

Presdales School



‘Achievement for All’

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Presdales Music Development Plan Academic Year 2024-2025

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This is a summary of how our school delivers music education to all our students 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 students and parents or carers understand what our school offers and who we work with to support our students' music education.

CURRICULUM MUSIC

Music is taught at KS3 through a weekly 50-minute lesson and is guided by the National Curriculum for Music. It is a cyclic curriculum revisiting the following musical areas: singing, keyboard skills, whole class percussion ensemble, reading rhythmic notation and pitch notation on the staff, the orchestra and musical stories, pop and rock, composition, digital music making, listening and appraising. An overview of the KS3 curriculum is seen below.



PRESDALES MUSIC DEPARTMENT 2024-2025 Curriculum Map Overview

MUSIC	Autumn 1		Autumn 2	Spring 1		Spring 2	Summer 1		Summer 2
Year 7	Rhythm & Pitch and The Language of Music. Reading, writing, performing rhythms in 4 time 	C L A S S	Songs for Carol Service C major scale 5 finger technique, extending keyboard skills. 	Lunar New Year  3 part percussion ensemble and rhythmic composition	C L A S S	Pentatonic Scale  	The Orchestra and Musical Stories "Animal ~Magic" 	C L A S S	Chord sequences and song performances  
Year 8	Djembe Drumming and South African song 	C O N C E R T S	Keyboard skills. 	The Planets Suite, listening and performing 	C O N C E R T S	Composing a class Planets Suite 	Digital Disco compositions 	C O N C E R T S	Rehearsing and performing a Disco song in a small group.  
Year 9	Samba and Latin American song 		Keyboard skills and singing carols. Christmas community performance 	Tempo, Timbre and Texture which elements are adapted to create music for a wildlife documentary? 		Composing for a Wildlife Documentary  Digital Composition	Sisters are Doing it For Themselves Female singer songwriters - performing & band skills 		Performing and composing a song for Presdales Rocks  

Termly class concerts allow students to perform their own music, music prepared outside of curriculum time, from one-to-one tuition, or perform their version of music learned in class.

In the summer term, students can enhance their keyboard and singing skills by learning a band instrument such as a guitar, bass guitar, or drum kit during class lessons.

Sixth Form Volunteers

As part of the sixth form volunteering programme, we have a number of 6th form students who attend KS3 music lessons as volunteer teaching assistants.

Assessment

Teachers frequently assess and monitor students' work. Written work in response to listening to music is done through Google Classroom, with feedback given to students. Composition and performance work is video recorded and assessed using the Music Department criteria which is in line with the school reporting policy. Self-assessment and self-evaluation of progress is regularly used via Google Quiz which allows staff to compare data across the KS3 classes and identify areas of strength or uncertainty.

Self Determination Theory

This motivational theory developed by Ryan and Deci in 2000 inform the way we teach Music at Presdales. This theory looks at the students' psychological needs of competency, autonomy and relatedness. We aim to allow students choice over the level at which they work so they can demonstrate competency, give them autonomy over the way they work, and listen to their request for further support or greater challenge. For example, in Year 9 Spring Term we learn how to write music for a wildlife documentary. Students will be allowed to choose the wildlife clip for which they compose, and whether they want to compose using keyboards, a group of acoustic instruments, using Bandlab Sounds on their Chromebook or using Bandlab instruments, Students will choose their own pathway, one they feel will give them the best outcome. This autonomy over their work improves their motivation. The same composition assessment criteria will be applied to all compositions.

Extra Curricular Music

Students currently have the opportunity to take part in lunchtime and after school music clubs to further their skills and musical experience. All years can sing with Show Choir, more experienced singers with Chamber Choir. Staff from Hertfordshire Music run a Flute choir, single Reed Group and Cello Group. The school orchestra rehearses for string, wind and brass players weekly as does our after-school string group. With the aim to give sixth-form music more of a unique identity Jazz Band began in September 2025 to create a group of a high standard that can serve both

classically trained and pop or rock musicians. A new club called The Alternative Music Lounge for students to share more unusual styles of music they enjoy, will begin this term. All extracurricular music clubs are free to attend.

Gold Arts Award

The Music Department is leading the Gold Arts Award for Year 12 students. This is open to anyone interested in gaining a level 3 qualification that carries 16 UCAS points. We currently have 6 students working towards this qualification which aims to extend and develop personal arts skills in any art form, build career development, research and leadership skills.

Student led groups

We strongly encourage student led bands and groups to rehearse during break and lunch and have a practice room booking system in place to support the high level of demand for rehearsal space. Our Year 9 band performed throughout the Year 7 Open Evening for over two hours, having selected and rehearsed their own choice of repertoire. Presdales Rocks our summer music event featured 2 hours of pupils led groups and singer songwriters.

Instrumental Tuition

We offer instrumental tuition through Hertfordshire Music Service and a small number of employed instrumental teachers. We offer a 20-minute or 30-minute individual lesson, a shared 30-minute lesson or a group 30-minute lesson on all instruments. Lesson currently being taught includes: Violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, piano, drum kit, guitar and bass guitar, trumpet, french horn.

Students in Receipt of Student premium receive 100% remission of fees, whilst GCSE students benefit from 15 minutes of free tuition taken from either a 20-minute or 30-minute lesson. A level Music students receive 30-minute free instrumental tuition.

MUSICAL EXPERIENCES

Class Concerts

Students in all year groups from Year 7 through to A level musicians have the opportunity to perform in front of their peers. KS3 class concerts happen once a term, with Year 9 classes having choice over this. Students can either perform a song, keyboard or percussion piece learned in their class lessons, a solo piece taken from an instrumental or vocal lesson, or a piece they have rehearsed with friends. GCSE and A level musicians have slightly more formal requirements to prepare them for the performance coursework elements of their studies.

School Concerts

In school concerts are open to all. The programme always includes an item from class music lessons, so every student has the opportunity to take part. We hold an Autumn and Spring Concert in the school hall, with Presdales Rocks being held either outside or in the hall depending on the weather! There is a small ticket charge of £6 with those in receipt of Student Premium having free entry.

St Mary's Church, Ware

The annual school Carol Service is held in St Mary's Church, Ware, with whom we are developing a strong collaborative relationship. A retiring collection is held for the church and for the school charity of the year. We also hold our Leavers Recital for Year 11 and Year 13 soloists at the church and enjoyed our first Choral Evensong in July 2025 with the Chamber Choir singing alone and with St Mary's Church choir. The new church Director of Music has met with Head of Music to discuss the possibility of an organ scholar programme, chorister programme.

Soloists Concerts

Also in collaboration with St Mary's Church, we have begun a bi-annual soloists concert for GCSE and A Level musicians. The first is held in September, the second in late April before students depart for exam leave. This allows students to share the pieces they have prepared for their course and for parents and the local community to enjoy hearing quality music. The concert was free to take part, and free for the audience.

Ashview and Riverside Place Care Homes

In December 2024 two Year 9 classes sang traditional Christmas carols and contemporary Christmas songs in these two care homes. Students were out of school for the duration of their class music lesson. Instrumentalists from each class had the opportunity to play cello, violin, flute, guitar and bass guitar, whilst others joined in with hand percussion and hand chimes. Both classes found this to be a hugely enjoyable and rewarding experience and one which we intend to repeat.

Musical Theatre Production

In February each year the Music and Drama departments collaborate to present a musical theatre production in the school hall. Auditions for lead roles are held at the end of the summer term each year, with chorus roles, open to all, being added in the Autumn term. Our 2025 production is Bugsy Malone and being accompanied by live band.

Summer Recitals

In the summer term recitals for families of instruments occur early evening for both students learning in school and those having tuition outside of school. Parents and

friends are invited to attend. The woodwind, brass, singing, guitar and drum kit recitals are held in the main music classroom. The string and piano recitals are held in the dining room. These are fantastic opportunities to perform to a wider audience than the class concert, but smaller than a whole school concert in the hall. Recitals are kept to around 1 hour. It also gives parents the opportunity to meet instrumental staff.

London Theatre Trip

September 2024 saw the first of our annual theatre trips for Year 8. 91 students travelled to London's West End to see a performance of The Lion King, to fit in with their curriculum music topic of Djembe Drumming and African Song. Students in receipt of Student Premium had the option of the amount they wanted to contribute.

Workshops

In October 2025 Year 8 will experience African storytelling and dance workshops led by IROKO Theatre Company. This will link to their djembe drumming experience in class music lessons. Students will select and combine two or more art forms to create a new piece of work in the lessons following these workshops.

Barbican

In March 2025 GCSE and A level music pupils watched a Half Six Fix concert at the Barbican performed by the LSO. An introduction and explanation of Berlioz Symphonie Fantastique preceded the performance of the symphony which A level students study as part of the development of the symphony. GCSE students benefited from seeing a professional orchestra live and being in a large concert venue. The one hour concert time worked very well for pupils and made a mid-week trip manageable. We are repeating the trip in March 2026 to see Dvorak's New World Symphony no. 9.

In the future

We are reviewing the layout of the department to make the use of room more effective for both curriculum and extra-curricular music.

As well as whole class singing and whole class keyboard skills we want to build on our rhythmic ensemble work. We have aims for whole class drumming, following a notation based course for snare drum and want to develop rhythmic notation whilst developing learning by ear and other forms of notation elsewhere in the curriculum.

We are raising the aspirations and profile of the Chamber Choir by taking them on a day trip to Cambridge in December 2025. They will have a 2 hours rehearsal in Gonville and Caius College chapel with a professional choral leader on the staff team of National Youth Choir. Chamber Choir will perform a twilight concert in the parish church of St Andrew's, Cherry Hinton.

