MUSIC

According to National Curriculum guidelines, Music is taught to all students in Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9). Students receive a one hour lesson once a week. In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11), Music is offered as a GCSE subject, and students follow the Edexcel course.

KEY STAGE 3

Students attend Music lessons in their form groups, following programmes of study which incorporate the essential skills of Listening & Appraising and Composition & Performance. They develop their knowledge and appreciation of Music from different periods and different cultures, broadening their overall Musical awareness and understanding. Students will listening to a variety of Music, and are encouraged to participate in discussions about what they have listened to. For the practical parts of the lesson, students regularly work on groups, exploring composition techniques and performing pieces.

Students are encouraged to develop in a variety of Musical skills, in particular rhythm, melody and harmony. In the first term of Year 7, students work on their understanding of – and skills in – rhythm and pulse. They explore a variety of pieces with strong rhythmic elements and perform increasingly more complex pieces. Later in Year 7, they examine melody and learn to compose effective tunes with shape and structure. In Year 8, they study harmony, looking at chords and texture in various styles of Music. They go on to consider variety and contrast in Music, composing and performing pieces which focus on the development of their creativity. In Year 9, students’ skills are refined and improved as they look at the development of classical and popular Music during the last four hundred years.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF TOPICS & PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Year 7:

Rhythm – Patterns – Timbre & Instruments – Melody & Note-reading – Song-writing – Medieval Music

Year 8:

Chords & Harmony – British Folk Music – Timbre & Texture – Contrast – Creative Composition – World Music

Year 9:


MUSIC AT KEY STAGE 4

Students follow the GCSE syllabus offered by Edexcel. The key skills of Listening & Appraising and Composing & Performing are developed and nurtured through close examination of four areas of study:

Area of Study 1

Repetition & contrast in Western Classical Music, 1600-1899, with emphasis on the following:

- Ground bass
- Variations
- Ternary
• Rondo

Area of Study 2

New developments in Western Classical Music, 1900 to the present day, with emphasis on the following:

• Serialism
• Minimalism
• Experimental Music
• Electronic Music

Area of Study 3

Popular song in context, with emphasis on the following:

• 12 bar blues
• Reggae
• Club dance remix
• Songs from Musicals

Area of Study 4

Rhythms, scales and modes in Music from around the world, with emphasis on the following:

• Indonesian Gamelan Music
• Indian raga
• African drumming
• Fusions

Music is proving an increasingly-popular option for students at GCSE level, with around 20 students a year opting for the subject, and there is an excellent A*-C pass rate. As well as success in GCSE, the aim of the Key Stage 4 course is to develop students’ knowledge, awareness and appreciation of a wide variety of Music.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Tuition is offered to students in all types of instruments: woodwind, strings, brass, piano & keyboards, percussion and guitar. Currently, nearly one sixth of the whole school have instrumental lessons here. Students can take grade examinations, such as those offered by the Associated Board, on their instruments or in theory of Music as part of their progress, though entry for examinations is not compulsory. Rather, the ethos of Music lessons is of enjoyment in playing and a desire to make progress.

There are a number of extra-curricular activities available for students at lunch times. The following activities are currently on offer:

• Concert Choir (focusing on advanced songs with harmony singing)
• Junior Choir (for students in Key Stage 3)
• Jazz Band (open to all students)
• Instrumental Ensemble (open to all students)
• Various other rehearsals for concerts or other public performances
During the course of each academic year, students participate in a variety of concerts and recitals, both in ensembles and as soloists. Concerts are held regularly in school, and students also participate in various functions in and around the local community. In recent years, the Music Department has been involved in performances in the Assembly House in the centre of Norwich and in events in the Poringland district. Recently, the Concert Choir was invited by the Rotary Club of Norwich to perform at an international evening in Norwich. A few years ago, a group of students performed in venues in Switzerland and France. Participation by students in concerts is encouraged in all year groups, and this gives opportunities for students to develop and nurture their performance skills.