

Curriculum Intent

'Without music, life would be a mistake.' Friedrich Nietzsche

Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. A high-quality music education should engage and inspire students to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement.

Our music curriculum aims to ensure that all students perform, listen to and evaluate music across a range of different genres and styles and traditions. As students are taught to perform practically on a wide range of instruments, they progress to improvise and compose, use notation in a range of musical styles and traditions whilst having a deep awareness of and using the dimensions of music.

We develop students' spirituality through the use of music for liturgy, contributing to whole school Masses and events.

In terms of musical education, there are three main elements that have traditionally been focused on; performance, composition and analysis. The curriculum at St Cuthbert's aims to provide a deep understanding of each one of these, through a well-structured, progressive curriculum. By the end of Year 9, students will be ready to move onto a GCSE or BTEC level qualification in the subject, if they choose to do so.

It is worth noting too, that that music education at our school aims to build other skills and qualities in students, such as confidence and resilience. We also have numerous extra-curricular activities, however this document only covers the progression of the core music curriculum.

The curriculum progresses in such a way that vital performance skills in numerous instruments are used to enrich the learning of composition and analysis. This way, students are learning an instrument, the skills associated with it (such as reading notation or chords diagrams), learning music theory and sculpting an appreciation for the music. This is practical learning – the way music should be taught. Ofsted noted in their last report of the state of music education that, *'The good and outstanding schools ensured that pupils from all backgrounds enjoyed sustained opportunities through regular classroom work and music-making for all, complemented by additional tuition, partnerships and extra-curricular activities.'* (**Music in schools: wider still, and wider, Quality and inequality in music education 2008–11**).

Year 7

Year 7 begins with two topics: keyboard skills and notation and, brass skills and performance. The class is split into two and both halves have an equal amount of time in each topic.

Keyboard skills and notation focuses on the keyboard/piano and reading notation. The majority of students who have transitioned from primary school have little if no knowledge of reading notes, or cannot remember (*anecdotal*). Some do come in with instrument skills and therefore good notation reading ability, but the topic is differentiated as there are several different levels of notation available. The students begin by learning the treble clef notes and playing with each hand separately - all students are expected to reach a level where they play with both hands together by the end. Some students will play the selected pieces fluently and possibly be able to sight-read treble and bass clef. They will demonstrate this through

performances and demonstrations, which are built into the structure of lessons and an assessment at the end of the topic they

Brass skills and performance focuses on brass instruments (mainly the cornet, but some trombone and horns) and consists of musical workshops where students learn to play one of these instruments. This can lead to opportunities in the school brass band and reinforces confidence in performance. The students are assessed each lesson at the end of each workshop for progress and have a summative assessment at the end of the topic to measure progress from when they started.

In term two, students now have a foundation of knowledge to move forward and begin another instrument. They will study the ukulele and begin to explore the ideas of harmony, chords and homophonic music (melody and chords). They study structure through the four chord song structure (I, V, vi, IV) and this unlocks the ability to play a number of different songs using the same chord sequence but by using different strumming patterns (rhythm) and melodies. All students will be able to fluently play the chords and transition between them, some students will be able to play with advanced strumming patterns and perform as a group, keeping in perfect time.

In term 3, students will explore the voice. They will first learn warm up activities and a study piece. As they learn these, they will develop an understanding of how to use the voice to make music, pitch and singing 'in tune', scales and how different voice qualities determine a singers range and how they use their range effectively. By the end of the topic, students will be able to sing melodies that they hear, with accuracy and be able to perform in groups. Some students will be able to harmonise.

Year 8

In term 1, students will learn about popular music through the 20th to 21st century. The students will use their knowledge of instruments learnt in the previous year to explore conventions used in popular music throughout the decades. Instruments used will include ukulele, keyboard and singing. The students will also participate in critical listening to examples of canon from this era, including blues, rock and roll, rock, punk rock, Britpop and modern pop.

In term 2, students will explore 'The Planets' suite by Gustav Holst. During this topic, students will use their critical listening skills to develop visual representations of what they hear. They will use their imagination to create art based on how the sounds in the music inspire them. This will lead on to them creating their own piece of music in groups after being given a stimulus to work from (linking to composition in KS4). This topic will test their composition skills and develop their ability to create music using their by now sculpted performance skills. There will also be opportunities for students to use percussion instruments and technology to further enhance their compositions. This topic will be assessed through a final recorded performance in their group.

In term 3, students will explore blues music. This topic not only involves the learning of twelve-bar blues structures and improvisation, but also the history of blues, how African-Americans were mistreated in the USA and how blues music became a way to protest oppression. Students will learn the twelve-bar blues, the blues scale and how to improvise using a blues hexatonic scale (tonality). They will then use their improvisation skills to compose a blues piece of music in groups. Some students will be able to assemble a band and use various instruments effectively, taking into account texture, harmony and rhythm to perform a well-structured piece of music.

Year 9

In term 1, students will form bands to explore ensemble performance. By year 9, there will be a variety of talents with students specialising in various instruments, roles and skills. They will be given a list of set works (updated each year) to select a piece from. Using resources, workshops and tuition during lessons, they will learn a piece of music (or a section of music) and focus on performing it as an ensemble. The emphasis will be on group performance and not on individual performance, however the assessment will be of each member's individual contribution to the tasks; i.e. how they interact with the band. All students will have made a significant contribution to the bands performance by the end of the topic and some students will have played a leading role in directing the ensemble, by instructing other students, making creative decisions and playing a lead role on their instrument.

In term 2, students will learn about samba and the Rio Carnival. The topic covers the samba band, the individual instruments, riffs (rhythm, ostinato) and devices such as polyrhythm and call and response. The students will learn and perform this practical topic in a whole-class group, with students being assigned a samba instrument and learning in depth how to perform using it. There will be an emphasis on timing, rhythm, dynamics and tempo. Rhythms will not just be simple riffs - the performances will involve complex rhythmic ostinatos with call and response, syncopation and expressive dynamics. All students will develop a deep understanding of samba music, performing various rhythmic riffs on a percussion instrument. Some students will be able to lead the group during call and response sections and play more complex parts, using dotted rhythms, fills and breaks. The module will be assessed with a video recording.

In term 3, students will learn about music technology. They will explore, in depth, the history of recording technologies, sound synthesis and sampling. Through sequencing and arranging they will learn about the capabilities of computers in audio and music production and whilst doing this will learn how to use and operate the software involved in this. The students will be assigned tasks in groups to reproduce excerpts of music by sequencing them in a DAW, then finally be assigned a task to record and produce their own composition of any style using music technology. They will be marked based on stylistic appropriateness, creativity, input of musical ideas, correct use of the software, use of the musical elements and devices, use of effects and processors, and convincing use of all of the above. The final assessment will be done through critical analysis of the final recordings.

Year 9 leads into year 10 by preparing students for the use of music technology and Digital Audio Workstations (DAWS), testing and strengthening their analytical and appraisal skills of existing music, allowing them to experience a group performance as a class and in smaller groups and developing their composition skills using technology and instruments.

Year 10

In term 1, students will select their preferred instrument. This will be the instrument they have studied previously or in the case that they are starting fresh, they will choose. They will receive their music tuition outside of lessons and be expected to attend all of their lessons. Students will begin the KS4 course with unit 2, 'Managing a Music Product'. They will be given the brief and begin their research into music products (podcasts or live performances). They will learn about advertising, promotion, venues and job roles. They will decide in their groups who will take each role and plan out their music product using their research as a guide.

In term 1b, students will begin their product preparation and development. They will simultaneously develop their promotion items whilst rehearsing, planning and recruiting for their product/event. For any students who are developing a podcast/recording, they will book 'recording sessions' in the music department to record and mix their tracks.

In term 2, students will deliver their products and use their promotion materials to promote their music product. The annual arts festival coincides with the timeline of this task, so it offers the perfect opportunity to deliver the product to an audience and collect evidence of this. Evidence will be recorded and photographed then students will write up a review of the delivery their product. They finish the unit with an analysis and scrutiny of their work, which completes the unit.

After completion of unit 2, students will begin unit 4, 'Introducing Music Composition'. In this unit they will learn about compositional techniques and work on six ideas, they will develop two of these further and then finally pick one of these to produce a full composition. This will be evidenced with a recording, appropriate scoring (notation, lead sheets, etc) and any other appropriate evidence.

Any extra time in year 10 will be spent on either instrument development or unit 1 learning time (The Music Industry).

Year 11

In term 1, students will prepare for unit 1, 'The Music Industry'. They will partake in lessons which are planned carefully to cover each element of the exam, as detailed on the curriculum map. They will extensively practise past papers and mock material and learn how to tackle each section of the exam. The exam takes place in January.

After this, the students will complete unit 7, 'Introducing Music Sequencing'. This will involve using skills that they will have learnt in unit 4 and year 9, plus additional skills in sequencing. They will learn about digital recording, note input, using effects and digital processors, MIDI and editing. They will mix and master their sequenced piece and their work will be evidenced through a master recording, screenshots of their work within the DAW and write-ups.