

Year 7

Unit Title	Unit Overview	Prior Knowledge / skills	New Learning
Rhythm and pulse	Introduction to KS3 music through developing knowledge and understanding of pulse in music and the association with repeated patterns of rhythms. Pupils learn the difference between different note values and how to read and play them. Pupils create rhythmic patterns of their own using a mixture of body percussion sounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class music tuition Playing an instrument to a steady beat. Playing a mixture of pitch on an instrument (this includes singing). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the difference between rhythm and pulse. Be able to perform whilst maintaining a steady beat, be able to perform at different speeds. Understanding of an accent in music and being able to identify an accent from listening to music. Working co-operatively in a group on a group composition and performance.
Elements of music	Pupils learn about the elements of music: Tempo, dynamics, rhythm, instrumentation. Through the topic, pupils will do a mixture of appraisal and performance activities to help with their understanding of the elements of music. As the unit progresses, students will delve into the works of Beethoven, specifically focusing on his iconic "Symphony No. 9."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will understand the difference between rhythm and pulse. Can have the ability to play a piece of music whilst maintaining an even pulse. Working co-operatively in a group on a group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Keyboard Skills: Students will have a foundational understanding of keyboard layout and basic playing techniques. Pupils will learn how to identify the elements of music when they are listening to music and playing music. Pupils will learn how to manipulate some of the elements of music (such as tempo and pitch) to enhance their performance of a piece of music.

	They will learn to play the famous "Ode to Joy" theme on the keyboard, utilizing different settings on the keyboard to manipulate some of the elements of music.	composition and performance.	
Instruments of the orchestra	Students will explore the diverse world of orchestral instruments and their families. The unit begins with hands-on lessons where students will investigate various instruments available in the school, fostering an appreciation for their unique sounds and roles within an orchestra. Pupils will then learn 'The Swan' from 'The carnival of the animals' by Camile Saint-Saens. This piece is intended for the cello. By changing the voice setting on the keyboard, pupils will learn how the choice of instrument effects the sound of a melody. This unit not only enhances students' practical skills but also deepens their understanding of orchestral music and its historical context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have previously learned about basic musical concepts such as rhythm, melody, and dynamics. Familiarity with playing simple melodies on the keyboard or other instruments. Exposure to different genres of music and an understanding of how instruments contribute to these styles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and classification of orchestral instruments into their respective families (strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion). Understanding that the choice of instrument can have a big impact on the sound of a melody. Development of keyboard skills through playing "The Swan" and experimenting with different instrument sounds using keyboard settings.
Folk Music	In this Year 7 unit on folk music, students will explore the rich tapestry of folk traditions from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have previously explored basic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will learn about the historical and cultural contexts of folk music, including its role in storytelling and community life.

	<p>around the world, focusing on the cultural significance and historical context of these musical forms. The unit will highlight the importance of folk music as a means of storytelling, community bonding, and cultural expression. Students will engage with specific pieces, including the sea shanty "The Wellerman," the traditional English folk song "Scarborough Fair," and "The Derby Ram," a song with roots in Derbyshire. Through singing, listening, and discussion, students will develop an appreciation for the diverse styles and themes found in folk music, while also connecting these songs to broader social and historical narratives.</p>	<p>musical concepts such as rhythm, melody, and harmony.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have engaged in group singing activities, developing their vocal skills and confidence in performing. • Students have learned about different musical genres and their characteristics, providing a foundation for understanding folk music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will develop their vocal techniques through the performance of specific folk songs, focusing on expression and interpretation. • Students will explore the geographical origins of the songs studied, enhancing their understanding of how folk music reflects the culture and traditions of different regions.
Form and structure	<p>Students will explore the fundamental compositional forms used in classical music, focusing on 'Question and Answer Form', 'Binary Form', and 'Ternary Form'. Through engaging keyboard activities, students will analyse and perform pieces that exemplify these forms, fostering both their practical and theoretical</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have previously learned basic music notation and can read simple melodies. • They have experience playing the keyboard and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will learn to identify and describe 'Question and Answer Form', 'Binary Form', and 'Ternary Form' in various musical pieces. • They will develop skills in analysing how these forms contribute to the overall structure and emotional impact of a piece. • Students will create their own short compositions using the learned forms, applying their understanding in a practical context.

	understanding of music. By the end of the unit, students will not only be able to identify and describe these forms but also apply their knowledge in their own compositions, enhancing their creativity and musical expression.	<p>are familiar with notes and pitch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students have been introduced to the concept of dynamics and tempo in music.	
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Year 8

Unit Title	Unit Overview	Prior Knowledge / skills (bullet points min 3)	New Learning (bullet points min 3)
Variations	Students will explore the concept of musical variation through the lens of Pachelbel's Canon in D. Students will engage in hands-on keyboard activities, where they will learn to create their own variations on the established theme. Through this process, they will develop their improvisation skills, enhance their understanding of musical structure, and foster their creativity. The unit will culminate in a performance where students showcase their unique variations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Keyboard Skills: Students should have a foundational understanding of keyboard layout and basic playing techniques. Understanding of Musical Notation: Familiarity with reading and interpreting simple musical scores will be essential for this unit. Understanding of the elements of music such as tempo, dynamics and rhythm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating Variations: Students will learn various techniques for creating musical variations, such as changing rhythm, harmony, and melody. Improvisation Techniques: The unit will introduce students to improvisation, encouraging them to experiment with their own ideas while staying true to the original theme. Performance Skills: Students will develop their performance skills by presenting their variations to peers.
All about the bass	During this unit, pupils will learn about bass clef and bass clef notation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading treble clef notation and rhythm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will learn to identify and notate on the bass clef expanding their understanding of musical notation.

	<p>Pupils will learn about the fundamental role of bass notes in music. Focussing on their role in creating harmony, texture and rhythm.</p> <p>Pupils will learn about the bass clef, bass clef notation and associated bass instruments from a variety of genres.</p> <p>By the end of the unit pupils will have an appreciation of the importance of a bass line in music and how to play one alongside a main melody.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing instruments in small groups, developing teamwork and listening skills in a musical context. • Understanding that the mixture of notes creates harmony and thickens the texture of music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will explore the role of bass lines, analysing how they support melodies and enhance overall sound. • Students will perform and create their own bass lines applying their knowledge of harmony and rhythm.
Hooks and riffs	<p>Students will explore the essential elements of pop music through the lens of hooks and riffs, focusing on the iconic song "Sweet Dreams" by the Eurythmics.</p> <p>Students will develop their musical skills by identifying and playing hooks and riffs on keyboards and ukuleles, as well as through singing. By analysing the structure and impact of these musical elements, learners will gain a deeper understanding of how hooks and riffs contribute to the overall appeal of pop songs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic understanding of musical notation and rhythm. • Familiarity with playing simple melodies on keyboards or ukuleles. • Experience in singing and performing as part of a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and analysis of hooks and riffs in popular music, specifically in "Sweet Dreams." • Development of keyboard and ukulele skills to play specific hooks and riffs. • Exploration of the emotional and commercial impact of hooks in pop music, enhancing critical listening skills.

Music technology	Students will explore the exciting world of music technology, focusing on composition using Musescore notation software. Building on their foundational knowledge from Year 7, where they learned about binary and ternary forms, students will deepen their understanding of musical structures by creating compositions in Rondo form. Students will engage in hands-on activities that foster collaboration and enhance their musical skills, preparing them for further studies in music and technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of basic musical notation and symbols from Year 7. • Familiarity with binary (AB) and ternary (ABA) forms in music composition. • Experience in using software. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Rondo form (ABACADA) and its characteristics in composition. • Advanced skills in Musescore, including using various tools for notation and playback. • Techniques for arranging and orchestrating compositions using technology.
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Year 9

Unit Title	Unit Overview	Prior Knowledge / skills (bullet points min 3)	New Learning (bullet points min 3)
What makes a good song	Students will explore the fundamental elements of pop song structure through the engaging example of "Shotgun" by George Ezra. Students will learn to identify and analyse different sections of a pop song, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic understanding of musical notation and rhythm. • Familiarity with common musical instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and analysis of different sections within a pop song structure. • Arrangement techniques for creating a cohesive 1–2-minute performance of a chosen song. • Development of collaborative skills through group work and peer feedback in a musical context.

	verses, choruses, and bridges, enhancing their understanding of musical form. Through collaborative group work, pupils will select a pop song of their choice and create a short arrangement, utilizing instruments like the keyboard, ukulele, or guitar. This hands-on approach fosters creativity and teamwork.	<p>(keyboard, ukulele, guitar).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in singing and performing as part of a group. 	
Soundtracks	Students will explore the fascinating world of film music, focusing on its origins and significance in enhancing cinematic experiences. Through the study of iconic themes from films such as "Halloween" and "Psycho," pupils will gain an understanding of how music contributes to storytelling and emotional impact in film. Building on their previous learning from the Year 8 unit "Variations," students will have the opportunity to arrange and perform their chosen film music themes using keyboards, ukuleles, or through vocal performance. By the end of the unit, students will not only have developed their practical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of basic musical elements such as melody, harmony, and rhythm from previous units. • Experience in performing and arranging music, particularly through the "Variations" unit in Year 8. • Familiarity with different musical genres and their characteristics, which will aid in recognizing film music styles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of the historical context and evolution of film music, including key composers and their contributions. • Development of arrangement skills by creating personalized interpretations of selected film themes. • Enhanced performance skills through collaborative work and individual practice on chosen instruments or vocals.

	skills but also their appreciation for the role of music in film.		
Music technology	In Year 9, students will build upon their foundational skills in music composition developed in Year 8, particularly with Musescore software. This year, the focus will shift towards creating more complex compositions that incorporate a variety of instruments and explore different musical genres. By revisiting and expanding on their previous knowledge, students will enhance their understanding of music technology and composition techniques, preparing them for more advanced musical studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Composition Skills: Students have learned to create simple melodies using Musescore, focusing on treble clef notation. • Understanding of Musical Elements: They have explored fundamental musical elements such as rhythm, pitch, dynamics, and timbre. • Introduction to Genres: Students have been introduced to various musical genres, allowing them to identify characteristics and styles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Instrument Composition: Students will learn to compose for a range of instruments, understanding how to arrange music for different timbres and textures. • Advanced Notation Techniques: They will explore more complex notation, including harmonies, counterpoint, and dynamics, to enhance their compositions. • Genre-Specific Techniques: Students will delve deeper into the characteristics of specific genres, applying these techniques to create compositions that reflect their chosen style.

Year 10

Unit Title	Unit Overview	Prior Knowledge / skills (bullet points min 3)	New Learning (bullet points min 3)
Elements of music retrieval.	In this topic, we will explore the fundamental components that make up music, building on the knowledge you've gained in Key Stage 3. Understanding the elements of music is essential for analysing and creating music effectively. We will revisit key concepts and expand your knowledge to deepen your appreciation and skills in music theory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Elements of Music: Prior learning about the primary elements such as melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, and timbre, which are crucial for understanding how music is constructed. • Notation Skills: Familiarity with treble and bass clef notation, including reading and writing notes. • Instruments of the Orchestra: Prior learning about the different families of instruments (strings, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will learn about more complex music theory concepts such as scales, intervals, and chord progressions. • Pupils will learn how to analyse pieces of music by identifying the elements of music that are being used. This will help pupils with their understanding of the composer's intentions and the emotional impact of the music. • Pupils will learn how to explore various composition techniques, allowing them to apply their understanding of the elements of music in creating original pieces of music.

		woodwinds, brass, and percussion) and their roles within an orchestral setting.	
AOS2 (Area of study 2). The concerto through time.	This unit explores the development of the concerto from the Baroque period to the Romantic era, focusing on the structure, instrumentation, and role of the soloist and orchestra. Students will study key works by composers such as Vivaldi, Mozart, and Beethoven, examining how the concerto form evolved in terms of orchestration, dynamics, and expression. Through listening, analysis, and performance tasks, students will develop an understanding of how different periods of music history shaped the concerto and its performance practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of basic musical forms such as ternary and binary. • Familiarity with the orchestra and its instrumental families. • Basic knowledge of Baroque music, including composers like Handel and Vivaldi. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the key characteristics of Baroque, Classical, and Romantic concertos. • Understand the role of the soloist and orchestra in different periods. • Analyse musical scores, identifying structural features as well as analysing how the elements of music have been used.
Composition (pupils will write their own brief)	In this unit, students will focus on composing original pieces of music, responding to a self-written brief as part of their coursework. The unit emphasizes creativity, developing compositional techniques, and applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic understanding of musical structures such as binary, ternary, and rondo forms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a composition based on a brief they have written. • Demonstrate understanding of form, harmony, and instrumentation in their work. • Present their composition using appropriate notation or music technology.

	<p>theoretical knowledge. Students will explore different starting points for compositions, such as melody, harmony, rhythm, or texture, and will be encouraged to develop their own musical ideas. The unit also covers the use of music technology and score-writing, with students producing a final score and recording. Throughout the process, students will be guided to refine and develop their compositions through feedback and self-assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with scales, chords, and harmonic progressions. • Experience with music technology or notation software for simple composition tasks. 	
Solo performance	<p>In this unit, students will focus on preparing and performing a solo piece as part of their GCSE coursework. This unit encourages students to refine their technical and interpretative skills on their chosen instrument or voice. Students will select a piece that is suitable for their ability level and aligns with the exam board's guidelines. The unit emphasizes performance techniques such as phrasing, dynamics, articulation, and expression, as well as the importance of practice strategies and stage presence. Throughout</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience performing in class or school concerts to build confidence. • Basic understanding of music notation and interpreting performance directions (e.g., dynamics, tempo). • Knowledge of technical exercises relevant to their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a solo piece confidently with technical accuracy and expression. • Demonstrate effective practice routines and strategies for improvement. • Critically assess their own performance and identify areas for further development.

	the unit, students will receive individual feedback and learn how to evaluate their own performances.	instrument or voice (e.g., scales, arpeggios).	
AOS5 (are of study 5) The conventions of pop.	This unit focuses on the evolution and key features of pop music from the 1950s to the present day, covering genres such as rock 'n' roll, pop ballads, and solo artists from the 1970s onwards. Students will explore the stylistic characteristics of these genres, including typical song structures, instrumentation, and production techniques. The unit includes listening and analysis tasks, where students will dissect key pop songs and identify elements like melody, harmony, rhythm, and lyrics. They will also consider the cultural and social impact of pop music and how technology has influenced its development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key features of different pop genres and their conventions. Analyse popular music using musical terminology. Understand the role of technology in shaping the sound of modern pop music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic understanding of melody, harmony, and rhythm. Familiarity with popular song structures (e.g., verse-chorus form). Experience with listening and analysing music from various genres.
AOS4 (area of study 4) Film music.	In this unit, students will explore the role of music in film, learning how it enhances the visual experience and supports narrative storytelling. They will analyse how composers use melody, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation, and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of the basic elements of music, including melody, harmony, and rhythm. Experience with listening to and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and analyse the use of musical elements in film music. Understand the relationship between music and visual media. Explore different techniques used by composers to enhance storytelling in film.

	<p>dynamics to convey mood, character, and action. Students will study iconic film scores, considering how leitmotifs, themes, and underscoring are used to create emotional impact. The unit also explores the historical development of film music, from early silent films to modern-day blockbusters, and the use of technology in film composition.</p>	<p>analysing music across various styles and genres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with the use of music to create mood or atmosphere, such as in programmatic music. 	
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Year 11

Unit Title	Unit Overview	Prior Knowledge / skills (bullet points min 3)	New Learning (bullet points min 3)
Composition (to a brief set by the exam board).	In this unit, students will compose their second piece of music based on a set brief provided by the exam board at the start of Year 11. This unit builds on the foundational composition skills students have developed and challenges them to work within specific guidelines while expressing their own creativity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compose a piece that fulfils the specific criteria of the exam board's set brief. • Develop their compositional ideas in a structured and creative manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience with composing music for a self-written brief (first composition). • Understanding of basic music theory, including melody, harmony, and form. • Familiarity with composing using music technology or notation software.

	<p>The brief could relate to a variety of musical styles, genres, or purposes, such as film music, pop songs, or instrumental pieces. Students will explore how to shape their ideas to meet the requirements of the brief while continuing to develop their understanding of harmony, melody, and structure. The unit will also focus on refining compositions through feedback, self-evaluation, and peer critique.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use music technology or notation software to present their work professionally. 	
Ensemble performance.	<p>This unit focuses on preparing and performing as part of an ensemble, which is a key component of the GCSE Music coursework. Students will collaborate with others to rehearse and perform a piece, refining their musical and interpersonal skills. The unit emphasizes the importance of communication, timing, balance, and cohesion within a group performance. Students will explore a variety of ensemble types—ranging from small chamber groups to rock bands—and will work on developing their part within the context of the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience with solo performance, developing confidence and technical skills on their chosen instrument or voice. • Understanding of basic musical elements such as rhythm, melody, and dynamics. • Knowledge of how to follow a conductor or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform as part of an ensemble with an awareness of timing, dynamics, and balance. • Communicate effectively with other musicians during rehearsal and performance. • Evaluate their ensemble performance and identify areas for improvement.

	whole ensemble. The ability to listen critically to others and adjust their playing or singing accordingly is a key focus.	musical director in a group setting.	
AOS3 (area of study 3) Rhythms of the world.	In this unit, students will explore the rich diversity of rhythmic traditions from various parts of the world, including African drumming, Indian classical music, Eastern Mediterranean music, and Latin American dance styles. The focus will be on understanding how rhythm plays a central role in these musical cultures, looking at elements such as time signatures, syncopation, polyrhythms, and cross-rhythms. Students will engage in listening and analysis tasks to identify the key characteristics of these rhythmic styles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of basic rhythmic elements such as note values, rests, and time signatures. • Familiarity with rhythmic notation and performance, developed through earlier performance work. • Experience with listening and analysing a variety of musical genres and identifying rhythmic features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and analyse the key rhythmic features of different world music traditions. • Understand the cultural and social contexts in which these rhythms are used. • Apply world rhythmic patterns in performance or composition.
Exam revision	This revision unit prepares students for the end-of-course listening exam by revisiting all areas of study in the GCSE Music syllabus. These include the Concerto Through Time, Rhythms of the World, Film Music, The Conventions of Pop, and the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed study of each area of study, including The Concerto Through Time, Film Music, Pop Conventions, and Rhythms of the World. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and analyse musical elements from each area of study. • Apply critical listening skills to unfamiliar and familiar pieces in a timed exam setting. • Develop strategies for answering a variety of exam questions, from multiple choice to extended responses.

	<p>of ensemble and solo performance. Students will review key musical terminology, score analysis, and listening techniques to help them identify and understand various musical elements across different genres and periods. The unit will focus on continuing to develop exam techniques, including aural recognition, score reading, and critical analysis. Students will use practice questions and mock exams as they have done throughout the course to help consolidate their knowledge and improve their confidence ahead of the final exam.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Familiarity with score analysis and identification of key musical elements like texture, melody, and harmony.• Experience with listening exercises and practice questions from previous assessments.	
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