



Blackfen School for Girls

Music Development Plan Summary:

Overview

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	2024 - 2025
Date this summary was published	1.9.24
Date this summary will be reviewed	1.6.25
Name of the school music lead	Sonia Linaker
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music (if different)	Hollie Magrowski
Name of local music hub	Bexley Music Education Hub
Name of other music education organisation(s) (if partnership in place)	Royal Opera House Music Mark

Part A: Curriculum music

The Music Department at Blackfen School for Girls aims to produce confident and creative young people. From Year 7 through to Year 11, we embrace the many aspects of music which can help to develop life qualities such as confidence, discipline, creativity, self and peer analysis, teamwork, cultural knowledge, and responsibility.

We encourage students to work both to set tasks and also independently, allowing room for their own creativity and curiosity. We cover a wide range of Western Classical Tradition and World music, catering for a modern multicultural environment which aids the appreciation of all the cultures and diversity of the school community. Most importantly of all, we aim to help students enjoy making and learning about music and be as interactive and imaginative as possible.

Music lessons are timetabled for one hour each week during KS3, which increases to five hours per fortnight at KS4, if chosen as an option, and five hours each week for KS5.

KS3 Music Curriculum

The KS3 music curriculum is informed by the [model music curriculum](#) (March 2021), non-statutory guidance for teaching music from Key Stages 3, and by the collaboration of many successful years of music teaching from department staff and visiting tutors:

Right from the very start of year 7, we introduce students to 6 key strands; Rhythms of the World; Music for Media; Structure; Instrumental Spotlight (Voice, Keyboard,

Guitar/Ukulele, Drums); Development of Popular Music and Technology in Music. Each unit has an element of composition, listening and appraising, and performance, and students will be told which of these will be assessed at the end of each unit. Students will learn how to read music, play melodies and chords on the keyboard, how to read chord symbols for the guitar/ukulele and how to read and play tab on the bass guitar. To increase confidence, performance skills are built upon through every unit across KS3, with more difficult rhythms and melodies being taught in the first two terms of every year. This should serve them well for the remaining units.

In every music lesson, students follow the “I do, we do, you do” style of teaching, where the class teacher will model a key skill or concept that students will be learning for that lesson. Once all students have mastered the skill as a class or group, then students will be expected to take the concept and add their own ideas to it, creating their own piece of music in a specific style, e.g. African Drumming. Each final piece of work is recorded and assessed. In year 7, we expect students to work in small groups and pairs, gradually building up the confidence to try performing on their own in years 8 and 9. Students will inevitably work at different speeds but with our focus on adaptive teaching, stretching the more able and supporting those with SEND needs, and use of music technology, we are able to ensure that all students can produce work that they are proud of. Outside the classroom students are expected to continue their music studies by revising using BBC Bitesize, researching and listening to different styles of music, attending music clubs, practising classwork in their group, or completing compositions.

KS4 Music Curriculum

At KS4 we follow the OCR GCSE 9-1 exam syllabus. This enables students to consolidate their learning from KS3 units, in Performance, Composition and Listening and Appraising. There are four areas of study, *The Concerto through Time*, *Film Music*, *Rhythms of the World*, and *The Development of Pop*. In the listening exam at the end of Year 11, students will be required to listen to excerpts from the four areas and answer questions on them. Students will also have to perform two pieces on their chosen instrument, one as a soloist and the other as part of an ensemble. Ensemble playing is a difficult skill to master, therefore this is embedded from the start of Year 10, so they are fully ready to record by Spring of Year 11. Some groups are ready to perform at the Winter Showcase and this is encouraged to build confidence and enjoyment of playing in an ensemble. Students can also perform at assemblies or other showcases throughout the year. Finally, students have to produce two compositions, one is a free composition at the candidate's choice, and the other is one produced from a given stimulus, set by the exam board in September of Year 11.

Part B: Co-curricular music

Currently, Blackfen School offers instrumental lessons with visiting tutors on the following instruments:

- Piano
- Voice
- Drums
- Bass Guitar
- Rock and Pop Guitar

Visiting tutors set their own fee and visit the school to teach in blocks of ten weeks. Some lessons are 1-1, or paired, and last between twenty and thirty minutes each week. The average cost is around £15 - £20 for thirty minutes. These lessons are subsidised for PP students. Every term an Instrumental Lesson Request form is sent out to all years via MS Forms, and those who have requested lessons will be contacted by an instrumental tutor to organise the lessons. Payment is due on the very first lesson, and a cancellation period of one term is required to cease lessons. During school holidays, pupils can also hire guitars and keyboards for a refundable deposit of £20.

If students want to practise individually, or in groups, there are two practice rooms and a classroom available to them every day, with adult supervision.

Lunchtime and afterschool music clubs are free to join and last approximately half an hour. At present we offer:

- Keyboard Club - Monday lunchtime
- Ukulele Club - Tuesday lunchtime
- VocalZone - Tuesday afterschool 3-4pm
- Choir - Wednesday lunchtime

Every lunchtime and afterschool there is also space and help available for those students that want to form a band.

Clubs are available to all years with a cap of ten students in ukulele club. To join a club, students can just turn up on the day and there is no expectation to commit to every session, they are entirely voluntary.

For 2024 - 2025 there will be a fusion-style band, *Fusion Confusion*, for students who play any instrument, that would like to play in an ensemble. This will rehearse on Fridays after school for one hour. It will be free to join and will be open to all years - just bring your instrument.

Performances for all students taking part in music clubs will be available throughout the year.

Part C: Musical experiences

The Expressive Arts Department holds two showcases each year, one at Christmas, and one in Summer. Students from co-curricular music, drama and dance clubs, from all years, perform acts they have working on, and the three departments hold auditions for extra spaces in the shows for students who want to perform solo, duet, or ensemble pieces, they have practising outside of clubs or lessons.

In 2023 - 2024 academic year, a show, purely for musicians was introduced, with the view to this remaining an annual event, as the standard and number of students performing increases.

In 2024 - 2025 academic year, student form groups will be by year rather than vertical. At the end of each six-week term, in the celebration assemblies, students from each year will be asked to perform for their year group. At appropriate times during the term, classwork performances from music lessons, will be included to increase confidence and engagement with timetabled lessons. These will be inclusive of all abilities and cultures to ensure a wide range of musical experiences both for the audience and those performing. I would also like to introduce a termly singing assembly from Year 7.

Music Trips offered for 2024 - 2025 for students at Blackfen include "Sing at the Royal Opera House" (a vocal workshop open to choir members first), "Live at Lunch" (Free lunchtime recital at the Royal Opera House, open to years 8 and 9), *The Planets*, Holst, (LSO £4 per student open to all years). Pupil Premium students go free, or ticket prices are subsidised by the school. Other trips are to be confirmed.

In the future

The plan for 2024 – 2025 in music, is to offer more variety in instrumental lessons. As we grow as a department, over the next three years we want to develop our collaboration with Bexley Music Education Hub, for workshops, instrument hire, and outside ensemble opportunities, this will be something we need to buy into as a school.

We also have a partnership with Hurstmere Boys' School, and their music department, which we hope to nurture further through joint concerts, competitions, workshops, and instrumental music lessons offer.

There will also be music and music careers workshops, from published songwriter, David Simon, performer and songwriter, Laura Wolfe, and a vocal workshop from, graduate, performer, songwriter and BBC Gospel Choir member, "Ourra".

The number of students who are forming bands during 2023 - 2024 has increased and in 2026 during the summer term, we would like to run a *Battle of the Bands* Competition, inviting parents, with a view to competing against Hurstmere Boys' School in 2026 - 2027 academic year.

Further information and guidance

Many of our students have instrumental music lessons outside school through Bexley Music Education Hub. A link to what they have to offer including events, lessons, and ensembles, and more, can be found here: [Bexley Music Education Hub](#). They also offer an instrument loan facility at a cost of £90 per year.

Secondary Music National Curriculum at KS3 document can be found here: [Music KS3 National Curriculum](#).

The Department for Education publishes a [guide for parents and young people](#) on how they can get involved in music in and out of school, and where they can go to for support beyond the school.

Careers in music information from *Prospects Careers Advisory Service* can be found here: [Music Industry Careers Advice](#), and another useful website for careers within the music industry, not, just performing, here: [Music Careers List](#). Both websites offer fantastic sources of information for those students who are interested in working in the music industry.

If you would like any other information regarding the Music Department at Blackfen School for Girls, please do not hesitate to contact:

Sonia Linaker
Subject Leader for Music
Faculty Leader for Expressive Arts
sli@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk