

Music Curriculum Overview

Summary of Intent

The Music curriculum aims to develop **confident, capable, and knowledgeable musicians** who engage meaningfully with music both within and beyond the classroom. We believe that all students, regardless of prior experience or background, should have access to a **high-quality and ambitious** musical education, with opportunities to **learn an instrument, perform with expression, compose creatively, and listen critically**.

Through practical music-making, students develop musical understanding alongside creativity, critical listening, collaboration, communication, self-management, and problem-solving. **Performing, composing, and listening are deliberately interconnected** throughout the curriculum, enabling students to apply their knowledge in meaningful musical contexts. Students encounter musical concepts through **sound and practical experience** before developing the theoretical language and notation to describe, analyse and communicate them.

The curriculum is carefully sequenced from Year 7 to Year 11, with progression built through the **cumulative development of knowledge, musicianship, and independence**. Students revisit and extend core musical concepts across an increasingly diverse range of genres, traditions and musical practices, **balancing breadth of experience with depth of understanding**. From their first experiences of instrumental music-making in Year 7, students progressively develop their technique, theoretical knowledge, aural understanding, and creative skills, becoming increasingly independent in their musical choices.

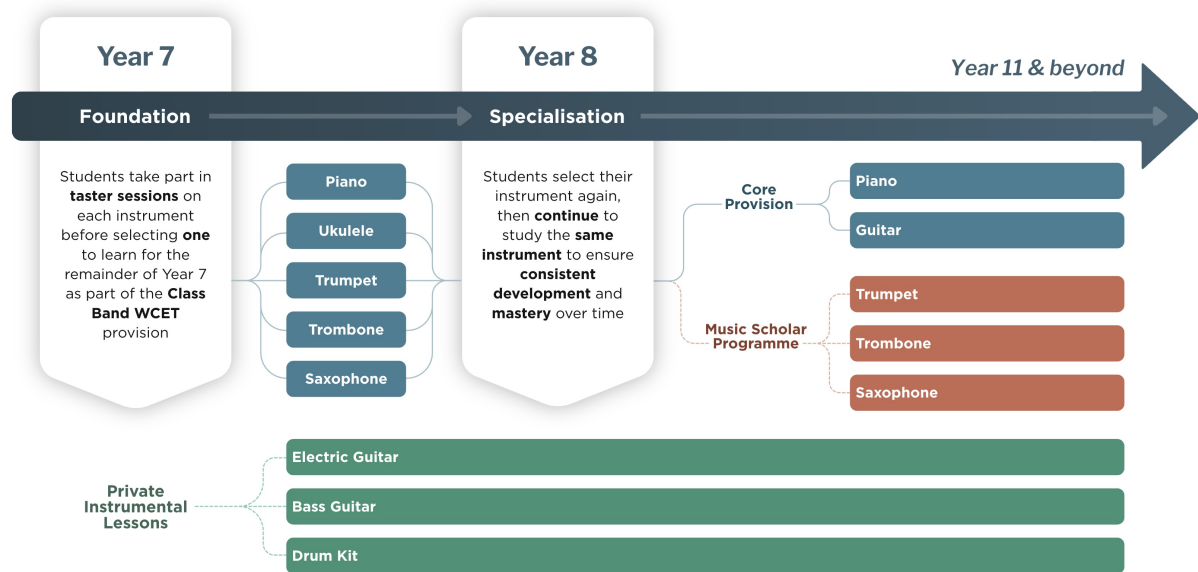
We aim to nurture the next generation of performers, composers, producers, sound engineers, technicians and informed listeners, while fostering a **lifelong appreciation of music**. As students progress, they develop their own **musical preferences, identities, and voices**, leaving the Music curriculum with both a strong foundation for further study and the confidence and independence to participate fully in musical life.

Implementation

The Music curriculum is structured from Year 7 to Year 11 around a **mastery model**, ensuring students secure essential knowledge and skills before revisiting and applying them in increasingly sophisticated ways. Progression is cumulative, with new learning building explicitly on prior knowledge while established skills are continually retrieved, developed and applied in new musical contexts.

From the outset, learning is rooted in **practical music-making**. Students encounter musical ideas through listening, singing, playing, and creating before developing the theoretical language and notation needed to describe, analyse, and communicate them. Performing, composing, and listening are deliberately interconnected, with each informing and strengthening the others.

In Year 7, all students participate in our innovative '**Class Band**' provision, receiving **small-group instrumental tuition** from one of three specialist teachers within their weekly timetabled Music lessons across trumpet, trombone, saxophone, piano, or ukulele. This ensures every student has access to high-quality instrumental learning, regardless of prior experience, while developing foundational technique alongside ensemble skills, aural awareness, rhythm, notation, and musical independence. From Year 8, students begin to specialise, developing one instrument in greater depth through our core piano or guitar offer, Music Scholar Programme, or private tuition.



Alongside instrumental development, students progressively build their **theoretical knowledge, compositional skills, and listening and analytical understanding**. Internally produced scores and resources enable repertoire and musical tasks to be adapted to students' developing abilities and instrumental pathways, supporting a personalised approach while maintaining a coherent curriculum sequence and shared musical experiences.

Extra-Curricular Musical Learning

To further enhance classroom learning, students are encouraged to engage in a **rich programme** of extra-curricular musical activities, giving them opportunities to rehearse, perform, specialise, and develop their musical independence beyond the core curriculum. Private instrumental tuition is also available through the Music Department, with financial support for families where circumstances might otherwise create a barrier. This reflects our commitment to ensuring that high-quality musical experiences are accessible to all students.

Weekly Clubs & Ensembles	Performance Opportunities
• Big Band (Multi-Instrumentalist Ensemble) • Hurlingham Voices (School Choir) • StudioX (Music Production Club) • Music Scholar Programme ◦ 2 x Brass Groups (Intermediate & Advanced) ◦ 2 x Saxophone Groups (Intermediate & Advanced) • Private instrumental tuition • Independent Music Practice (students may use Music Department facilities for their own music-making during designated lunch times)	• Winter Concert (annual) • Summer Concert (annual) • United Learning trust-wide Music & Performing Arts event (biennial)

Music Curriculum Map | Key Stage 3

Year 7

Musicianship & Ensemble Skills

Developing foundational music skills, instrument techniques, and ensemble playing.

Autumn Term	Spring Term		Summer Term	
7.1. Instrument Carousel	7.2. Technical Exercises	7.3. Class Band (i)	7.4. Class Band (ii)	7.5. Class Band (iii)
Students are introduced to our Class Band provision , experiencing each of the instruments offered before selecting one to develop further. Taster sessions focus on posture, technique and sound production, alongside developing an understanding of instrument families. Students begin to read and perform basic pitches and rhythms, developing their understanding of the treble clef and simple note lengths including semibreves, minims and crotchets.	Students develop foundational technique on their chosen instrument through a range of technical exercises, including various British and French folk songs. They begin developing their ability to perform melodies with increasing accuracy and fluency. Students consolidate their understanding of the treble clef and are introduced to musical vocabulary related to tempo and dynamics. The unit culminates in students' first performance assessment on their chosen instrument.	Students apply their developing instrumental skills within an ensemble through ' <i>When the Saints Go Marching In</i> ', learning differentiated sectional parts that combine to form a whole-class band performance. The focus is on maintaining a steady pulse, following a part, and developing effective ensemble rehearsal habits. Students develop their understanding of melody, accompaniments, and ensemble playing while applying repeat marks within a practical musical context.	Students develop their ensemble skills through Abdullah Ibrahim's ' <i>Homecoming Song</i> ', learning more sophisticated sectional parts and increasingly challenging rhythms. They develop greater rhythmic accuracy and independence, exploring on- and off-beat rhythms alongside crotchet and quaver rests. Students also develop their understanding of musical structure through the use of repeat marks and A-B-A form within a whole-class ensemble performance.	Students consolidate and extend their ensemble skills through ' <i>Sweet Dreams</i> ' by Eurythmics, working with increasingly sophisticated parts and more challenging rhythmic patterns. They develop greater independence and musical awareness, performing on/off-beat rhythms while exploring how ostinatos, melody, and accompaniments combine to create an effective ensemble texture. Students apply these concepts through practical rehearsal and performance, building confidence and fluency as ensemble musicians.

Year 8

Music in Context

Exploring cultural and stylistic contexts, gaining a deeper understanding of musical forms and genres.

8.1. The Rudiments of Jazz	7.2. Programme Music	7.3. West African Music	7.4. Incidental Music	7.5. Salsa Music
Students explore the origins and characteristics of jazz through the study and performance of Miles Davis' ' <i>Milestones</i> '. They develop instrumental skills on piano or guitar while learning to read notation or TAB, and explore key jazz concepts including the head, improvisation, syncopation, the roles of the frontline and rhythm section, pentatonic scales, tied notes, and ternary form. The unit culminates in an ensemble performance incorporating improvisation.	Students explore how composers use music to represent stories, places, and ideas through Dvořák's ' <i>From The New World Symphony</i> '. Through learning the main theme, students develop their instrumental technique while exploring pentatonic scales, dynamics, articulation, tempo, major and minor tonalities, and ternary form. They consider how musical features can shape mood and character and develop increasingly expressive and fluent performances.	Students explore the musical traditions of West Africa through drumming and song, including ' <i>Kuku</i> ' and ' <i>Thula Mama</i> '. They develop ensemble skills and rhythmic fluency while exploring syncopation, ostinatos, and improvisation. Students also apply their understanding of rhythm creatively by composing and performing their own rhythmic ideas.	Students explore how music can support and enhance drama through Grieg's ' <i>In the Hall of the Mountain King</i> '. As they develop their performance of the set work, students learn about articulation (staccato), fermatas, major and minor tonalities, and binary form. They consider how composers use musical features to create character, atmosphere and dramatic effect.	Students explore the musical features of salsa music through Marc Anthony's ' <i>Vivir Mi Vida</i> '. They develop instrumental and ensemble skills while learning about syncopation, chords and chord progressions, accompaniments, and contrasting articulations such as legato and staccato. Students apply these concepts through practical performance and collaborative music-making.

Year 9

Musical Intention & Purpose

Analysing the intent, purpose, and impact of musical choices.

9.1. Popular Song Form	9.2. Jazz in Film	9.3. Reggaeton	9.4. Musical Theatre	9.5. Film Music
Students explore the structure and musical characteristics of popular music through Bon Jovi's ' <i>Livin' on a Prayer</i> '. They develop their instrumental skills while learning to interpret various repeat symbols, chord progressions, and explore verse-chorus form and the role of different instruments within a rock / pop ensemble. Students then apply this knowledge through composing their own drum beats, chord progressions, bass lines, and melodies.	Students explore how jazz techniques and musical features can be used in film music through ' <i>Cruella de Vil</i> ' by Mel Leven. As they develop their instrumental performance, students explore swung quavers, anacruses, tied notes, melodic movement, and repeat symbols, developing greater fluency and accuracy in reading and performing notation. They also revisit and apply their understanding of articulation through the use of staccato.	Students explore the musical features of reggaeton through a practical composition project using music technology. They learn to construct a dembow-based drum beat and develop chord progressions, bass lines and melodies, revisiting concepts including root notes, broken chords and syncopation. Students then explore texture and layering, applying these ideas to structure and develop their own compositions.	Students explore how music contributes to character, narrative and dramatic expression through ' <i>Wait for It</i> ' from Lin-Manuel Miranda's <i>Hamilton</i> . Through learning and performing the set work, students develop their instrumental skills while exploring riffs, dotted rhythms, repeat symbols, major and minor chords, and the expressive use of pauses.	Students explore how composers use musical devices to create character, atmosphere, and tension through the main theme from Hans Zimmer's ' <i>Wonder Woman</i> ' and ' <i>28 Days Later</i> ' by John Murphy. They develop their instrumental and ensemble skills while exploring leitmotifs, melody and accompaniment, two-part textures, ostinatos, pedal notes, dissonance, and chromaticism. Students apply these techniques creatively by composing music to a horror film brief.

Music Curriculum Map | Key Stage 4

Course: GCSE Music (Eduqas)

Year 10

Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term
Popular Music	Musical Forms & Devices	Film Music	Music for Ensemble	Revision & Coursework
Students revisit and extend key knowledge from Key Stage 3 through the study of popular music, developing their understanding of a pop / rock ensemble, chord progressions, texture, melody and verse–chorus form. They use music technology to compose and arrange a popular song, developing melodies through techniques including retrograde and inversion, and exploring the pentatonic scale. Students are introduced to the prepared exam extract, <i>‘Africa’</i> by Toto, performing parts of the piece on their chosen instrument while developing their understanding of its musical context and characteristics.	Students develop their understanding of melody, harmony, and musical form through the study of Baroque, Classical and Romantic music, exploring how musical styles developed and differ across these periods. They investigate melodic devices including sequences and ornaments, major and minor tonality, primary and secondary chords, cadences, and classical forms such as binary, ternary, rondo and minuet and trio. Students apply this knowledge by composing a short waltz in ternary form for string quartet, exploring instrumental techniques such as arco and pizzicato. They are also introduced to the prepared exam extract, <i>‘Badinerie’</i> by J. S. Bach.	Students develop their aural analysis skills, learning to identify musical features and explain how composers use them to create mood, atmosphere, and other effects. They explore leitmotif, intervals, consonance and dissonance, alongside instrumental techniques such as glissando and tremolo. Students apply their understanding creatively by composing a short piece to a set film music brief and perform a selection of leitmotifs on their chosen instrument. Students also revisit content from Terms 1 & 2 in preparation for the spring mock exam.	Students explore the stylistic features and conventions of musical theatre, jazz and blues, while continuing to develop their instrumental performance skills. They revisit and extend their understanding of improvisation, syncopation, and swung rhythms through the study of the 12-bar blues, blues scale, walking bass line, and 32-bar song form. Students also explore vocal and instrumental roles, brass techniques, and a range of textures before arranging and performing a song in a small ensemble. Alongside this, they revisit <i>‘Africa’</i> in preparation for the summer mock.	Students consolidate their understanding of the GCSE course through targeted revision of key knowledge, exam skills, and extended written responses, while also revising <i>‘Badinerie’</i> . They begin their first official composition coursework, responding to a film music brief and applying their understanding of musical elements, devices, and compositional techniques to create an original piece. Students also prepare their solo performance for recording and submission early in Year 11.

Year 11

Revision & Coursework		
Students consolidate their understanding of popular music through revision of ' <i>Africa</i> ' and a range of popular styles including pop, rock, bhangra, and hip hop. They explore performance and production techniques, including guitar, drum, and vocal techniques, and the use of music technology such as sampling, panning, loops, and autotune. Students refine and complete their first composition coursework, record their solo performance for submission, and continue developing their examination technique through exam-style questions.	Students revisit ' <i>Badinerie</i> ' and the musical characteristics of classical traditions while developing a deeper understanding of harmony through the study of modulation. They begin their second composition coursework in response to an externally set brief, applying their developing compositional knowledge with increasing independence. Students also begin preparing their ensemble performance and consolidate their knowledge through exam-style questions in preparation for the first mock exam.	Students consolidate their knowledge across the full GCSE course through systematic revision and continued practice of exam-style questions, preparing for their second mock examination and final public examinations. They refine and complete their second composition coursework and a final recording of their ensemble performance for submission. The final stage of the course focuses on securing musical knowledge and exam skills across all elements of the appraising exam.

Appendix A

Sequencing of Instrumental Skills in Key Stage 3

Instrument	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9 & Beyond
Piano / Keyboard	- One hand or hands playing in octaves throughout in a static 5-finger position - Right hand melody + left hand bass line in a static 5-finger position - Simple dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>f</i> to <i>p</i>)	- Two hands playing with some independence - Some variety in articulation (e.g. legato / staccato / fermata) - More opportunity for dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>cresc.</i> / <i>dim.</i> / sudden changes) - Some changes in hand position	- Two hands playing independently - Wider range of dynamic & articulative expression (e.g. <i>rit.</i>) - More regular changes in hand position
Guitar / Ukulele	- Simple chord shapes covering 3 strings - Simple strumming with regular, infrequent chord changes - Simple dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>f</i> to <i>p</i>)	- Two hands playing with some independence - Some variety in articulation (e.g. legato / staccato / fermata) - More opportunity for dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>cresc.</i> / <i>dim.</i> / sudden changes) - Some changes in hand position	- Two hands playing independently - Wider range of dynamic & articulative expression (e.g. <i>rit.</i>) - More regular changes in hand position
Trumpet / Trombone	- Pitch range covers a major 5th - Breath control - Simple dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>f</i> to <i>p</i>)	- Pitch range covers a major 6th with accidentals - Clarity of sound in larger leaps up to a perfect 5th - More opportunity for dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>cresc.</i> / <i>dim.</i> / sudden changes) - Some variety in articulation (e.g. legato / staccato / fermata) and tonguing	- Pitch range covers an octave with accidentals - Clarity of sound in larger leaps up to a major 6th - Wider range of dynamic & articulative expression (e.g. <i>rit.</i>)
Saxophone	- Pitch range covers a major 6th - Breath control - Simple dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>f</i> to <i>p</i>)	- Pitch range covers an octave with accidentals and generally smooth finger work - Clarity of sound in larger leaps up to a major 6th - More opportunity for dynamic contrast (e.g. <i>cresc.</i> / <i>dim.</i> / sudden changes) - Some variety in articulation (e.g. legato / staccato / fermata) and simple tonguing	- Pitch range covers a major 9th with accidentals and smooth finger work - Clarity of sound in larger leaps up to an octave - Wider range of dynamic & articulative expression (e.g. <i>rit.</i>)

Appendix B

Sequencing of Music Theory & Concepts

Musical Element	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	KS4
Tempo	Adagio			
	Andante			
	Allegro			
		Largo		
		Presto		
			Ritardando	
			Accelerando	
				Rubato
Rhythm	Semibreve			
	Minim			
	Crotchet			
	Quaver			
	Semiquaver			
	Crotchet Rest			
	Simple time (2/4, 3/4, 4/4)			
		Fermata / Pause		
		Tied Notes		
		Semibreve Rest		
		Minim Rest		
		Quaver Rest		
		Semiquaver Rest		
		Syncopation		
			Dotted Minim	
			Dotted Crotchet	
			Dotted Quaver	
			Swing Rhythms	
				Demisemiquaver
				Demisemiquaver Rest
				Compound Time (6/8, 9/8, 12/8)
				Irregular Time (5/4, 7/8)
Melody	Treble Clef (C4 - F5)		(B3 - A5)	(Full)
	Semitone			
	Ostinato			
		Bass Clef (G2 - C4)	(E2 - C4)	(Full)
		Key Signature (1 # or b)	(Up to 2 # or b)	(Up to 4 # or b)
			Anacrusis	
			Conjunct	
			Disjunct	
			Ascending	
			Descending	
			Perfect Intervals (4th, 5th, Octave)	
			Leitmotif	
				Fanfare
				Trill
				Appoggiatura
				Major intervals (within 8ve)
				Sequence
				Alto Clef (C - C)
Dynamics	Forte			
	Piano			
		Fortissimo		
		Pianissimo		
		Crescendo		
		Diminuendo		
			Mezzo Forte	
			Mezzo Piano	
				Sforzando
Sonority	Instrument Families			
	Orchestra			
	Choir			
	A cappella			
		Jazz Band		
		Frontline		
		Rhythm Section		
		Legato		
		Staccato		
			Pop / Rock Band	
			Amplified	
			Synthesizer	

Musical Element	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	KS4	
Sonority (cont.)				Distortion	
				Amplified	
				Slur	
				Accent	
				Syllabic / Melismatic	
				Vibrato	
				Pizzicato	
				Arco	
				Double Stop	
				Glissando	
				Scat	
				Rap	
				Tremolo	
				Drum Roll	
				Falsetto	
				Panning	
				Reverb	
				Sample	
				String Quartet	
				Voice Types (SATB)	
				Basso Continuo	
Structure	Repeat mark				
	Harmony & Tonality				
Texture					

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