Music development plan summary: Bayford Primary School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	November 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2027
Name of the school music lead	Katie Neilson
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Malcom Foster
Name of local music hub	Hertfordshire Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Hertford Ware and District Schools Music Association

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. Music is an important part of Bayford's identity and community. Through collective music-making, performances, worship and links with the village church and wider community, we aim to give every child a sense of belonging and the tools for a rich and fulfilling musical life.

Part A: Curriculum music

This is about what we teach in lesson time and how much time is spent teaching music.

- Bayford Primary School has a specialist Music Teacher, Katie Neilson, who plans and delivers the school's music curriculum. The curriculum is rooted predominantly in the Kodály approach, with influences from other music education approaches such as Dalcroze, and is designed to fulfil the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for Music (2014).
- The curriculum is highly practical and places singing at its heart. Children develop their musical understanding through singing, playing instruments, listening, moving, improvising and performing. Musical concepts such as pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo and dynamics are introduced and developed through

practical experience, supported by movement, visual representation and the use of classroom resources.

- Classroom percussion instruments are used regularly to support children's exploration and understanding of musical concepts. Children develop their musical literacy progressively, using solfa to understand pitch and spoken and written stick notation to represent rhythm before progressing towards reading basic music on the stave.
- Children experience a wide range of repertoire, including music from different cultures, traditions and historical periods. Listening is an important part of the curriculum, both through active listening and responding in lessons and through the school's wider programme of listening in collective worship.
- Performance is an integral part of music education at Bayford. Children sing and perform regularly throughout their time at the school, both individually and collectively. As they progress, they develop increasing musical accuracy, confidence, independence and ensemble skills. Performance opportunities become particularly prominent in Upper Key Stage 2, when pupils prepare more substantial repertoire for the School Music Association festival and the end-of-year musical.

The curriculum is organised around four mixed-age classes:

- **Early Years:** Nursery and Reception
- **Class 1:** Years 1 and 2
- **Class 2:** Years 3 and 4
- **Class 3:** Years 5 and 6
- Teaching and progression are planned to reflect the needs of these mixed-age groups, with musical concepts revisited, reinforced and developed at increasing levels of complexity and in different contexts.
- The curriculum is informed by the National Curriculum for Music and takes account of the non-statutory Model Music Curriculum (March 2021) as a reference point for musical knowledge, skills and progression.

Curriculum time

All children in Reception and Years 1-6 receive a weekly specialist music lesson. Nursery children who attend in the afternoon also receive a weekly lesson alongside Reception. Children who attend Nursery in the morning only and leave at lunchtime do not currently receive this specialist lesson.

Class / Key Stage	Weekly specialist music provision
Nursery and Reception	30 mins
Years 1 and 2	35 mins

Years 3 and 4	35-40 mins
Years 5 and 6	35-40 mins

Specialist music lessons usually take place on a Tuesday or Friday afternoon. Class teachers also contribute to children's musical learning by revisiting and practising songs and musical material introduced in specialist lessons and supporting listening activities in collective worship.

Daily singing and a weekly music-focused collective worship provide additional musical experiences beyond the timetabled specialist lessons.

Curriculum progression

- **Early Years:** Developing the singing voice, pitch matching, confidence in singing alone, listening skills and an awareness of the musical concepts of pitch, pulse and rhythms as well as the variables higher/lower, louder/quieter and faster/slower. Children are introduced to classroom percussion instruments and experience practical music-making.
- **Key Stage 1:** Developing secure foundations in pulse, rhythm and pitch. Children begin to use basic solfa and rhythm language, including crotchets and quavers, and explore simple musical notation through movement, physical positioning and pictorial resources that aid understanding.
- **Lower Key Stage 2:** Building on earlier musical understanding, with more developed use of solfa and rhythm language. Children begin to read and write musical ideas using stick notation and solfa, sometimes combining the two.
- **Upper Key Stage 2:** Extending musical understanding through more complex rhythms, including semiquaver patterns and syncopation, and more sophisticated pitch work. Children develop a wider repertoire, greater musical independence and more advanced ensemble and performance skills. They have further opportunities to apply their understanding through notation and practical music-making.

Access, inclusion and SEND

Music is planned to be inclusive and accessible to all pupils. The practical and participatory nature of the curriculum provides a range of ways for children to engage with musical learning, including singing, movement, listening, playing instruments and responding through visual and physical representation.

The school aims to ensure that all children can participate meaningfully in music lessons and performances, with support and adaptations appropriate to individual needs.

Partnerships and wider support

Bayford is a member of the local School Music Association. This provides opportunities for pupils to take part in shared musical events and performances with children from other schools and in the case of the festival, a live band.

The school also has strong links with Bayford village church, which provides an important setting for regular performances and musical participation in the wider community.

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.

Instrumental tuition

Pupils can access individual or small-group instrumental tuition in violin, piano and guitar. This tuition is provided outside the school's specialist curriculum music lessons.

Instrumental lessons are arranged for interested pupils and are generally paid for by parents and carers. The school will seek to ensure that financial circumstances do not prevent pupils from accessing these opportunities, including consideration of support for eligible Pupil Premium pupils.

Details of current charges and any available financial assistance can be obtained from the school office.

Previous whole-class ukulele provision (arranged through the local MEH) has now ceased. The school is considering whether to introduce a new instrumental opportunity for pupils, potentially a recorder programme for Year 4 run by Katie Neilson, subject to staff availability.

Ensembles and other music-making

Bayford does not currently operate an additional voluntary school choir or instrumental ensemble. The lack of school choir is a deliberate approach to ensuring that opportunities for collective singing and performance are available to all children, rather than being limited to those who choose, or are able, to attend an extracurricular group.

Through specialist music lessons, collective worship and school performances, all pupils have regular opportunities to sing and perform together. This inclusive approach recognises that voluntary choirs can sometimes attract a relatively narrow group of pupils and that participation may be influenced by factors such as confidence, gender and family circumstances. By making collective singing a shared experience for whole classes and the school community, Bayford aims to ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop their musical confidence and performance and ensemble skills.

Progression and further opportunities

Pupils are encouraged to develop their musical interests through instrumental tuition and through participation in school and wider community musical events. The school will continue to explore opportunities for children to access further musical experiences and progression beyond the classroom.

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 performances.

Music is a visible and valued part of school life at Bayford. All pupils have opportunities to participate in musical events and performances throughout the academic year.

Singing and collective worship

Singing takes place daily in collective worship. This provides regular opportunities for children to develop their singing, learn and revisit repertoire and participate in music-making as a whole school.

One collective worship session each week has a particular musical focus. Children take part as a choir, developing their singing and performance skills, or learn about the featured Musician of the Week.

The Musician of the Week programme is planned in collaboration with the Deputy Headteacher. A list of diverse musicians is drawn up each half term and always includes one musician selected by a child and another by a member of staff (other than the music specialist). The programme aims to represent a broad range of musicians across gender, ethnic origin, musical genre and historical period, including living composers.

Music by the featured musician is played during collective worship throughout the week, supported by an information poster. A timeline displayed in the school corridor helps children to place musicians within their historical context and develop an understanding of different musical periods.

Performances and events

Pupils participate in a range of regular performances during the school year, including:

- **Harvest:** Whole-school singing as part of the Harvest service at Bayford church.
- **Christmas:** EYFS and Class 1 each create a Christmas performance. All pupils perform jointly and as a class choir at the Christmas service in Bayford church.
- **School Music Association Carol Service:** Class 2 pupils participate alongside children from other member schools.

- **Easter:** Whole-school singing and class choir singing in the Easter service at Bayford church.
- **School Music Association Music Festival:** Class 3 pupils participate in a shared musical event with other schools accompanied by a live band and conducted by nationally-acclaimed choral conductor Charlotte Brosnan.
- **End-of-year musical:** Class 3 pupils prepare and perform a musical production.
- **End-of-year leavers assembly:** Whole-school singing and class choir singing.

The school also responds to occasional invitations to take part in wider community events. Previous opportunities have included singing at the Harvest service at St Albans Abbey, singing at Tesco's HQ at Christmas, singing at local Hertfordshire Zoo and visiting a local care home to sing to residents.

These experiences enable children to perform to different audiences, develop confidence and ensemble skills, and understand the contribution that music can make to the wider community.

Listening and experiencing music

Listening to a wide range of music is an important part of school life. The Musician of the Week programme provides regular opportunities for all pupils to hear music from different genres, cultures and historical periods, including music by significant composers and contemporary musicians.

Pupils also have opportunities to attend local musical events as whole classes. These visits broaden their experience of live music and enable them to encounter musical performances beyond the school environment.

The school also finds opportunities for pupils to experience live music and performances from a range of musical traditions and contexts for example a recent Class 3 trip to see the musical Oliver in London and annual whole-school visits to a local professional pantomime.

In the future

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

In the future: Development priorities for 2026-2027 and beyond

Bayford has an established programme of specialist music teaching and a strong culture of singing, performance and musical participation. The priorities below focus on developing this provision further, strengthening the contribution of the wider school team and ensuring that musical learning is supported throughout the school day.

Priority 1: Embed music more consistently across the school

Aim: To strengthen the links between specialist music lessons and the musical experiences children have with their class teachers.

Actions:

- Establish clearer expectations for how class teachers can revisit and reinforce musical learning from specialist lessons.
- Explore the introduction of a regular *Song of the Week* and establish a tradition of daily singing in class.
- Encourage teachers to use music purposefully in classroom routines, transitions and other curriculum areas.
- Develop a shared understanding of how music-making can contribute to children's learning and wider school life.

Responsibility: Music Teacher, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, with class teachers.

Timescale: Develop during 2026-2027 and review at the end of the academic year.

Intended impact: Children experience more regular opportunities to sing and make music beyond their weekly specialist lesson. Musical learning is reinforced and becomes more embedded in everyday school life.

Priority 2: Develop staff confidence and expertise in music

Aim: To make better use of the specialist musical expertise within the school by providing appropriate professional development for other staff.

Actions:

- Work with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to establish a shared commitment to developing music across the school.
- Provide tailored training for the Early Years team, including teaching assistants, to develop confidence in singing, music-making and using music within everyday practice.
- Explore how music can support routines, transitions, communication and learning across the Early Years curriculum.
- Extend appropriate training and support to Key Stage 1 teachers and teaching assistants.
- Provide tailored support for Key Stage 2 teachers, particularly in relation to singing, rehearsal and supporting children's performance opportunities.

Responsibility: Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to support and prioritise the development; Music Teacher to plan and deliver training.

Timescale: Planning and agreement during 2026-2027, with training introduced as school capacity and resources allow.

Intended impact: Staff feel more confident in supporting musical activity. Children have more frequent opportunities to sing and make music, including those Nursery children who attend in the morning only. Musical learning is reinforced beyond specialist lessons.

Priority 3: Review and strengthen curriculum documentation and progression

Aim: To ensure that the school's music curriculum is clearly documented, coherent and demonstrates progression across all year groups.

Actions:

- Review and update published music curriculum information for each year group.
- Document the Scheme of Work for the four mixed-age classes, including the progression of musical skills and knowledge.
- Develop a clearer two-year rolling programme where appropriate, retaining flexibility in repertoire and responding to the needs of each class.
- Ensure that information about inclusion and access for pupils with SEND is clearly communicated.
- Review the curriculum against the National Curriculum for Music and use the Model Music Curriculum as an additional reference point.

Responsibility: Music Teacher, with support from the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.

Timescale: Initial documentation during autumn 2026; review and refinement throughout 2026-2027.

Intended impact: Staff, parents and pupils have a clearer understanding of what children learn in music and how their musical knowledge and skills develop as they move through the school.

Priority 4: Explore further instrumental opportunities

Aim: To broaden opportunities for pupils to learn an instrument as part of their musical education.

Actions:

- Explore the feasibility of a recorder programme for Year 4 pupils.
- Establish the staffing time / funding required (school already owns recorders)
- Review opportunities for pupils to continue developing their instrumental skills beyond the programme.

Responsibility: Headteacher and Music Teacher.

Timescale: Feasibility to be explored during autumn 2026, with implementation dependent on outcome.

Intended impact: More pupils have the opportunity to experience learning an instrument and develop practical music-making skills.

Further information

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 to for support beyond the school.

For more information on Hertfordshire Music Hub click here