

Music development plan summary: Queen Elizabeth High School

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-25
Date this summary was published	January 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2026
Name of the school music lead	Laura Tindall
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Jason Blair
Name of local music hub	Northumberland Music
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	N/A

Part A – the music curriculum.

'Everyone has a lifelong right to fulfilment through music'

Curriculum structure

Year 9

All students in year 9 have one hour of Music per week and engage in a curriculum where the key components of listening and appraising, performing and composing are taught. The curriculum is interwoven with ongoing opportunities to practice performance skills, notation, musical elements and composition devices within a given context, for example, Popular Music.

Students have the opportunity to incorporate the playing of their own instrument/voice, thereby always giving stretch and challenge opportunities to the more able and those who have additional lessons.

GCSE

The course studied is the Eduqas GCSE Music course which is assessed through the following components:

Listening (40%)

Performing (30%)

Composing (30%)

Summer 2025 saw the second cohort through the Eduqas course and results were very good. The average points score was 6.29, above the estimate of 5.57.

93% of students achieved a grade 4 or above with 86% of students achieving grades 9-5 and 43% of students achieving grades 9-7.

Sixth form enhancement

Students have the opportunity to study Music Theory up to Grade 8 and have one-to-one or small group tuition.

Part B – musical involvement – instrumental / vocal lessons and ensembles

Instrumental lessons

Current data

We offer lessons in the following instruments/voice taught by visiting specialist teachers:

piano; singing; flute; saxophone; clarinet; guitar; bass guitar; drum kit; trumpet; trombone; tuba; euphonium; violin, accordion, harp.

Approximately 70 students at QEHS have instrumental or vocal lessons. These are paid for directly by the parent to the teacher, or in the case of PP students, parents can apply to the Student Support Fund for help with the cost of lessons. PP+ students have their lessons entirely funded.

Ambition for 2026 and how we are addressing this

While the number of students having instrumental/vocal lessons in school is slightly down on the previous year, the ambition remains that 10% of the school population (approx 130 students) have instrumental or vocal lessons. This will happen through continuous promotion of lessons in curriculum lessons and in assemblies as well as throughout the year on the school's social media pages, parent newsletter and in the summer term to new, incoming students.

The reduction in funding from PP students has had a knock-on effect as well as it being a concern of pupils that they 'miss curriculum lessons' and as a result, a significant number of students source tuition elsewhere, for example, at Core Music or with a private tutor.

PP funding

Parents can now apply for funding through the school's Pupil Support Fund. PP+ students' lessons continue to be funded.

Ensembles

There is a broad range of extra-curricular opportunities as well as some which are cross-trust and therefore are open to both pupils from QEHS and HMS. These are run by Music staff and Peripatetic Music staff:

- String Ensemble (QEHS/HMS)
- Show Choir (QEHS/HMS)
- Orchestra (QEHS/HMS)
- Jazz Band (QEHS)
- Soul Band (QEHS)
- Youth Theatre (QEHS)
- Wind Band (QEHS)
- Flute Ensemble (QEHS)
- QEHS Choir (QEHS)
- Northumbrian Pipes (QEHS/HMS)
- Hydroholics (student-led)

2025-2026 opportunity

The hope for this year is that the ensembles listed above continue to go from strength to strength.

The school continues to fund the provision of these ensembles, for example, in hiring in the leaders of the groups who are peripatetic staff.

PART C Musical Performances

Summary of 2024-2025

The was the continuation of the tradition of two music concerts per year, one in Winter and one in Spring, as well as a Youth Theatre production in January. There was also the inclusion of a brand new performance called 'Songs from the Shows'.

The music concerts involve a range of extra-curricular groups and soloists and would taking place in the Winter Gardens to sell-out audiences. This year also saw the

inclusion of more HMS parents at the concerts given the nature of the joint groups. The Youth Theatre production has recently been 'Grease' and 'Oliver' and takes place in the Main Hall. 'Songs from the Shows' which was performed over three evenings and was very successful, involved students from both QEHS and HMS and was performed in the QEHS theatre.

There have been additional performance opportunities for QEHS students, for example, at the RGS Big Play Day (Sept 2024) HMS Christmas Carol Service at Hexham Abbey (Dec 2024), Hexham Christmas Lights Switch-On (Nov 2024) and at various Open Evenings and Celebration Evenings spread throughout the year.

We also hosted Samling Institute for a taster session with QEHS/HMS singers and a performance by Samling artists. Further meetings took place in which they invited QEHS to become a Samling Singing School, meaning that we will receive further tuition and input from Samling in the next academic year.

Ambition for 2025-2026 and beyond

The ambition for 2025-26 and beyond is to continue raising the profile of Music at QEHS through two high-profile concerts, one in Winter and one in Spring/Summer, as well as the school production of 'West Side Story' and hopefully a return of 'Songs from the Shows'.

We would like to introduce some smaller events to showcase the work of certain cohorts, for example, the 6th form musicians and GCSE musicians.

The Music Department is keen to get music into the community more, for example, showcasing performances at external events and venues.

The school was awarded 'Lead School status' in the Summer of 2025 after an application was made to Northumberland Music and as a result was recognised for its strengths in extra-curricular and performances. The Curriculum Leader will be talking about this at a Secondary Music Symposium in Jan 2026, as well as making links with other schools in the north-east.