Music development plan summary:
Dixons Pennine Academy – Manchester

This document is designed to give a summary of the high-quality music provision at this academy in curriculum music, co-curricular music and musical experiences, considering the key features in the national plan for music education:

- timetabled curriculum music of at least one hour each week of the school year for Key Stages 1 to 3
- access to lessons across a range of instruments, and voice
- a school choir or vocal ensemble
- a school ensemble, band or group
- space for rehearsals and individual practice
- a termly school performance
- opportunity to enjoy live performance at least once a year

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	October 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	October 2027
Name of school Music lead	Thea Anderson
Name of academy leadership team with responsibility (if different)	Richard Jones
Name of local music hub	Tameside Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Dixons Academies Trust - Director of Music, Tamsin Rafnsson

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 for future years. This information is intended to help pupils and parents or carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support 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.

- All students at Key Stage 3 are timetabled to have music once a week.
- More details about the intentions of our curriculum, the skills pupils develop and the curriculum overview can be found here: Dixons Pennine Academy | Curriculum
- The curriculum is informed by the National Curriculum for music and aims to enable pupils to:

  develop a love of music;

  develop their talent as musicians; and

  develop critical engagement with music, enabling them to compose and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon.
- Aligning with our trust's focus on the joy of learning, we focus on high-quality teaching and an excellent culture in lessons. This includes opportunities for success and appropriate challenge, underpinned by clear routines, positive behaviour and strong relationships. Pupils have regular opportunities to celebrate and be recognised for their achievements; for example, praise points and postcards are awarded in lessons, and pupils can earn awards at the end of each term for attitude to learning and progress.

- Students develop their musical knowledge and skills through performing, listening and appraising, and composing. They work both independently and collaboratively, developing their confidence and ability to contribute as part of a team.
- The curriculum is designed to build incrementally, so that when pupils revisit a skill, they can develop and improve their previous learning. For example, keyboard performance skills are revisited and developed over time.
- The curriculum is both accessible and challenging, enabling every student to work towards their personal best with the expert guidance of a specialist teacher. Information from our SEND department supports teachers in adapting provision and teaching approaches to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- At Key Stage 3, students sing and play a wide variety of instruments, including keyboard, handheld percussion and ukulele. They also have opportunities to create and develop music using computer software in our music technology room.
- At Key Stage 4, students work towards the Pearson BTEC qualification in Music. This enables pupils to apply their knowledge and technical skills through music creation, performance and music production, using realistic vocational contexts. The course also develops personal skills such as self-development, responding to a brief, planning and time management through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment.
- Equity, diversity and inclusion are considered throughout the curriculum. This includes the selection of repertoire that represents a variety of genres, cultures and music from around the world, alongside performances and listening experiences that aim to reflect the diversity of our community.
- All students opting for music are encouraged and supported to take peripatetic lessons on their chosen instrument 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.

- In addition to the central curriculum lessons outlined above, pupils have access to a wide range of peripatetic instrumental and vocal lessons. These are taught on a 1:1 or paired basis and last for either 15 or 30 minutes.
- Students are guaranteed a minimum of 33 lessons across the academic year, with the possibility of receiving up to 35 lessons.
- We have a stock of instruments that students can loan free of charge, subject to availability. These currently include violin, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, glockenspiel, electric guitar and bass guitar, alongside small practice amplifiers.
- For pupil premium and free school meal students, we aim where possible to provide free or subsidised lessons. Where financial support is required, we can also agree weekly or monthly payment plans through our ParentPay system.
- All students studying Music at Key Stage 4 are supported to access lessons on their chosen instrument or voice.
- The range of instrumental and vocal lessons currently offered includes violin, cello, electric and acoustic guitar, bass guitar, piano, keyboard, flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet and other brass instruments, singing, drum kit and percussion.
- We also offer a variety of free extra-curricular music clubs:

  Music Technology.

  Choir and singing.

  Guitar and Rock Club.
- Any student wishing to start a club should speak to their Music teacher.
- Extra-curricular clubs provide pupils with opportunities to develop and progress in their chosen area of music. They also provide valuable social experiences, enabling students from different year groups to come together and enjoy making music.
- In addition, we liaise with Tameside Music Service to support pupils in accessing lessons on the academy premises where possible. We also regularly consider eligibility for pupils who may benefit from this provision.
- Pupils who have peripatetic lessons have opportunities to enter a range of recognised external music examinations where appropriate.
- Pupils wishing to practise their instruments outside of the academy day, including before or after school, can make use of the practice rooms available. Students should speak to their Music teacher to arrange this.
- We aim to increase the joy students gain from music-making by removing as many barriers as possible, enabling pupils to participate, develop their skills and explore their love of music both inside and outside the academy.

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.

In 2026-27, the rehearsal schedule above will run every week, and most groups will have the opportunity to perform in at least one of the planned musical events this year:

- Academy Open Evening – Students who wish to volunteer can perform or support the event by showing Year 6 pupils around our music facilities and helping them to play a musical instrument.
- Dixons Cup – The music department encourages students to enter solo performance work to be considered for commendation and Bronze, Silver and Gold awards as part of the Trust-wide Dixons Cup competition. These opportunities are offered at various points during the year; this year, we hope to offer this during Cycle 2. Students participating in external extra-curricular events can also be eligible to collect participation points for their academy towards the final total at the end of the year.
- DPA Has Talent Christmas Concert – In December, pupils can showcase their talents, including singing and playing instruments such as piano and guitar.
- Summer Musical – The production for 2026-27 is currently TBC. The academy has previously delivered a production of *High School Musical* (July 2026).

In the future

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

We are continually reviewing our music provision to ensure that we offer the best possible musical opportunities for our pupils. The following are areas we are planning to develop this year and beyond, while maintaining and building on our current provision:

Curriculum

- Based on pupil voice, we have developed the range of instruments pupils can learn and introduced new software for students to compose with. This enables pupils to create music in a wider range of musical styles.
- We rigorously use examiners' reports to evaluate and enhance our provision at Key Stage 4.

Outside the classroom

- We are expanding our extra-curricular music and performance opportunities.
- We will continue to develop our relationship with the Royal Northern College of Music and look for opportunities to build relationships with other higher and further education providers.

Further information (optional)

Please find below some useful links which you may find helpful when considering your child's musical experiences inside and outside the academy:

Tameside Music Service - TMS

Edexcel BTEC Tech Award for Music - Quick Guide to the BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice

National Curriculum for Music at Key Stage 3 - National Curriculum - Music key stage 3

The National Plan for Music Education - NPME

The Department for Education publishes a guide for parents and young people on how they can get involved in music in and out of school, and where they can go for support beyond the school.