

Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. Our high-quality music curriculum aims to engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians through creative, practical lessons and a range of extra-curricular opportunities.

The Music curriculum is designed around the national curriculum, meaning that students develop their performance, listening, composition and evaluation skills through means aimed to increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. All students learn to use their voices, to create and compose music, to use sector-specific technology and have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. In studying Music, students gain an understanding of how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and structure. Listening tasks enable students to learn and identify key features of music and schemes of learning have an equal mix of composition and performance so that the curriculum is broad and balanced.

In key stage 3, schemes of work are planned to address the variety of starting points that students have from key stage 2 and allow all students the same opportunity to succeed regardless of their starting point. Students start year 7 focussing on the musical elements incorporating composition and performance whilst giving them a foundation of understanding for all future learning. Students learn to compose using their voices and instruments before applying this skill in *GarageBand* and developing their use of music technology. Students also develop their skills on an instrument, learning to play more difficult pieces of music and improve their technical skills and performance technique as they progress. Throughout all practical schemes of learning they continue to develop their knowledge of the elements of music and their ability to identify key features, experiencing a variety of musical genres. At the end of each unit students reflect on their learning as they evaluate their work.

In years 10 and 11 students can opt to further develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in Music by studying the BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice. Students' knowledge of the elements of music enables them to understand the key features of different genres of music and identify them through listening, a key skill in components 1 and 3. They also have the ability to perform, compose and produce music, a skill which they develop further throughout all three components of the course. These skills are vital for students who choose to study music at college, and through understanding the key skills required to be a successful musician in the music industry as part of component 2, students are able to make an informed decision on their future studies and career path.

Teaching and learning in Music aims to ensure all students make progress at all stages of their education. Progress routes are designed to be challenging for all learners, building on the varied previous experience students have in the subject, while the Progress+ routes challenge more able learners, especially those who have more developed musical ability. In lessons expert questioning is purposely targeted to keep all learners engaged and probing is a technique used that challenges students to demonstrate deeper understanding. New learning is often introduced through modelled live performances to students or via audio examples played to help them to understand how their music should sound and develop their listening skills. Regular assessment for learning, such as listening to students' work and use of whiteboards to check understanding, ensures that lessons are adapted to challenge and support students where needed. In the first lesson with each class students are asked about their prior experience in music, which ensures that all abilities can be planned for and students who do play an instrument to a high standard are given tasks that stretch them to continue to further develop their skills. Scaffolding is always planned into schemes of learning, for example, chord charts, *GarageBand* help sheets and check lists for written work to support students.

Schemes of learning are continually reviewed to ensure that the topics and genres being taught are engaging for students and relevant. As well as being engaged, students are given many opportunities to demonstrate the College Core Values. Students develop their resilience through understanding that it will take time to learn to play or compose a piece of music and that this is something that all successful musicians experience. Students can collaborate and are taught how to work well in a group, building their kindness, teamwork and tolerance. They also build their independence both through being responsible for their coursework and meeting deadlines, working independently on certain tasks. Organisation is also key for students to manage their time well and remember equipment such as their instrument. Students are encouraged to ask questions to better understand what they are learning about and, as students perform regularly, they take pride in their work so that it is the best it can be.

Across all year groups students are asked to compose, perform or play music and evaluate their work at the end of every topic. Progress checks are mainly based on students' practical work and highlight what students have done well so far. These are completed at midpoints within units in years 7 - 9 to assess students and enable self-reflection. These are then used to inform future lessons and allow students to identify their next steps for improvement. Students are then assessed at the end of the unit both on a quiz and on their practical work, allowing them to demonstrate the progress they have made since the midpoint assessment. In years 10 and 11, in completing the BTEC Tech Award, coursework is formally assessed in line with BTEC assessment plans and students are given regular feedback on their written and practical work against the assessment criteria for each component.

Beyond the classroom, there are many extra-curricular opportunities available to students in music, with sessions for beginners through to the Horizon Band which is made up of many of our most talented players. The number of students having instrumental lessons is increasing each term as this an opportunity that both the music department and school teams encourage students to take.

A quality Music education enhances learning skills, communication skills, creativity, teamwork, discipline, cultural awareness, respect for others, and self-esteem through personal accomplishment. At Horizon we want to promote that love of music.