



## A Guide to the Curriculum at Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)

### Music

Throughout KS3 Music, students have the opportunity to explore essential music skills as such as performing, listening and composing music through both practical and theoretical application. Students study music from a variety of styles, genres and traditions in a way that also supports the development of essential social skills such as team building, delegation and leadership. Students receive a one hour music lesson each week. Students are taught in their mixed ability tutor groups.

### Year 7

#### Unit 1: Musical Elements - Exploring key musical concepts

Students will begin the year by exploring the main features of music through the study of musical elements. They complete rhythm performances on a variety of percussion instruments and compose their own rhythmic pieces. They also begin to learn to read and write rhythmic notation.

#### Unit 2: Keyboards

Students will learn how to read rhythm and staff notation and then learn basic keyboard skills. Students start by playing a basic melody with their right hand and then begin to add a simple left hand part. Some students will play full left hand chords. This will lead towards a solo performance in front of an audience.

#### Unit 3: The Orchestra and Descriptive Music

Students will learn about the instruments of the orchestra and will listen to a wide variety of orchestral music from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Students will explore the ways composers use music to describe scenes, characters and stories. This will lead to a group composition of their own, using a variety of instruments including percussion and keyboards.

#### Unit 4: Exploring chords and the Ukulele

Students have already learned about chords on the keyboard. They now develop that knowledge through playing chords on the ukulele. This will lead to a group arrangement and performance of a popular song using the chords C, F, G and A minor and will include voices and ukuleles.

#### Unit 5: African Drumming

This unit enables students to explore the main rhythmic musical features and devices used in African music, particularly the African drumming tradition of West Africa. Students will learn to perform different drum strokes on a drum before composing, performing and improvising simple rhythms, turning these into cyclic rhythms. They will then combine these to form a polyrhythmic texture, characteristic of much African music. They will then explore the effect of syncopation on rhythms learning about its offbeat feel and its emphasis on weaker beats before exploring how call and response is used in African music, improvising, composing and performing their own call and response rhythms. Students will look briefly at African musical instruments before combining their learning of cyclic and polyrhythms, syncopation and call and response into an African-inspired piece.

## **Unit 6: Performance Project**

In the final half term of the year, students will consolidate all their learning and using all the skills they have gained over the year, will create a complete performance of a given song for their “band”. This is a more open ended task allowing for greater creativity, and will also involve opportunities for soloists to shine in the class concert.

## **Year 8**

### **Unit 1: Blues**

Students will explore the Blues style through a variety of tasks, including group and paired performances. They will be expected to understand the developmental history and context of the genre as well as be able to demonstrate practical performance skills

### **Unit 2: Keyboards & Pop Ballads**

Students begin Year 8 by learning a new piece of music (a pop ballad) on the keyboard which builds on skills from year 7. They will read from staff notation and aim to play with both hands, melody in the right hand and chords in the left. This will be performed as a solo in front of the class. They will listen to pop ballads from different decades, describing their similarities and differences using an appropriate musical vocabulary.

### **Unit 3: Composing with Music Technology (1)**

The aim of this project is for students to begin learning to compose their own music using technology. They will be using sequencing and multi-tracking software which introduces them to sequencing and editing. Students will aim to compose a modern dance track by using pre-set sounds but quickly move on to creating their own samples, including vocal samples.

### **Unit 4: Variations**

This unit enables students to develop their ability to recognise, explore and make creative use of the elements of music found in variation form. Students will begin this unit by working with a famous theme and exploring different musical ways in which this can be varied and developed, using the elements of music and exploring changes in tonality and rhythm. They will explore how composers have used variation form in a selection of music from different times and places. Finally, they will learn about the concept of Ground Bass, as a type of Variation Form, performing Pachelbel’s “Canon” and composing their own Ground Bass Variations before looking at how Ground Bass has been used in popular songs.

### **Unit 5: Musicals**

This unit enables students to explore songs and music from the stage, beginning with an exploration into “What makes up a musical?” They will explore the history and developments of elements of a musical, from their origins in opera, before exploring the impact of an “opening number” (‘All That Jazz’) in terms of chords and vamps, putting together a group performance. Students will then move on to rehearse a full class performance of ‘Cellblock Tango’ (also from “Chicago”). They will then work in groups to put on a performance of a song from a musical.

### **Unit 6: Ukuleles**

Students will build on their ukulele skills which were first developed in Year 7. They will learn the new chords of D minor and G minor, D and A major and C7, G7, A7 and E7. This will lead to a group arrangement and performance of a choice of popular songs including voices and ukuleles.

## Year 9

### Unit 1: Group Performance

Students will demonstrate the skills developed in Y7/8 in a whole class performance project. They will be expected to play a part on a large ensemble and contribute to the whole group outcome. They will also assess their contribution and be expected to suggest amendments in order to reach their goal.

### Unit 2: Composing with Music Technology (2)

The aim of this unit is for students to build on their music technology skills learned in Year 8 using a programme called "Mixcraft". They will begin to compose their own loops and samples to create a composition in a club-dance or other popular music style. They will have the opportunity to compose lyrics to create a song. Students will have the option to work individually or in a small group.

### Unit 3: Film Music

In this unit students will be given the experience of being "*film soundtrack composers*" exploring the challenges and musical devices used in film soundtrack composition. Students will begin by exploring *Leitmotifs* and how they have been used to represent certain "*characters*" or "*situations*" in films, before exploring how *Themes* have been used in film soundtracks and performing a number of "*James Bond*" *Themes*. They will compose their own soundtrack to the new James Bond film trailer "*Spectre*" learning how film composers use "*Cuesheets*" to create music to fit with exact timings.

### Unit 4: Popular Song – Exploring songs and arrangements

In this unit, students will explore the genre of popular song, learning how different artists and groups have created different musical arrangements of the same song. They will learn about different musical devices used in popular songs including how the different structural elements (including verse, chord, intro and bridge), as well as how different textural layers (including hooks, riffs, chords, bass lines and melody) are combined to produce the classic form of a popular song. Students will be given the opportunity to conclude this unit with their own arrangement of a popular song or to compose their popular song.

### Unit 5: Samba

This unit will introduce students to the polyrhythmic style of Latin American Samba and identifies its roots in African and Spanish/Portuguese music. This builds on the rhythmic work introduced in the African Drumming unit in Year 7. Concepts revised and visited include the importance of a steady beat/pulse as a foundation of rhythmic music, looping rhythms, polyrhythms, call and response and improvisation. Through performing Samba students will learn the sounds and understand the roles of each instrument used in Samba and experience the exhilaration and physical impact of percussion ensemble music.

### Unit 6: Music Project

Students will work on an open task. They can research and create a presentation about a favourite band/artist, can prepare a live performance of a piece of their choice or can compose an original piece or arrangement using music technology. These will be performed/presented in the final weeks of Year 9.

### Assessment

Formative assessment is continual within the faculty and includes teacher comments, as well as peer and self-assessment. Final summative pieces for each unit are typically completed in class, with appropriate support where required. Summative feedback provides a KS3 National Curriculum level, as well as strengths and targets for improvement for the Assessment Focuses studied. All students track their progress in Music on progress and assessment sheets in their exercise books.

### **Literacy and Numeracy Skills**

In order to support the students' literacy skills, key words and phrases used in Music lessons are displayed on the walls of the classroom. Students are encouraged to talk about the Music they listen to in lessons and at home using the appropriate musical terms and in full sentences. Numeracy is reinforced by reference to beats in the bar and note lengths in Music. Changes in time or tempo can be described in beats per minute.

### **Promoting Reading for Pleasure and Independent reading.**

Reading will be promoted in the Music department as part of the whole school's campaign to improve reading for pleasure. Students will be encouraged to read the lyrics of their favourite songs and to read about the music they listen to in magazines and online blogs.

### **Support, Strategies and Intervention for students.**

The Music department supports students with their learning during lessons and provides opportunities for students to be supported out of lesson time. Students are challenged to work to their highest ability during lessons. Students are provided with work which is suitable for their ability and students who do not make enough progress are identified and set targets to improve by their class teacher.

Students are welcome to come to the Music Department at lunchtime and after school. On Thursday lunchtime, the 'KS3 Music Club' offers practical help for students wishing to practice the music they have been learning in class. Students wishing to work independently may ask to use the Practice Rooms for individual or small group practice. Students are welcome to come to the Music Department at lunchtime to complete their Music homework, especially if they need to ask for help from a teacher or to use a computer.

### **How to help your child in Key Stage 3**

Many students are learning to play an instrument outside of school and we encourage students to bring their instruments to certain Music modules throughout KS3 in order to develop understanding in a useful and personal way. If your child already plays an instrument, encourage them to practice and use their instrument as much as possible. If there is a keyboard or ukulele at home then please encourage your child to practice between music lessons. They are able to bring copies of the music home. If not, then many tablet computers and smart phones have keyboard apps which can help with memorising the melodic patterns. There are many opportunities for students to receive instrumental lessons at school. Please contact Mr Batley if you require further information.

There are many extra-curricular Music clubs. Please encourage your child to attend any clubs that are of interest to him/her. School Band, Ukulele Club and choir are all extra-curricular activities that have strong links with the year 7 course outline.

Encourage your child to listen to as much music as possible from a wide variety of genres. Many students have great knowledge about current trends in music, but they can also draw inspiration from other genres, such as classical, world or jazz music. Students can develop their listening skills by being exposed to music on Radio 2 or 3, or Classic FM. You could work with your child to identify different instruments or genres of music. You can access good sources of information about music and current events from the websites of the above mentioned radio stations. YouTube is an excellent resource: the growth of freely-available music on the internet means you have an almost infinite number of pieces that you can access at home. Any topics you study in class can be researched online and you can broaden your musical horizons like never before.

Take your child to see a live performance of music, whether a formal concert, or a gig, or even standing watching buskers in the town centre. Live music can be really inspiring for students and help to develop ideas for their own music.

## Useful websites for Home

[www.musictheory.net](http://www.musictheory.net)

BBC Bitesize website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects>

## Glossary

<b>A cappella</b>	Voices without an instrumental accompaniment
<b>Accompanied</b>	Voices with an instrumental accompaniment
<b>Alto</b>	Lowest-pitched female voice (part)
<b>Bass</b>	Lowest-pitched male voice (part)
<b>Bass sound</b>	A sound produced by striking an African drum in the middle producing a “hollow” sound
<b>Brass</b>	A group of instruments including trumpet, French Horn, trombone and tuba. They can be found in orchestras, brass bands, big bands, and pop groups.
<b>Call &amp; response</b>	One person plays or sings a musical phrase, and then another person/group responds with a different phrase or copies the first one.
<b>Chord</b>	A group of notes played at the same time.
<b>Crotchet</b>	A one beat note
<b>Cyclic rhythm</b>	A rhythm which is repeated over and over again (looped)
<b>Duration</b>	How long or short notes are.
<b>Dynamics</b>	The volume of a piece of music – how loud or quiet it is.
<b>Ensemble</b>	A group of singers or instrumentalists
<b>Harmony</b>	The effect produced by two or more pitched notes sounding at the same time.
<b>Improvisation</b>	A piece or section of music which has not been previously prepared
<b>Layers</b>	Another way of describing individual melodic lines/parts
<b>Master drummer</b>	The leader of an African drumming group and someone who performs the “calls” during call and response sections.
<b>Melody</b>	A tune or succession of notes, varying in pitch that has an organised and recognisable shape.
<b>Minim</b>	A two beat note.
<b>Percussion</b>	The percussion section contains instruments that you hit or shake to make a noise.
<b>Polyrhythm</b>	The use of several rhythms performed at the same time, often overlapping to create a thick, “polyrhythmic” texture
<b>Orchestra</b>	A large group of instruments which play together including strings, woodwind, brass and percussion.
<b>Quaver</b>	A half beat note
<b>Rhythm</b>	A series of notes of different lengths that create a pattern. It usually fits with a regular beat or pulse
<b>Round</b>	Type of musical composition where one part starts with another starting at a later time creating an overlapping texture
<b>Semibreve</b>	A four beat note
<b>Slap sound</b>	A sound produced by striking an African drum near the rim with a “cupped” hand

<b>Solo</b>	Single performer or singer
<b>Soprano</b>	Highest-pitch female voice (part)
<b>Staff/stave</b>	The five horizontal lines on which music is written.
<b>Strings</b>	The string instruments in an orchestra are usually violin, viola, cello, double bass and harps.
<b>Structure</b>	The sections the music is divided into e.g. Verse and chorus.
<b>Syncopation</b>	A way of changing a rhythm by making some notes sound a bit early, often so that they cross over the main beat of the music, emphasising the weak or “off beats”
<b>Tempo</b>	The speed of a piece of music.
<b>Tenor</b>	Highest-pitch male voice (part)
<b>Texture</b>	Can be described as THICK or THIN. A thick texture is when most or all of the instruments are playing whereas a thin texture is when only some or a few of the instruments are playing.
<b>Timbre</b>	The tonal quality of an instruments sound and also the way we can identify orchestral instruments as being distinct from each other – each instruments’ own sound.
<b>Tone sound</b>	A sound produced by striking an African drum between the middle and the edge producing a “shallower” sound than the bass sound
<b>Tuned percussion</b>	Instruments from the percussion section of the orchestra that are capable of playing more than one pitch or are tuneable e.g. Timpani
<b>Ukulele</b>	A small four-stringed guitar of Hawaiian origin.
<b>Unison</b>	When more than one instrument or voice performs the same line of music together at the same time
<b>Untuned percussion</b>	Instruments from the percussion section of the orchestra that play at only one pitch or are only capable of playing one sound e.g. Cymbals
<b>Woodwind</b>	This section of the orchestra got its name from the fact that many of its instruments were originally made from wood. It includes flutes, clarinets, oboes and bassoon. Nowadays, they can be made from plastic, silver, gold and even platinum!