# Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre

## Overview

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| Detail | Information |
| Academic year that this summary covers | 2025 - 2026 |
| Date this summary was published | 18/7/2025 |
| Date this summary will be reviewed | 10/9/2026 |
| Name of the school music lead | Daniel Nock |
| Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different) | Tom Squires |
| Name of local music hub | Service for Education |
| Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place) | Protuition |

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| ***Music Curriculum***  All pupils study music at Key Stage 3, after which it is an option subject at GCSE. Pupils taking GCSE Music receive instrumental or vocal lessons in school free of charge. The implementation of the curriculum must, necessarily, take into account a number of contextual factors in the school which affect the design of the curriculum:   * National frameworks such as the National Curriculum. * Pupils’ prior learning and potential: Some pupils enter the school with a significant level of background musical ability – these pupils frequently need to be significantly challenged in lessons. o A number of pupils take up an instrument upon entering the school – these pupils will often progress quickly. * A large proportion of pupils enter the school with limited musical knowledge. Expected progress through primary education as detailed in the Model Music Curriculum is rare. Although the starting point in Year 7 is, frequently, low, the general ability of pupils means that progress should be significant across Key Stage 3. A number of pupils opt for GCSE Music purely based on their classroom Music experience. * The diversity of cultural heritages within the school. * The broader culture of the school: academically and otherwise. * The resources available. * The planning, delivery and assessment of the curriculum in the context of how this can be managed with a regard to reasonable workload for staff. * The assessment framework of the school (including formal examinations). * What repertoire would both speak to, and challenge, pupils.   KEY STAGE 3 Pupils receive two lessons over two weeks in Year 7 – 9. The ability range and the experience of music can be very wide in Year 7. KEY STAGE 4 Pupils receive five lessons over two weeks. We study the Eduqas GCSE course which is divided up into Performing (30%), Composing (30%) and Listening (40%).  *Information into unit sequencing and learning journey can be found on our website.*  ***Instruments and vocal opportunities for pupils***   * During lessons, pupils will engage in a range of musical activities and performances using the following instruments and skills: * **Singing** – Throughout the year, across all year groups. * **Keyboard** – Practiced consistently across all year groups. * **Tuned and Untuned Percussion** – Used in various projects to develop rhythm and coordination. * **Ukulele** – Focused on in **Year 7**. * **Djembe** – Focused on in **Year 8**.   ***Partnerships***  Our local music hub is run by services for education in Bourneville  ***Music qualifications***  Pupils are encouraged to take instrumental or vocal examinations in peripatetic lessons. They are useful in providing a goal to work towards and indicate the standard attained. Parents/carers will be consulted when we believe it would be a good idea to enter. The decision of whether to go ahead will involve the pupil, parent/carer and teacher.  Piano Club provides pupils with the opportunity to develop their piano skills in a supportive and structured environment. Pupils work through the **ABRSM Initial Grade Piano Book**, building fundamental skills in technique, reading, and musical expression.  For those who make good progress and demonstrate readiness, the teacher will **advise pupils and parents on how to enter for the ABRSM Initial Grade exam**, including guidance on preparation and the entry process. Pupils who choose Music at Key Stage 4 will work towards the  **Eduqas GCSE Music qualification**. The course is divided into three components:   * **Performing (30%)** – Solo and ensemble performance on an instrument or voice. * **Composing (30%)** – Two original compositions, one to a brief and one free choice. * **Listening and Appraising (40%)** – A written exam based on set works and unfamiliar music, covering a broad range of musical styles and genres. |

***Extra-curricular music***

Instrumental and vocal lessons are available with our team of 5 well-qualified and experienced specialist teachers. Pupils can apply for this via our Parent Mail form.

**Commencement**   
Lessons commence at the start of each full term.

**Cost**   
The fee for lessons is £30 per term. This figure is reviewed annually. Lessons are paid termly or annually using Parent Mail.    
  
**Exemptions**   
Pupils who qualify for Pupil Premium, or who take GCSE Music are entitled to free tuition.   
   
**Scheduling**    
Pupils will receive individual lessons of 20 minute or paired lessons of 30 minutes.

\*Steel Pan and Dhol drum lessons are taught as an ensemble so will be taught in small groups for 30 minutes.   
   
**Lessons**   
A minimum of 30 lessons will be offered over the academic year.    
Lessons are scheduled on a rotating basis so that pupils do not miss the same lesson repeatedly.

**Instrument Hire**   
We have a small stock of school instruments which can be hired. Please enquire with the Head of Music ([dnock@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk](mailto:dnock@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk)). These are generally considered ‘starter’ instruments and should only be kept for a short period of time. We ask all families to consider buying an instrument after a maximum of a year.   
   
We cannot guarantee availability of an instrument and we will look into the possibility after you have requested lessons. We do not keep a stock of some instruments.

**Events**   
The department runs a number of concerts and events throughout the year. Pupils should attend as required.

**Rehearsal spaces**  
Rehearsal spaces are available to book via Mr Nock  
  
**Notice**   
A half term’s notice is required to cancel lessons. Lessons can only be stopped at the end of each full term. This gives due warning to the teacher and ensures that the space can be used by another pupil. Parents/carers should write to the Head of Music ([dnock @hillcrest.bham.sch.uk](http://j.watters@camphillboys.bham.sch.uk/)) before the final day of the preceding half term (e.g. to cancel lessons from the Spring Term onwards, the school needs to be notified by the last school day of the first Autumn Half Term). Refunds cannot be issued on lessons already paid. The school also reserves the right to cancel the lessons of any pupil who does not use their lessons profitably or who does not adhere to the terms of the Agreement

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| Club | Teacher | How to apply | Fee | Time | Location |
| Steel Band | Mr Clarke | Apply via parent mail letter | £30 per term (Free to FSM) | Mon 15.15 – 16.15 | Hall |
| Dhol Drums | Mr Singh | Apply via parent mail letter | £30 per term (Free to FSM) | Mon 11.30 – 12.30 | Hall |
| Choir | TBC | Open to all | Free | Tues 15.20 – 16.00 | Hall |
| Keyboard club | Mr Nock | Open to all (Capacity 15 Pupils) | Free | Wednesday  15.20-16.00 | R12 |
| GCSE coursework club | Mr Nock | KS4 | Free | Thurs  15:30 – 16:00 | R12 |

## *Music experiences*

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| 1. The Music Department has an exciting and inclusive programme of events planned for the 2025–26 academic year, designed to encourage both viewing and partaking across the school community. Four major events will take place throughout the year: the Talent Show in the autumn term, the Winter Performance at the end of the autumn term, the school musical *The Boy, the Fox and the Mole* in the spring term, and the Summer Performance to close the year. In each of these events, pupils will be given the opportunity to perform, support backstage, or attend as enthusiastic audience members. Families and the wider school community will also be invited to attend these celebrations of musical talent. 2. In addition to these headline events, pupils will take part in regular bi-weekly performances during assemblies. These provide valuable platforms for solo and group performances, and encourage a culture of sharing music, developing confidence, and celebrating creativity. Pupils from all year groups are encouraged to get involved either as performers or supportive listeners. 3. Throughout the year, there will also be between four and six special performances for Year 6 pupils. These performances aim to showcase the musical journey at the school and offer a welcoming and inspiring experience for incomingstudents. |

***Future plans***

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| We plan to enrich pupils’ musical experiences through an educational trip to Symphony Hall, offering them the chance to witness live professional performances in a world-class setting. This experience will deepen their understanding of orchestral music and provide insight into potential music careers. Within the classroom, we will continue to develop pupils’ skills across a variety of instruments—including singing, keyboard, ukulele (Year 7), and djembe (Year 8)—alongside tuned and untuned percussion. We also aim to expand the use of music technology, enabling pupils to explore composition, recording, and digital music production. Additionally, we are committed to increasing the availability and variety of instrumental lessons, giving more pupils the opportunity to learn an instrument that suits their interests and talents. |