

Music development plan summary: St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Coventry

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-25
Date this summary was published	September 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	Summer term 2025
Name of the school music lead	Mrs Hilary Mills
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Miss Vivien McDonald, Headteacher
Name of local music hub	Coventry Music Hub
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

Music is very much a part of the education received by pupils at St Augustine's. Each fortnight, children gather together to sing during Hymn Practice. Each 30 minute session will include a warm up and learning or rehearsing the hymns and responses to be sung at Mass the following week. Normally, children from Reception and Key Stage 1 sing together, followed by the children in Key Stage 2 – they are accompanied and led by a professional musician and accompanist, together with the Music Lead. Occasionally, the whole school will join together in Hymn Practice. This important and regular part of the St Augustine's children's musical experiences – of preparing for and singing the fortnightly Mass at our local church - is key in developing their liturgical awareness, as well as listening skills. With each year group leading the Mass from Year 2 upwards, the children read scripture, prepare prayers and are given the opportunity to choose the hymns that will be sung at Mass.

St Augustine's works in partnership with Coventry Music Hub. Until last year, their staff provided whole class instrument tuition (guitars and then recorders) to year groups within Key Stage 2. Through the Music Hub, the school has an annual subscription to

Charanga. This scheme of work provides plans and ideas for Reception up to Year 6 – a spiral approach is used to ensure skills and knowledge are built upon. Reception children follow the ‘Original Scheme’ through weekly teacher input which is then extended into their continuous provision. Teachers of pupils in Key Stage 1 and Year 6 also use Charanga – but use the ‘English Model Music Development Scheme’. Lessons are fortnightly and are timetabled for 45 minutes. Throughout the year, children of all ages are taught to develop skills in musicianship, singing, playing instruments, improvising, composing and performing. Pupil feedback indicates that children across the school, including those with SEND or have EAL, very much value and enjoy these Music lessons.

Affiliated to the National Schools Singing Programme, the Archdiocese of Birmingham launched its own Diocesan Schools Singing Programme in September 2023. Delivered by Choral Directors, the Programme currently involves primary schools across Solihull, Nuneaton and Coventry – including St Augustine’s and the other primary schools within the Holy Cross Catholic MAC. The purpose of the Programme includes supporting the national curriculum for Music in school as well as the music within parish liturgies.

Last year, Choral Directors delivered the initial phase of the Singing Programme to children at St Augustine’s in Years 4, 5 and 6. This year, delivery has been extended to include the first year of the Programme in Year 3, the second year in Year 5 and a Keyboard Programme (also incorporating singing) in Year 4. Children receive a timetabled weekly 30 minute lesson. This pattern of delivery is the same across all the Holy Cross Catholic MAC primary schools.

Part B: Extra-curricular music making

Children in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to join the School Choir. This is led by the Music Lead each Tuesday after school for an hour. There is no audition – the only prerequisite is that children enjoy making music together and are keen to work together as a team. In addition to preparing music for the fortnightly Mass, the children also learn and prepare music for other occasions. They take their voices to sing and entertain residents at local care homes and prepare music for large scale musical events. Choir members take part in the Young Voices concerts and have performed in concerts at other schools, Coventry Cathedral, the Belgrade Theatre, Warwick Arts Centre and The Royal Albert Hall in Coventry. Many opportunities come through the links made the education arm of Armonico Consort, as well as with other schools and the Cathedral. The children really appreciate the opportunities afforded by performing alongside others (both their peers and professional musicians), often in world class and even iconic venues.

Whilst a nominal charge has been introduced for choir membership this year, and there is an expectation for a contribution towards travel costs, because St Augustine’s is very supportive and encouraging of music making outside of school, they subsidise these exciting external opportunities where possible.

Part C: Musical events and performances

Currently staff, pupils and their parents look forward to three big musical events each year – the Nativity presented by children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1; the Carol Concert led in St Augustine's Church by our Key Stage 2 pupils; and the Year 6 production held at the end of the school year.

A year group from each key stage also takes part in an annual music festival, 'The Mousike Ensemble', which involves children from other primary schools in the city. Each year there is a theme which provides a holistic link to another part of the curriculum (previously this has included the environment and geography). This year, children in Year 2 and Year 3 will be taking part.

As part of preparation of their first Holy Communion, children from Year 3 prepare a special musical performance, which has sometimes involved signing alongside music.

In previous years, we have called upon colleagues at Coventry Music Hub to give whole school performances (sometimes run twice – once for the older and once for the younger pupils). Particularly popular has been the 'rock concert' (actually involving a variety of genres and encouraging interaction from the children) which last occurred in the summer of 2023. It is intended to offer something similar to all pupils again in this academic year.

In the future

The development of music and musical opportunities within the school is always evolving. St Augustine's Music Lead has been seconded to the Holy Cross Catholic MAC for half a day each week as Primary Music Lead. She envisages part of this new role to include extending the links between the primary school and, in conjunction with the Diocesan Programme Director, establish a MAC Choir. It is intended that this choir would perform together within a cathedral setting during the year. Links have already been made with the Gabrieli Consort to sing at a concert in December.

Work in building the confidence of the young singers in the School Choir may make it possible to introduce school-based performances this year, including school assemblies, short performances to parents and providing communion music during Mass.

It is anticipated that the existing links with Coventry Music Hub, Coventry Cathedral and Armonico Consort will also provide more performance opportunities this year and beyond.