

Year 7

During year 7 we aim to cover the basic skills required in musical understanding. The topics covered have been selected to support a smooth transition from KS2 into KS3, building on the students' ability to listen and analyse music, sing and perform basic melodic ideas and compose musical ideas based on a guided starting point.

Their musical learning is separated into 3 key areas:

Theory / Listening – students will develop their understanding of reading music (pitch and rhythm), helping them develop their confidence when playing and composing musical ideas. They will gain a good knowledge of musical elements and be able to describe music using a range of musical language.

Performance – students will be able to sing with expression and perform a number of rhythmically simple melodies and then when appropriate extend their knowledge playing more complex parts. They will have access to Ableton, Ukuleles, Guitar, Piano and Drums in order to develop their solo and ensemble skills which help develop their confidence when tackling more challenging tasks within Year 8 and 9

Composition – students will be shown (through a variety of genres) the basic techniques of music composition, which they can then apply to their work. They will explore lyric writing and have the opportunity to create their own lyrics within 2 different musical styles.

The specific topics we cover in year 7 are:

Term 1

Rap

In order to give students a good basic knowledge of Ableton (the industry standard music software we use in our music department) we start the year in C9 with a Rap project. We start by performing a well know Rap as a class which encourages group work skills and aims to develop students confidence when performing to each other. We then draw our attention to the musical features of Rap, starting with the drum samples. This then forms the backing track of the students Rap performance which is based on the ability to play and record a well-known Rap bassline. We then move onto developing their performance by adding the chords, bass and melody taken from a well known Eminem track. Students then arrange these in Ableton to create their own Rap Performance.

Folk Music

We start our live performance topic with Folk Music, students will we listen, discuss and perform a range of traditional and well-known songs. The students will start to develop their confidence within group performance, becoming aware of their own skills and the skills required when performing in groups, such as listening, keeping in time and developing their instrumental skills. Performances will be vocal and on different instruments such as the keyboard and ukulele.

Term 2

Programme Music

Students will continue developing their performance skills within this topic, they will listen and analyse music which tells a story using musical language with more confidence. Discussing musical elements such as tempo, dynamics and pitch, how can establish mood within music and how they relate to the specific musical examples. They will specifically learn about Danse Macabre, which is a very famous piece of music arranged for a full orchestra. They will explore the use of the different instruments, developing their instrumental recognition skills and exploring the use of melody which will support the topics which are composition based later in the year. They will use Ableton to develop their own arrangement of the first main melodic motif (right hand only), using relevant instruments and exploring simple melodic patterns.

Rhythms of the World

Students will develop their ensemble skills through our rhythms of the world topic. Through Samba Drumming and African drumming, students will understand the different conventions of the two styles, develop their vocabulary of instrument names and performance techniques. They will perform extended pieces demonstrating their understanding of the different drums and styles and their ability to work as an effective team member. Students will also be given the opportunity to lead the group which will continue to build their confidence in a musical setting. They will learn instrumental names and basic facts relating to the context of the world music studied which. This topic is based on a topic which is covered in both BTEC and GCSE, supporting our musical progression through KS3 and beyond.

Term 3

March

This topic explores musical tempos, melody and helps to develop students notation skills through their developing understanding of melodic and rhythmic notation. They will learn about rhythms, pulse, keeping in time and complete practical tasks which build on skills already learnt earlier in the year. This will begin with completing a drum pattern using Ableton, developing their skills using the push controller. Once they have created a drum line they will then learn the melody of a well-known song which is written in the style of march. This topic will look at the addition of the left hand and challenge students to record these in separately or together (for more able piano players) focusing on both parts being in time whilst staying in time with the drum line.

Vocal Music

We celebrate the beauty and diversity of the voice through our vocal music topic. Students will be inspired by essential listening from the pop, classical and musical genres and will perform increasingly difficult songs, starting in unison, through part singing into harmony singing. Their ability to describe the music they have studied, using accurate and specific musical vocabulary, will be tested at the end of the topic. This will feed into their overall appreciation of different musical styles and ability to analyse and discuss music using relevant terms which are required throughout Year 8, 9 and beyond.