

# Curriculum Area Intent



Music

## 1.1 Rationale

### Aims

At Huntcliff School we believe that all students are entitled to a high-quality music education. Our aim is to engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and to realise their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. Embedding the enjoyment and sense of community music performance can create is very important to us as a school and so we look to provide students with opportunities to perform to a wider audience. This is through a combination of in school events such as House Music competitions, through to more public events such as the Christmas Concert or taking part in community events in the local area.

The National Curriculum for music aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Perform, listen to, review, and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians.
- Learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence.
- Understand and explore how music is created, produced, and communicated, including through the interrelated dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations.

### The rationale for Sequencing (Scope and Rigour)

Our Music Curriculum matches the National Curriculum by encompassing the main skills of performing, composing, listening and appraising. For each unit, students are given a range of tasks and activities that are designed to build and challenge students' practical and music theory skills. Students are given the opportunity to learn a variety of musical instruments as well as building singing skills and confidence. This is executed through a range of practical activities where students work, most frequently, in pairs or small groups. Students learn notable, well-known pieces and are taught to create their own music, using stylistic features and devices. Listening skills are applied in every unit of work, with activities designed to build critical listening skills and music analysis. Students are taught to discuss and describe music with increasing coherence, through the use of key words and music vocabulary. As Music Technology is used extensively in KS4, this is introduced in a basic format in KS3 - using industry standard notation and sequencing software.

The units of work are structured to allow for progressive understanding and a development in instrumental skills. Each unit builds upon skills and knowledge learnt previously. Music is a multi-faceted subject that requires time and practise to learn and understand. Students are encouraged to take part in lunch time clubs such as the Choir, sign up for specialist music lessons by visiting tutors and are open to use to small studios to explore their own music.

### Cognitive load theory

The skill of reading music is akin to learning an entirely new language. This can easily cause students' working memory to become overloaded. Through pre-teaching, segmentation, repetition and retrieval practice we aim for musical understanding to be processed from the working memory into the long-term memory in manageable chunks. It takes vast amounts of practise and repetition before it becomes more fluent. It is therefore weaved into every unit of work, so that all students can follow it to some degree. Music

terminology can be tricky to comprehend, due to the range of languages used (Italian, Latin, French, Spanish etc.). Key words and vocabulary are used and referred to in every lesson, regardless of the topic, in the hope and expectation that the musical language becomes second nature to students.

### **Research informing the Sequencing decisions.**

Both Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and Cognitive Load Theory have informed our curriculum sequencing and implementation. Both recognise the importance of memory in building schemas required to develop mastery and retention. Our schemes of work are sequenced so that students revisit skills and build upon prior learning over time, chunking more complex concepts into smaller parts. By limiting the amount of new information students are exposed to at one time, we can check understanding before moving the learning on. A scaffolded approach, combined with modelling and step by step success criteria means students are exposed to new skills and concepts gradually, building strong foundations and links across texts and skills.

### **Broader Themes:**

Our curriculum for Music is designed to equip students with a breadth of skills and knowledge, that will enable them to become educated and well-rounded citizens. Where possible literacy, numeracy and science are linked into each lesson, to encourage deeper understanding and application of core principles of learning. By incorporating historical and geographical subject matter, students can make connections between disciplines, fostering critical thinking and allowing students to draw deeper connections between music, time and place.

Confidence and self-esteem are huge factors in the success of becoming a musician, and the way that we have designed our curriculum and schemes of work allows for students to gradually build these personal skills, to help them become successful in the subject. Through an inspiring, respectful and empathetic teaching approach we aim to provide students with a 'no fear' attitude where they feel content with sharing and demonstrating their work to others.

The practical element of music requires creativity, ingenuity and inspiration. By learning about key figures and styles of music from a range of cultures and through history, students are able to build their cultural capital and draw inspiration from others, to build, create and externalise their own musical likes, opinions and styles.

Every student is different and by learning to play a range of musical instruments in KS3, each student has the chance to excel. The motor and coordination skills required to play an instrument, vary, and thus ability is diverse.

