Music development plan summary:

Dixons Croxteth Academy – Liverpool

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

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-27
Date this summary was published	October 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	October 2027
Name of the academy music lead	Karen Unsworth
Name of academy leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Silvana Palmeiri
Name of local music hub	Resonate Music Hub
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 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 students can achieve. Enriching lives and offering opportunities to learn outside of the classroom.

- Year 7 & 8 have one music lesson a week.
- Year 9 have one music lesson a fortnight – this will be reviewed in September 2027 to increase the amount of time given to music in the curriculum and develop into KS4.
- From September 2026 Peripatetic provision and extra-curricular groups are on offer and this has increased to include singing lessons, strings (violin).
- We are also offering music technology as part of the school co-curricular program.

Currently on offer:

- Keyboard lessons (small groups) - Mrs Unsworth
- Piano lessons - external peripatetic
- Guitar lessons – Patrick Morrison
- Brass lessons - David Chadwick – external peripatetic

- Drum lessons - David Chadwick – external peripatetic
- Singing Groups and extra-curricular choir – Mrs Unsworth
- Ukulele lessons – Mrs Unsworth
- Extra-curricular mixed orchestra – Mrs Unsworth
- Violin lessons – Sadie Haadji
- Co-Curricular – Music Technology – Mrs Unsworth
- Samba / Drumming Group – for events and showcases – Mrs Unsworth

- All extra-curricular music lessons are funded for pupils who wish to take up the opportunity to develop their independent musical skills.
- Currently 90 pupils have taken up on these opportunities at KS3 - attendance at peripatetic lessons and after school groups is excellent.
- All peripatetic lessons are taught in small groups for a maximum of 20 mins per week.
- The department has an open-door policy on the days Mrs Unsworth is in to allow pupils to rehearse independently, before school, during lunch times and after school.
- Students explore performing and, listening and appraising in music lessons through practical work, they develop skills individually and as a team in group work activities.
- The curriculum explores a wide range of musical styles and genres allowing personal progress in musical skills while learning and appreciating music from different cultures and styles building cultural capital for students.
- Our Key Stage 3 music curriculum is designed to build a strong foundation of musical understanding, ensuring students are well-prepared for further musical study and participation in the school's musical life. By the end of Year 9, students will have developed aural knowledge, engaged in creative processes, understood musical elements, and improved their fluency in music notation.

Performing, Composing, and Appraising

- Performing: Students arrive at Key Stage 3 with experience in performing music. Throughout Key Stage 3, they will continue to develop their performance skills through individual and ensemble opportunities, including whole-class and small-group ensembles.
- Composing: Students engage in creative processes through improvisation and composition. By the end of Year 9, they will be able to perform and create music using primary & secondary chords, create bass lines, melodies, and rhythmic accompaniments, and develop their own compositional voice.
- Listening: Listening activities focus on both technical exercises and exploring musical meaning. Students will gain aural knowledge of significant musical works and styles from a broad range of musical backgrounds, enhancing their overall musical understanding.
- At KS3 the pupils will sing and play a variety of instruments to give them a chance to experience creating and performing while developing skills in a variety of instruments – keyboards, drums and music technology are the resources used the most during the curriculum to allow for individual expression. Students access music technology every half term when the IT rooms are available.
- The curriculum is both accessible and challenging for all, so that every student can achieve their personal best under the expert guidance of a specialist music teacher.
- This is supported by information from our SEND team which helps music staff adapt teaching to support the needs of every child.
- By continually developing our curriculum and expanding opportunities for all students, we aim to cultivate a vibrant and inclusive musical community within our school.

Part B: Co-curricular music

This is about opportunities for students to sing and play music, outside of lesson time, including choirs, ensembles and bands, and how students can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

- This academic year, opportunities for independent peripatetic support for KS3 students are available in several musical disciplines. Guitar, drums, keyboard, singing, brass, violin and ukulele. Pupils who have opted for this receive a small group session for 20 mins.
- Students do not pay for extracurricular lessons.
- Singing and orchestra are offered as after school provision allowing for many students to participate in these musical opportunities. The singing group currently has 24 members and the orchestra has 10.

- The department has an open-door policy which allows students in to rehearse when the room is available before school, after school and during lunch time.
- Co-Curricular Music Technology – this is an option one lesson a fortnight for Year 7 / 8. There are about 20 students experiencing and gaining skills in music technology during this time. Students collaborate to produce music to showcase though the transition bells and school events and showcases.

Enrichment Timetable

Week A Monday	Week A Tuesday	Week A Thursday	Week B Monday	Week B Tuesday	Week B Thursday
Brass and Drum Lessons	Guitar Lessons	1 to 1 singing support Ukulele Lessons Piano Lessons	Brass and Drum Lessons	Guitar Lessons	Piano Lessons
	Co-Curricular Music Tech	Keyboard Lessons		Co-Curricular Music Tech	Violin Lessons
After School Orchestra	After School Choir	After School Rehearsals	After School Orchestra	After School Choir	

- All pupils are informed and encouraged to attend extra group rehearsals held by the local music hub 'Resonate'. These are advertised and pupils are informed in morning meeting of these sessions. We currently have two pupils attending these.
- Instrumentalists have attended 'Resonate' Youth Orchestra days and Singers have attended 'Gospel' workshops in the local community.
- The school has links with the Valley Brass Band and pupils will be encouraged when available to attend rehearsals on Saturdays to progress and enjoy playing in a group music making environment.
- Brass days attendance and showcases will be encouraged throughout the year for the pupils playing brass instruments.

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.

- Cathedral Trips / Concerts – Reward trips throughout the year to see live musicians and experience local culture.
- Art exhibition – showcasing the Year 11 artwork – this allows for music pupils to work towards a performance for a small audience to gain experience in performing.
- Dixons Liverpool Schools Collaboration events. The Croxteth music pupils supported Dixons Fazakerley Summer Concert and performed at the trust-wide Collaboration Concert in Bradford at St George's Hall.
- December 2026 we will be showcasing students' talent in music, drama and dance in our own Christmas Concert to celebrate and promote the hard work and dedication the pupils have shown in music.
- Community singing event – links are starting to develop with Liverpool Lighthouse Gospel Choir and there will be workshops happening in the school this coming year and opportunities to sing in a larger group at Festivals like African Oye and other events at the Liverpool Lighthouse.
- Plans to do regular evening orchestra visits – with the free tickets for schools offer in the summer of 27 at the Philharmonic.
- External visitors: we will develop links so that students will experience live performances from external sources throughout the year and can watch live performances in and out of the school environment and speak to professional musicians.
- Trust- wide Collaboration Concert, Wed 14 July 2027: students will work towards a performance and travel to Bradford to participate in an academy trust showcase celebrating talent across the trust -23 pupils attended this in the summer of 26

we are hoping to increase numbers as we continue to develop. A soloist was chosen to feature in the Collaboration number with all the participating secondaries and P16 students.

- Dixons Cup – last year 24 pupils entered the Dixons Cup trust-wide music competition and 3 students got points for their age groups – this year we will be hoping for more entries from the school.
- Brass day: showcase working with the Valley Brass Band pupils will attend a brass day with a showcase performance. This was attended by 16 pupils in the summer of 26.
- Liverpool Schools Youth Orchestra – 12 pupils attended a full day workshop and evening concert in the Summer. I would like to increase numbers next year to allow more pupils to opportunity to play with other pupils in a larger orchestra.
- Music in the community – perform for the pensioners Christmas Party – we would also like to look at going out into the community to sing carols in some of the local nursing homes.
- London Trip – June 27 – 50 Pupils will be travelling and staying in London to experience Musical Theatre in a performance of the Lion King and seeing the actors in the London Dungeons.
- Transition Music – opportunities for showcasing of Music Technology work to be played during student transition times.
- Art / Music – Leitmotif competition – design of a character and compose suitable music was popular with lots of entries from Year 8 students.

In the future

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

This is a department in development. Lots of work has begun to offer quality education and opportunities for the students many students have taken advantage of the music provision and there is a 'buzz' around the music department.

The drive in the staff / school for growth is strong, and we are determined to improve the facilities and provisions for students over the coming years.

- Development of music room space and addition of music technology is a priority moving forward. Discussions around the music space / department to find workable solutions – options of additional rooms to house computers to run music technology, or re-designing the current space to make it more viable to run a KS4 course are underway. We also want to ensure this is available for KS3 so they can build up skills towards KS4.
- The school strongly supports the Performing Arts and recognises the importance and need for investment in this area to provide the best opportunities for students. The school is very keen to improve facilities and keen to develop a centre of excellence for music in the city and this will be a focus in the future growth of DCR under the current 5-year plan.
- Addition of music technology to the department – students need to have hands on and gain experience in creating music using music technology – Mrs. Unsworth has been block booking the computer suite to allow all classes to experience and start to develop skills in Music Technology.
- Increase curriculum time for KS3 music to one hour per week for all KS3. This has increased for Year 7 / 8 in the academic year 25-26. It would also be good for Year 9 time to be increased to an hour a week.
- Investment in sound equipment for the hall (performance space) to allow pupils who have worked hard towards a performance to have the best equipment to enhance their performances and allows an audience to have the best experience.
- BTEC music tech award: level two course on offer for September 27 – Mrs. Unsworth experienced in running the course and will keep up to date with the developments and specification.
- More robust monitoring of pupil participation and progress in extracurricular activities and peripatetic lessons. Ensuring instruments are taken home and regular practice is done.
- Increase the peripatetic provision across the school and encourage more student involvement with the Hub provisions.
- More opportunities for performance / showcase throughout the year – small after school recitals, sports events.
- Enriching performance and listening to develop students' understanding and appreciation of music.
- Primary school links and showcase events – liaise with the local primary school to discuss the curriculum provisions and provide live music and performances. Support the primary feeder schools and develop a relationship in the delivery of music at KS2 and transition.
- Cross curricular opportunities with Drama - Musical Theatre showcase – this will develop into full productions in the future.
- Look at more theatre trips / concerts in local venues – providing opportunities to appreciate live music.
- Links with local community groups – Liverpool Lighthouse / Gospel Choir, orchestras and bands in the area to provide more opportunities for our students to experience and gain experience in the performing arts industry.

By implementing these improvements in the department's growth, we aim to provide a robust and dynamic music education that supports the development of our students' musical abilities, develops cultural capital and fosters a lifelong love of music.

Further information

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

- National Plan for Music Education
- Resonate Music Hub
- Model Music Curriculum
- National Curriculum for Music
- Liverpool Philharmonic