Music development plan summary:

RA Butler Academy

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-2026
Date this summary was published	July 2026
Date this summary will be reviewed	July 2027
Name of the school music lead	Ginette Brown
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Emma Vincent
Name of local music hub	Greater Essex Music Hub: Essex Music Service
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Saffron Hall

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.

RA Butler Academy Music Curriculum

The national curriculum for music aims to ensure that all pupils:

- perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians.
- learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence.
- understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the interrelated dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations.

Music is a powerful, unique means of communication that can change the way children feel, think and act. Pupils who are disadvantaged or who have SEND can find music an invaluable way to express themselves.

Our Approach

At RA Butler Academy we believe that Music should be a fun learning experience which engages and inspires all children. The curriculum enables everyone to listen to, compose and perform music to their highest potential. It also offers a variety of experiences for children to develop as musicians, raise self-esteem and improve wellbeing/mental health. Our main aims are: 1. Inspire 2. Empower musicians 3. Foster a love and appreciation for music as a universal language.
The **music progression and curriculum map** detail how learning is sequenced and taught across the school. This has been designed in line with both the National Curriculum (NC) and Model Music Curriculum (MMC) guidance, and ensures the key skills of singing, listening, composing and performance develop sequentially over time. Where appropriate, programmes of learning in Music link to the year group's overarching topic of learning to strengthen cross curricular links and contextual understanding.

Singing and musicianship are at the heart of every lesson. In EYFS and KS1 the curriculum content draws on the Kodaly Method introducing musical concepts through games, listening, singing and movement. The focus is placed on 'sound before symbol', however once a concept has been learnt children will explore ways to notate this, for example through pictures, symbols, stick and dot notation. In KS2 all children have access to class tuition on a musical instrument and learn how to read/write traditional stave notation. Through each programme of learning across years 1-6, children learn about the inter-related dimensions of music and are taught progressively to develop their singing, listening, composing, and performing skills. Music technology further deepens understanding through manipulation of sound and our bespoke curriculum uses carefully selected content from a range of sources, including ABRSM Classroom 200, BBC 10 Pieces, Sing Up and Charanga.

Whole Class Ensemble Teaching (WCET)

Embedded in the KS2 curriculum is the opportunity for ALL children to learn a musical instrument. Children build upon these skills each year and incorporate instrumental playing into performance/composition work.

Year 3 – Introduction to the ukulele and glockenspiel

Year 4 - Recorder/glockenspiel/ukulele

Year 5 - Recorder/glockenspiel/ukulele

Year 6 – Recorder/glockenspiel/ukulele

We partner with Greater Essex Music Hub and Essex Music Service to support musical opportunities for our pupils as well as Saffron Hall.

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.

Instrumental Lessons

Children at RAB are offered the opportunity to learn an instrument in 1-1 lessons with one of our private instrumental teachers. We offer lessons in the following instruments:

Violin

Piano

Drums

Guitar

Brass

Flute

Saxophone

Clarinet

Voice

Ukulele

Free Ensembles for all RAB Children

RAB Voices

Our music specialist Mrs Brown leads a vocal group during lunchtime each week, where every child in KS2 can participate.

Orchestra

Our peripatetic woodwind teacher Mr Meyrick leads RAB orchestra once a week for all instrumentalists.

Children are able to access Financial assistance from Essex Music Service for music lessons, instrument hire and county-led ensembles.

Children are also able to access instrumental tuition and ensemble activities outside of the school day through Essex Music Service

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.

Assemblies

Singing is at the heart of musicianship at RA Butler Academy. All children participate in singing assembly once a week and develop good singing technique over the course of KS1/KS2. The principles of good quality singing are embedded into learning both in assemblies and music lessons: warming up, awareness of breathing, posture, dynamics, phasing, context, and vocal health.

Performance Opportunities

Autumn and summer music concerts offer a relaxed but more formal opportunity for children to perform to an audience. These include solo and small group instrumental and vocal performances, as well as ensemble performances by RAB Orchestra and RAB Voices. We also welcome local musicians/ensembles to perform to the children during assembly. This year, it has been wonderful to welcome Gavin Boyer of Prime Brass and professional opera singer Clare Presland. All children are also welcome to perform to their peers in assembly time throughout the academic year.

Our children also participate in local community concerts and performances such as The Spirit of Christmas with the Saffron Walden Choral Society and the national event of Young Voices with a performance at the O2 Arena. All children at RAB attend the yearly RAB Carol Concert at St Marys Church where they sing traditional carols and more modern pieces to an audience of parents and carers. RAB Voices visit local care homes at Christmas to sing carols with the residents and have sung carols outside our local Waitrose. These experiences enable our children to appreciate our local community but also the wider school's community and those of people across the world when we support charities through events such as Young Voices.

This year, as part of curriculum music, year 1 have taken part in a djembe workshop led by a specialist drumming teacher. Year 3 took part in an interactive concert 'Count me in' at Saffron hall exploring links between music and maths.
Year 4 have experienced the fabulous Jess Gillham perform at Saffron Hall.
Our KS2 Voices also enjoyed taking part in a primary school choral festival lead by professional singer and choral leader Carrie Rawlings.

In the future

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

- Continue to grow RAB orchestra and extra-curricular instrumental opportunities.
- Further develop links with SWCHS musicians and Saffron Hall.
- Create additional space to teach music and for children to rehearse.

Further information (optional)

- Essex Music Service have produced a Parent's Guide to Music Provision which gives parents valuable information about supporting their child's music education.
- Essex Music Service Schools Brochure 2025-26
- Greater Essex Music Hub Local Plan for Music Education – Information for schools will be coming in September 2024