



THE LEAF CENTRE



WILLOWTREE ACADEMY

Music development plan summary

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was published	September 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2027
Name of the school music lead	Max Kinmans
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Rotherham Music
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

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.

Music curriculum - EYFS, KS1, KS2, SEND

At Willow Tree Academy, music is a way for children to express their emotions enjoyably and creatively. It plays an important role in personal development and we aim to provide opportunities for all children to create, play, perform, listen, analyse and enjoy music across a wide range of periods, genres and styles. Our music offer goes beyond the level of the national curriculum, seeking to address social disadvantage by addressing gaps in knowledge, skills and experiences (i.e. concerts, live events).

The music curriculum at Willow Tree Academy is based on the Kodaly approach to music education. This pedagogy emphasises the importance of singing and movement in embedding musicality in children's bodies and minds. Enjoyable and engaging experiences of music making are essential, both before identifying the musical knowledge and concepts that the activities demonstrate, and then to reinforce understanding of these

concepts. The curriculum therefore focuses on the methodical progression and mastery of musical skills across the year groups, with learning always involving music making, whether vocal or instrumental. Musical knowledge and understanding are derived from this experience. This results in stronger understanding as it relates to concrete experiences rather than musical terms being introduced as abstract concepts.

At the core of the music curriculum are pulse, rhythm and pitch. From songs, games, movement and listening children learn to identify the pulse and an increasing number of pitches and rhythms, moving on to reading and writing them on the stave. As children progress these key skills they are then introduced to other dimensions of music such as dynamics, tempo, timbre and texture. Children are also given many chances to apply their skills and knowledge to improvise musically and to compose their own music, vocally, instrumentally and digitally.

KS2 classes receive whole class instrumental tuition for at least half a year in either djembe, ukulele, glockenspiel, recorder or music production. The instrumental learning both enhances the Kodaly-based curriculum and is adapted to support the children's current skill and knowledge level. Access to instruments is provided for free, to remove this barrier to musical experiences, and children are given opportunities to continue their instrument learning in extra-curricular groups. A range of other percussion instruments and props are also used as a matter of course in music lessons - from claves to cups to scarves and parachutes.

Music is led by a music specialist, Max Kinmans, who has implemented an academy-wide curriculum and scheme of work based on these principles. This year, all year groups will begin learning from the new scheme of work at the appropriate level, having been caught up with the necessary knowledge and skills in the 2025-26 academic year. Music sessions typically run for 30 minutes for KS1 and lower KS2, with 45 minutes for upper KS2. This learning is supplemented with a weekly 25 minute music assembly, incorporating singing, listening, and some performance opportunities.

In Early Years, music sessions are either led by Max Kinmans or by the class teacher. The Willow Tree scheme of work extends to F1 and F2 and is being expanded to include 2 year old provision also. The scheme of work follows the Academy progress model for Early Years, which breaks down the Early Learning Goals into more specific, year-by-year, targets for music learning. In the 2 year old and F1 provision much preparatory work on pulse, rhythm and pitch is done through songs, games and movement, so that children can begin using these skills consciously in F2. Specialist CPD is given to class teachers who then work closely with the music specialist to ensure that children can progress their musical skills and knowledge.

Music CPD

CPD opportunities throughout the year are used to offer teaching staff further development within this curriculum area. CPD this year will focus on class teachers who are sharing music teaching with the music specialist and new starters to the academy.

Communications

Music at Willow Tree Academy is on each individual school's website. Here we set out Intent, implementation and impact and curriculum coverage.

Parents are kept up to date with daily news by:
Music news on school learning blogs
X updates.
Fortnightly school newsletter
Visits into school to share with learning and learning outcomes.

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.

We aim to supplement our rigorous, skills-based curriculum with many chances to perform, vocally and instrumentally, in order for our children to become confident performers, composers and listeners.

Throughout our curriculum we offer many opportunities for pupils to sing and play music across school. This is through assemblies where we explore a range of musical genres half termly where children are given the opportunity to sing and perform and just enjoy music. During social time out on the playground each playground has a music box where the children are able to play music they love and enjoy giving the children opportunities to talk about music they listen to or music that means something to them using memories that provoke an emotional response.

Curriculum instrumental learning typically ends in a performance opportunity - whether to parents, other classes, or as a recorded performance shared through the school website. Children love to show what they have achieved on their instruments and gain great confidence from developing their skills from absolute beginner to performance level.

At school we have multiple choirs that run throughout the year after school by our music specialist and by members of staff who are passionate about music, children are then given opportunities to perform for members of our local community or at events within our local area or at concerts put on by the local authority. Willow Tree schools also give instrument learners and singers the opportunity to perform as part of a school band. Performing arts club also gives children an opportunity to put together their own musical theatre performance.

Rotherham music services offer ensembles which provide our children with the opportunity to see live musicians who share their skills and expertise offering the children the opportunity to play a musical instrument outside of the curriculum. This is supported by parents, carers and the school. The overall provision is diverse, valuing all musical styles, genres and traditions equally; this is reflected in the clubs and enrichment programme and drawing on the skills, talents and interests of staff and local stakeholders through specialist tuition. A large proportion of children are involved.

We provide children with varied opportunities to expand their knowledge of music beyond the curriculum taking the children to the theatre, ballet and the opera which allows the children to make progress in their knowledge and understanding beyond the curriculum.

In EYFS, children are provided with daily opportunities to listen to and sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. These opportunities are incorporated into different

areas of the curriculum and parental/carer involvement opportunities, such as maths and number with music sessions in the Early Years, linked to the ELG.

The creative curriculum offering allows children to perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories linked to areas of the curriculum. Class teachers work with our music specialist to create musical links across the curriculum - from learning about the Beatles as part of the Britain since 1948 topic to creating thunderstorm soundscapes when learning about sound and extreme weather.

We signpost parents to opportunities outside of school through our social media pages and class dojo.

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 addition to group singing in assembly and end of unit instrumental performances, children from across the academy come together to perform as part of our “Willowfest” music concert. The concert takes place at a venue away from school and brings together instrumental learners from different schools to play together in mixed ensembles. Children also have opportunities for individual instrumental performances. It is a fantastic showcase for Willow Tree music.

Children in KS2 are also given other opportunities to perform as part of external events. In the Spring term children perform at Sheffield Arena for the Young Voices concert. In the summer term children perform at the One Voice concert, at Magna with the Rotherham Music service.

Frequent concerts are scheduled throughout the year, such as Harvest Festival, Christmas Carols Concerts, Pantomimes, Nativities, Easter and an opportunity at the end of each academic year for each year group to showcase performance and composition happening in school. Children also have opportunities to perform in competitions such as the talent show and dance competition. The talent show encourages children to develop their own talents and to become confident performers.

Throughout their childhood experience at [Willow Tree Academy](#), all children have had access to the Rotherham Music service. As a trust, it is crucial that children across school have opportunity to learn an instrument and perform on their instrument, and then evaluate their own performances.

Through the Willow Tree music scheme of work, children are exposed to music from varied countries, cultures and ethnic backgrounds celebrating culture, values and traditions enabling children to make creative choices and decisions on musical preference. For example, Year 6 learn about musical traditions from India. Children learn about West African music traditions as part of their djembe learning. All children listen to and learn about music from all over the world as part of music assemblies weekly.

Cultural capital opportunities including music are built into our profound primary experience through collaborative working with performing arts companies such as Grimm and Co. Pupils work with artists, musicians, dancers and designers to put together a celebration of creative art. This is a legacy project which continues to be developed within our offer.

In the future

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

- Embed the use of the Willow Tree scheme of work for music, with Year 6 leavers being able to play a variety of instruments, sing confidently and read and write music on the stave
- Continue Staff CPD so that class teachers can confidently teach from the scheme of work where required
- Extend the scheme of work to 2 year old provision to ensure consistency of approach
- Continue to decolonise and ensure equal balance between male/female and diverse range of composers/musicians across the curriculum
- Look for opportunities for Willow Tree children to perform at South Yorkshire ensemble events