

Music

Subject Leader: Mr A. Hawke

Subject teachers: Miss L. Wood

Peripatetic teachers: Mr M. Lane, Mrs S. Hall, Mrs G. Nicholls, Mr S. Oxborrow

Department aims:

The Music department at Birches Head Academy gives students opportunities to explore many different musical styles using a wide variety of instruments and resources. We recognise and celebrate the importance of students' own musical interests, as well as music they may be less familiar with from different historical periods. We want students to become confident performers, songwriters, composers, analysts and critics of music, whether they are studying Electronic Dance music and creating their own Dance tracks on iPads, or performing Haydn on the keyboard and discussing the conventions of Classical music.

The Music department offers a variety of clubs including Key Stage 3 Band (Tuesday lunch times), Key Stage 4 Band (Thursday after school), Vocal Group (Wednesday lunch times) and String Group (Thursday lunch times). We also offer additional tuition in drums, keyboard, singing, guitar, bass and ukulele with our visiting peripatetic teachers.

KS3

In year 7, the emphasis in Music is on enabling students to experience as many different instruments and musical resources as possible, including Samba drums, keyboards, guitars, singing, ukuleles, electronic drums and iPads (GarageBand software). As student's progress through year 8 and 9, we encourage them to specialise more in the instrument(s) of their choice. For example, it is possible for a keen guitarist to explore the entire year 9 curriculum through this instrument. This is excellent preparation for GCSE Music at KS4, where students are expected to have one principal study instrument for their solo and ensemble performances. The table below shows the current KS3 topics:

KS3 Curriculum overview

	Term 1a	Term 1b	Term 2a	Term 2b	Term 3a	Term 3b
Year 7	Samba	Soul	Reggae	Electronic Dance / Classical	Folk	Pop
Year 8	Film Music	African Music	Blues	Hip Hop	Classical	Musical Theatre
Year 9	Britpop	Your Music 1	Songwriting	Songwriting	Your Music 2	-

KS4

At KS4, the Music department offers Edexcel GCSE Music. We believe that any student can study GCSE Music, regardless of whether they have had individual lessons on an instrument or can read music notation. Students are expected to complete controlled assessments in Solo Performance (15%), Ensemble Performance (15%) and Composing (30%). There is a final summer listening exam based on the set works students have studied throughout the course (40%). The tables below shows the current GCSE topics for year 10 and year 11 respectively.

GCSE Curriculum overview

	Term 1a	Term 1b	Term 2a	Term 2b	Term 3a	Term 3b
Year 10 (2016 Specification)	Music for Stage & Screen	Vocal Music	Vocal Music	Instrumental Music 1700 - 1820	Instrumental Music 1700 - 1820	Fusions
Year 11 (2009 Specification)	African Music	Expressionism / Minimalism	Indian Music / Celtic Folk Music	Musical Theatre / Exam Preparation	Exam Preparation	Final Exam

How can I help support my child's learning in Music?

At KS3, students will have one "hand-in" homework per topic. These homework activities will take the form of research projects, worksheets or "take-away" homework menus which parents can help their child with. Additional homework may be set involving revision or practice in preparation for an assessment. If your child expresses an interest in learning a particular instrument, then it would be valuable for parents to purchase that instrument so their child can practice at home. This is often more affordable than you may think – guitars, for example, can be found for as little as £30 (new) through reputable mail-order companies/websites. At KS4, students will have one extended homework project per topic, which will extend and deepen their learning for each set work. This will take the form of a booklet which should be completed over a 2-3 week period. It is crucial that KS4 student practice on their instruments regularly so they are well-prepared for Performance assessments. They should do this at home and in school – the Music practice rooms are available to book most lunch times.

Useful websites

BBC Bitesize: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/zpf3cdm>

Normans Musical Instruments (Staffordshire-based company with some good prices on instruments):
<https://www.normans.co.uk/>

Edexcel GCSE Music website: 2009 Specification (Year 11)
<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-qcses/music-2009.html>

Edexcel GCSE Music website: 2016 Specification (Year 10)
<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-qcses/music-2016.html>

www.youtube.com – Extensive song clips and tuition videos

www.ultimate-guitar.com – Free guitar, bass and ukulele tabs

www.8notes.com – Free sheet music for a range of instruments, including piano/keyboard

www.spotify.com – Free music streaming service