Music

Music at Key Stage Three

Year 7

The Year 7 Music curriculum is divided into five topics:

- **Rhythm**
  - Initial introduction to Key Stage 3 Music: What is music? (definition, discussion); why do music?
  - Definition of rhythm and a consideration for why rhythm is probably the most important musical element.
  - Understanding the concept of pulse and tempo (performance skills)
  - Time signature (esp. 4/4)
  - Note values (crotchet, quaver, minim, semibreve)
  - Rock rhythms on the drum kit
  - Detailed look at classroom percussion instruments, including playing techniques
  - Types of rhythm on the keyboard
  - Repetition, ostinato, syncopation
  - Minimalism
  - Initial thoughts about melody as an extension of rhythm
  - Singing various songs in solo or group contexts, including harmony singing
  - **Examples of listening excerpts:**
    - Copland: *Buckaroo* (Rodeo)
    - Stravinsky: *Rite of Spring*
    - Gershwin: *Rhapsody In Blue*
    - Ravel: *Bolero*
    - Various rock pieces (inc. Status Quo, ZZ Top etc.)
    - Minimalism pieces by Reich and Glass
    - Kraftwerk
    - Rhythms performed by the students in class

- **Winter**
  - Variety of Christmas pieces for performance
  - Consider how winter can be an inspiration to composers and song-writers
  - Singing and analysing the song *Winter’s Tale*
  - Study of *Winter* from Vivaldi’s Four Seasons
  - Compose a song about winter – focus on techniques of song-writing (lyrics, poetic rhythm, tune, harmony and accompaniment, poetry as a link with other art forms)
  - Opportunities to perform their songs in assemblies or concerts
  - **Examples of listening excerpts:**
    - David Essex: *Winter’s Tale*
    - Vivaldi: *Four Seasons (Winter)*
    - Songs composed by the students in class
Patterns
Continuation of rhythmic patterns
Melodic patterns
Composing riffs based on words using the first seven letters of the alphabet (eg, “CAGE”, “BAG”, “EDGE” etc.)
Introduction to the treble clef
Melodic shape – esp. relating what music sounds like to what it looks like
Performing pieces on the keyboard, developing note-reading skills and performance skills
Beginning a more detailed look at notation and theory of music
Examples of listening excerpts:
   Various melodies and riffs (e.g. Michael Jackson: Billie Jean, Survivor: Eye of the Tiger)
   Melodies performed by the students in class

Ukulele
Learning about the background of the ukulele
Performing chord sequences
Participating in whole-class or small-group performances of various songs, including Banana Boat Song, Wimoweh, John Lennon: Imagine, Bruno Mars: Count On Me
Examples of listening excerpts
   12 Bar Blues in C
   Banana Boat Song
   Various rock and pop songs

Medieval and Renaissance
Church music: plainsong, neumes, Guido d’Arezzo, organum, cantus firmus.
A general consideration of how western music developed during the medieval period: especially melody, harmony and notation.
Listening to and learning about medieval instruments
Understanding drone
Analysis of pieces from this period as an inspiration for composition
Sumer is Icumen In – introducing both the concept of round and of composing an answering phrase
Performance of a variety of pieces from this period, for example La Volta, Music For A Grand Procession and Greensleeves, continuing with note-reading skills and beginning to put two or more parts together
Examples of listening excerpts
   Gregorian Chant, parallel organum and cantus firmus
   Sumer Is Icumen In – various arrangements
   Greensleeves – various arrangements
   Other pieces, featuring medieval instruments
Year 8

- **Chords**
  Common triads and how to play them on keyboards and ukuleles
  Simple chord sequences
  Looking at chord sequences in modern rock and pop songs
  Introduction to major scales
  Developing understanding and recognition of major and minor chords
  Adding melodies to chords (understanding the concept of melody and accompaniment)
  Composing and performing pieces based around chords individually, in small groups and as a whole class

  **Examples of listening excerpts:**
  - Chopin: “Prelude in C Minor”
  - Various songs featuring standard chord sequences

- **British Folk**
  A general study of folk music from various regions of the British Isles
  Pentatonic melodies
  Continuing with the work learnt above by adding chords to folk melodies
  Developing performing skills – playing melodies accurately and confidently
  A detailed study of Scottish folk music, including folk songs and Scottish country dancing
  Instruments used in British folk music
  Use of drone on bagpipes
  English folk music, including Morris Dancing, sea shanties etc.
  Composing and performing an English folk song in groups
  Composing and performing a piece entitled *A Scottish Journey* – a chance to consider fusions in music and paving the way forward for the next scheme

  **Examples of listening excerpts**
  - Scottish pentatonic tunes (*Amazing Grace, Skye Boat Song*)
  - Country dances
  - English folk songs (*Drunken Sailor, I Got A Brand New Combine Harvester, Scarborough Fair*)

  Pieces featuring different folk instruments, such as accordion, fiddle, bagpipes etc.

- **Creativity**
  A general focus on developing compositional skills
  A consideration of mood and expression in music – including a look at specific musical elements such as tonality, dynamics, tempo, timbre and style to create the intended effect
  Understanding the concept of ‘programme’ music, with particular reference to Smetana’s *Die Moldau* and Beethoven’s *Pastoral Symphony*
  Composing a piece entitled *The River* with contrasting sections and producing a
picture showing the river and musical ideas

**Examples of listening excerpts:**
- Smetana: *Die Moldau* (Vltava)
- The storm from Beethoven’s *Pastoral Symphony*
- Dukas: *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*
- Various excerpts of music from different cultures that portray mood and expression

- **World Music**
  - A general understanding of the importance of music in different cultures and developing an appreciation of and tolerance towards music of different cultures and traditions
  - A look at aboriginal music and how it plays a role in the ‘Dreamtime’
  - *Waltzing Matilda*: the story behind the song, performances of the song and a comparison of different arrangements
  - Characteristics of gamelan music from Bali (Indonesia) – instruments and timbre, layers of sound, limited range of notes
  - Performance of the *Baris* (Warrior Dance from Bali) and a group composition
  - Composition in an improvised style based on a limited range of notes
  - Indian raga, including a closer study of Rag Bhairav, gaining understanding of the significance of raga, developing improvisation skills
  - Revising drone
  - Composing rhythmic cycles based on Tintal
  - Performances of a variety of pieces from India
  - African music, especially a detailed look at sub-Saharan music and its role in African society/culture
  - Emphasis on percussion instruments, especially drums and understanding the importance of rhythm in African music
  - Developing understanding of various musical terms
  - Composition and performance tasks in groups, including Kpanlogo dance music and the Hatsiasia, with particular emphasis on maintaining a part individually of others within a group
  - Panpipes of South America – a detailed study of the music from Peru & Bolivia
  - Performance of the melody *El Condor Pasa*, and a comparison of a performance of this tune on panpipes with Simon & Garfunkel’s arrangement
  - Composing and performing in groups a piece intended to capture the scenery of the Andes mountains, with a melody played on a panpipes sound on the keyboard, accompanied by chords, to conclude Year 8.

**Examples of listening excerpts**
- Arrangements of *Waltzing Matilda* and *Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport!*
- Music from the Island of Bali, including the *Baris* and *Tamilalingan*
- Rag Bhairav and other raga performances on sitar, sarod, flute or voice
- Tintal demonstration
- Selected examples of percussion music from Africa, including talking drums,
Year 9

- **Western Classical Music**
  Focus on composition skills, looking at the key musical elements, including rhythm, melody, harmony, texture, structure, dynamics etc.
  Looking at the history of western classical music, including Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods
  Detailed research on a composer of the student’s choice
  Composing and performing rounds
  Performance of class arrangement of Pachelbel’s *Kanon*
  Composing and performing ground bass

  *Examples of listening excerpts*
  - Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto*
  - Handel: *Water Music*  
  - *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel’s *Messiah*
  - Pachelbel’s *Kanon in D*
  - *Altogether Now* by the Farm
  - Selected pieces by other composers including Mozart, Beethoven etc.
  - Performances of students’ compositions

- **I’ve Got the Blues!**
  Detailed study of the background to the Blues (slave trade, Deep South etc.)
  Learning the 12 bar blues chord sequence in C and G, ideally from memory, and using it in composition and performance
  Ragtime, especially Scott Joplin – including performance of class arrangement of *The Entertainer*
  Development of jazz, including whole-class and small-group arrangements of jazz pieces including *In The Mood* and *Little Brown Jug*
  Developing improvisation skills

  *Examples of listening excerpts*
  - Various original blues songs
  - Rock and pop songs which use the 12 bar blues chord sequence (e.g. *I Like To Boogie* by T Rex and *Birthday Song* by the Beatles)
  - *The Entertainer* and *Maple Leaf Rag* by Scott Joplin
  - Jazz pieces, including traditional Dixieland, big band pieces by Glen Miller etc.
- **Popular Trends: Up to 1959**
  Emergence of Rock and roll – development from rhythm and blues, country and western etc.
  Revision of 12 bar blues chord sequence and its use in rock and roll
  Class performance of *Rock Around The Clock*
  Life and songs of Elvis Presley, including small-group and whole-class performances
  Impact of rock and roll on society – mass hysteria, development of wireless
  **Examples of listening excerpts**
    - Selection of Rock and Roll songs, including *Rock Around The Clock* by Bill Haley & The Comets and *Love Me Tender* and *Hound Dog* by Elvis Presley

- **Popular Trends: The ‘60s and ‘70s**
  Consideration of how popular music was influenced by the rock and roll movement of the 1950
  New and emerging styles of music
  The Beatles – an in-depth study of their careers and their music
  Whole-class, small-group and solo performances of arrangements of Beatles songs
  The rise of reggae and its influence on western popular music
  Development of rock styles, including a class performance of *Rocking All Over The World* by Status Quo and one or two Queen songs
  **Examples of listening extracts**
    - Comparison of the Beatles’ and Souxie & the Banshees’ versions of *Dear Prudence*
    - Comparison of the Norman Greenbaum’s and Doctor & the Medics’ versions of *Spirit in the Sky*
    - Comparison of the Don McLean’s and Madonna’s versions of *American Pie*
    - Variety of songs from this era, especially by The Beatles
    - Bob Marley & The Wailers songs, especially *Buffalo Soldier*
    - Status Quo songs, especially *Rocking All Over The World*
    - Queen songs

- **Popular Trends: Into the New Millennium**
  A look at how popular music has evolved over the last 30-40 years
  Study of some of the trends and styles that emerged during the 1980s, including synth pop, rap, hip-hop and dance music
  Composing a dance track using technology where possible
  Looking at examples of music of today, with performances from students either as solo or in groups
  **Examples of listening excerpts**
    - Selected songs from the 1980s onwards
    - Early rap songs such as *Rapper’s Delight* by the Sugar Hill Gang – compare with more modern rap
    - Various dance tracks to support the composition task
    - Selection of songs from today, including artists such as Adele, Bruno Mars etc.
- **Music in Society**
  Music technology (continuation of work covered with dance music, looking at recording and producing music in greater depth)
  Film and TV music
  Adverts – composing and performing pieces suitable for advertising products
  The music industry – including careers in music
  Use of music in video games, including the chance to compose some music that might be used in a video game (preparation for the GCSE course)
  General summary of the importance and role of music in today’s society

*Examples of listening excerpts*
  - Selected examples of film and TV music
  - Examples of use of music in adverts, video games etc
Music at Key Stage 4

If you enjoy performing, are keen to find out about various styles of music, develop understanding of music technology, learn more advanced composition skills, generally enhance your overall musical knowledge and want to take on a subject which combines both practical and academic elements, then this is for you. We have specifically opted for the AQA course as we feel it offers the best opportunities for students to enjoy studying, and to make good progress in, this vibrant and exciting subject.

There are four Areas of Study in the AQA Music GCSE course. These are Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910; Popular Music; Traditional Music; and Western Classical Tradition since 1910.

Year 10

In Year 10 students will study general theoretical aspects of music, such as key signatures, time signatures, rhythm, melody, harmony, structure, texture and instrumentation. They will then go on to look at the four Areas of Study outlined below. As part of the course, students will be looking at composition techniques (both in a general sense and with specific reference to the four Areas of Study) and preparing for the performances (which take place in the summer term of Year 10).

Homework in Year 10 will generally take the form of research, taking notes on musical elements, taking detailed notes on the set works within each Area of Study, listening to the set works and composition exercises. Ongoing extra study will be practice on specialist instrument(s).

Year 11

In Year 11 students will continue with the study of the four Areas of Study as part of the preparation for the examination. In addition, students will embark on the composition element of the course in greater detail and aim to complete both compositions by February half term. From February onwards in Year 11, students will be focusing on revision and exam practice for the written examination.

In Year 11 students will be continuing to study the set works, so note-taking will continue as a typical homework task, but in addition students will increasingly be focusing on the composition coursework.

The GCSE course is divided into three components:

- **Component 1: Understanding Music**
  This written exam of 1 hour 30 minutes tests their listening skills and their knowledge and understanding of the set works studied. The questions will assess students’ awareness of a number of musical characteristics, such as rhythm, melody, harmony, instrumentation, texture, timbre and structure.

  *Percentage of marks: 40%*
- **Component 2: Performance**
  Students must be able to perform live music using one or both of the following ways:
  Instrumental (including DJ)/vocal
  Production via technology
  Students will need to offer two performances: one solo and one ensemble.
  Students are expected, or at least strongly recommended, to offer performances on their main instrument. If they have instrumental lessons, it is best to discuss a suitable piece for solo performance with their instrumental teacher. For the ensemble performance, they must ensure that they have a significant individual role within the group.
  A minimum of four minutes and a maximum of seven minutes of performance in total is required, of which one minutes must be the ensemble performance.
  Students must be able to interpret relevant musical elements as appropriate using resources (eg microphones) and techniques (eg *pizzicato*) as appropriate to communicate musical ideas with accuracy and expression and interpretation, including phrasing and dynamics appropriate to the style and mood of the music.
  Both performances will be internally marked by teachers and externally moderated by AQA.
  *Percentage of marks: 30%*

- **Component 3: Composing Music**
  Students must learn how to develop musical ideas, including extending and manipulating musical ideas, and compose music that is musically convincing.
  Students will be required to complete two compositions: one to an externally-set brief, and one free composition. The combined duration of the compositions must be a minimum of three minutes.
  Compositions can be composed in any style or genre to best reflect the skills, strengths and interests of the individual students. Both compositions must be assessed on the student’s ability to demonstrate:
  * creative and effective selection and use of musical elements
  * appropriate selection and use of musical elements (to the compositional intention)
  * technical and expressive control in the use of musical elements.
  Each composition must demonstrate selection and use of at least four types of musical element as follows: at least two of rhythm, metre, texture, melody, structure, form, and at least two of harmony, tonality, timbre, dynamics, phrasing, articulation.
  Both compositions will be internally marked by teachers and externally moderated by AQA.
  *Percentage of marks: 30%*
How Parents Can Help

- Ensure homework tasks are completed each week.
- Encourage students to keep up regular practice on their specialist instrument(s) and to continue to take instrumental lessons.
- Encourage students to listen to a wide variety of music, but especially to the twelve set works.
- Help students to read extensively around the subject, particularly aspects of music that they may be less familiar with (such as the history of Western Classical Music and World Music)
- Encourage participation in musical activities in order to enrich and enhance musicianship.