

Year 7 Music Progression Map

Working curriculum map – KS3 Music 2026–27

The key principle is that each strand genuinely moves forward across the year rather than simply appearing repeatedly.

Strand	1. Musical Foundations	2. Keyboard & Melody	3. Chords, Melody & Composition	4. Ukulele & Song Performance	5. Samba & Ensemble Musicianship
Pulse, rhythm & metre	Establish steady pulse; distinguish pulse/rhythm; perform/copy simple rhythms; introduce core note values, rests, bars and 4/4	Maintain pulse while performing a melody; read rhythms within notation; develop rhythmic accuracy	Use rhythm purposefully when creating melodies; coordinate melody and chord changes; begin creating rhythmic variety	Maintain pulse while changing chords; perform increasingly fluent strumming patterns; coordinate with others	Major development: maintain independent rhythmic parts; layer rhythms; perform ostinati, breaks and call-and-response accurately
Pitch & melody	Hear high/low; identify rising/falling, step/leap/repetition; pitch-match through singing; establish keyboard geography	Major development: perform a complete melody; understand phrase, repetition and melodic shape; improve accuracy and fluency	Apply creatively: construct coherent melodies over chords; make deliberate pitch choices; use repetition and contrast	Retrieve pitch/melody through singing and song repertoire; distinguish melody from accompaniment	Retrieve through listening; melodic content is not a major practical focus
Keyboard technique	Locate notes confidently; establish posture, hand position and basic fingering habits	Major development: right-hand melodic technique, appropriate fingering, accuracy, fluency and purposeful practice	New development: play simple triads with appropriate hand shape; change between C, F, G and Am; coordinate chord performance with a partner's melody; use keyboard independently as a composing tool	—	—
Harmony & chords	Introduce the idea of notes sounding simultaneously where useful; distinguish melody/chord	Hear chordal accompaniment and retrieve the concept when appropriate	Major teaching: understand chords/triads; learn C, F, G and Am; build and select chord sequences; understand that chords and melodies relate	Transfer: reproduce familiar harmonic material on a new instrument; change between chords fluently in real time	Retrieve harmony through listening where appropriate
Notation	Establish foundations: note values, rests, bar lines, 4/4; introduce treble clef and relationship between stave and keyboard	Major application: follow/read simple melodic notation while performing; connect written rhythm and pitch directly to sound	Read chord symbols; use notation/chord symbols to support composition; record musical ideas in an appropriate form	Read chord diagrams/symbols and simple rhythmic/strumming notation	Read simple rhythmic parts and/or accessible graphic notation
Performing	Establish routines: start/stop together, follow direction, maintain pulse, handle instruments appropriately	Develop individual/small-group performance; accuracy → fluency → expression; learn how to practise difficult passages	Perform own music with a partner; coordinate two contrasting musical roles; rehearse and refine	Major ensemble development: maintain accompaniment, change chords in time, respond to other performers and support singing	Culmination: maintain an independent part within a larger ensemble; listen across the group; respond to cues; recover from mistakes
Singing	Pitch matching, echo singing and short class singing; establish willingness and routines	Sing melodic phrases before/alongside playing to internalise pitch and phrasing	Sing/hum potential melodic ideas before transferring them to keyboard	Major application: class singing with instrumental accompaniment; develop pitch, pulse, phrasing and ensemble awareness	Vocal calls/counting where musically useful
Composition	Very short constrained activities: alter/create simple rhythms or pitch patterns	Manipulate a familiar melodic/rhythmic idea in small ways	Major focus: create chord sequence + melody; organise ideas into a coherent structure; use repetition/contrast; refine work through listening	Composition not a major focus; perhaps make small choices about accompaniment/structure	Devise short rhythmic patterns/breaks where appropriate rather than running a separate composition project
Listening	Establish listening routines: focus attention, identify obvious musical features, compare sounds and justify simple answers	Hear pitch, melody, phrase, tempo, dynamics and articulation in relevant repertoire	Hear harmony, chord changes, melody/accompaniment and structure; connect listening directly with composing	Hear accompaniment, texture, timbre and rhythmic style within song repertoire	Major development: identify layers, instrumentation/timbre, texture, structure, dynamics and rhythmic relationships
Musical vocabulary	Pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre; introduce metre, melody etc. when encountered	Melody, phrase, step, leap, repetition, articulation; retrieve tempo/dynamics/rhythm	Chord, harmony, chord sequence, accompaniment, structure, repetition, contrast	Accompaniment, texture, strumming, ensemble; retrieve chord/harmony vocabulary	Ostinato, call and response, break, texture, timbre, structure; extensive retrieval of earlier vocabulary
Texture & structure	Introduce ideas such as one sound/many sounds and repetition/sections through listening	Recognise phrases and simple sections; hear melody with accompaniment	Major development: organise composition into sections; use repetition/contrast; recognise melody + accompaniment texture	Major practical application: hear and perform melody/accompaniment roles; explore changes in texture	Major development: understand layered texture and how entries, breaks and sections create structure
Timbre & instruments	Diagnose/teach broad instrument recognition; describe contrasting sounds appropriately	Identify keyboard/piano timbre and relevant repertoire instruments	Consider timbre when choosing sounds for compositions	Understand characteristic ukulele sound and instrumental/vocal combinations	Major focus: recognise different Samba instruments and understand how contrasting timbres contribute to the ensemble
Genre, style & context	Listen broadly; begin connecting musical features with different repertoire rather than learning genre labels in isolation	Brief, meaningful context for Beethoven/Ode to Joy and relevant performances	Use suitable repertoire to hear chord loops/melody-harmony relationships across real music	Explore songs/styles in which chordal accompaniment is central	Strong focus: understand Samba within an appropriate Brazilian musical/cultural context and recognise characteristic musical features
Independent musicianship	Establish equipment, rehearsal and behaviour routines; respond to modelling; begin identifying/correcting mistakes	Learn to isolate and practise difficult passages; self-assess accuracy	Make paired musical decisions; experiment, evaluate, refine and solve problems	Rehearse chord transitions purposefully; maintain own role without constant teacher support	Year 7 culmination: manage an ensemble role with increasing independence, follow cues, listen to others, correct mistakes and contribute to rehearsal