

Music Statement of Intent

Intent

At RFHCS, our intention is to provide a broad, balanced and inclusive Music offer that enhances students' cultural capital, emotional wellbeing and creative expression. From a therapeutic perspective, we recognise that many of our students arrive with highly varied prior experiences of music, including those with limited formal musical knowledge, barriers to access, or extended medical needs that have a disrupted educational continuity, can all benefit through exposure to music.

Our offer therefore aims to:

- Promote musical exploration, creativity and self-expression, including non-verbal communication and emotional regulation, particularly through music-making and collaborative activities
- Ensure all students, including those with SEN, can access differentiated, technology-assisted and therapeutic musical experiences that support confidence, skill development and enjoyment.
- Provide opportunities to develop core musical skills—such as listening, performance, composition, and appraisal—regardless of starting point.
- Make links between music and wider cultural, social and personal contexts to support personal development and nurture a lifelong appreciation of the arts.
- Facilitate through contact with private tutors progression for those who wish to pursue formal accreditation, including the option to study GCSE Music as an additional GCSE, tailored to individual medical, emotional and educational needs. We encourage our students to opt for the OCR GCSE as we are familiar with this examination board.

In line with whole-school offer principles, the Music offer revisits key ideas, encourages knowledge retention and builds musical understanding incrementally over time.

Implementation

Music Therapy at RFHCS is delivered through a flexible and adaptive model that accommodates short-stay, long-stay and highly variable attendance patterns. Teaching is highly personalised and takes place across a range of settings, including the dedicated Music Room, the wards and outreach environments.

Offer Delivery

- Students engage in a blend of practical music-making, composition, improvisation, digital music production and structured listening activities.
- Resources include keyboards, guitars, drums, DJ decks and recording equipment, allowing students to explore music independently or collaboratively
- Lessons are sequenced so that core musical concepts—rhythm, melody, structure, texture, notation and expressive features—are revisited regularly to reinforce prior learning.
- Sessions include space for both structured teaching and student-led exploration, acknowledging that musical engagement is intrinsically personal and therapeutic.
- Literacy is embedded through the use of musical terminology, model answers, reflective writing and structured listening frames.

Assessment and Feedback

- Assessment is continuous, flexible and responsive, drawing on observation, performance opportunities, recorded work, peer and self-evaluation, and discussion.
- Feedback focuses on developing confidence, technical accuracy, creativity and musicianship while recognising the emotional and therapeutic role of music for many learners.

GCSE Music

- RFHCS can enter students for GCSE Music where appropriate.
- GCSE students receive personalised instruction, supported by digital platforms (e.g., Google Classroom), weekly updates, guided study tasks and differentiated resources consistent with whole-school practice
- Composition and performance components are supported through access to instruments, recording equipment and specialist tuition.

Therapeutic and Inclusive Practice

- Music therapy principles underpin much of the offer, enabling students to express themselves non-verbally and build confidence and social connection.
- Sessions can be adapted entirely around the young person's physical and emotional needs, ensuring universal accessibility and meaningful participation.

Impact

The Music offer at RFHCS fosters creativity, confidence and emotional wellbeing while supporting academic progress and personal development. Students:

- Gain increased musical knowledge, skills and cultural awareness.
- Develop confidence in expressing themselves, collaborating and engaging in new creative experiences.
- Improve resilience, motivation and self-esteem through successful musical outcomes, whether therapeutic, curricular or both.
- Produce recordings, performances or compositions that evidence progress in musicianship and musical understanding.
- Experience improved engagement and communication, particularly for those for whom music provides a unique expressive outlet.

Where students pursue GCSE Music, personalised instruction, adaptive offer sequencing and consistent feedback result in strong outcomes and successful accreditation despite the challenges associated with medical needs and interrupted schooling. This can be supplemented by private study.

Overall, the impact of Music at RFHCS extends beyond academic measures, contributing significantly to students' wellbeing, cultural capital and readiness for future learning, qualifications or mere enjoyment.