



# Music Development Plan Summary: Heatherwood School



## Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026 - 2027
Date this summary was published	January 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	January 2027
Name of the school music lead	Jessica Brown
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Doncaster Music Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	DARTS (Doncaster Arts) Simon Robinson (Musician) Rachel Downs (Makaton Teacher)

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: Our Music Curriculum.

Heatherwood School is a special educational needs school for pupils from the ages of 3 – 19 years who have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Our learning is split into four pathways Sensory, Active, Bridge and Intentional. Our Music Curriculum is embedded across all key stages within pupils' daily routines and explicitly taught music sessions. Our curriculum is informed by the National Curriculum (2014) the Sounds of Intent (2001), The Amber Trust and Flo Longhorn's PMLD Curriculum.

Music at Heatherwood supports pupils' communication, expression, exploration and socialisation. Our Music sessions create a space for our pupils to come together in a social environment for a shared learning experience. Sessions are tailored to support pupils' individual development whilst supporting the growth of friendships and an

awareness of individuals around them. Pupils are encouraged to be self-expressive and exploratory, experiencing different instruments, sounds, stimuli and technologies. Music sessions facilitate our total communication approach, allowing pupils to express their wants, needs and preferences through sound, touch, symbols and signs.

The teaching of Music across our school is outlined across our overarching Sensory and Active Pathway Curriculum and our Music Curriculum which further supports the development of our Bridge and Intentional pupils. Our Active and Sensory pupils experience Music through shared interactions and exploration. The Active and Sensory Pathway Curriculum encourages pupils to develop consistent responses and reactions through utilising a variation of motivating stimuli. This supports pupils in developing joint attention skills, object permanence, anticipation, and the ability to make their own choices. Pupils are actively encouraged to imitate sounds, movements and gestures in response to adults, peers and stimuli. In support of further developing their awareness and understanding the world around them.

Moreover, our Bridge and Intention Curriculum, supports the development of key musical skills including singing, listening and playing musical instruments. Pupils experience opportunities that support their understanding sound, patterns, repetition and action through a range of media. This includes familiar songs, rhymes and different music genres. Through exploring different musical stimuli, pupils develop a range of auditory and listening skillsets including recognising and responding to musical motifs and rhythms. Pupils are encouraged to explore, play and respond to different musical instruments. Furthermore, pupils have the opportunity to explore musical composition and utilise this to communicate their feelings and thoughts. As pupils progress further on the Intentional Pathway, they will delve deeper into the intentions of a sound, motifs and rhythms and begin to compose their own pieces of music. Pupils also have the opportunity to showcase their creativity through performing to small and larger groups.

Additionally, we work in partnership with musical professionals that support our Music Curriculum through delivering bespoke class sessions or 1-1 sessions. This includes DARTS (Doncaster Arts), Simon Robinson (Musician) and Rachel Downs (Makaton Teacher). It is incredibly important to us that we continue to nurture our relationships with outside agencies and professionals to provide our pupils with enriching musical experiences.

## **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.

At Heatherwood we aim to create accessible and inclusive opportunities for our pupils to explore Music outside of explicitly taught music sessions.

We work with Doncaster Arts to facilitate a range of Musical workshops and sessions that take place throughout the year as part of the “All Aboard Music” project. We also work in close partnership with Musician Simon Robinson, who delivers music sessions for classes and on a 1-1 basis. As part of our enrichment timetable each class is provided with the opportunity to work with a music professional for the term. During this time the music professional will liaise with our class teachers to create and facilitate individualised music sessions for each class. Sessions are designed for pupils to experience different sounds, musical motifs and genres through a range of resources. This includes playing instruments, sound buttons, singing, listening and digital technologies. Pupils are also exposed to sound scaping and the composition of music through the exploring different sounds, timings and repetition. This has supported us in creating a love for music and the arts across school. Thus supporting pupils understanding of music, confidence, exploration and enthusiasm.

Additionally, our partnership with Makaton Teacher Rachel Downs has created an opportunity for us to develop our pupil’s communication through musical aspects. Sessions utilise a range of stimuli including objects of reference, photographs and symbols. During these sessions, Pupils experience familiar songs and rhymes alongside Makaton signs and symbols. This has had a significant impact on our pupil’s communication and ability to recall and respond to familiar music. All of these opportunities support us in creating positive musical experiences for our pupils.

Music is also an integral part of pupil’s school day to support daily routines and transitions. This includes transitional music, good morning and goodbye songs, lunch time clubs, circle times and drama circles. Pupils have access to a range of musical instruments within our music cupboard which may be accessed during free choice, lunchtimes and breaktimes.

## **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.

At Heatherwood we also utilise musical opportunities with in our community. This allows our pupils to experience music in a range of contexts.

We work with our local Outwood Academy to facilitate the school’s choir to come and perform to our pupils at school. This often takes place at during special times of the year within our school Calendar such as Christmas and Easter. This is a wonderful experience for our pupils, allowing them to enjoy live music and participate in songs and dance that may be unfamiliar.

Additionally, our pupils are exposed to Music through theatrical events such as “M and M Theatrical Productions. M and M productions provide fun, interactive and immersive pantomime productions. These productions allow our pupils and staff to participate in a traditional pantomime with modern themes, music and humour. The pantomimes are usually centred around familiar stories such as the Wizard of Oz or Aladdin.

Furthermore, Heatherwood annually participates in a “Sign and Sign” Event organised by one of trusted partnerships Doncaster Arts. At this event pupils have the opportunity to perform as part of an ensemble alongside different schools across the city. Pupils have the opportunity to work with a range of music professionals to create a performance that includes Makaton, musical instruments and singing. The performance is tailored by professionals to support pupils’ individual abilities, making the experience really inclusive and celebratory of our pupils. The event is incredibly empowering for our pupils and a chance for them to showcase their wonderful learning.

Over the past two years we have hosted Heatherfest! Heatherfest is a Music Festival that takes place in the summer term in support of our Heatherwood 10 experiences. It allows our pupils, parents and carers to experience the excitement, adrenaline and a passion for live music. We invite a range of musicians, bands and entertainers to come to school and perform for our pupils and their families. The event has been a great success and we have had wonderful feedback from parents and carers. This is something we are going to continue to do over the coming years.

## **In the future**

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

We will continue to create enhancing and meaningful Music experiences across key stages through collaboration and partnerships with professionals within our community. We want to create a love and passion for Musical experiences and the arts and so we will continue to seek out opportunities for our pupils to experience music as part of their enrichment and daily routines.

Moreover, we will continue to work with DARTS to create opportunities for staff CPD in delivering Music sessions. This will support teachers in further developing their confidence and expertise in creating structured and sequential Music sessions.

We will continue to reflect on and evaluate our Music curriculum across all of our 4 pathways to ensure it is providing pupils with the opportunity to explore music in a range of contexts and genres. This includes purchasing supportive materials that will support lessons and provision.

## Further information (optional)

The Department for Education 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: [Music education: information for parents and young people - GOV.UK](#)

Link to our local music hub: [Doncaster Music Hub - Doncaster Community Arts](#)

Link to Doncaster's creative health charity – the largest participatory arts organisation in the UK: [arts - Doncaster's participatory arts charity. We create art with people in Doncaster to improve life, learning & health](#)