



Hertfordshire
Music Service

January 2024

Building a high
quality music
education



Hertfordshire

Contents

This toolkit will ensure the children and young people in your school receive a high-quality music education.

How to use this toolkit

First, determine where you are in your musical journey (Journey Milestones - Building A High-Quality Music Education) If you are at the start of your journey to become a musical school, start at step 1. If you are further along the way you might need to start at the step most appropriate to your own school journey. Every school's journey will be unique with its own timeframe. For some this journey will be over a much shorter timeframe for others it might be longer. We encourage you to work at a pace appropriate to your own school.

What will you get from this toolkit

A step-by-step process with all the resources you will need along the way as a handy link or QR code. You determine where your school will start on the journey and which resources you wish to use.

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| Welcome

We are thrilled to introduce our exciting new toolkit, "Building a High Quality Music Education". Tailored to align with the New National Plan for Music Education in the UK, your dedication to nurturing the musical talents of our future generations is an invaluable contribution to the educational landscape, and we will support you every step of the way.

The guidance, and insights will this toolkit will empower you to cultivate a vibrant, inclusive, and inspiring musical culture within your school. Our vision is for all children and young people in Hertfordshire regardless of background or circumstances, to have the opportunity to discover or develop their unique musical voice and express themselves through the language of music.

Key features of the toolkit include how to assess the quality of music education in your school, and access to a wealth of resource materials, including examples and development plan templates.

We empower music educators through supporting knowledge, skill and resources and this toolkit will serve as a valuable resource, not only for you but for the countless young minds you are influencing. The power of music education to shape a brighter future cannot be overstated, and your dedication to this cause is greatly appreciated.

We are excited to embark on this journey with you, working together to shape the next generation of musicians and music lovers. As you delve into this toolkit, we encourage you to share your insights, successes, and challenges with us. Your feedback will be invaluable in making this toolkit an even more effective and adaptable resource.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to music education, and we look forward to supporting you on your journey to create a harmonious and melodious learning environment.

| Context

In June 2022, the government published '[The power of music to change lives': National Plan for Music Education \(NPME2\)](#)'. This refreshed plan builds on the model music curriculum and original national plan for music education, '[The importance of music](#)', published in 2011. The new plan sets out a vision for all children and young people to learn to sing, play an instrument and create music together, and to have the opportunity to progress their musical interests and talents, including professionally.

This plan sets an expectation that schools will have a music development plan in place that shows how they will teach a high-quality curriculum for at least one hour a week in Key Stages 1 to 3.

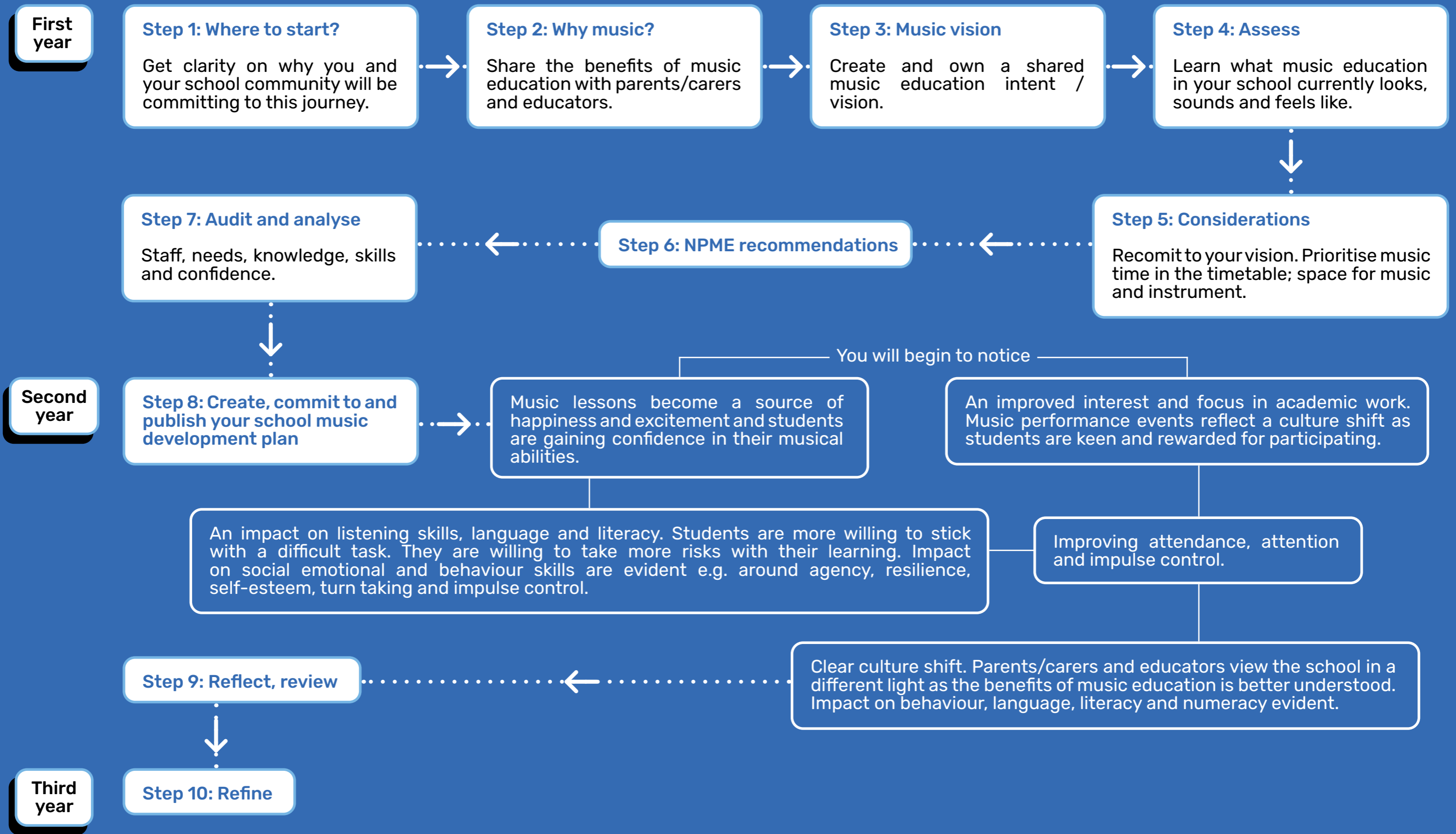
The trajectory of music education in recent years has been one in which schools have reduced Key Stage 3 provision, and trainee primary teachers have been offered shrinking amounts of music training. ISM research indicates the decline in the uptake of music exams in school: a 36% drop in GCSE and a 45% drop in A-level music entries in England, Wales and Northern Ireland since 2010. [Striking the right note: the music subject report](#), published 21 September 2023 evaluates the common strengths and weaknesses of music education and considers the challenges that Music faces. It builds on the [research review on music](#) published in 2021. Overall, this report identifies some significant strengths and weaknesses in school music education. It recommends ways that school and subject leaders can make sure that all students leave school with a well-rounded music education that supports them to think more musically and, consequently, become more musical.

"Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. For many students, the music they love will be part of the narrative of their lives and bring colour to the experiences that shape them. Learning about music is a vital part of a broad and rounded education. Taught well, music gives students the opportunity to make music, think more musically and, crucially, become even more musical."

- [Striking the right note: the music subject report](#), GOV.UK



Journey milestones: Building a high quality music education



Step 1: Where to start?

Building and maintaining a high-quality music education starts with all involved. It involves a lot of work and takes a lot of time. Considering the work involved everyone should begin this process by asking themselves:

“Every child should learn music because...”

To build and maintain a high-quality musical education, all staff need to understand its educational benefits.

1. Collate and organise the answers from all staff into two categories:

Educational reasons	Other reasons

Focus on your Educational reasons: the reasons relating to the cognitive and developmental benefits of a high-quality music education.

2. Are the reasons primarily educational? Yes // No

Looking at staff responses, evaluate current understanding of the educational value of music in your school.

The following answers might indicate that staff don't yet fully realise the benefits of music education:

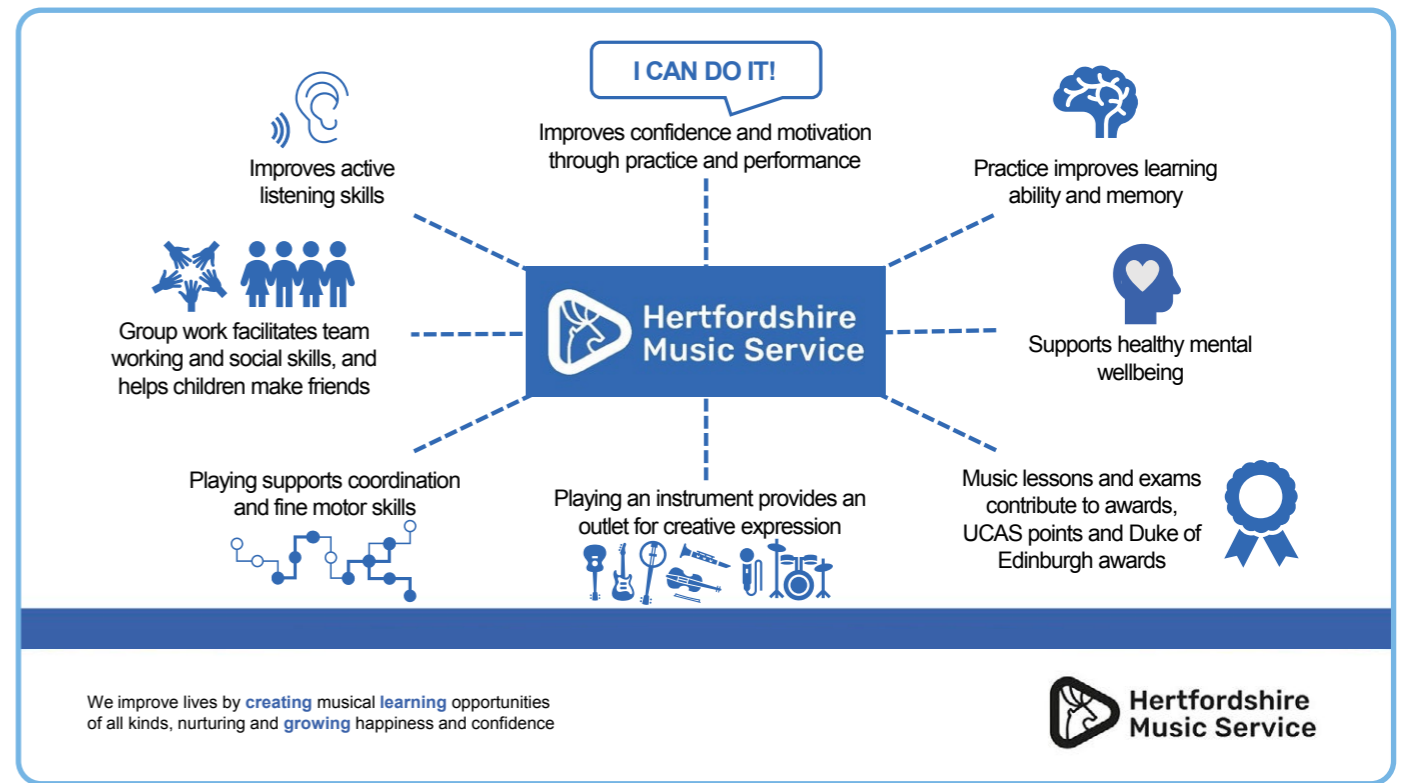
- students need to be able to express themselves
- students need to have fun
- it helps them relax

The following answers show deeper understanding of the benefits of music:

- mention of developmental outcomes
- it improves attention
- it improves impulse control
- it improves memory
- it improves active listening

Step 2: Why music?

Over the years, music education will have a significant impact on your students' social, emotional and academic growth. Long-term investment in music education has enormous benefits, but it takes time to be fully realised.



Marketing and social media materials are available via the website. You may download the files from the below webpage.



Scan me or visit hertsmusicservice.org.uk/HMS-building-high-quality

Step 3: A clear vision for your schools' music curriculum

Being clear about your vision for music in your school will help you to have the well sequenced and high-quality music curriculum your students deserve. Your music vision will allow each and every one part of your school community to work towards the same goal.

Creating your school's music vision

Intent, Implementation and Impact:

- Intent: What students learn and why? What musical outcomes are you aiming to achieve by the end of the student's journey in your school? What? Why?
- Implementation: How effective is the delivery of curriculum objectives? How is the learning journey organised? What? How?
- Impact: Are you making a difference? What is the impact? How do you know? How? So what?

Consider the following questions when creating your intent/vision statement for a high-quality music education in your school. It is recommended to complete this process together as a workforce to accommodate different viewpoints and ensure everyone is invested in the vision.

When creating your music vision, you might consider:

- Your school vision
- Your school ethos
- What is right for your children and local community
- The purpose of your school music curriculum
- What you want your students to learn from your music curriculum
- What you want your students to achieve from your music curriculum
- Whole staff clarity about the purpose of your music curriculum
- Inclusion
- SEND
- Culture capital
- Curriculum, co-curricular and enrichment activities.



Step 4: What to look for when assessing the quality of the music curriculum in your school?

Know what to expect from your music classroom

	KS1	Lower KS2	Upper KS2
What do you see?	<p>An open space with no children sitting in chairs or at their desks.</p> <p>Lots of big whole-body movements. A bit chaotic, but under the expert direction of the teacher.</p> <p>Activities are short and change around every few minutes. Learning basics such as move & play to the beat using recorded music; saying/clapping/playing word rhythms from graphics and notation in lots of different ways.</p>	<p>Children reading graphics and notation.</p> <p>Reading/saying/ saying & clapping/ saying & playing, playing ostinatos and a wider variety of rhythms and notes, internalising the beat.</p> <p>Use of recorders, ukuleles, and classroom percussion instruments.</p>	<p>Internalising music.</p> <p>Fine motor skills/smaller movements.</p> <p>More ordered group and whole class work.</p> <p>The whole class will look more like a disciplined ensemble, working together, producing longer pieces of music using a wider rhythm and pitch range in unison, canon, rounds and potentially 2 part.</p>
What do you hear?	<p>Lots of laughter and singing-songs within a narrow vocal range.</p> <p>Some children might still be finding their singing voices and it might not sound in unison yet.</p>	<p>Singing and playing mostly in Unison.</p> <p>Using basic music vocabulary.</p> <p>Beginning to sound like an ensemble.</p> <p>Quieter, more focused, and attentive between songs.</p>	<p>Vocal and instrumental work is covering a wider range and is more proficient.</p> <p>Using more musical terminology.</p> <p>Sounds like an ensemble.</p> <p>Disciplined, working as an ensemble.</p>
How does it feel?	<p>Enjoyable, a bit chaotic, experiential.</p>	<p>Focused, engaged, eager to succeed.</p>	<p>Rewarding, enjoyable, uplifting.</p>

Know your staff's musical confidence

Ask teachers to answer these two questions:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel **doing** music?
2. On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel **teaching** music?

The answers to these 2 questions could provide some insight as to the kind of support required.

- **Medium confidence doing (4-6), Medium confidence teaching (4-6).** Staff might feel confident in some areas (e.g. singing) but not others (e.g. leading an instrumental ensemble). Identify strengths and weaknesses. CPD to support development of weaknesses.
- **Low confidence doing (1-4), High confidence teaching (7-10).** Need for musical skill development.
- **High confidence doing (7-10), Low confidence teaching (1-3).** Need for specialised teacher training.

Know what CPD is needed

You might want to use the HMS staff skills audit, available from the below webpage.



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A high-quality music education requires multiple trained teachers to ensure variety and sustainability. When considering specialised teacher training and music education within your school improvement plan, make sure multiple teachers are involved right from the beginning.

You could contact HMS regarding CPD requirements for your school.

Invite a music specialist to visit your school

You could contact HMS to arrange joined visits and joined observations.

Know how much time is dedicated to music in your school

Students must have enough curriculum time to incrementally develop their musical knowledge and skills. A minimum of one hour per week is recommended. Look at your school calendar and calculate how much time your students are doing music education across an academic year.

- ### On track
- Every week of the school year
 - During school hours
 - A small amount of time every day
 - Fair distribution during the school day
 - Regular performances opportunities

- ### Room for improvement
- A single long lesson once a week
 - Music lessons only take place later in the school day
 - Some weeks students have no music
 - No or limited performance opportunities
 - Instrumental lessons out of school hours only

Step 5: What else should be considered?

Funding

What your musical programme will cost will depend on where you start, what you're trying to accomplish, staff training needs and how you progress.

There are three main costs you'll need to consider:

- Instruments
- Tuition
- CPD

Possible funding streams to explore:

- Charging tuition fees to parents
- School subsidies
- Student Premium funds

You could contact HMS regarding financial support for eligible students in your school.

[Take it away](#) provides interest free loans for the purchase of musical instruments available through a network of high street retailers across England.

Each space provides instruments and equipment for free or for minimal cost.

[Royal National Institute of Blind People](#) provides music advisory service which offers advice on music education, employment, ABRSM Braille exam pieces, buying and loaning music.

- Singing / Instrumental provision
- Singing staff training program
- First Access - Key Stage 2

You could contact HMS regarding Services for Schools brochure using the link, below.



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Parental engagement

Communicate the educational value of music to parents. Once parents understand the value of music education, they are more likely to support their child's practise at home and take an interest in their learning journey. You might find the marketing materials helpful to share the value of music via the link on page 17.

Partnerships

Establish what resources and organisations are available in your area. (e.g., HMS, HFL, AlbanTSH, partner school) and establish what informal resources are available within your community (e.g. a parent/carer, a neighbouring secondary school).

To access a list of organisations that support music education, please scan the QR code at the bottom of this page.

Step 6: National Plan of Music Education recommendations

Read a summary of the National Plan for Music Education recommendations.

Additionally, we recommend staff know the high quality music curriculum key recommendations from the latest OFSTED music subject report: Striking the right note: the music subject report.

Both can be found via the webpage linked at the bottom of this page.

Step 7: Music Curriculum Audit

The results of an audit will not only help you to identify your strengths and weaknesses in relation to the National Plan for Music Education, it will also form a key part in writing your School Music Development Plan (NPME pg. 23)

The results will provide direction as to the kind of support your school might need.

Who could help to audit your school?

- A music teacher from a local secondary school
- A music teacher from a private school
- Hertfordshire Music Service

Access HMS High Quality Music Education in Primary School Audit Toolkit using the link, below.

HMS can make a recommendation to Music Mark for your school to receive a School Music Award through participation of the HMS music self-evaluation process.



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Step 8: School Music Development Plan

Before writing your school's Music Development Plan, we recommend completing the **HMS High Quality Music Education in Primary School Audit Toolkit**, linked on page 17, and identifying your music provision strengths and areas for development.

The School Music Development Plan should set out how your school will deliver high-quality music provision for all pupils in the three areas of Curriculum, Co-Curricular and Enrichment, and against the key features set out in the NPME.

Your school may already have an Action Plan. Identify actions timelines and criteria for success.

Music Mark has created a school music development plan template for school/trusts to use. The toolkit can be downloaded using the link on page 17.

Step 9: Review

Review and Refine

Evaluation and progress tracking

We know that our school music development plan is working because:

.....

.....

.....

A possible review process:

1. Time: dedicated time when you are not in a rush.
2. Environment: space suitable for uninterrupted quiet reflection
3. Review: Planned goals and activities
 - For each target:
 - What has been achieved?
 - Are you in line with your intentions?
 - Are your achievements meeting your expectations?
 - What have you done differently and how did this effect the outcome?
4. Consider: How successful are you on route towards reaching your goals?
 - Where are you currently on your journey?
 - Have you identified any factors that might slow your progress?
 - Are your goals and timings realistic?
5. Decide: what you need to do next
 - Do you continue with the same approach, or do you need to make changes?
 - Do you need more time, or do you need external support?

Step 10: Refine

Revise your plan and set out new activities, actions and timelines.

Any objectives that have not been fully achieved, note the reasons and whether they will be pulled forward into next year's plan.



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