



Hello and welcome to GCSE music!

I'm so pleased you've chosen this subject and am looking forward to starting the course with you in September, exploring lots of different styles of music and seeing you develop your musical creativity.

In studying music at GCSE, you could be taking your first steps into a career in the music industry, a field which contributed £7.6bn to the UK economy in 2023. Even if working in music isn't your ultimate goal, in studying music at GCSE you will develop a lot of skills which are valued by employers: the ability to work independently and in teams, presentation skills, creativity and problem-solving, listening, writing and analytical skills.

Furthermore, studies show that participating in music is very beneficial to wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem and some studies even show that, because music exercises all areas of your brain, it improves your performance in other subjects. Finally, as you already know, taking part in musical activities is fun!

To give yourself a flying start, there are a few things you can do from now to prepare yourself for GCSE music.

1. **Most importantly, be actively involved in music.** Here are some suggestions.

Play your instrument, practise the pieces you know, try out some new pieces, and perform with other people whenever you can.

If you haven't tried composing music before, start trying to create some musical ideas. It doesn't matter if you can't compose a whole piece yet. You will develop your skills. If you already compose music, work on a new piece!

Listen to as wide a range of music as you can. Don't just listen to the music you already know. Find out what your family, friends and even your teachers listen to. If you can hear some live music, take up the opportunity. There are often free music events over the summer.

2. Please make sure you have a thorough understanding of the basics of music theory. I have been setting you homework this half term. You need to complete this work.

It is important that you have a secure knowledge of this work as it is the foundation that we will be building your GCSE knowledge on.



As a reminder, here is the course structure:

Components

There are three components:

Component 1: Performing (30% of the final mark) – Internally assessed and externally moderated.

Component 2: Composing (30% of the final mark) – Internally assessed and externally moderated.

Component 3: Appraisal (40% of the final mark) – Written exam of 1 ¾ hours.

The Components Explained

- **Performing:** Students will develop their performing skills in lessons, in instrumental lessons and in extra-curricular music activities. Towards the end of the course, students will perform one solo and one ensemble performance.

Composing: Students will explore a range of elements, techniques and resources, including using music technology. Towards the end of the course, they will submit two compositions, one in response to a given brief, and the other a free composition.

- **Appraising:** Students will develop their musical listening and appraisal skills by exploring pieces from a variety of styles and genres, including classical instrumental music, vocal music from different times and genres, music for stage and screen, and music which blends different styles. They will be assessed in a final written, listening exam.

Exam:

One written 1 ¾ hour listening exam – 40%

Coursework:

One solo and one ensemble performance – 30%

Two compositions – 30%

I hope that you will find GCSE Music as exciting, engaging and enjoyable to study as I do to teach!

Mrs. Brennan