

Music development plan summary: Milestone Academy Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024/25
Date this summary was published	16 July 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	1 July 2025
Name of the school music lead	Jack Coleman
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Sarah Goosani
Name of local music hub	Ksent
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.

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.

Milestone Academy is an all-through special school with primary needs of PMLD and ASD. Music forms a fundamental part of our core offer supporting communication and well being at all levels.

The music curriculum at Milestone is meticulously designed with a focus on providing suitable and appropriate progression for our students. This curriculum is not only informed by the model music curriculum from March 2021 but also takes into consideration what works best for special needs of Milestone students. At the core of our curriculum is a focus on taking students on a transformative journey from grasping the fundamental building blocks of music to empowering them to compose music that reflects their individuality and music curriculum is thoughtfully structured to integrate pupil agency and creativity, ensuring that students are at the helm of their musical exploration and learning. This emphasis on autonomy and creative expression is a core value that is consistently upheld within our music curriculum.

Our curriculum is based on the framework provided by Charanga Music, to which the school subscribes. This provides a clear sequence of learning for music concepts alongside a wealth of resources. The resources provided by the programme ensure that teachers have access to music from a diversity of backgrounds and genres, mapped to the appropriate skills students need to acquire according to age and stage.

Our curriculum is underpinned by a spiral approach, strategically utilising all the key building blocks of music in a progressive manner. Students at Milestone engage in a continuous process of revisiting and building upon previously acquired musical knowledge and skills, fostering a deep understanding of musical concepts.

Students at Milestone Academy participate in weekly music lessons as a class, with each session typically lasting between 30 to 45 minutes. This dedicated time enables students to immerse themselves in musical exploration, skill development, and creative expression under the guidance of our expert teaching staff. In addition to this, students use music, dance and song in performances, usually within their Phase, which are performed to families at least once a year. These performances provide great opportunities for students to embed musical skills and practice musicality in context, building confidence in performance and communication.

There are currently no specific music awards but 6th form students experience and develop musical skills in their ASDAN qualification for Performing Arts.

The Milestone Academy music curriculum embodies a holistic and student-centred approach that nurtures a passion for music, cultivates musical proficiency, and promotes creativity and exploration in our students, setting a strong foundation for their musical journey ahead.

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.

Within our school, we offer a comprehensive range of music tuition opportunities beyond regular lesson time, catering to pupils' diverse interests and abilities. Our music department provides one-to-one sessions for individual instruction, small-group classes for collaborative learning, and large-group sessions in various instruments and vocal training.

To ensure continuous progress in music, pupils are supported in honing their talents beyond lesson time. Regular performance opportunities and workshops are provided to help students develop their musical abilities further. The school acknowledges that music serves as a foundational element that threads through various academic

milestones. It is integrated into learning practices across all subjects, aiding emotional regulation, transitioning between activities, and marking celebratory occasions.

Music is not simply an extra-curricular activity but a fundamental aspect of our educational ethos. We recognise its significance in nurturing well-rounded individuals who appreciate the beauty and power of music. Through this holistic approach to music provision, Milestone aims to cultivate a lifelong love for music and provide a platform for pupils to flourish both creatively and personally.

Students are supported to bring their musical skills to productions across Milestone, writing and performing their own music for specific scenes in pantomimes which occur at least twice a year at our Wilmington and Leigh Academy Satellites and other productions such as those at our Dartford Primary Academy Satellite which help to foster and build the skills the students need in future years for productions on a bigger scale. These performances are showcased to parents at school in our drama studio or occasionally on a grander scale, such as the annual Shakespeare Festival when Milestone Students perform on stage at a local theatre every Spring.

Milestone has developed a link with a prominent local music college, SupaJam. This collaboration not only provides further education opportunities for young adults with SEND but also grants access to a working recording studio for Milestone students to record music in a professional environment. This partnership enhances the practical aspect of music education and opens avenues for students to explore music production.

Milestone also has a close working relationship with performing arts charity Square Pegs. The school actively participated in a county-wide project initiated by Square Pegs to write, record, and release an album, showcasing the students' musical talent and creativity on a broader platform. The album was supported by a documentary film and a release to all music streaming services.

Milestone has its own radio station giving opportunities for pupils, depending on age and stage of development, to record music, performances and produce podcasts and radio shows. The school's music lead broadcasts a radio show every Friday to the whole school, encouraging students to request their favourite music.

In summary, through our robust music education programme and collaborations with external organisations, we aim to not only develop musical talent but also cultivate a lifelong appreciation for music in our students. Music at Milestone is not just about learning notes and rhythms; it is about fostering creativity, enhancing academic achievement, and nurturing well-rounded individuals who understand the transformative power of music.

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 the upcoming academic year, students can look forward to engaging with various musical genres and styles, supporting our commitment to a Total Communication approach. The Milestone therapy team works in partnership with the performing arts team and supports all cultural events and performances by teaching the students to sign songs and scripts in shows. Recently an entire phase performed a musical drama with signing to their families as an end of year event. Every student is encouraged and enabled to take part and experience the joy of performance. These opportunities for students to develop communication skills through music and performance are planned alongside and in addition to the Charanga curriculum. Singing and signing is a key part of class and phase assemblies and, where pupils play instruments, they are encouraged to perform in front of peers at such events.

Throughout the academic year, students from different year groups will have the chance to participate in these events either as performers or as part of the audience, ensuring that all students can immerse themselves in the magic of music and performance. We believe that such experiences are invaluable in nurturing creativity, confidence, and a sense of community among our students.

Moreover, our school has established partnerships with local music hubs, music education organisations listed and detailed above. These collaborations enable us to offer unique insights, workshops, and performances that further enhance the overall musical experience for our students.

In addition to our in-house events, we are proud of our participation in the Shakespeare Festival, a prestigious event that celebrates the timeless works of William Shakespeare through music, drama, and literature. This festival presents a wonderful opportunity for our students to showcase their talents on a larger stage and engage with the rich cultural heritage embodied in Shakespeare's works.

Milestone have also recently partnered with the Royal Opera House as Cultural Champions which is a year long national training programme aimed at developing and evolving the strategic direction of creative and cultural learning at Milestone and all its satellites

In the future

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

In the upcoming academic years, students will benefit from the following developments:

- The introduction of Ukulele ensembles provided by Ksent, offering students the opportunity to explore and showcase their musical talents through this unique instrument. This addition aims to diversify the musical offerings available to students.
- A focus on the further integration of music technology into both the curriculum and co-curricular activities. Specifically, the use of Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) will be emphasised for both composition and performance tasks. Additionally, the in-house radio station at Milestone will be utilised across all subjects and phases (currently used in phases 3 and 4). By incorporating DAWs and the radio station into the music programme, students will have the chance to further develop their skills in music production, recording, broadcasting, and editing, aligning with industry standards and technological advancements in the field.
- Staff training in the use of Charanga - as a refresh for current staff and introduction for new staff.
- Collaborative planning opportunities for the music lead and performing arts team to support the inquiry-based curriculum planned in all year groups.

These developments will be introduced gradually throughout the upcoming academic year, with training sessions and workshops planned to familiarise both students and teachers with the new technologies and musical opportunities. We aim to provide a well-rounded and contemporary musical experience for our students, equipping them with essential skills and knowledge for their musical pursuits and, if desired by the student, open doorways into careers within music and the arts.

Further information (optional)

<https://charanga.com/site/>

<https://www.semmuk.com/>

<https://squarepegsarts.com/>

https://account.shakespeareschools.org/festival/festival_index

If your school is part of a multi-academy trust with a trust-wide music development plan, you may also want to include a link to any published information on this plan.