



# MUSIC

## What will you study during the course?

The GCSE Music specification allows students to engage in both practical and academic tasks in three key areas: performing, composing and listening. Activities have been based around these skills in Years 7-9 and GCSE Music extends these further to include solo and ensemble performing, composing whole pieces, and studying music in a variety of styles. The GCSE Music students present their own concert as part of the course. As a GCSE Music student, you will be expected to participate in at least one of the many extra-curricular groups on offer. 30% of the total examination is performing on your chosen instrument, so if you already have instrumental lessons and enjoy them then this subject would be ideal for you. These will help you to develop your listening and performing skills as well as your music theory knowledge. All GCSE students are expected to be a member of the Senior Vocal Group (rehearsals: Friday, 2nd Break).

The course is split into three units:

### Unit 1: Integrated portfolio – 30%, coursework

This can be taken using any instrument, including voice. Students develop their understanding of performance and composition through exploration of their own instrument within styles and genres of their choosing. They demonstrate their playing skills and abilities by practising and performing a solo piece musically, accurately and with appropriate interpretation. In the composition element of this component, they demonstrate knowledge of composition techniques, use of musical elements and resources, including specific instrumental and technology techniques.

### Unit 2: Practical component – 30%, coursework

Students develop their skills and understanding of performance and composition. The focus of the performance aspect of this component is on the demands of performing with an ensemble. Students are also required to compose a piece of music appropriate for one of the areas of study in response to a set brief. You will work to develop your understanding of core composition techniques and music theory before beginning to create compositions of your own. Much of your composition coursework will be completed using the music notation software Sibelius. You will need to have plenty of self-motivation to be able to work on your own during curriculum time to independently create your pieces.

### Unit 3: Listening and appraising – 40%, examination

Listening to music and responding to it is an integral part of Music lessons. You will study four Areas of Study, The Concerto through Time, Rhythms of the World, Film and Computer Game music and Popular Music, and will listen to a wide range of repertoire from these areas. During the 1 hour 30 minute examination you will be played excerpts from a range of unfamiliar pieces and will have to answer short and more extended questions based upon stylistic features and the musical elements.

## How will the course be taught?

Lessons will focus around the three units of study: performance, composition, and listening and appraising. You prepare for Unit 3 through studying the Areas of Study and listening to repertoire, with your learning being tested after each one. You will spend some lessons working on the computer creating your composition. Much of the composition element is taught through tutorials and you will be expected to continue with your work whilst your teacher is supporting other students. There will also be termly performances, which will be assessed to allow you to gauge how well your performance is progressing.

## How will your work be assessed?

Unit 1 and Unit 2 are coursework based, each covering 30% of the course. You complete these over the course of Year 10 and 11 and they are marked in-house and moderated by the exam board. Unit 3 forms the remaining 40% of the course is a 1 hour 30 minute examination at the end of Y11, which will test your knowledge of the Areas of Study.

## Where can it lead?

Music GCSE is ideal preparation for A Level Music. The music industry is a big business and offers a huge range of

opportunities in many different careers. Equipped with an awareness of musical genres and styles; performing, listening and composing skills; and music technology proficiency, students will be well placed to pursue a musical profession. GCSE Music also offers a wealth of transferable skills relevant to ongoing non-musical study as well as to future career development in any field, including literacy, critical thinking, creativity, social skills and team working, leadership and communication, time management and organisational skills. It also gives you a very well-rounded academic arts education that both employers and Sixth Form Colleges, as well as universities, value. This academic approach will also prepare you for general A Level study. It is a well regarded academic GCSE and A Level course by all universities, including Oxbridge.