

Music development plan summary: Four Dwellings Academy Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024 - 2025
Date this summary was published	
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2025
Name of the school music lead	D Lovatt
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	
Name of local music hub	Services for Education
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.

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.

The FDA music department has three large teaching rooms: one containing keyboards, so that all pupils develop skills on a musical instrument; one containing enough computers for pupils to work individually or in pairs; one housing a gamelan (belonging to Services for Education), steel pans, a drum kit and enough samba instruments for whole-class performances. The department also has enough chromatic boomwhackers for whole-class use. There are two practice rooms, housing keyboards, guitars and a second drum kit.

At Key Stage 3, pupils receive one hour of classroom music per week. Pupils follow a curriculum based on performing (including singing), composing and appraising music, with opportunities to work individually, in small groups and as a whole class. During KS3, pupils learn several keyboard pieces, giving them a foundation to study at GCSE, even if they haven't had lessons from a visiting music teacher. It is essential that pupils are given enough time to develop their ability on one instrument, as getting better at

playing an instrument takes time and resilience. Pupils learn about music from a variety of different times and places through their performing, composing and appraising work.

At Key Stage 4, pupils receive 3 hours per week of lesson time, following the Eduqas specification. Numbers for September 2024 are the strongest they have ever been at FDA.

All KS3 pupils and KS4 pupils studying music at GCSE have a Soundtrap account for recording, editing and producing music. This can be accessed from both within school and at home. All pupils have access to Teaching Gadget - an interactive online music education resource, for use during and outside of the school day.

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.

Services for Education (SFE) provides instrumental tuition on woodwind, brass, drum kit, guitar and voice. Where appropriate, pupils are loaned an instrument free of charge. Piano lessons are offered within the music department. Pupils are supported to take graded examinations if they wish.

Pupils are taught in groups of around three, in lessons lasting 20 minutes and tuition is free for all pupils.

Pupils have the opportunity to take part in SFE events and ensembles and pupils have participated in public performances in and around Birmingham, including at the SFE Outdoor Festival at the Midlands Arts Centre and at the Youth Proms at Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

Many pupils learn to play the steel pans during after school clubs and the academy has a choir that performs at the Christmas concert and at local events. The music department is open during break and lunch for pupils to work on their own projects, practise their instrument/voice or continue performing or composing work they have started in lessons. These opportunities are open to all pupils.

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.

Well over 10% of the school community takes part in the annual Christmas Concert, with even more pupils attending the evening to support their peers. This event is well supported by pupils' families, as well as the FDA teaching and pastoral staff.

Other opportunities for performance include: entertaining the Tuesday Treasures community group at Christmas, open evening, Culture Day, induction evening, a talent show organised by the City Year mentors and Quinsound (a community concert for Quinton schools).

Pupils from all year groups take part and visiting music teachers play a role in preparing their pupils for performances, attending when they are able.

In the future

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

There has been an increased emphasis on singing recently, which I plan to develop in the coming academic year. Currently, all Year 7 pupils experience singing as part of most lessons and this will be continued as they progress through Key Stage 3.

I plan to develop my approach to teaching the keyboard, focusing on pupils being able to play using both hands together. This approach starts with just one or two bars of music (right hand and left hand), with an insistence that pupils play both parts. In my trial of this approach, only two or three pupils in each year group were unable to play using both hands together for part of the piece being learnt.

Taking the above two points into consideration, I plan to condense my curriculum so that pupils have more time to 'get better' at performing, composing and listening, rather than just 'doing' or 'experiencing' (as suggested by Christopher Stevens - HMI music lead at the SFE music education conference in February 2024).

I plan to look for more opportunities for pupils to experience live music, by finding performances to attend in the local area.