



KING JAMES'S
SCHOOL
KNARESBOROUGH

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MUSIC

2025/26

The Music department aims to incorporate a passion for the arts into student's curriculum. We have a very practical approach to lessons, which allows students to explore not only different genres of music but also develop their own style and flare on top of musical knowledge. It is our desire to teach not just music alone, but a wide range of culture through exploring the context and meaning behind a large repertoire of contrasting works.

In KS3, students learn the main elements of music along with key instrumentation and the development of the orchestra, which builds a foundation for all future learning. This gives the basic knowledge to help develop skills over KS3 and beyond. The practical elements of the course, performing both solo and as part of an ensemble, allows student to feel a sense of individual and shared achievement. Cross-curricular links give students the chance to explore other subjects through Music and study genres from as far back as the Baroque period right through to modern experimental and pop music. Through this we thoroughly prepare students for the KS4 curriculum. In each learning cycle, we touch on at least two of the main strands of music; performing, composing, listening and rehearsing.

The curriculum allows both students with prior knowledge and those that have none to progress due to heavily differentiated resources and excellent teacher subject knowledge. Music builds our students confidence, cultural capital and social interactions on a deeper level through both class and our extensive range of extra-curricular activities.

At KS4 we continue to build on listening and contextual skills so that students gain a broader knowledge of key repertoire throughout the history of music. Performance skills progress and the sense of achievement becomes greater. Analytical skills are developed and deepened with the introduction of larger set works from a range of musical genres. These skills directly link to the KS5 curriculum which sees an even greater range of music being introduced and discussed in essay style questions. Progress throughout the key stages is evident through clearly developed skills, performance technique and student's ability to discuss not only genres of music, but how the style is determined by context.

Clear assessment criteria are evident across all key stages, which allows learners to improve independently, as well as through verbal feedback. Formal assessment takes place once per topic but each student completes a practice assessment beforehand.

The structured topics throughout the key stages ensure that students are prepared for the next step in their musical journey. The newly revised KS4 curriculum along with a change of GCSE examination board ensures there is a clear transition between the key stages. We aim that every learner leaves our classroom with a wider understanding of a range of cultures, increased confidence and the ability to work with the others.

By the end of KS5 learners leave having an in depth knowledge of not only music, but musicology also and the ability to study Music at degree level. We pride ourselves on providing a curriculum that is based on traditional music theory alongside current teaching methods such as musical futures that encourages practical performance to a high level and the use of industry standard software.