



**Hillcrest Music Department
Handbook
2024-25**



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Music Department Intent, Implementation and Impact

Intent

We aim to create the very best musicians. We challenge students to think, act and speak like those working in the field. We do this through quality first teaching which challenges our students to not only understand different styles and genres of music but requires them to explore, discuss and demonstrate this understanding in creative ways.

They are challenged in all lessons to be able to demonstrate understanding and creativity through performance, composition, through collaboration with their peers and through evaluation of their own work.

As a department we aim to offer a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for those students who want to develop their musical skills and abilities beyond a classroom curriculum. Peripatetic instrumental lessons are available to all students throughout the school. Small ensembles offer opportunities to a wide range of students, allowing them to collaborate with other musicians and thus develop their performance skills, understanding and love of the subject.

We endeavour to expose our students to live music. All students involved in music at Hillcrest are given regular opportunities to perform in front of others both as individuals and with the various groups. This builds on their performance skills and also helps to develop their confidence and understanding as musicians.

Impact

We know our curriculum is working in the Music department through the engagement of our students that can be seen in all lessons. KS3 topic work regularly shows good performance skills and secure understanding.

Teaching and learning in the department is good and can be evidenced through positive internal learning walks.

The impact of our extra-curricular provision can be seen throughout the school. Hillcrest provides its students with opportunities to perform and engage in music making at a high standard. Regular performances in assemblies and shows give students the opportunity to display their talents and we receive regular compliments from audiences regarding the level of musicality. As a department we firmly believe that it is the enjoyment of the students and staff alongside their commitment and enthusiasm to make music which drives the department's success.



Implementation

- The curriculum requires students to be able to collaborate whilst being mindful to the opinions and abilities of others. We encourage students to be enquiring in the development of their ideas.
- As a knowledge engaged curriculum, we believe that knowledge underpins and enables the application of skills; both are entwined. As a department we define the powerful knowledge our students need and help them recall it by having a carefully planned progression through our curriculum which not only builds on prior knowledge but regularly enables students to develop key skills in all topic areas.
- We expect and encourage students to use key musical terminology within their work.
- We have created bespoke curriculum booklets which support the learning of our students at KS3 and KS4 giving them the opportunity to reflect on their achievements and areas which they feel need further development.
- Exposing pupils to influences and traditions from many different cultural and historical contexts.
- We encourage students to appraise a wide range of musical styles through regular exposure. They are challenged and stretched by an expectation that they can justify their opinions using musical understanding.
- We build on more traditional composition skills from the beginning of KS3 so that the composition requirements of the GCSE curriculum are more accessible.



Department Staffing, Accommodation and Resources

Mr Daniel Nock (DN), Head of Music:

dnock@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk

Instrumental and Vocal lessons

DN is supported by a team of 5 well-qualified and experienced specialist instrumental and vocal teachers who visit Hillcrest weekly in term time. The Head of Music is in regular contact with all instrumental and vocal teachers in person and by email.

Mr J Elwell	Teacher of Popular string instruments including Ukulele, Bass guitar, Acoustic guitar and Electric guitar
Mrs W Francis	Teacher of Vocals and leads the Advanced Choir
Mr O Clarke	Teacher of the Steel Band ensemble
Mr I Singh	Teacher of the Dhol Drum ensemble
Mr C Forde	Teacher of Piano and Keyboard

Building

The Music Department is based in the performing arts block which contains:

- A large and very well-equipped Music Room
- Two Practice Rooms

Resources

The department also has:

- a wide variety of instruments including ukuleles, guitars and djembes
- a class set of keyboards
- computers running FLAT and Bandlab
- One grand piano in the hall
- a large selection of musical scores.

At KS3 pupils use booklets and sheets produced by the department.

At KS4 pupils additionally have notebooks for compositions (lined and manuscript)



Curriculum

All pupils study music at Key Stage 3, after which it is an option subject at GCSE. Pupils taking GCSE Music receive instrumental or vocal lessons in school free of charge. The implementation of the curriculum must, necessarily, take into account a number of contextual factors in the school which affect the design of the curriculum:

- National frameworks such as the National Curriculum.
- Pupils' prior learning and potential: Some pupils enter the school with a significant level of background musical ability – these pupils frequently need to be significantly challenged in lessons. o A number of pupils take up an instrument upon entering the school – these pupils will often progress quickly.
- A large proportion of pupils enter the school with limited musical knowledge. Expected progress through primary education as detailed in the Model Music Curriculum is rare. Although the starting point in Year 7 is, frequently, low, the general ability of pupils means that progress should be significant across Key Stage 3. A number of pupils opt for GCSE Music purely based on their classroom Music experience.
- The diversity of cultural heritages within the school.
- The broader culture of the school: academically and otherwise.
- The resources available.
- The planning, delivery and assessment of the curriculum in the context of how this can be managed with a regard to reasonable workload for staff.
- The assessment framework of the school (including formal examinations).
- What repertoire would both speak to, and challenge, pupils.

KEY STAGE 3 Pupils receive two lessons over two weeks in Year 7 – 9. The ability range and the experience of music can be very wide in Year 7. KEY STAGE 4 Pupils receive five lessons over two weeks. We study the Eduqas GCSE course which is divided up into Performing (30%), Composing (30%) and Listening (40%).



Key Stage 3

Although the technical, constructive and expressive elements of music curricular design is, to a large extent, covered at all levels, it is more explicitly covered in particular year groups:

- Year 7 – technical (through the development of fundamental instrumental skills, understanding staff notation)
- Year 8 – constructive (through the focus on chords and harmony)
- Year 9 – expressive (through tasks at a technical level appropriate for pupils to be able to realise their expressive intentions)

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7 Foundational and transitory musical skills and knowledge	7.1 What is music? Pupils complete baseline tests in listening, performing and composing music.	7.2 Javanese Gamela Pupils compose and perform as part of a Javanese gamelan ensemble. This is used to develop ensemble performance skills.	7.3 The Orchestra Pupils learn to read staff notation and then perform as an orchestra to develop ensemble skills. Pupils learn to identify different instrument in the orchestra and are assessed on their listening skills.		7.4 Arriba from Jazz in the classroom Pupils create a whole class performance of 'jazz in the classroom' reading notation.	7. 5 Personal Project Pupils rehearse and perform a piece of their choosing. For most pupils this will be a piece on the keyboard, guitar or voice. Pupils who learn an instrument outside of the classroom will use this time to compose a piece to a set brief in the given rehearsal time.

<p>Year 8 Chords and Harmony</p>	<p>8.1 Mande Drumming</p> <p>Pupils compose and perform as part of a Mande drumming ensemble</p>	<p>8.2 Arriba from Jazz in the classroom</p> <p>Pupils create a whole class performance of 'jazz in the classroom' reading notation.</p>	<p>8.3 Baroque music</p> <p>An introduction to the Baroque era – in particular, pupils develop keyboard skills by learning a piece of Baroque music and compose using a ground bass. Pupils learn to read the bass clef.</p>		<p>8.4 Blues music</p> <p>Pupils look at the genres of blues and jazz, including well known structures (12 bar blues) and scales (blues scale) and perform a piece in an ensemble.</p>	<p>8.5 Personal Project</p> <p>Pupils rehearse and perform a piece of their choosing. For most pupils this will be a piece on the keyboard, guitar or voice. Pupils who learn an instrument outside of the classroom will use this time to compose a piece to a set brief in the given rehearsal time.</p>
<p>Year 9 Finding your musical self</p>	<p>9.1 Film Music</p> <p>Pupils explore different styles of music used in films. Pupils will compose a horror soundtrack in</p>	<p>9.2 EDM</p> <p>Pupils explore sequencing and music technology through the genre of EDM.</p>	<p>9.3 Cover music</p> <p>Pupils create a musical cover of a Samba piece to develop ensemble skills.</p>	<p>9.4 Composing a Pop song.</p> <p>Pupils compose a bassline, chords, drumbeat and melody using music technology</p>	<p>9.5 Personal Project</p> <p>Pupils rehearse and perform a piece of their choosing. For most pupils this will be a piece on the keyboard, guitar or voice.</p> <p>Pupils who learn an instrument outside of the classroom will use this time to compose a piece to a set brief in the given rehearsal time.</p> <p>Pupils also could submit a written assignment on a style of music of their choosing.</p>	



Key stage 4

	Autumn Y10	Spring Y10	Summer Y10	Autumn Y11	Spring Y11	Summer Y11
Performing	<p>Pupils continue their instrumental or vocal studies with their Visiting Music Teacher. Pupils perform a solo or ensemble piece in class as part of a formal assessment.</p> <p>Pupils also perform holistically through composition tasks.</p> <p>Pupils are also expected to perform as part of the extra-curricular life of the school or/and external institutes.</p>			<p>Pupils perform and submit either a solo or ensemble performance which forms 15% of their <u>final GCSE mark.</u></p>	<p>Pupils perform and submit either a solo or ensemble performance which forms 15% of their <u>final GCSE mark.</u></p>	
Composing	<p>Language for Learning</p> <p>Pupils look at foundational theoretical knowledge needed for the programme of study, alongside basic compositional skills.</p> <p>Pupils complete an appropriate composing task using musical forms and devices.</p>	<p>Composing to a Learner Determined Brief</p> <p>Pupils complete a composition to a brief set by themselves, which forms 15% of their <u>final GCSE mark.</u></p> <p>This will be submitted in the Autumn term.</p>		<p>Composing to a Set Brief</p> <p>Pupils complete a composition to a brief set by the board, which forms 15% of their <u>final GCSE mark.</u></p> <p>This will be submitted in the Spring term</p>		

<p>Listening and appraising</p>	<p>AoS1: Musical forms and devices. AoS2: Music for Ensemble</p> <p>Pupils study music from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic Eras.</p> <p>Pupils study the set work Badinerie and complete a listening test on this piece</p>	<p>AoS4: Popular music AoS2: Music for ensemble</p> <p>Pupils explore different styles of popular music.</p>	<p>Examination Practice</p> <p>Pupils practice listening and appraising style examination papers based on Eduqas AoS1, 2 and 4.</p>	<p>AoS3: Film Music</p> <p>Examination Practice</p> <p>Pupils practice listening and appraising style examination papers.</p>	<p>Review</p> <p>Revisit area of studies which are weaker. This content will differ depending on the cohort.</p>	<p>Final examination</p> <p>Pupils complete their listening and appraising exam paper set by the exam board.</p> <p>This will form 40% of their <u>final GCSE mark.</u></p>
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Day-to-Day Teaching and Learning

Regarding a typical lesson might look like in Music, although there may be variation between key stage, the fundamental feature that should unite practice across the continuum of the school is music as the dominant language of the classroom. Wherever possible, lessons should contain practical music-making but it is acknowledged that, in some instances, circumstances may dictate that learning must take other forms. Lessons will always show the checking of understanding and formative feedback as the dominant means of assessment, and, frequently, the most meaningful learning takes place in individual conversations and musical modelling in practical tasks. The style of teaching will be adaptive in a way that only music teaching can be – allowing for the huge scope in the ability of the pupils in the class. There is an emphasis, particularly in Key Stage 3, that music is for everyone and not for the preserve of those receiving instrumental or vocal tuition.



Department Feedback and Assessment Policy

Assessment takes place in all lessons, based upon the pupils' responses to questioning and individual feedback to practical tasks.

Key Stage 3

During each term a grade is, as far as possible, based upon a balance of the three main skills of performing, composing, and listening and appraising with a similar weighting to GCSE and A Level studies. This gives a sense of continuity to assessment and feedback throughout the school. The assessment language in Key Stage 3 can be found below:

- Working above (Wab) curriculum related expectations (CRE)
- Working at (WA) CRE
- Working towards (WT) CRE

Feedback is continuous in each lesson through live feedback, but formal feedback will often be given at the end of a unit. In such instances the teacher will provide their grade and a practical improvement target.

Should I study music at KS4?

We encourage pupils to take music further if they:

- Regularly have instrumental or vocal lessons.
- Actively participate in ensembles in school or external settings.
- Consistently 'Working at or above' in assessments.
- Can commit to practise an instrument 20 minutes a day four times a week.

If the above does not apply to a pupil and they still want to participate in KS4 Music, a meeting with the Head of Music should take place laying out the expectations of the course.

Key Stage 4

Assessment language in Key Stage 4 is based on the 9-1 grading system.



Gifted and Talented

Gifted and Talented pupils are catered for through the extra-curricular provision and the curriculum.

When identifying Gifted and Talented musicians, we look for:

- exceptional performing ability or exceptional progress
- an innate sense of creativity
- a strong commitment to music.

Exceptional performing ability or exceptional progress is defined as:

1. Significant prior attainment on an instrument or, equivalent to the following standards (though, attainment of the grade itself is not necessary):

- a. Year 7 - Grade 2
- b. Year 8 - Grade 3
- c. Year 9 - Grade 4
- d. Year 10 - Grade 5
- e. Year 11 - Grade 6

2. Displaying significant progress in performing e.g. progressing at the rate of two or more grades in a year (or equivalent classroom standard).

An innate sense of creativity is defined as:

3. Displaying natural creativity in composing tasks e.g. imaginative use of rhythm, natural and adventurous sense of harmony,

4. Performing with a natural sense of musicianship e.g. strong sense of pitch and rhythm, the ability to phrase musically and a strong sense of expression and personal voice. A strong commitment to music is defined as:

5. Enjoyment of, and curiosity about, a wide range of music beyond the classroom curriculum.

6. Composing music for pleasure.

7. A desire to involve oneself in available performing opportunities.



In the classroom

The curriculum is adapted in three key ways:

- The design of the curriculum is such that there are a number of ‘Stretch’ activities throughout.
- Where pupils learn a piece on an instrument there are always a number of levels of difficulty available.
- The teacher responding to pupils’ work throughout the lesson and challenge appropriately. The most effective forms of adaptive teaching in musical learning tend to be those which are personalised and in response to what is heard in practical activities.

Extra-Curricular

The extra-curricular musical offering provided by the school is significant to pupil progression. There are two keyways in which this provides challenge for the most able musicians:

- Access to an outstanding instrumental and vocal music programme, which includes entrance for ABRSM and Rockschoool examinations.
- Access to high-calibre ensembles, choirs and productions. There are a large number of excellent musicians in the school and pupils progress most quickly when they are performing together and learning from each other.



Extended Learning

In Key Stage 3, compulsory extended learning takes place three times a year:

- each term three knowledge checks will be completed using Microsoft forms which:
 - o acts as a recall activity for the expected level of musical knowledge
 - o assesses musical understanding
- This allows a greater amount of practical musicianship in classroom lessons. Performance in Extended learning contributes to the pupil's grades.

In Key Stages 4, extended learning is generally used for:

- performing practice (GCSE Music pupils are expected to practise for at least 20 minutes four times a week, although in many instances it may be much more)
- composing coursework
- revision
- Focus on sound

Closing the Gap

We aim to ensure that pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding are not disadvantaged by:

- class teachers being aware of pupils in their groups who qualify for Pupil Premium;
- monitoring the uptake of instrumental and vocal tuition by Pupil Premium pupils;
- monitoring the uptake of extra-curricular music by Pupil Premium pupils;
- targeting Pupil Premium pupils with significant musical potential towards paid instrumental or vocal tuition. We support our pupils with SEND by applying the guidelines from their pupil profiles. All teaching is differentiated accordingly.



Extra-Curricular Music Instrumental and Vocal Music Tuition

Instrumental and vocal lessons are available with our team of 5 well-qualified and experienced specialist teachers. Pupils can apply for this via our Parent Mail form.

Commencement

Lessons commence at the start of each full term.

Cost

The fee for lessons is £25 per term. This figure is reviewed annually. Lessons are paid termly or annually using Parent Mail.

Exemptions

Pupils who qualify for Pupil Premium, or who take GCSE Music are entitled to free tuition.

Scheduling

Pupils will receive individual lessons of 20 minute or paired lessons of 30 minutes.

*Steel Pan and Dhol drum lessons are taught as an ensemble so will be taught in small groups for 30 minutes.

Lessons

A minimum of 30 lessons will be offered over the academic year.

Lessons are scheduled on a rotating basis so that pupils do not miss the same lesson repeatedly.

Instrument Hire

We have a small stock of school instruments which can be hired. Please enquire with the Head of Music (dnock@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk). These are generally considered 'starter' instruments and should only be kept for a short period of time. We ask all families to consider buying an instrument after a maximum of a year.

We cannot guarantee availability of an instrument and we will look into the possibility after you have requested lessons. We do not keep a stock of some instruments.

Events

The department runs a number of concerts and events throughout the year. Pupils should attend as required.

Examinations

Pupils are encouraged to take examinations in music. They are useful in providing a goal to



work towards and indicate the standard attained. Parents/carers will be consulted when we believe it would be a good idea to enter. The decision of whether to go ahead will involve the pupil, parent/carer and teacher.

Notice

A half term's notice is required to cancel lessons. Lessons can only be stopped at the end of each full term. This gives due warning to the teacher and ensures that the space can be used by another pupil. Parents/carers should write to the Head of Music (dnock@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk) before the final day of the preceding half term (e.g. to cancel lessons from the Spring Term onwards, the school needs to be notified by the last school day of the first Autumn Half Term). Refunds cannot be issued on lessons already paid. The school also reserves the right to cancel the lessons of any pupil who does not use their lessons profitably or who does not adhere to the terms of the Agreement.

Ensembles and Choirs

Steel Band	Mr Clarke	Apply via parent mail letter	TBC	Hall
Dhol Drums	Mr Singh	Apply via parent mail letter	TBC	Hall
Advanced Choir	Mrs Francis	By Audition	TBC	R12
Blues and Jazz Band	Mr Nock	Open to all (Capacity 15 Pupils)	Wed 15.30 – 16:15	R12



British Values

In all its work the department promotes British Values: Democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs:

- Democratic values are promoted through dialogue in pair and group work.
- Pupils choose their own musical pathways in the yearly Personal Project unit.
- Pupils are encouraged to find their own voice through composition tasks.
- Adherence to classroom rules is encouraged in all lessons.
- Pupils are encouraged to support their peers in performances.
- Music from different beliefs and cultures are experienced, including:
 - Javanese gamelan
 - The Blues and jazz
 - Brazilian Samba
 - Music of China
 - Christian choral tradition
 - Mande drumming
 - Punjabi Bhangra
 - Reggae
 - Western classical and popular musics

In addition, the music department promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all its pupils. The cultural aspects of music education are obvious, and pupils are exposed to a range of global cultures listed above. In both curricular and extra-curricular music, pupils develop social skills through deep and meaningful collaboration when they compose, perform and listen together. The department sees the aim of its curricular and extra-curricular activities for pupils to find their musical selves, which we believe is essential to the human experience and fundamentally a spiritual and moral pursuit.