Music development plan summary:

Dixons Newall Green 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 academy music lead	Hannah Groarke-Young
Name of local music hub	One Education
Name of other music education organsiation(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 students 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 students and parents or carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our students' 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.

- Year 7, 8 and 9 students currently receive one hour of timetabled music per fortnight. As a school, we recognise the importance of a 'high quality' music education and aim to deliver at least one hour of timetabled music per week to all students in Key Stage 3 by September 2027 (in accordance with the national plan for music education published in May 2024).
- A baseline assessment is carried out at the start of every year in KS3 which assists in identifying the levels of prior learning, retention of knowledge, musical understanding and instrumental experience. Based on this information, a challenging, personalised and accessible music curriculum is then devised and delivered. Gaps in knowledge and any misconceptions can be identified at the start of each academic year.
- This ensures that planning / teaching is adapted to meet the needs of every child and that every student is given the opportunity to achieve their personal best. This important information helps determine those who received peripatetic instrumental tuition in primary school and where possible, ensure that their learning can be continued.
- At KS3, students learn about the musical elements and how these key 'ingredients' underpin all aspects of music. Schemes of work incorporate listening and appraising, composing and performance-based learning and are delivered via a broad and diverse music curriculum.
- Topics in Years 7 and 8 include the Instruments of the Orchestra (Beethoven, John Williams, Britten), Programme Music (through Peter and the Wolf by Prokofiev and Sorceror's Apprentice by Dukas), Blues, Chords and Form and Structure using BandLab . Students can enjoy singing, using body percussion, playing a range of handheld percussion and learning to play the keyboard, ukulele, steel pans, guitar and using music technology sequencing software (Bandlab Education).

- The music curriculum in Year 7 builds upon the skills and knowledge taught at Key Stage 2. This 'spiraled' approach revisits and develops musical skills throughout Key Stage 3.
- Do Now starter activities take place at the start of every lesson. Retrieval practice revisits prior knowledge and allows any misconceptions to be addressed and re-taught.
- The purpose of this is to recall and revisit prior learning whilst embedding key vocabulary and information. The curriculum provides students with the necessary foundations for further study at Key Stage 4.
- In Year 9, students build upon their prior musical knowledge and develop a deeper understanding through the topics Reggae, Protest Music and 'Made in Manchester'. Appraising music and composing will introduce students to further musical terms and devices,
- Students can enjoy singing, using body percussion, playing a range of handheld percussion, learning to play the keyboard, learning to play the ukulele and using music technology sequencing software (Bandlab Education, Sibelius). Students also have access to 3 practice rooms. Each room is equipped with a digital piano. Within the curriculum, groups of students are encouraged to use the additional rooms to specialise the practical elements on violin, guitar, steel pans or drums (where applicable).
- There are two GCSE Music groups in Year 10. Students follow the Edqas GCSE Music exam board.
- Aligning with our trust's focus on the joy of learning, we focus on high-quality teaching and excellent culture in lessons, opportunities for success and difficulty, underpinned by clear routines, behaviour and relationships. There are opportunities for students to celebrate, be recognised and make meaning of their experiences in music.

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.

- There are currently over 50 students receiving instrumental lessons. Peripatetic tuition is available on electric guitar, bass guitar, drum kit, saxophone, piano / keyboard, violin and steel pans. This provision is delivered by an external peripatetic teacher and the Head of Music.
- Steel pans were donated to school and have enabled 2 steel pan groups to start up.
- Guitar students bring their own instruments to school and keep them in practice rooms.
- The music department is open before school at 07.40am and every lunchtime (Mon-Thurs) for students to work on coursework or book practice rooms and rehearse.
- All extra-curricular lessons are provided for students without any cost.
- Choir meets once a week and there are approximately 30+ who attend regularly. When the choir is at full capacity, there are around 40 students.
- Students have the opportunity to become 'music leaders'. They can be awarded this title if have shown commitment to choir or instrumental lessons.
- The choir has termly workshops from renowned choral / musical director Dan McDwyer. The workshops prepare students for their performances.
- Music leaders will be given the opportunity to lead and deliver choir warm-ups and help other students in lessons (where applicable). These students also kindly offer their time before school, at break and lunch to set up resources for music lessons.
- Anyone interested in taking lessons or joining a music club should get in touch with the Head of Department.
- Students take part in the Dixons Music Cup each year.
- The choir performs throughout the year at the Manchester Citizen Awards, at school, at the Dixons Collaboration Concert and in the local community (care homes etc).
- School Musical – Annie 2026 – 2027.

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. Below are some of the opportunities that our students have:

- 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. DNG had the most entries in 2025. For the last 2 years, students from DNG have been recognised for their talents.
- Choir and soloists sing in assembly and during family dining.
- Choir and soloists sang at the Citizen Awards Manchester and have been invited to perform at future events (next 11/11/26)

- Choir and soloists singing in school – concerts, morning meetings etc
- Concert visits: Royal Northern College of Music Concert. RNCM Young Explorers - Space, Stars and Video Games (2025).
- Concert visits: Hallé for Youth - Celebrating International Women's Day (5/3/26), Hallé Orchestra perform 'The Orchestra Through the Ages' (16/10/26)
- Theatre visits: Heathers the Musical (03/27)
- Musicians performing in the local community – care homes
- School Production – Annie (2026 – 2027)

In the future

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

- Increase curriculum time for KS3 music to one hour per week.
- Launch Bronze Arts Award qualification.
- String group from Autumn 2026.
- Increase student participation in extra-curricular activities.
- Primary school links - liaise with the local primary schools, offer workshops and collaborative performance opportunities. Year 6 students will be invited to production of Annie.
- We would like to increase the peripatetic offer to vocals.
- Continue to build music technology into the Key Stage 3 curriculum for all students to access from September 2025 onwards.

Further information

- National plan for music education
- Model music curriculum
- National curriculum for music