

Chatten Free School Music development plan

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2025-26
Date this summary was published	Summer term 2025
Date this summary will be reviewed	Summer term 2026
Name of the school music lead	SLT
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Step Into Dance, Suffolk Music Therapy Services

Chatten Free School is a school for autistic pupils with severe learning difficulties aged 4-19. Our curriculum is highly individualised to meet the specific needs of each pupil and music is integrated across the curriculum. We also work with highly skilled external practitioners who deliver specific music and dance sessions to pupils. In addition, we provide a range of music-based experiences across the curriculum, including our specialist sensory rooms and community events.

A: Music curriculum

Our curriculum is highly individualised to every pupil and music is integrated into their curriculum across their day. Examples of this may include (but are not limited to):

- Accessing our specialist sensory and VR rooms which have a wide range of songs and musical experiences
- Soundboard sessions
- Sound work during Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language sessions
- Learning to play simple musical instruments through imitation or as a leisure skill
- Singing songs during group sessions such as bucket time, circle time, and social engagement groups

Some of our pupils also access more formalised music sessions which are delivered by skilled external practitioners. Please note that we will always follow pupils' lead on whether they would like to continue to access these sessions based on their level of enjoyment and engagement in the sessions:

- Weekly Step into Dance sessions for secondary and sixth form pupils
- Music therapy sessions delivered by Suffolk Music Therapy Services

Part B: Co-curricular music

As we are highly specialist provision with a large catchment area and our pupils have highly specific transport needs, any provision scheduled before or after school would not be appropriate or inclusive. We do not have specific 'lesson' times and our pupils access their individualised curriculum across their entire school day, of which music is an important part. However, we have a range of highly specialist rooms and music based activities which pupils can access as part of their choice/leisure time:

- Sensory room with interactive floor where pupils can play interactive musical games
- Sensory room with wall projector where pupils can choose and listen to their favourite songs
- Relaxation rooms where pupils can experience how relaxing music can support their regulation
- Virtual reality room where pupils can experience immersive musical experiences

Part C: Musical experiences

At Chatten Free School, we limit the number of whole school events due to the stressful impact this can have on our pupils. However, we do offer an annual music festival (Chattenbury) in the outdoor area of the school so that pupils can choose whether to attend if they would like to. This includes live music, karaoke (where pupils can have a chance to perform if they would like), and lots of opportunities for pupils to dance and listen to their favourite songs.

We additionally plan a range of community and fundraising events across the year, which take part in the evenings/weekends. All pupils and parents are invited to these, but they are completely optional. These include a range of musical experiences, such as live music performances at the summer picnic and a silent disco evening.

In the future

As we are planning to continue to work on building links with specialist external providers who can deliver high quality music sessions and experiences for our pupils. We would also like to provide dance sessions to primary aged pupils.