

KS3 Music curriculum overview 2025-2026

<p>Year 7</p>	<p>UNIT 1: Building Our Musical Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm Games • Pitch Games • Introduction to the percussion section of the Orchestra • Rhythm Grids • Note values and Reading Music • Ensemble/Group Roles • Performing • Staff Notation and Keyboards <p>AIMS: This unit will use the musical elements of rhythm, pitch, tempo etc to underpin any previous knowledge learnt at primary school and students will be able to put their learning into context. Various activities will take place including rhythm games, aural listening, visual note value maths, completion of rhythm grids and pitched note reading from the treble stave. There will also be a brief introduction into keyboard work.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: To complete a rhythm grid, rehearse and perform it. To be able to read basic treble clef music or begin to develop this. Singing will also be at the heart of this topic so that students begin to develop confidence in this area. Keyboard skills introduction course to look at short phrases and RH skills.</p>	<p>Unit 2: Exploring Music from Around the World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Music from Japan, Jamaica, Brazil and Africa • Brazilian Samba • Japanese Pentatonic Scale • Jamaican • Ghanaian Hatsiatsia • Jamaican Worksongs • Textures and Layers • Patterns • Ingredients and Devices • Performing as a small group <p>AIMS: This unit will continue to explore the elements of pitch, rhythm, tempo and melody. There will be short learning journeys into music from other cultures where students will explore the cultural and historical origins of the genre. There will be listening activities and games of chance including an introduction into lyric writing. Keyboard skills and composition will be explored through the use of texture and melody.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: To complete a Ghanaian composition using a grid. A re-cap of note identification and locating notes on a keyboard, performance of a Japanese pentatonic piece with development of the students' own pentatonic composition, developing aural awareness through listening and analysing Jamaican work songs, and</p>	<p>Unit 3: Ode to Joy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruments of the Orchestra • Learning instrumental families and their characteristics • Staff Notation • Small group performances • Keyboard Skills • Unison • Independent keyboard performance with treble and bass parts <p>AIMS: This unit will use the keyboard to underpin knowledge of pitch in previous units and students will be able to put their learning into context. They will be able to demonstrate their performing capabilities using a keyboard and build on knowledge of note reading from Unit 1. They will successfully and confidently build on their keyboard skills from the last project by playing longer segments of music. Students will learn the melody and rhythm of the song through Ode to Joy lyrics that focus on how the piece is constructed melodically and rhythmically.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Following on from the work in Unit 2, the skills will now develop into performing longer melodic phrases, unison playing with a partner, adding in a bass line and playing independent parts with the LH and RH with stylish performances that are starting to develop the student into a 'pianist'. This will be demonstrated through rehearsing and performing. Skills will also be taught on setting up equipment and troubleshooting.</p>
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	<p>Assessment: Formative.</p> <p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>	<p>developing rhythmic performance skills through playing Brazilian Samba rhythms.</p> <p>Assessment: Summative at the end of each learning journey with short assessments and review.</p> <p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>	<p>Assessment: Summative with informal feedback through self and peer assessment. An overall EOY grade will be recorded based on individual topic levels and the instrumental learning ladders.</p> <p>Whole class listening and partner performances are part of this assessment focus.</p>
Year 8	<p>UNIT 1a. Introduction to Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm Games • Pitch Games • Rhythm, Tempo and Pulse • Introduction to the percussion section of the Orchestra • Note values and Reading Music • Ensemble/Group Roles • Performing • Staff notation and introduction to the keyboard (coordination and technical exercises) <p>UNIT 1b: Keyboard skills and Music Makers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 chord trick • Sharps (#) and flats (b) • Blinding Lights • Small group performances • Vocal Warm-ups and singing <p>AIMS: This unit will use the musical elements of rhythm, pitch, tempo etc to underpin any previous knowledge learnt at primary school and students will be able to put their learning into context. Various activities will take place including rhythm games, aural</p>	<p>Unit 2: Reggae</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical and Cultural context of Reggae • Famous Reggae artists • Further development of keyboard skills • Skank • Melodic Riff • Vocal warm ups and singing • Small group performances • Rehearsal skills <p>AIMS: Having studied the cultural and historical context of Reggae, students will use the keyboard to underpin knowledge previously taught in the previous unit.</p> <p>They will develop skills by learning to play skank chords, a melodic riff, develop confidence in whole class singing and pitch and then form groups where they will perform their own version of a Reggae song.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Whole class performance exploring singing and pitch in various Reggae pieces both original and modern. Exploration of riff and skank and partner rehearsal and performance. Division into larger bands for HA groups. Timing, accuracy and coordination.</p> <p>Assessment: Summative.</p>	<p>Unit 3: Band Skills 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop Band and instrumental skills • Rehearsal skills and band roles • Music equipment & Technical skills • Arranging and Musical Lead • Basic instrumental performance techniques on a bass guitar, electric guitar and basic use of a drum kit • Development of chord playing in relation to a song • Human Fly (Late Punk) or Use Somebody (Indie/Rock) • Different musical styles and genres <p>AIMS: This unit will develop the skills previously explored in earlier projects so that students can confidently learn a basic melodic part to a pop song along with chordal and rhythmic accompaniments. The setting up of equipment (both technical and physical) and the formation and structure of a 'band formation' are also explored. Other activities will include whole class and solo singing in order to memorise the song, as well as regular performances within a group practice room and as a group performance to the rest of the class (with peer and self-assessment). Use of the four chord trick from previous units will embed further learning and set the</p>

<p>listening, visual note value maths, group percussion performances, pitched note reading from the treble stave. There will also be a brief introduction into keyboard work which will include sharps and flats, and a differentiated playing sheet for small group work and how to play a 4 chord sequence.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: To develop small group skills in rhythmic performances by following a set of instructions, developing skills in reading treble and bass clef music with note identification on the keyboard. Listening activities will be developed through listening to music and watching video clips. Instrumental awareness of how the percussion section works in different settings will also be developed. Singing and learning a song through voice will be included in this topic so that students can familiarise themselves with the melody. Skills will also be taught on setting up equipment and troubleshooting.</p> <p>Assessment: (Formative in the main): Summative test on keyboard skills for Blinding Lights.</p> <p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>	<p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>	<p>chordal accompaniment of the piece in context with the other parts.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Students will develop a better understanding of timing within a band setting. Listening skills will also develop in terms of identifying vocal cues and singing in time to the backing from other parts. Leadership skills will also be encouraged in terms of ‘counting in’ and planning the band arrangement.</p> <p>Assessment: Summative at the end of the topic with an overall EOY grade based on individual topic levels and the instrumental learning ladders.</p> <p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>
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<p>Year 9</p>	<p>Unit 1: Melody and Chords</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composing and Creating • Use of Midi-Keyboard into a DAW • Musical Theory knowledge on melody writing • Chords and how they are formed • Formation of a melody line • Melody and Accompaniment • Conjunct/Disjunct/Passing notes <p>AIMS: This unit will develop the skills previously explored in earlier projects so that students can confidently begin to compose using a midi keyboard and DAW. The formation of chords is explored along with a basic pattern/chord sequence provided for the students. They are encouraged to create their own sequence from the choices given. The construction of melody is also studied, with students looking at choices of chord notes and then developing a melodic pattern from there. Conjunct/Disjunct and passing notes are studied.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Students will develop a better understanding of how melody and harmony work together. This is a good starting point for developing composition skills in preparation for KS4. Use of a DAW, music notation programme and being able to export files into the student area so that they can be shared.</p> <p>Assessment: Summative at the end of the topic with an overall EOY grade based on individual topic levels.</p>	<p>Unit 2: Band Skills 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop Band and instrumental skills • Rehearsal skills and band roles • Music equipment & Technical skills • Arranging and Musical Lead • Basic instrumental performance techniques on a bass guitar, electric guitar and basic use of a drum kit • Development of chord playing in relation to a song • I Gotta Feeling by the Black Eyed Peas • Different musical styles and genres • Further development of pop band arrangements and working as an ensemble • Extended techniques for each instrument <p>AIMS: This unit will develop the skills previously explored in earlier projects in Year 9 so that students can confidently learn to sing an extended melodic part with the addition of a rap section. The setting up of equipment (both technical and physical) and the formation and structure of a 'band formation' are also developed from Year 8. Other activities will include whole class and solo singing in order to memorise the song, as well as regular performances within a group practice room and as a group performance to the rest of the class (with peer and self-assessment). Use of the four chord trick from previous units will embed further learning and set the chordal accompaniment of the piece in context with the other parts. Vocals will be developed further from Year 8 with singers taking on solo parts, unison sing and creating their own vocal arrangement/organisation within the piece.</p>	<p>Unit 3: Music and the Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music software and studio technician • Use of Bandlab • Synthesisers and Samples to produce an advert/TV Theme • Musical Arrangement • Composing and Creating • Developing a produce/business skills • A.I. Copyrighter Clearance (Samples/A.I.) <p>AIMS: This unit will develop the skills previously explored in earlier projects in Year 9 so that students can confidently begin to compose using samples on bandlab. They will produce a piece of music for a medial platform (TV advert/jingle/use on social media), planning both the target audience and the business/marketing aspect of the finished product. Research will be conducted on A.I copyrighter clearance and how the use of samples can be developed further.</p> <p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Students will develop a better understanding of the music industry and how a musical product is formed. Listening skills will also develop in terms of analysing musical products made for the media. Business skills will be explored as students research the various component parts for the music industry within a media setting (copyright, use of AI, use of samples, how different samples can work together along with composition of new musical parts).</p> <p>Assessment: Summative at the end of the topic with an overall EOY grade based on individual topic levels.</p>
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	<p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>	<p>SKILLS AND FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Students will develop a better understanding of timing within a band setting. Listening skills will also develop in terms of identifying vocal cues and singing in time to the backing from other parts. Leadership skills will also be encouraged in terms of 'counting in' and planning the band arrangement. Groups will develop planning skills in terms of how the band parts will be arranged and structured as the song progresses.</p> <p>Assessment: Summative at the end of the topic with an overall EOY grade based on individual topic levels and the instrumental learning ladders.</p> <p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>	<p>Whole class and individual activities are part of this assessment focus.</p>
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