

Music development plan summary: Brays School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	September 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	September 2026
Name of the school music lead	Stuart Tonge
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)	Harry Dawes

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.

Brays School is a primary special day school located in Sheldon Birmingham. All pupils on role have a statement of special educational needs and an Education Health and Care Plan. The school offer places for children with a range of needs. These can include physical difficulties, severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, specific communication difficulties, visual impairment, hearing impairment and multisensory impairment.

Children attending Brays School will usually require augmented and modified curriculum opportunities including an overarching mobility curriculum and a sensory experiential curriculum for our more profound learners.

Our pupils across all Key Stages have timetabled curriculum music of one hour each week of the school year, music lessons are appropriately differentiated, for example pupils working on a multisensory curriculum will focus on listening, awareness of

sound, cause and effect and an appropriate pace of lessons, our pupils working towards a more formal curriculum will develop an understanding of music according to pupils varying musical abilities, interests, preferences and needs.

Pupils access to lessons across a range of instruments and voice, is supported by the schools Thematic curriculum and our pupils weekly access to our multi-sensory music and drama studio, the range of music, songs and instruments pupils have access to changes according to the theme, for example our Indian subcontinent theme gives opportunity for pupils to engage with Indian percussion and drone shruti, our Ice world theme gives access to metallic instruments.

Brays School has a school choir that has opportunity to perform termly at events including special celebrations and a yearly performance for parents at our academy pupil awards event. Our school choir is supported using Makaton signing because many of our pupils are non-verbal but still have access to signing and the use of instruments. The school makes use of its hall for rehearsals and individual practice.

We have a relationship with City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra who provide live performances created specifically for pupils with SEND. We also take advantage of Birmingham's rich multicultural music scene by inviting music performances during special events.

Our music curriculum is informed by Sounds of Intent, a model of musical development that sets out how we all engage with music, from children in the early years to older people with dementia, from those with profound learning difficulties who are still learning to process sound. Sounds of Intent is not specific to a particular style or genre of music; it is meant for music teachers to help them understand how pupils engage with music in different ways and differentiate what they do according to pupil's varying musical abilities, interests, preferences and needs.

Brays School has a partnership with musician and sensory drama practitioner Harry Dawes who coordinates our sensory drama and music space we call The Creative Space, music and drama sessions take place in The Space. It's a place where the children become immersed in the environment, a place outside the classroom where they have their own voice and can express themselves in their own way. The musical activities include the following:

- Active music and sound making using instruments, contextualised by the theme. For example using kazoos with bees or wooden percussion in the forest.
- Using 'sound makers' to create multisensory activities, for example dropping sunflower seeds into metal bowls or bouncing barley on drums.
- Singing/listening to songs to accompany the action, for example improvising a song describing each child's participation.
- Focused listening to the sound environment, for example recordings of seagulls on the beach or the music of Steve Reich accompanying busy bees.

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.

As a special school our pupils are brought into school on buses, so we take opportunities to provide sessions for our musically gifted pupils during lunch times.

Lunch time music clubs open to all pupils that include movement and dance sessions and instrument exploration for our sensory learners. All classes have access to musical instruments in class for use during choice time and play time. Keyboards and percussive instruments are offered to parents free of charge for practice or engagement with music at home and we share links to digital resources for those pupils keen to engage with music at home.

We encourage our parents to engage with out of school provision created specifically for Birmingham's special schools to provide the musical enrichment not possible in school, for example Midland Arts Centre's MAC Makes Music, that include Inclusive Music Practice with Primary aged children and Inclusive Ensembles' these opportunities are usually subsidised, and we ensure to be clear with parents if an opportunity carries a cost.

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.

Planned musical experiences for the academic year include:

Weekly signed singing assemblies. One week focused on our Sensory Learners that include the use of props and resources to make the sessions meaningful and multi-sensory. One week focused on pupils who may be verbal and can sign, making engagement meaningful, sessions are supported by class staff who are actively involved in signing and singing. All pupils are involved in these music sessions as active participants.

Special musical performances include special assemblies and seasonal performances by our pupils performed to class, to pupils during assemblies and to parents. The school choir will perform to pupils, staff and parents during our academy award show.

We intend to continue our links with Birmingham's CBSO discreate performances, these include visits to the CBSO by our sensory learners, pupils are members of the audience for these performances.

We invite a music and drama group to perform a musical story once a year, the event includes our pupils having opportunity of learning simple repeated verses and a selection of pupils from KS2 years 5 and 6 spend the morning rehearsing songs and learning lines as part of the play, performed in our hall to pupils and staff.

We plan to invite musicians to perform during special assemblies, these events involve our school community, parents and staff who share music and culture in the context of special RE focused events, pupils are members of the audience, the events are designed to be interactive involving dance and the exploration of the instruments and costumes used.

In the future

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

The school is developing its curriculum provision in the context of a Thematic curriculum, teachers have input into the delivery and planning of timetabled weekly sessions, the school has also appointed a DHT with responsibility for curriculum so the person with TLR responsibilities for Music will monitor and support the teaching of Music across school. The development of our curriculum provision is ongoing and is centred around two half termly teaching staff curriculum development meetings. The school has a relationship with Music Services our local music hub, we will seek advice on supporting our pupils with a gift for music, we currently support a pupil with weekly 1:1 music session.

Further information

The following information informs our approach to teaching music in the context of our setting and our learners:

Soundabout - Uses music, sound, and silence to create opportunities where Learning Disabled people with complex support needs thrive. [Soundabout](#)

Soundabout Live: <https://www.youtube.com/c/Soundabout/playlists>

Mac Makes Music: Upcoming training and current resources from Mac Makes Music, including 'Inclusive Music Practice with Primary aged children', 'Inclusive Ensembles' and more. <https://macbirmingham.co.uk/mac-makes-music/hubs-training>

IMAGINE: Deafness and Hearing Loss YouTube, useful Makaton and BSL music signs and songs <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQGaxtXrC9EHllyzDJ5ZfOQ/playlists>

Andy Pidcock: Lots of songs for children with additional needs.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdFGTJV9ZO_mdQszgXXoIF-BkK4h5s7t0

Soundbeam: Touch free' musical device that uses sensor technology to translate movement into music and sound' <https://www.soundbeam.co.uk/>