

## Music development plan summary: Kings Norton Girls' School and Sixth Form



Music is all around us. It is the soundtrack to our lives. Music connects us through people and places in our ever-changing world. It is creative, collaborative, celebratory and challenging. At KNGS, music brings students together through the shared endeavour of whole-class singing, ensemble playing, experimenting with the creative process and, through the love of listening to friends and fellow pupils, performing.

The Music Department at KNGS aims to set out a clearly sequenced and challenging yet enjoyable approach to music teaching. It is a roadmap that introduces students to the delights and disciplines of music, helping them to appreciate and understand the works of musical composers, producers and artists of the past and present, while also equipping them with the technical skills and creativity to compose and perform.

### How SMSC and British Values are taught within the Music Key Stage 3 Curriculum:

Music at Key Stage 3 is full of opportunities to promote SMSC and British Values. Through the study of different styles of music, music from different cultures and music for different occasions and purposes, students are encouraged to share their feelings, thoughts and opinions, whilst respecting the feelings, thoughts and opinions of others. Students do this mainly through the appraisal of their own performances, improvisations and compositions and the work of professional musicians. Opportunities to do this are in every unit of work for each year group.

Students develop an appreciation of cultural influences in music from around the world and build on their understanding, acceptance and respect of cultural diversity.

Musical performance is a key cornerstone of the Key Stage 3 music curriculum and through solo, paired, group and whole class performances we develop self-esteem and self-confidence in students. Musical performance and composition also give students the opportunity to develop their imagination and creativity and to reflect their own moods and emotions in the work that they produce.

Music at KNGS is inclusive, and we endeavour to support every child regardless of their level of need. The curriculum itself is diverse and teaching is adaptive in order to support all students so that they achieve good progress. In all music lessons there is a variety of whole class, small group and 1-1 teaching. Some students will have one to one support with a teaching assistant if their ECHP requires it and these classroom assistants work closely with the music teacher on how musical activities can be adapted to best suit the needs of these students so that they are able to succeed and progress.

#### KS3 Curriculum:

Years 7, 8 and 9 study 1 hour of music per week.

The curriculum is designed so that skills and understanding in performance, composition and listening and appraising are revisited in each year, with an appropriate level of challenge added each time.

Students develop their performance skills across KS3 using keyboards and ukuleles. Students that learn different instruments outside of classroom music lessons are also encouraged to use these instruments in

lessons where appropriate. The curriculum and our classroom music teachers take into account the vast spectrum of ability and starting points in music when students arrive in Year 7 and teachers strive to always provide an appropriate level of challenge for students.

Students in Year 7 develop their understanding of composition through playing chord sequences from a range of familiar songs on the ukulele. They also compose chord sequences on the keyboard using the primary chords of C major, and begin to create their own melodies using the chord sequence they have created as an accompaniment to their own work.

Students in Year 8 use African Drumming techniques to compose their own syncopated rhythms, which they work to combine in polyrhythmic textures. Year 8 students also begin to look at improvisation, and use the blues scale in C to create their own improvisations in time to a 12-bar blues backing track.

Students in Year 9 build upon the composition knowledge they have acquired in Years 7 and 8. They compose more complex chord sequences in different keys on the keyboard and begin to write simple bass lines using the root chord of each note. They create melodies on the keyboard that show a good balance of variety, repetition, small steps and leaps.

Singing is an important part of the curriculum throughout KS3 and is taught with enthusiasm and confidence by the music teachers at KNGS. In Year 7, students are taught to develop a sense of singing as an ensemble. They begin singing unison songs and progress to harmonies in 2 and 3 parts. In Years 8 and 9 we focus on extending the vocal range of the students and sing songs that require students to consider phrasing, accuracy of pitch and dynamic contrast. We also continue to develop part singing and the ability to listen to different parts when singing.

An understanding of the musical elements underpins listening and appraising work across KS3. These are as outlined in the Model Music Curriculum:

- Tonality
- Texture and instrumentation
- Metre, rhythm and tempo
- Pitch
- Harmony
- Dynamics

We also include melody and structure at KNGS as we feel these are vital to give a more complete understanding.

In Year 7 we teach the meaning of these musical elements and how they sound in music that is performed. Students also begin to explore the wider meaning behind music that they listen to.

In Year 8 students practise identifying the musical elements in music that they listen to, and continue to explore the wider meaning behind the music that they study.

In Year 9 students start to look at *how* the musical elements are used and the impact this has on the listener. As in Years 7 and 8, students in Year 9 also explore the wider meaning behind the music that they study.

## KS4 Curriculum

GCSE Music focuses on the three strands of composing, performing and listening and appraising, much the same as at Key Stage 3 only in much more depth and requiring a deeper understanding.

Students are formally required to undertake 2 performances – one solo performance and one performance as part of a group in order to demonstrate their ensemble skills. They also have to produce two contrasting compositions under controlled conditions and often use the computers in the department to do this.

There are 8 set works that students study in depth for GCSE which range from Baroque concertos through to rock, club dance and world music from other cultures. Students learn how to analyse these different styles and are formally assessed at the end of the course through a written paper that consists of listening questions and an extended piece of writing. The course followed uses the Edexcel exam board.

## A level Music Curriculum

The A Level in Music is 100% externally assessed, and consists of one written paper and two non-examined assessment components. The course covers a wide variety of musical styles. Candidates can choose whether to specialise in composition or performance. The course includes performing, composing and appraising. The course followed uses the Eduqas exam board.

Further information of GCSE and A level music can be found [here](#)

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024-2025
Date this summary was published	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
Date this summary will be reviewed	June 2025
Name of the school music lead	Craig Gell
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Lisa Shakespeare
Name of local music hub	Services for Education Birmingham

## Co-curricular music

Kings Norton Girls' School uses Services for Education to provide one-to-one tuition on a wide range of instruments. Currently being taught at KNGS we have:

- Bassoon
- Cello
- Clarinet
- Drumkit
- Flute
- Guitar
- Piano
- Saxophone

- Trombone
- Trumpet
- Violin
- Voice

The annual fee for these lessons is £573 or £429 (piano tuition only)

Payment is required termly in advance. Invoices will be issued 3 weeks before the end of term in advance of the new term's lessons commencing and must be paid within 14 days via Parentpay. Payment is required 7 calendar days clear of the prior end of term to avoid tuition being withdrawn.

*Students in receipt of Free School Meals and those eligible for Pupil Premium Funding will be able to request a 50% subsidy for tuition during the 2024/25 academic year. Requests should be made in writing or via email to [finance@kngs.co.uk](mailto:finance@kngs.co.uk) in advance of tuition commencing.*

Extra-curricular ensembles are publicised at the beginning of every academic year and also through an annual extra-curricular fair. Instrumental and vocal teachers from the Music Hub (Services for Education Birmingham) that run choirs or ensembles in school also encourage those they teach to join musical groups where appropriate. Apart from the year group specific ensembles (KS3 ensemble and Year 10 ensemble) all other ensembles and choirs are open to all year groups. All ensembles are open to all musical abilities and are fully inclusive.

Ensembles that students can join this year are:

- KS3 Ensemble (any student from Years 7, 8 and 9 is welcome to join)
- Year 10 Ensemble (any student from Year 10 is welcome to join)
- Flute Choir – for any student that plays the flute
- Choir – for any student that enjoys singing as part of a group
- Guitar Ensemble – for any student that plays acoustic or electric guitar
- Orchestra – for any student that plays an orchestral instrument

We also have ensembles that are formed especially in preparation for musical productions and concerts.

Students having instrumental lessons have the opportunity to take graded exams by appropriate awarding bodies. These awarding bodies are chosen by the individual instrumental teacher and tend to be chosen from:

- Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music
- Trinity College London
- Rock School

Services for Education also run a variety of free ensembles that children can attend outside of school hours.

- Area Ensembles – localised groups open to any musician of school age, which rehearse weekly across the city (after the school day)

Central Ensembles – designed for intermediate through to advanced performers. Ensembles rehearse weekly during term time with members benefiting from specialist ensemble tuition supported by skilled professional

tutors and conductors. These ensembles are open to young musician in full time education who attend a Birmingham School or live within the city of Birmingham.

## Musical experiences

This academic year we have planned:

- Christmas Concert
- Arts Faculty Summer Showcase
- Participation in Gala concerts organised by Services for Education
- Tea-time concerts organised by the Head of Music and instrumental/vocal teachers
- Visits to feeder primary schools
- Performances in end of term assemblies, Open Evenings and Awards Ceremonies.

### Christmas Concert:

The Christmas Concert is an annual ticketed event that takes place towards the end of term in December. The ticket price for this year is still to be decided, but last year was £4. Unfortunately we are unable to offer concessions because of the payment system that the school uses.

The concert is held in the main school hall and includes musical items from the school orchestra, choir, instrumental ensembles and soloists. Students from all year groups and all musical abilities are encouraged to participate. Students from Kings Norton Boys' School also take part in the orchestral performances.

Instrumental and vocal teachers from Services from Education also support this event.

### Arts Faculty Summer Showcase:

The Arts Faculty Summer Showcase takes place every other year towards the end of the summer term. It is a collaborative event between the whole of Arts Faculty. Similarly to the Christmas Concert it is held in the main school hall and includes various items from the school orchestra, choir, instrumental ensembles, soloists and drama groups.

Students' work from Art, Photography, Design Technology and Textiles is also displayed. Musicians from the Boys' School also take part in the orchestral performances. The ticket price for this event in 2023 was £4.

In the year that the Summer Showcase does not take place we put on a musical production. In March 2024 we produced Sister Act. All students were invited to audition for parts.

The Music Department also prides itself on being able to produce a pit band of student musicians for the musical. This included students from Years 8-13 and also included two musicians from Kings Norton Boys' School. A large number of students from Kings Norton Girls' School attended performances of the musical production which ran for four nights.

### Participation in Gala Concerts:

Each year Services for Education organise a series of concerts taking place in Spring and Summer

This year the flute choir and the vocal choir will be taking part at concerts at The University of Birmingham, the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Symphony Hall in the city centre.

### Tea-time Concerts:

These are concerts organised collaboratively between the Head of Music and the visiting instrumental and vocal teachers, usually towards the end of summer term after instrumental/vocal teachers have submitted their reports on individual students' progress.

Parents of students having instrumental/vocal lessons in school are invited to attend for free. Students showcase the work they have done this year.

These concerts allow students to develop their confidence as solo performers and allow parents to see the progress their children have made. It is also an opportunity for parents to connect with the instrumental/vocal teacher.

### **Visits to Feeder Primary Schools:**

We plan to take one of our ensembles to perform in some of our feeder primary schools this year. This has been done in the past with great success. In a previous visit in the summer term, students from KNGS gave a performance of repertoire they had been working on throughout the year and this was followed by a question and answer session where Year 6 students were able to ask KNGS students about the transition to secondary school.

Performances in end of term assemblies, open evenings and awards ceremonies:

This year a selection of students will be asked to perform at whole school events. This enables all students at KNGS to experience live music being performed by other students.

## **In the future**

This year in the Music Department we will be adopting the whole school focus on reading and literacy. We will be looking at how we teach important subject specific vocabulary and how we can encourage all students to use this more often in lessons. We want our music students at KNGS to be able to articulate their thoughts and opinions about the music that they hear confidently and concisely.

We will be looking at reading and literacy strategies used by other departments in the school and how these can be used (where appropriate) in the Music Department.

This year there will be a continued focus on ensuring our teaching resources are fit for purpose, especially reducing cognitive load and facilitating student understanding. Schemes and units of Work are always a work in progress and as such need to be revisited at regular intervals.

This year we will also be looking to further develop our collaborative approach to planning between departmental staff using the Model Music Curriculum as a bench mark.

Last year the Music Department made use of student voice to gauge opinions of the music curriculum. We will be revisiting this again in this academic year.

This year we will also be incorporating more careers information into music lessons for all years in all key stages.