



United Learning

The Cornerstone Academy

Music Curriculum

Curriculum Overview - Music

Principles and Purpose of the Music Curriculum

The purpose of the Music curriculum is to:

- **Enable all pupils to develop their musical potential through engaging experiences**, recognising that music as art is an important part of cultural identity. We also recognise that music benefits both cognitive development and character development. Performing is a crucial part of this.
- **Encourage and prepare students for lifelong musical learning and appreciation**, both in and out of school, including preparation for further study if appropriate.

Learning music is a cultural entitlement for every child, and we hope that our approach will ensure that all pupils receive this and are successful in their learning.

The following principles have informed the planning of the United Learning curriculum across all subjects.

- **Entitlement:** All pupils have the right to learn what is in the United Learning curriculum, and schools have a duty to ensure that all pupils are taught the whole of it.
- **Coherence:** Taking the National Curriculum as its starting point, our curriculum is carefully sequenced so that powerful knowledge builds term by term and year by year. We make meaningful connections within subjects and between subjects.
- **Mastery:** We ensure that foundational knowledge, skills, and concepts are secure before moving on. Pupils revisit prior learning and apply their understanding in new contexts.
- **Adaptability:** The core content – the 'what' – of the curriculum is stable, but schools will bring it to life in their local context, and teachers will adapt lessons – the 'how' – to meet the needs of their own classes.
- **Representation:** All pupils see themselves in our curriculum, and our curriculum takes all pupils beyond their immediate experience.
- **Education with character:** Our curriculum - which includes the taught subject timetable as well as spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, our co-curricular provision, and the ethos and 'hidden curriculum' of the school – is intended to spark curiosity and to nourish both the head and the heart.

Here we explore these principles in the context of the music curriculum:

- **Coherence:** It is more important for pupils to fully understand the key concepts presented than to cover lots of curriculum content. Progress and development are more assured as the curriculum content is sequenced. By working in this way, the dangers of a 'shallow musical odyssey', where pupils travel from genre to genre without making links between styles or building on their skills, are also avoided.
- **Mastery:** The curriculum is based on a mastery model, in which the ambition is that all pupils are taught and achieve the essential knowledge and skills in each of the years of the curriculum so that both knowledge and skills can be re-used effectively in future learning to achieve greater depth of musical learning and outcome.



Students should begin to specialise as they progress through their school curriculum, choosing an instrument to 'master' over time.

- Representation: The music curricula in our schools is unlikely to remain static for long periods of time. It needs to respond to the changing nature of the school and society. A curriculum that recognises the musical lives of children and young people, building on this prior learning and experience, will resonate with pupils.
- Education with character: Music plays a vital role in delivering a values-led education, aiming to:
 - Give our pupils ambition: to perform to a high standard, and to support others who also aim for high standards.
 - Build confidence: to perform in both small and large settings as a member of a wider ensemble, participating in memorable occasions that contribute to the school life and community.
 - Foster creativity: to compose and improvise with skill, building on prior experiences.
 - Instil respect: for each other in performance, and the artistry of musicians from all backgrounds.
 - Drive enthusiasm: to pursue musical talents and interests through an engaging curriculum and co-curriculum.
 - Encourage determination: to persevere and strive when refining and improving performance and composition.

Route through the Curriculum

The table below sets out the route that pupils take through our curriculum. Our spiral curriculum features the development of musical skills and knowledge at its core, through the development of technique (performance and music technology), construction (composing and improving) and critical engagement – all of which are woven into each unit of learning, revisited, and developed throughout. The unit titles are listed for each year, with an indicated theme of each unit.

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
• Finding Your Voice & Rhythm • Musicals • Theme and Variations – Notation & Structure • Ensembles • Video Games	• Music in Our World • Classical Music • Theme and Variations – Melody & Tonality • Ensembles • Programme Music	• Rock & Pop • 21st Century Music • I Can Compose – Exploring the Waltz • Ensembles • Film & TV

At Key Stage 4, pupils follow the Eduqas Music GCSE course in line with the network.



‘Why This, Why Now?’

In our planning, we have asked ourselves 'why this, why now?' Here we provide some examples of the curriculum choices we have made, and why the units have been placed in the order we have chosen:

- The curriculum is aligned to the United Learning music curriculum framework and is carefully sequenced to introduce students to progressively more challenging concepts. Year 7 is a baselining year where students experiment with patterns, repetition and contrast including simple melody. Moving into Year 8, pupils develop an understanding of the construction of musical structures over time such as melody, tonality, and large-scale structure (the horizontal) whilst Year 9 content includes more complex concepts such as harmony and texture (the vertical).
- The development of technical skill is progressive through the roadmap: in Year 7, essential skills are developed for ensembles, in Year 8 students develop individual technique, and in Year 9 leadership and direction becomes important.
- Singing is weaved into all units and is a core part of developing musicianship and understanding of internalised pitch.

Teaching the Music Curriculum

Every unit has an overview that details the objectives, teaching sequence, key vocabulary, and terminology. In every unit, key vocabulary and terminology are displayed, defined, and continually revisited. Students are routinely tested on new vocabulary and terminology in 'Memory Platforms' and end of lesson reviews. Students are required to apply new vocabulary and terminology in their responses to music, both oral and written.

Extended tasks are designed to help stretch learners who seek additional challenge through levels based scaffolded tasks. For example, through the 'video games' composing tasks in Year 7, and through exploring instrumental specialisms via 'ensembles' in Year 8.

Lessons are structured to support the I-We-You cycle, and students have regular independent practice. High quality modelled examples are an integral part of lessons, many of which are provided as videos on-screen or as narrated guides for teachers. Extended tasks are often followed by a fully developed model to exemplify the standards students should demonstrate.

Great music teaching is rooted in the language of the subject: musical sound. All learning should centre around the music itself. The subject area can draw extensively on recent understanding in cognitive science to ensure that teaching and learning is impactful. We would expect to see the application of the Rosenshine Principles through:

- 'Play me/show me' used in teaching alongside 'tell me'; so, students can demonstrate embodied musical understanding.
- Teachers always being a musician in the room.
- Whole class modelling used alongside teacher and pre-prepared models.
- Modelling effective practice both in lessons and beyond the curriculum via clubs, with the teaching environment being conducive to effective practice.



- Focussed creativity, using scaffolds, models, and creative starting points.

Homework in the subject is a good opportunity to review and practice theory knowledge that opens the curriculum to all pupils, such as through set interactive and audible online activities. In Key Stage 4, students are expected to be accountable for their level of continued independent practise as part of their homework, alongside revision of classwork and learning exercises such as reading and composition planning.

Assessing the Music Curriculum

Formative Assessment in Music

In music, assessment needs to be proportionate and authentic to the subject. The best assessment practices have a clear purpose and provide meaningful information about what pupils know and can do, shaping future teaching.

Summative Assessment in Music

Currently, there are no common assessments as part of this music curriculum. However, all the units provide opportunities for summative assessment. Just as the curriculum is a balance of knowledge and skills in technical, constructive, and critical engagement in music, assessment should also reflect this balance. Notably, assessment materials may include performing and composing tasks, allowing teachers to build a holistic picture of their cohort. Aside from this, summative assessment should be infrequent; select units of every year includes an extended task that brings together learning of curriculum content from that year which can inform teacher planning for the year ahead.

Progression in the Music Curriculum

The United Learning curriculum reviews and builds on the Key Stage 2 primary curriculum so that lessons are suitably stretching and age appropriate. The experiences of students in primary schools are likely to vary hugely. Whilst some pupils will have benefited from regular curriculum provision, a rich co-curricular experience and input from visiting music teachers or 1-2-1 lessons in the community, there will be a continuum of exposure to the subject. Gathering information through a school transition programme can help to build a better understanding of each cohort and identify areas of strength and development. Working with local music services helps with facilitating provision and to know more about the musical life of feeder primary schools.

Pupils who wish to take Music at Key Stage 4 receive the benefit of developing skills to perform, appraise and compose music on a more analytical level. To help support students with tackling the step up to GCSE, a 'crash course' unit is delivered in the first term in order to support accessibility to the course as part of transition into Key Stage 4. which is advised to be used as part of the transition to Key Stage 4. The content of this unit covers the essential theoretical knowledge that supports fluency in musical understanding.



Annex 1 – The Cornerstone Academy KS3 Music Curriculum and Assessment Outcomes

Students are encouraged to 'AME' high in KS3. They will be awarded an A, M or E for the work completed. A is approaching, the work completed is not yet where we would expect a student to be for the year. M is meeting, they are completing tasks at as expected. E is exceeding, the student is working above where we would expect them to be for the year.

In music, students will be working towards the following statements:

	Meeting
Performing	Y7: Demonstrate increasing fluency & technique in performance on an instrument / voice with some inaccuracies. Demonstrate ensemble listening skills in group projects. Use appropriate musical notation with increasing accuracy when performing. Perform basic melodies and isolated chords. Y8: Make appropriate responses to performance directions. Demonstrate leadership ensemble skills in group projects. Generally reliable fluency & technique in performance on an instrument / voice with some inaccuracies. Perform intermediate melodies and chord patterns. Y9: Perform from some notated music with some expression. Recognise and follow some performance directions. Collaborate with other performers where appropriate. Perform intermediate pieces of music with some accuracy.
Composing & Technology Skills	Y7: Select appropriate sounds based on composition requirements. Input & edit basic music, showing an understanding of music software. Compose basic ideas using appropriate instrumentation. Y8: Create music in one type of conventional form. Input & edit intermediate music, showing accuracy in terms of pitch & rhythm. Begin to compose longer ideas that show some use of musical devices & the elements. Y9: Create music with some understanding of the musical elements. Continue to input & edit intermediate music, showing an understanding of notation. Compose longer ideas that show use of musical devices.
Appraising	Y7: Identify a range of different instrument sounds and families. Recognise some musical symbols and staff notation, demonstrating an ability to use some of these in performance. Understanding of dynamics. Y8: Recognise conventional forms in music. Recognise musical devices such as call & response, syncopation as well as tonality. Accurate understanding of most rhythmic values. Y9: Recognise the primary triads (I, IV, V). Mostly consistent use of musical vocabulary when analysing music. Some understanding of texture.





United Learning
The best in everyone™

■ Ambition ■ Confidence ■ Creativity ■ Respect ■ Enthusiasm ■ Determination