

# Music Curriculum at Brownhills Ormiston Academy



## **The department's vision...**

The Brownhills Music Curriculum will ensure students know how make more music, think more musically and consequently, become more musical. Students will become better performers, better composers and more sophisticated listeners. Music at Brownhills is ambitious, knowledge-rich and taught in the context of music's history and provenance to allow students to create effective musical responses.

Brownhills Music students know that:

1. Brownhills is a singing school.
2. We ask ourselves 'what can I actually hear?'
3. We practise more, so we remember more.

This curriculum is designed to harness the wide-ranging opportunities presented in an arts-rich school to transform the thinking, appreciation and behaviours of young people to become culturally competent citizens. By taking a highly practical approach to addressing the key skills and concepts addressed on the National Curriculum and beyond, we prepare our students to develop a lifelong love of the subject that they can apply to the wider community and possibly, their careers. British Choral Tradition will lie at the heart of our curriculum offer and Brownhills students will all experience and learn through massed choir singing throughout their learning journey. We will provide creative opportunities for students to find their own voice and develop discipline and confidence through high quality rehearsal. We will provide a sequence of concepts showing clear progression of skills and knowledge in Music. Musical vocabulary pertaining to musical features as well as wider contextual information will be explicitly taught throughout this curriculum. Our music curriculum aims to be relevant and equitable for all members of our community, using musical examples and aspirational role models that celebrate the importance and prevalence of diversity in our subject. It provides a framework from which relevant learning experiences can be planned, to broaden the horizons and experiences of Brownhills students, to enable them to recognise and take advantage of opportunities available to them, promoting the concept of aspirations.

## **Sequencing of lessons**

We recognise that procedural knowledge is a key aspect of music education. In order to effectively access the complex composite skills that form the foci of our curriculum goals, music education at Brownhills will be componential. The components will be taught explicitly, and learning will be gradual and iterative in order to give students the time and knowledge to achieve fluency. These components are sequenced to ensure development of musical skills and knowledge increases over time, allowing students to access music of increasing difficulty.

In every lesson, we will keep our values and curriculum goals at the centre of everything we do. At KS3, lessons will be planned to ensure students sing around the piano in traditional rehearsal-style lessons, regularly. When appropriate, classes

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will be merged to allow as many opportunities as possible for massed singing, including students working with those in different year groups. This style of lesson will allow students to benefit from proximal learning and the culture of success and aspirations we aim to drive through everything we do in the department. We will also utilise this opportunity to skilfully implement team teaching, using both practitioners to weave knowledge and skill development into practical work through targeted questioning and ongoing intervention in lessons.

Alongside singing, keyboard skills are developed throughout the KS3 curriculum, ensuring students gradually develop appropriate technique to play piano music of increasing difficulty with greater fluency. Reading staff notation is sequenced similarly to ensure that students continually use score to access new music. This sequence of learning ensures that the development of keyboard and singing technique is accompanied by knowledge that allows students to interpret that information in notated form. This approach to notation also informs and supports the sequence of learning for composition. The teaching of composition at Brownhills begins with a focus on the elements of music as the building blocks of composition. It is then our focus on provenance and fingerprints of different genres that allows us to teach the components of composition to gradually support effective musical responses from students in different musical contexts.

In every lesson at KS3, students will learn to become more sophisticated listeners. As knowledge is presented in small chunks to students, listening examples played live by the teacher or from professional recordings are used to model and exemplify musical features. The elements of music form the focus of listening at Brownhills. The development of listening skills supports the development of performance and composition as students begin to recognise how the elements of music are harnessed in different musical contexts in order to inform their own musical responses. Prepared listening questions develop listening skills and ensure students focus on important stylistic features of music that are indicative of music of that genre and/or inform other aspects of their musical learning.

Three themes in each year of KS3 act as the vehicles through which this musical knowledge is taught. These support the sequencing of knowledge and allow teachers to increase challenge for students as they develop and apply their skills to different musical scenarios of increasing complexity. The Brownhills Songbook at the beginning of Year 7, 8 and 9 puts an increased focus on singing and British Choral Tradition as a key aspect of our curriculum. Through this unit we explore, primarily vocal music, from a variety of different genres. Year 7, 8 and 9 then study a Story of the Orchestra unit which focuses on how Western Classical Tradition has evolved through time. The final theme in each year group, puts students' musical knowledge into a new, and likely unfamiliar, context that allows students to consider musical roots and compositional intention to inform their own stylistic musical responses and broaden their musical horizons.

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In Year 10 students begin KS4 by studying the elements of music, now, using more advanced musical language to become more sophisticated listeners. This is applied to choral singing and ensemble performance as students apply this knowledge of the elements of music to Christmas music in preparation for public performance. At the beginning of KS4, there are many and varied opportunities for students to revisit the fundamental elements of music studied through KS3 and expand upon this knowledge or apply it to musical contexts of increased complexity. In these units, an emphasis is put on students becoming positive musical orators and being trained to talk like musicians. Students learn how to respond to questions about individual elements of music and articulate the musical devices they have recognised using location examples, musical language and consider how to describe music to someone who can't hear it. Throughout this work, music theory skills are gradually developed and students continually work from score to support their descriptions of music. With a more refined understanding of the language of music, music theory and the opportunity to have realised this through performance work, students then develop their musical knowledge, skills and lexicon through a broad range of genres in the following four units of work. Initially, students study popular music, and study genre specific language surrounding pop, rock, dance and bhangra music. Students apply this knowledge in a detailed case study of Africa by Toto. This is then interleaved, compared and contrasted with a detailed case study of Badinerie by J.S. Bach. This focus on Western Classical Tradition inform the following exploration of the Baroque, Classical and Romantic era in more detail, now focusing on the compositional devices and structure of this music. This is then interleaved with Music for Ensemble, as students study Jazz and Musical Theatre, however this strand now looks more closely at sonority, instrumentation and texture. This is then applied to chamber music in which students focus on music such as string quartets, wind quintets and trio sonatas. Finally, students culminate these new knowledge and ability to describe music in detail, focusing on film music, considering compositional choices and justifying these through well-articulated musical answers both orally and scripted. Compositional and performance skills are carefully sequenced throughout Year 10 to allow students to develop their repertoire of musical skills practically explore musical examples from curriculum context to allow for a deeper musical understanding of this knowledge. The explicit teaching of provenance and purpose, particularly in the final four units of Year 10 informs students' understanding of the components of composition and features of stylistic performers to create expressive musical responses.

This KS4 model is sequenced in such a way to ensure that knowledge and skills can be applied to compositional and practical work from the beginning of Year 11, in which they must write two compositions and record two performances. Compositions are completed independently through Year 11, underpinned by the skills and knowledge embedded KS3 and developed and harnessed in their first year of KS4 study. At the beginning of Year 11, listening skills are based on short answer questions, focusing on state, name and describe questions. Throughout this unit, students are asked 'what can you actually hear?' to help students concisely use

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musical knowledge to answer questions pertaining to each of the elements of music. Students are prepared for these styles of questions with a strong focus on recognising which compositional devices relate to which element of music. Developing on these skills used to identify musical features, students now learn to write extended responses to musical examples. Students are taught to identify musical devices and write sentences that link these features to the intention of the composition, using location examples and instrument identification to demonstrate clear understanding of how forces have been harnessed in response to a brief. Working from score is a feature of practice throughout Year 11. Challenge is increased in Year 11 as students use knowledge of note reading to accurately locate musical features and complete melodic and rhythmic dictation. Students continue to work from score to develop music theory skills, ensuring they can competently identify time signatures, key signatures and read notation in the treble, bass and alto clef. Throughout Year 11, students revisit the musical features of Africa by Toto and Badinerie by J.S. Bach. Finally, Year 11 consolidate all of their performance and composition work and apply their listening skills to a variety of different musical examples from across our curriculum contexts studied in KS3 and KS4 showcase that they are better performers, better composers and sophisticated listeners. Students are given regular home learning and set personal listening targets to continue to develop aural identification skills. All of these listening skills are underpinned by our values of 'what can you actually hear?' and 'we practise more, so we remember more.'

## Assessment

Assessment in music will be focused on ongoing formative assessment that checks that students understand and are successfully applying the key components of performance, composition and listening. Students will be assessed on their full musical capacity to ensure we are nurturing aspirational, well-rounded musicians of the future. Students' progress will be considered in three areas:

1. Technical Progress
2. Constructive Progress
3. Expressive Progress

In order to do this, student performance skills and composition skills are measured based on the following criteria:

Performance	Composition
Accuracy	Ideas
Technique	Technical Control
Expression	Style & Coherence

Listening skills at KS3 are assessed through regular 'Big Listen' questions. These are spaced regularly throughout schemes of learning to create ongoing feedback for

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staff on students' knowledge and listening skills to inform planning for learning. These scores are calculated to inform progress in response to reliable and valid assessment questions that go above and beyond the demands of the National Curriculum. Feedback for performance and compositions is given orally and immediately for maximum impact for students. Big Listen's are self-assessed immediately, using prepared mark schemes for the same reason.

KS4, 'Big Listen' questions are also embedded throughout schemes of learning, more regularly and in greater depth. At regular points throughout the two-year course, students will complete more extensive listening assessments, which, alongside ongoing performance and composition assessments provides a detailed picture of students' performance in line with skills and knowledge set out in our curriculum goals.

At every stage, this assessment structure is used to ensure that students are becoming better at making music, thinking more musically and ultimately, becoming more musical. If this is achieved throughout the curriculum, it will be apparent through performance in external examinations. We aim for students to consistently attain in line with National Averages and for the department to always have a progress score of at least 0. We aim to allow KS4 students to progress to study performing arts subjects at Post-16 level and will ensure that all students at Brownhills have developed a lifelong curiosity and appreciation for the arts.