the instruments are provided for free.

We run a full programme of weekly extra-curricular group rehearsals. This year we have Wind Band, Jazz Band, Thornden Choir, String Orchestra, String Quartet, Flute Choir, Clarinet and Saxophone ensemble, Double Reed Group, Brass Ensemble, Show Singers, Percussion Ensemble, Senior Vocal Ensemble and Junior Vocal Ensemble. These are free to join and all students learning an instrument are encouraged to participate in at least one of these groups.

We also offer group Music Technology lessons after school once a week for a small charge. These are an hour long and are also run in partnership with Hampshire Music Service. Our Mac Suite offers industry-standard software for the students to learn about music production.

Part C: Musical experiences

Every year we have a range of concerts and performances. All performances take place in Thornden Hall – our purpose-built auditorium that seats 400 people.

This year we have a Christmas Concert and a Spring Concert in which all our extra-curricular music groups will perform. We also have a concert called Rising Stars which is scheduled for the summer term. This concert is a showcase concert for KS3 students where they perform solo and small group vocal/instrumental items.

We also stage a musical every year where we work in collaboration with our school's Dance and Drama departments. We use a student band for our productions which provides another valuable experience for our older students. Previous shows include Annie, Bugsy Malone, Grease, Our House and Little Shop of Horrors. These are very popular and always have a large cast.

Another highlight of the year is the Performing Arts department trip to New York which is available to GCSE Music students. Students watch a Broadway Show during the trip and get the opportunity to take part in an interactive workshop run by professional performers.

There are always lots of smaller events throughout the year – musical performances in assemblies, Open Evening, talent shows and a Year 11 fundraising concert. We also visit Brendoncare at Christmas with a group of students who perform Christmas carols to the residents.

In the future

As well as continuing to develop all our current provision covered in Parts A, B and C, we are looking to push the department forward in these areas:

- To increase the number of visiting musicians to the school to run interactive workshops for our students and to perform 'live' music for them in Thornden Hall.
- To increase the numbers of students studying Music at KS4 with a view to offering a vocational KS4 option/course.
- To explore the possibility of hosting after school instrumental lessons at Thornden for our local primary school students with a focus on orchestral instruments.

We have also become a Lead School for the Hampshire Music Education Hub and will be advocating for music education by contributing to a Curriculum Steering Group as well as supporting other colleagues where needed.