

Music Development Plan Summary: South Dartmoor Community College Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2026-2027
Date this summary was updated	15.09.2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	01.10.2027
Name of the school music lead	Ralph Wickenden
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Emma Gallagher
Name of local music hub	Devon Music Education Hub

This is a summary of how South Dartmoor Community College 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.

Introduction

Music at South Dartmoor Community is thriving, with high participation and a large concert programme. Students enjoy music lessons and we have a healthy uptake at KS4 and numerous key student leaders in KS5. Students collaborate in a community that blends all ages and abilities including our primary feeder students. This development plan focuses on music at the college, whilst it works alongside our Creatives Arts Mark Development Plan which demonstrates fully our cross-arts philosophy and collegiate approaches. Music is conducted at a high-quality standard in all year groups, with professional techniques and values at the forefront of our work. Many students go on to Music Academies, Universities and into professional work in the industry after finishing studies at South Dartmoor – many revisiting us at concert times or for workshops.

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 students can achieve.

This section addresses the content taught during lesson time, the duration dedicated to music lessons, and the music qualifications or awards that pupils can attain.

An overview of the music curriculum for each year group is available on the South Dartmoor Community College website:

[South Dartmoor Community College - Creative Subjects](#)

The music curriculum supports students in developing the three 'pillars of learning; technical, constructive, and expressive, which in turn support the skills of performing, composing, and analysis. These elements are integrated into our teaching framework, with adaptations to suit our learners and our specific educational setting.

Key Stage 3 – Years 7-9

- Year 7, 8 and 9: 2 hours per fortnight
- Years 7-9 REACH Option: 2 hours per fortnight – students can select to study further music (e.g. guitar teaching, pop song writing, Year 8 band)

Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
7	The Natural Instrument Students develop singing through class songs and small ensemble pop songs. Students also learn to rap to a high level of sophistication. The focus is on building teamwork, vocal technique, good singing ability and confidence.	Rhythm Students learn about the origins of stave notation. They create rhythm pieces using group voices and percussion. This enables a genuine approach to learning how to write and read notation. Story Telling and Sound Students study Asian Music – telling stories using Asian techniques, sounds, instruments blended with Western Orchestral sounds. This develops programmatic composition skills as well as developing ensemble playing in groups using a variety of familiar and unfamiliar instruments.	Story Telling and Sound Continued Students study Asian Music – telling stories using Asian techniques, sounds, instruments blended with Western Orchestral sounds. This develops programmatic composition skills as well as developing ensemble playing in groups using a variety of familiar and unfamiliar instruments. Medieval Music Students perform or compose medieval melodies on keyboard instruments learning essential keyboard technique. This enables a genuine approach to learning how to write and read notation.
8	Music Travels Starting in Africa with drumming and songs, we then look at the slave trade and how this brings African and European music together through protest songs and blues. Students work on keyboards and	Music Travels Blues develops into reggae and cross-rhythmic fusion styles. Students learn to perform a whole reggae song as a band or as a whole class – combining drum kit, bass and electric guitar, guitars, keyboards, vocals.	Music Travels Students look at classical music – the European element of fusion styles – developing reading skills, keyboard styles, harmony understanding whilst learning pieces by great composers. Students learning other instruments are always encouraged to play

	other suitable band instruments.		these in all modules, but this is a particularly suitable moment to showcase graded players.
9	Fusion Students study a range of fusion styles including bhangra, musicals. These build on the work of Year 8 and lead to advanced ensemble performances using all available instruments and voices. This is a unit that focuses on what it is to be a performer in the real world of artistic music.	Modern Composition Techniques Students compose pieces using a variety of classical contemporary techniques such as serialism, minimalism, soundscapes, using instruments in new ways, sound effects, vocal effects. This is a unit that focuses on what it is to be a composer in the real world of artistic music.	Music and Media Students explore film music through both performance and composition. Students can select a core focus of style ranging from Anime through to Hollywood and TV. All elements and instruments are available at the end of KS3 as students develop end pieces demonstrating their skills.

Alongside all schemes of work modules, students also have regular opportunities to play in ukulele ensembles, learn popular music songs, develop ensemble percussion work such as African Drumming and Samba.

Key Stage 4 – Years 10-11

- Years 10 and 11 Option Choice: GCSE Music 6 hours per fortnight in Year 10; 5 hours per fortnight in Year 11.
- [GCSE Music | Eduqas](#)

From September 2027: Both Years 10 and 11 will have 6 hours per fortnight.

Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
10	Students focus on: Sonority Rhythm Ensemble Playing	Students focus on: Tonality and Harmony Melody Free Composition	Students focus on: Texture Expression Style

		Solo and Ensemble Playing	Free Composition Solo and Ensemble Playing
11	Students focus on: 2 set works – <i>Badinerie</i> by Bach and <i>Toto</i> by Africa Free and Set Brief Composition (NEA) Solo and Ensemble Playing (NEA)	Students focus on: All Listening work – written paper exam in summer term Free and Set Brief Composition deadlines (NEA) Solo and Ensemble Playing deadlines (NEA)	Students focus on: All Listening work – written paper exam in summer term

Key Stage 5 – Years 12-13

- Years 12 and 13 Option Choice: BTEC Music Performance, A Level Music 9 hours per fortnight.
- We also offer BTEC Performing Arts in Drama and Dance, although Music is an integrated part of this dependent on student interest and unit choice.
- [AS and A Level Music | Eduqas](#)
- [BTEC Nationals | Music Performance \(2018\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
BTEC Music 12	Students focus on: Ensemble Performance – session styles	Students focus on: Ensemble Performance – session styles	Students focus on: Ensemble Performance – session styles - assessment
BTEC Music 13	Students focus on: Practical Music Theory and harmony	Students focus on: Professional Practice in the Music Industry Practical Music Theory and harmony	Students focus on: Submission of work
A Level Music 12	Students focus on: Jazz 1900-1960	Students focus on: Jazz 1900-1960	Students focus on: C21st Music – set work by Sally Beamish

	Symphony – 1750-1810 Set work – Haydn <i>Symphony No 104</i> Solo and Ensemble Playing Composition based on witchcraft and techniques associated with this genre	C21st Music – 6 key composers and their music Symphony – 1750-1810 Set work – Haydn <i>Symphony No 104</i> Solo and Ensemble Playing Composition based on classical period styles and techniques associated with the genres that are used	Symphony – 1810-1900 Set work – Mendelssohn <i>Italian Symphony</i> Solo and Ensemble Playing – start preparing for recital exam Composition based on classical period styles and techniques associated with the genres that are used – preparation for NEA work
A Level Music 13	Students focus on: Revise Jazz 1900-1960 C21st Music – set work by Thomas Ades Symphony – 1750-1900 – develop thematic links and examples Performance – prepare for recital to visiting examiner in March NEA Composition work – 2 pieces	Students focus on: Revise Jazz 1900-1960 and C21st Music Revise Symphony – 1750-1900 Performance – prepare for recital to visiting examiner in March NEA Composition work – 2 pieces – deadline after Easter	Students focus on: Revise Jazz 1900-1960 and C21st Music Revise Symphony – 1750-1900 Exam in June. NEA Composition work – 2 pieces – deadline.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

At South Dartmoor Community College, inclusion and equity are at the heart of our curriculum. We are committed to ensuring every student can access and succeed within the music curriculum. We recognise that some students may need additional, often temporary, support to achieve this. Our music department works closely with the SENDCO to make the music curriculum fully accessible to learners with SEND.

[South Dartmoor Community College - SEND](#)

Year 7 High Performing Academy

At South Dartmoor, our most committed and able students in Year 7 have extension workshops in Music, Dance and Drama:

[South Dartmoor Community College - Year 7 High Performing Academy](#)

Additional Music Qualifications

At South Dartmoor Community College, students have the opportunity to supplement their curriculum learning with graded music examinations. Delivered by peripatetic teachers, these extra qualifications cover brass, woodwind, strings, music theory, drum kit, piano, vocal, guitar and bass guitar.

Partnerships

At South Dartmoor Community College, we work closely with Devon Music Education Hub, running a music school after timetable for our feeder primaries and KS3 students. This also combines our less common instrumental areas such as brass, cello and gives an opportunity for Devon Music Hub to teach in smaller groups and offer ensemble playing – percussion, strings, junior orchestra, guitar ensembles.

SCL Role

The Head of Creatives (Music) is also the Subject Community Lead across the whole WeST Academy with strong links developing with schools in Cornwall, Plymouth and Ivybridge. This includes an aligned KS4 GCSE scheme of work, and an Academy performance festival called West Fest in which Music, Dance and Drama work is shared across the academy and across all year groups once a year in June.

Part B: Extra-curricular Music and Music Tuition

This is about opportunities for students to sing and play music, outside of lesson time, including choirs, ensembles and bands, and how students can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

This section highlights the vibrant opportunities at South Dartmoor Community College for students to learn instruments, sing, and share their music beyond lesson time. Students engage in a wide variety of ensembles and groups, providing rewarding experiences to create, perform, and develop musical skills while enjoying the lively and inclusive music community.

In addition to all the opportunities below, the music department maintains an open-door

policy during breaks and lunchtimes, inviting students to rehearse, express themselves musically, and develop their skills in a supportive, safe, and encouraging environment. We have 4 rehearsal spaces and 8 practice rooms. There are numerous student bands and small ensembles – reflected in our concert programme below. Many students also use Music areas as a safe space at these times which we are proud of.

Instrumental & Vocal Groups & Clubs

South Dartmoor Community College offers a large range of music clubs, instrumental and vocal ensembles, open to all students across every year group. All are offered free of charge.

Rehearsals and activities take place in specialist spaces within the music department and instrumental rooms. All groups perform regularly both within the school and the local community.

More Information: [South Dartmoor Community College - Clubs](#)

Choir

Our enthusiastic choir of 80+ welcomes anyone who loves to sing or wants to develop their voice and make new friends. The choir's repertoire includes pop, rock and classical music, all supported by an excellent live band or at Christmas piano and orchestra.

Year Bands

We run year bands for every year group – 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, Sixth Form. These combine singers with live band players, and they perform music selected by the students themselves as well as by staff.

College Production

Our amazing annual production, boasting over 100 students each year, professional band, sound and lighting attract sell-out crowds and rave reviews. In addition, we run a tri-annual live opera performance.

Jazz Band

Our vibrant Jazz Band comprises young musicians passionate about jazz standards and contemporary jazz arrangements.

Folk Scene

Our popular folk ensemble – now running for 30 years – perform music from local and home traditions as well as world music.

Chamber Orchestra

Our small but strong orchestra, play music from films as well as classical genres.

Male Voice Choir

Does what it says on the tin – a choir for boys.

Peripatetic Instrumental Lessons

Learning an instrument or singing, at any level, is both enjoyable and deeply rewarding. At South Dartmoor Community College, specialist peripatetic teachers provide personalised one-on-one or small group music lessons tailored to each student's needs. This instruction offers students the chance to explore a wide range of instruments, enriching their musical education in a supportive and diverse environment.

Instrument choices include:

- Brass (Trumpet, Cornet, Trombone, etc.)
- Flute, Clarinet & Saxophone
- Drum Kit
- Guitar - Electric & Acoustic
- Electric Bass Guitar
- Keyboard & Piano
- Singing (including musical theatre specialism)
- Violin and Cello

More information: [South Dartmoor Community College - Instrumental Lessons](#)

Currently 16.25% of the college learn a musical instrument.

Part C: Musical experiences

This is about all the other musical events and opportunities that we organise.

Throughout the academic year, a range of exciting musical opportunities take place, With several performances each term. These events provide invaluable experiences for our students to showcase their talents and contribute to the community.

Term	Events	Information
Autumn 1	Autumn Concert	All college ensembles

	Year 7HPA Sharing	Academy sharing of creative work in music, dance and drama
Autumn 2	College Production Carols on Tour Carol Service	Main show – all years Orchestra, Choirs, Folk travel local venues including Exeter, Buckfast Abbey Full service followed by community folk singing
Spring 1	Live Sessions	Opportunity for student created work – bands, solos, small groups
Spring 2	Body Language Dance Festival Spring Concert	Including primary workshops, live music for dance All college ensembles plus primary music centre ensembles (Strings, guitars, percussion, brass, junior orchestra)
Spring 1	Classical Music Concert	Recital style evening with solos on a range of instruments
Summer 1 Summer 2	Creatives in the Making Art Exhibition Summer Gala Concert Various Community Events Percussion Concert	A cross-arts event with art, photography, DT, Catering joining dance, drama and music showcasing a range of artwork Art from GCSE/A Level with live Music All college ensembles Such as Bovey Tracey Big Green Fun Day, Moretonhampstead Music Festival Showcase of our Percussion Academy work

Students can join all groups and also can attend concerts for free. Participation rates are high with 10% of the college in the choir, 13% in the show and 20% across all musical opportunities. All concerts are free for adults resulting in sold out events of over 250. We have a tradition of ex-students also supporting our events.

Students take part in the huge range of local cultural opportunities including local youth theatres, art centres and gigs.

All students experience regular professional music workshops at college which have included percussion workshops, string quartets, chamber music, male voice singing and more. We also welcome professional musicians who regular play with our students in shows and concerts. Over the years this has included professional bands for our production and an orchestra for our opera.

In the future

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

- We are looking to expand space – music is growing and rehearsal space is already at capacity. Class sizes require more break-out spaces. This is becoming a national concern as it affects noise levels and the ability to produce high standards of sound creativity.
- From September 2027: Years 10 and 11 will have 6 hours per fortnight.