

MUSIC CURRICULUM STATEMENT

Specific Curriculum Intent - Music

Music is both a practical and academic subject. Musical learning is about thinking and acting musically. This means that music lessons are about learning *in* and *through* music, not solely *about* music. Music lessons at Balshaw's are focussed on developing imagination and creativity, building up pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Young people come into Balshaw's with a lifetime of musical experiences, which are practical and experiential, and which have contributed to their aural memory, practical, discriminatory skills, and personal and collective identity formation. Their music lessons in Balshaw's, therefore, **do not assume** that they know nothing and have no prior musical experience.

Music is a powerful, unique form of communication that can change the way we feel, think and act. It brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. As an integral part of culture, past and present, it helps students understand themselves and relate to others, forging important links between the home, school and the wider world. The teaching of music develops students' ability to listen and appreciate a wide variety of music and to make judgements about musical quality.

At Balshaw's we encourage active hands on involvement in different forms of music making, both individual and communal, with the curriculum classroom based work and the curriculum support opportunities such as choral work of the Chamber Choir, Show Choir, Brass Band, Rock School and various other ensembles, thereby developing a sense of group identity, togetherness, and community spirit.

Music also increases self-discipline and creativity, aesthetic awareness, sensitivity and fulfilment. We firmly believe that music plays a vital role in a child's development and seek to offer a range of opportunities for children to participate in playing instruments as well as experiencing music in other forms.

Our students experience wide-ranging musical genres throughout Key Stage 3 and 4. They have the opportunity to develop skills in electronic keyboard, piano, ukulele, guitar, bass guitar, drum kit, singing and music production using GarageBand / Logic Pro X and BandLab.

Lessons often employ spacing and pupils learn to build expertise by revisiting core skills and knowledge in different contexts. Enrichment opportunities / extra-curricular activities heavily supports timetabled lessons offering students the chance to practise and develop a more in-depth understanding of music and to transfer and expand their understanding in new areas.

The department provides opportunities for pupils to perform for others; developing self-esteem, confidence and helping them to experience the joy of making a positive contribution to the community.

We have a team of outstanding peripatetic teachers who offer specialist training on all instruments and voice. The music department at Balshaw's is always very busy. Music is the dominant language. Students rehearse in every available space at breaks, lunchtime and after school – forming bands, vocal groups and instrumental ensembles. It is a vibrant place where everyone is treated as a musician, and everyone is accepted. (SMSC)

We are proud of the inclusive nature of the department and provide additional musical tuition and support for those with additional or SEND needs.

Careful and well thought out planning for musical learning enables students to utilise and develop their musical experiences from both within and, importantly, beyond the classroom.

Generic Curriculum Intent – Music (Design)

- To equip students with the knowledge and skills to thrive, develop and make a positive contribution in modern Britain in the multi-million pound industry of media and the Performing / Creative and Expressive Arts (in particular – music.)

- Provide relevant qualifications so that all students can progress to the next stages of their education, training or employment. (In addition to the state examinations at KS4, Music students are also offered opportunities to take graded examinations in a variety of disciplines at the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity Guildhall and the London College of Music examinations. (Grades 6,7 and 8 carrying UCAS points.)
- Promote academic excellence and high aspirations.
- To develop lifelong learners who are confident, independent, and resilient and have the musical skills enabling them to communicate effectively through the creative, expressive and performing art of music.
- To provide students access to a wide and rich set of experiences that develop respectful, active citizens and personal character, within a Christian context. (Going to church services, concerts, shows, workshops, presentations and participating in Charity and Missionary projects such as “The Bethany Project” in Tanzania and BBC Children in Need Fundraising – Talent Show, just to name a few.)

Fundamental Principles underpinning our music curriculum

1. The education of each child shall be given equal value and importance regardless of ability.
2. All children shall have equal opportunities especially in respect of access to the music curriculum so that it will be made possible for each individual child to develop their knowledge, expertise, abilities and attitudes to their full potential.
3. The curriculum is organised, resourced and presented in such a way that no child is disadvantaged in terms of gender, ethnicity or ability.
4. Although the music curriculum will be common to all pupils at KS3, it will be implemented with varied pace and depth to match differences in age and ability at all Key Stages.
5. The Music curriculum is broad, balanced and aims to inspire, challenge and stretch students beyond their comfort zone. To strive for personal excellence at all levels regardless of age or ability.
6. The Music curriculum will be characterised by teaching strategies, which challenge and engage all students, recognising the importance of The Magenta Principles, retrieval practice, spacing and interleaving. Pupils will acquire an understanding of the most effective techniques to boost their learning.
7. The Music curriculum acknowledges the fundamental role of literacy across all subjects and the importance of fostering this across the whole school.
8. The Music curriculum relates to the world of work (Especially prominent at KS4 BTEC Music Level 2), reflecting this in opportunities to develop economic awareness and enterprise expertise. (E.g Unit 1 The Music Industry. Every BTEC Unit has a mandatory vocational scenario in the Unit Brief.)
9. The curriculum will ensure students develop their understanding of our distinctive Christian ethos and Balshavian motto **Non sibi sed aliis**. Not for ourselves, but for others. Characterising our motto of lighting the path to excellence through Christian vision and values. (Years 7-11 rehearse musical items for special assemblies and services, particularly for Remembrance, Memorial events and Christmas. The whole of year 7 contribute and perform in an Easter Presentation in the Lenten season of our Christian calendar. This is largely a BIG SING event usually presented in final form at St. Andrew's Church.

10. The Music Curriculum must be engaging, inspiring and creative, developing a love of the subject for life. Music is a gift from God, let's use it. (SMSC)

Curriculum Implementation – Music (Delivery)

Musical learning at KS3 is built around six main strands, which are interrelated and overlapping. These are:

- Singing (*Performing*)
- Composing (*Creating*)
- Improvising (*Creating*)
- Playing (*Performing*)
- Critical engagement, (*Listening & appraising, evaluating, describing, identifying, aural perception and many other aspects of musical learning.*)
- Social, moral, spiritual, and cultural (SMSC)

Learning is embedded through the development of knowledge and skills over time.

In KS3, the curriculum breadth supports learners' knowledge, understanding and skills acquisition. The essence of the music curriculum - performing, composing, listening and appraising are all key aspects of musical knowledge, skills, and understanding, and the emphasis placed on these needs to remain strong throughout the curriculum.

Assessment of musical learning is rooted in the reality of musical activity that students undertake. Consequently, assessment is of the musical attainment they have evidenced in a range of learning activities in which they have been singing, playing, performing, improvising, composing, and critically engaging with music. Progress is made over time, and evidence from ongoing musical assessments is used to show this. Students are assessed continually throughout each unit and immediate verbal feedback is given. Assessment criteria are based around the AWL framework for Music.

Musicality is the centre of attention. Regular opportunities are given for students to perform, compose and analyse their own and each others work, to ensure every student not only develops critical thinking, analysis skills, but also is well prepared to excel should they choose Music at KS4. There are ongoing opportunities through practical music-making, listening to students playing, and watching them responding, to be able to form assessment judgements which are appropriate to the work they have done, and can be used to inform the next stage of their musical journey. Such assessments are used over time to build up a portfolio of assessment data, which demonstrates progression. As this is music, assessment data is almost always "live performance" audio and/or video, although we are mindful of issues regarding GDPR, and safeguarding and child protection. (iPads and Music Technology equipment is used.)

Curriculum Impact – Music (Assessment)

The six strands shown in the spiral form the basis of the assessment and progression framework, showing the ways that pupils are being musical.

Evidence of this is demonstrated in the quality of performances and compositions produced by students, their engagement, involvement and clear enjoyment in music making.

Students with SEND make very good progress in music, and there is no evidence of a gender gap. PP students are performing well and there is no data evidence to suggest otherwise.

Impact: Music is a strong, successful, vibrant subject in school. Evidence of this is seen through the summative examinations (BTEC Level 2 KS4 and the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity Guildhall and London College of Music instrumental, singing and musical theatre examinations. Formative

assessments are constantly being executed in class lessons and immediate verbal feedback is given both by teachers, peers and self assessment against the given criteria. Assessment in music at Balshaw's recognises that, above all, music is a sonic art. Music lessons should be "musical."

All of this feeds into the extensive extra-curricular programme of work which is clearly evidenced around school in shows, concerts, the church and local community involving Balshaw's music students. At Balshaw's you will hear the sound of music.

