



# Whitby School

## Music

Sound is all around us. Where there is life - and where there is technology - there is sound. Music teaches our pupils to listen critically and hear the narratives, messages, and emotions in what they hear in the world around them.

In helping young people to understand the universal language of music, their conscious listening is enhanced. Playing, composing, and listening to music also builds their creativity, problem solving skills, and develops their wellbeing.

At Whitby School we believe that Music is good for the soul.

Music is part of our **performance** discipline.

## Our Intent

<b>Flexible</b>	Music is an area of learning where children have to work both creatively and analytically. Through problem solving, identifying patterns, and working with flair and imagination, music challenges pupils to apply a range of approaches to their work.
<b>Collaborative</b>	The vast majority of music requires a team – be it a band, orchestra, or ensemble. Within lessons pupils must work together harmoniously: making compromises, sharing ideas, and supporting each other. Outside of lessons, the opportunity to work across the wider co-curriculum of additional ensembles and performances allows them to meet and work with different people.
<b>Open Minded</b>	A key part of our curriculum involves exposing pupils to a rich variety of music from the Model Music Curriculum and beyond. We would like children to understand how composers use the musical elements to create music that manipulates their emotions in order to enhance their conscious listening. In understanding music, pupils can develop a lifelong appreciation of all kinds of music.

## Our teaching:

There are four main types of knowledge that children will develop at Whitby School through the music curriculum:

**Tacit** – Tacit knowledge is knowledge gained through experience – it can be difficult to put into words. For example, even without knowing a great deal of music terminology, children may recognise that a piece of music is tense or joyful. This is important as this sensitivity to music forms the basis of their analysis. They will, of course, bring with them their own experiences of music from outside school and these can be cherished and used to help with their understanding of new concepts.

**Declarative** – the facts and other information stored in the memory about music. For example, factual knowledge about performers or composers. Examples of declarative knowledge might include that of notation, keys and chords or of the works and songs that

form musical culture. This knowledge has an important role to play in offering a broad and balanced education.

**Procedural** – this is the knowledge exercised in the performance of a task: for example, developing the skills to become competent in playing music on a keyboard.

These aspects of knowledge develop each other – so for example, as pupils gain a sense of what makes an idiomatic melody through listening to music in that style, later their growing expertise in melodic composition will lead to the creation of new pieces in that style.

Through these varieties of knowledge we have three key aims for all children:

- the **'technical'** aim of music that children will need in order to translate their intentions successfully into sound. This is the practical element of music
- the **'expressive'** aim of music, focusing on the more indefinable aspects of music: quality, meaning and creativity
- the **'constructive'** aim of music, referring to the composition of how musical components fit together. This supports their analysis of complex pieces but also helps them to consider their own compositions.

### **Technical aims of the music curriculum:**

At Whitby School we begin by focusing on and developing the resource we have naturally available to us - our voice. We teach the musical elements through singing at the start of Year 7. We continue singing throughout KS3 and of course into KS4 and KS5. Alongside this we teach keyboard skills where pupils play melodies and learn chords to accompany their singing. In Year 8 we introduce chord patterns on the ukulele and reading tab and chord diagrams so that this can be translated easily onto the guitars. Pupils perform as part of an ensemble with their class. All of these skills culminate in Y9 with Battle of the Bands. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills further by choosing to take instrumental lessons. We currently offer group or single lessons in: voice, brass, woodwind, strings, percussion and piano. Please see the Heads of Music for further details.

### **The expressive aims of the music curriculum**

While, the expressive aspect develops from a child's technical ability in the music they come to perform, the expressive aspect of music is whether the music produced by pupils is effective in its purpose in the impact it has on the listener.

This also comes from what each child performer knows and understands about the music they are playing. Consequently, pupils' listening as part of the curriculum is a key part of developing their sensitivity and therefore appreciation of the music they are working on.

Our understanding of the way in which musical elements impact on emotion may be underpinned by findings that emotion can arise out of a complex web of realised and disrupted expectations.

### **The constructive aims of the music curriculum:**

The knowledge pupils learn about music will focus on the musical elements of melody, articulation, dynamics, texture, harmony and tonality, instrumentation, rhythm and tempo (MAD T SHIRT). These are inter-related and pupils will revisit and re-discover these aspects of music throughout their time at school through the context of particular pieces of music. Allowing them to make connections from the technical knowledge to the cultural is a key part of this – so for example recognising a particular rhythm (e.g. chords played off beat) and then discussing how this (skank) sound fits into the genre and style (of reggae) – as well as intent of the composer.

Consequently, the constructive part of the curriculum through composition must bring together the technical knowledge and their expressive knowledge. Composing is, in many ways, the ultimate activity in music education. It is important that our planning is carefully sequenced to ensure that technical and expressive skills are developed in sequence to allow pupils to make progress and create a personal response to composing tasks.

## **Our curriculum**

Creating a desirable level of difficulty for all the pupils in a class is a key factor in our curriculum design. Presenting pupils with music that is technically too difficult or that provides insufficient challenge can lead to de-motivation. However, we aim to provide a challenging curriculum for all.

Our curriculum ensures that pupils:

- play and perform confidently in a range of solo and ensemble contexts using their voice, playing instruments musically, fluently and with accuracy and expression
- improvise and compose; and extend and develop musical ideas by drawing on a range of musical structures, styles, genres and traditions. In Year 8 and 9, for example, pupils cover Reggae music as well as music for film, Rock'n'Roll and a range of Western European Classical tradition (Baroque, Classical and Romantic music)
- use staff and other relevant notations appropriately and accurately in a range of musical styles, genres and traditions
- identify and use the inter-related dimensions of music expressively and with increasing sophistication, including use of tonalities, different types of scales and other musical devices

- listen with increasing discrimination to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians
- develop a deepening understanding of the music that they perform and to which they listen, and its history.

### How is our curriculum sequenced?

We begin with singing in Year 7, moving onto keyboard skills and playing single melodic lines to chords, sequences and the 12 bar blues chord sequence developing motifs using Bach's 'Dracula' toccata in D minor with its minor scales and diminished chords. All of these skills are then put into good practice as we fly around the world exploring different world cultures.

In Year 8 we develop ensemble skills through Baroque counterpoint and Pachelbel's Canon before honing in on Whitby's traditional and famous folk scene. We then pass to the complexities of rap music and beat boxing before building on keyboard skills and an appreciation of the development of the piano through the Classical era and ending with a short topic on reggae music followed by Musical Theatre.

In Y9 we begin with the post WW2 teenage revolution that was Rock'n'Roll before moving onto our Battle of the Bands where each class chooses, practises and performs a piece in which everyone has a job and contributes to the band. This is followed by a whole term on music for film with a huge emphasis on the musical elements through listening, performing and composing. Pupils then move on to a unit on the rock musicians of the Baroque, Classical and Romantic eras, where pupils work together to learn to play the most famous melodies and use compositional devices from the eras to create their own compositions. Finally, pupils put all the skills and knowledge acquired through KS3 into a range of two-week mini projects in the summer term,

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is geared towards preparing pupils for GCSE music in Key Stage 4, which in turn prepares them for A-level study at Key Stage 5.

## Assessment

Pupils are given continuous verbal feedback on the skills that they practise each lesson. At KS3, pupils are presented with success criteria at 'Bronze', 'Silver', 'Gold' or 'Platinum' levels and all are encouraged to aim as high as possible. Pupils are able to use the success criteria grids to self and peer assess their work and become increasingly confident in being able to improve their own work and achieve highly. At KS4, pupils are assessed according to the Eduqas GCSE specification mark schemes.

## How families can support:

Whitby town and its surrounding villages have a strong musical tradition. Music is widespread in the community through various community groups and performance venues embracing a variety of musical genres.

Whitby Music Centre is open every Saturday morning throughout the term. This is an opportunity for pupils and adults who play an instrument to join an ensemble. Learning to play an instrument can be lonely as you practise on your own. The fun begins when you can put your skills to use in musical ensembles. Currently the Whitby Music Centre has a string group, a junior band (up to grade 4), a senior band (grade 4 plus), a jazz band (grade 5 plus) and a choir (this will be new in September 2024). They have two main concerts a year but also play in a variety of local events such as Whitby Christmas Lights Switch on, Fish and Ships Festival, Grosmont Church twice a year and Hawsker Church as well as Eskdale Festival of the Arts. More details can be found on the North Yorkshire Music website as well as from the instrumental tutors and the Heads of Music.

Music is more accessible than ever and listening to music is enjoyable for most young people. Encouraging your child to listen to a wide variety of music and engaging them in conversations about music of the past and present can be a positive means of communication. Similarly, taking an interest in what music your child listens to can be a positive experience for all. Most young people will listen to a surprisingly wide variety of music as they are continually exposed to it in films, television and other media. Occasionally your child will be asked to listen and comment on music for homework.

Sometimes they will be asked to practise keyboard skills, so if there is access to one at home this can be helpful. Where this isn't possible the pupils can access the music facilities at school. Should your child be interested in learning to play an instrument or take singing lessons we would hope that this is encouraged and supported through providing time and space for your child to practise.

We offer a wide range of extra activities at Whitby School and ask that parents encourage their children to make the most of these by regular involvement in rehearsals and commitment to performances.