

The Music Curriculum at Our Lady's Catholic High School

Music Staff at Our Lady's are particularly skilled in transforming pupils' expectations about their potential. We firmly believe that a quality musical education must also ensure that all pupils experience praise and benefit from a strong sense of self-belief. Through the gift of music and The Gospel Values, staff in the Music Department at Our Lady's develop musicianship; striving for excellence, emphasising authenticity, being inspiring, and engaging, ensuring a positive child-centred experience, actively involving pupils, providing a sense of personal progression and developing a sense of ownership and belonging.

The intent of the music department has always been clear; to provide the best possible opportunities for our pupils and to maximize their potential. This strong sense of purpose and vision continues to guide and inform us along our musical journey. Our curriculum aims to inspire and engage the love all pupils have for music, and in doing so better enable them to understand themselves and the world in which we live. Through this embedded work, we instil in pupils an awareness of the number and types of jobs available in the music industry, including the economic importance of the sector. The music department is deeply committed to ensuring that pupils understand that it is possible turn a passion into a career.

Pupils follow a carefully structured curriculum, which ensures the delivery of the KS3 National Curriculum KS3 and KS4 programmes of study. In doing so pupils explore performance, composition and understanding through engaging and inspiring contemporary topics. They develop confidence, musicianship, imagination and creativity alongside appraisal and literacy skills. Each aspect of the National Curriculum is linked alongside the following Areas of Study (AoS 1 – 8): Performance/ Practice, Composition, Set Works, Styles of Music, Aural Skills, Core Content, Wider Listening & Understanding, Examination Preparation and Retention. Careers in music are taught in a discrete, integrated way throughout KS3 & KS4. Each of these skill sets build on prior knowledge and key concepts are revisited throughout Year 7-11. For example, development of harmonic understanding in Year 7, through studying primary chords, is developed in Year 8 Study of popular song and further in Year 9 through the development of chord sequences. The knowledge and skills developed at KS3 enable KS4 pupils to develop complex harmonic structures, including modulations, as part of their GCSC Composition coursework.

SEND pupils follow the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils, differentiated where necessary. As a result of our inspiring curriculum work, a high number of SEND pupils choose to study Instrumental Lessons and take part in extra curricular activities. These extra opportunities play an important role in enabling SEND pupils to access to the GCSE Music course and the opportunity to be entered for instrumental examinations.

Disadvantaged pupils are known by class teachers, who monitor their progress and provide supportive intervention where necessary. This may take the form of providing resources, extra teaching, or enrichment activities.

For the most able pupils, who work incredibly hard, encouraging such pupils to engage with music and fulfill their potential ensures a balance from which other subjects benefit. Through our commitment to all pupils, music staff ensure that higher ability pupils experience praise and benefit from a strong sense of self-belief in the same way that middle and lower ability pupils do.

Through our broad and creative music curriculum and extra curricular activities, pupils at Our Lady's are motivated and engaged in their studies with intensity and feeling. There is extensive out-of-hours provision in Music; Pupils are welcome to attend the lunchtime ensembles to extend their musicianship, instrumental lessons are available for all pupils, FSM pupils receive free instrumental tuition, music theory classes enable pupils to make successful transitions to KS5, after school sessions operate throughout the year for GCSE pupils and pupils are offered the opportunity to take place in performance opportunities both inside and outside of school. At Our Lady's we firmly believe that a pupils sense of cognitive, physical, emotional, spiritual, linguistic, and moral development is enhanced, impacting positively on confidence, self-esteem,

personal, social, emotional development and behavioral health, reducing inequality and increasing creativity. This leads to sustainable progression, raised standards of achievement, and increased sense of fulfillment.

KS3

Pupils in Year 7 & 8 study the following instruments/topics, alongside 'The Elements of music' and through a variety of musical styles:

- Keyboard
- Music Technology – Composition
- Drums
- Guitar
- Ukulele
- Voice

Pupils in Year 7 & 8 study the following instruments/topics, alongside 'The Elements of music' and through a variety of musical styles:

- Keyboard
- Music Technology 1 – Melodic Composition
- Band (Guitar, Bass, Piano, Drums)
- Music Technology 2 – Harmonic Composition

KS4

Pupils study a full GCSE in Music, which consists of 3 components.

- **30% Performance (Coursework)** – 2 Performances; solo & ensemble. Pupils have to showcase a wide variety of instrumental techniques, demonstrating level of demand, accuracy, expression and interpretation. Pupils produce 2 recordings, which must total 4 minutes. Both performances are marked out of 36.
- **30% Composition (Coursework)**
Both components are marked out of 36, consisting of a 'Free' composition and a 'Composition to a Brief' (externally set).
- **40% Examination** – 1hr listening paper (previously unheard material) and 30 minute written paper (based on 'Set Works').

In Year 10 pupils study:

- Aural Skills: Chords, Scales, Harmonic devices, Melodic Devices, Cadences, Intervals,
- Core Concepts: Dynamics, Tempo, Texture, Tonality, Following notation
- Set Works – Set Work 1 (externally set)
- Styles: Minimalism, Baroque, Film, Dance, World, Classical, Rock & Blues
- Examination & revision techniques/ preparation.
- Composition: All areas of study.
- Wider Listening
- Performance: Practice methodology, expression, techniques, interpretation and accuracy

In Year 11 pupils study:

- Aural Skills: Chords, Scales, Harmonic devices, Melodic Devices, Cadences, Intervals,

- Core Concepts: Dynamics, Tempo, Texture, Tonality, Following notation
- Set Works – Set Work 2 (externally set)
- Styles: Minimalism, Baroque, Film, Dance, World, Classical, Rock & Blues
- Examination & revision techniques/ preparation (Inc. long written answers).
- Composition: All areas of study.
- Wider listening
- Performance: Practice methodology, expression, techniques, interpretation and accuracy.
- Instrument Sounds (advanced)

Pupils in KS3 complete four practical assessments per topic, each of which are based upon different instruments. KS4 pupils complete one practical assessment per term on their chosen specialised instrument. The purpose of the assessments is to measure progress in demand, accuracy, expression and interpretation, in addition to informing pupils of how to make future progress. Teacher 'live' assessments of performance and practice are given aurally at KS3 and in writing on a fortnightly basis at KS4, highlighting areas for improvement. Pupil levels are based upon level of technical demand and graded against examining boards and other schools. Following the analysis of data from summative assessments, pupils requiring intervention are highlighted, their barriers identified and targeted in subsequent classwork. Class teachers keep a log of pupils involved and this information is included as part of the Curriculum Area Review.

Music staff spend 2 hours every week for staff development and training. This work continues to impact positively on all aspects of school life, including; our rewards system, cross-curricular links with creative arts subjects, teaching and learning and the development of a balanced curriculum. The Music department are committed to developing expertise in curriculum design and constructing well-planned and sequenced lessons, which are exciting, engaging and ambitious. Curriculum Areas remain focused on consolidating and extending the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired, including enabling pupils to memorise key concepts storing them in long-term memory. This work includes CPD linked to Learning Sciences and cognitive science such as; distributed practice, interleaving, retrieval, dual coding and Cognitive Load Theory. As a result of this intense CPD, teachers at Our Lady's are better able to adapt to the changing educational landscape, sustaining and further developing excellent provision for all groups of pupils. As part of our National Teaching school role, the principal Teacher of Music disseminates outstanding practice across a range of schools, enhancing pedagogical development. Annual 'Curriculum Area Self Evaluation' and Improvement Plans recognize and celebrate areas of success, highlighting areas for development. Outstanding judgements made in Music Department, have been consistently verified and upheld by link governors, Artsmark Governor and Senior Leadership.