

Music KS3 and KS4

What are the aims of the course?

- To encourage students to develop as independent learners and reflective thinkers who are appreciative of different styles of music and cultures.
- To develop musical interests and skills through performing, composing, listening and analysing music both individually and in groups.

What is the content of the course?

The course is divided into the following three units of work:

Unit 1 – Performing Music: Students will perform both individually and as part of a group and need to be able to play an instrument or sing. Extra marks are available for performing at a more difficult level and recordings need

to be completed under teacher supervision during allocated lessons. Students can improve their performance skills by attending the Music Department enrichment activities related to their chosen instrument/s. Performances will need to last at least four minutes combined duration.

Unit 2 – Composing Music: Students will compose two pieces, one to a brief given by the exam board and one free choice. The final score and recordings are undertaken in lesson time with preparation work completed at home before and during the composition task. Compositions will need to last at least three minutes combined duration.

Unit 3 – Appraising: There is a one hour 45 minute exam at the end of Year 11 when students are required to answer questions based on set works that have been studied during the course. There are eight set works from four areas of study: Instrumental Music 1700-1820, Vocal Music, Music for Stage and Screen and Fusions.

All students wishing to take the GCSE must be able to play an instrument already **or** be willing to commence learning and practise at the beginning of Year 9 as performance coursework forms 30% of the overall mark. Voice is a valid instrument and all singers are welcome. While it is not compulsory for students to have private instrumental lessons, those who do so benefit greatly.

Students must be prepared to perform individually and in ensembles in class at regular intervals. It is not essential to take grade exams in the chosen instrument, but students must be able to play a piece fluently and confidently with attention to detail.

What will be assessed during the course?

The listening paper (40%) will require students to be aware of the musical terminology and to be able to hear specific features in the types of music from Unit 3. Students will be required to answer questions in the exam based on reading a skeleton score and this skill will be taught in lessons, but a good knowledge of reading and writing musical notation will give students an advantage when commencing the course.

Performing (30%) and composing (30%) assessments will be completed over both Years 10 and 11.

