Year 7

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| Term | Theme | What students will learn | Key assessment | How you can support your child |
| 1 | ‘Playing Together’ – Performing Skills 1 | Students will learn how to play together in time and in tune, They will be introduced to guitars, keyboards and drum patterns. | The group will perform songs as a class and will be assessed on the types of part they can play and how well they play within the group. | Listen to music that you and your child like and talk to them about what you like about it.  |
| 2 | Introduction to Keyboards | Students will be taught to play the keyboard using proper piano technique. They will learn how to practice and how to work independently. | Students will be assessed individually in an informal environment. If they would like to share their work with the class then this will be encouraged. | Talk to your child about what techniques they have used to practice and how this has helped them work independently. Encourage your child to come to the music department to practice the keyboards at break and lunchtimes. |
| 3 | ‘Composing Together’ – Composing Skills 1 | Students will learn how to compose as a class using notes based on simple scale through a classroom workshop. A beat and groove will be played and students will compose music to go over the top. They will make decisions together about how they want the music to sound and choose from different sounds. | Students will be assessed individually on the patterns they are able to composing and on the skills they show when reasoning and evaluating which sound works best.  | When you have music playing in the car or house, talk to your child about what sounds they like and why they think certain music sounds good.  |
| 4 | ‘The Orchestra’ – Performing Skills 2 | Students will learn the conventions of the symphony orchestra, including the instruments that make up the orchestra, the characteristics of each section of the orchestra and how to identify instruments aurally. They will learn how an orchestra works and the conventions that guide performers. | The group will perform a piece as a class and will be assessed on the types of part they can play and how well they play within the group. They will also do listening questions to assess their aural understanding. | Talk to your child about the instruments they have learnt about and how the orchestra works.  |
| 5 | Just Play 1 | Students will develop their ensemble skills playing together as a class using guitars, keyboards, drums and other instruments available. | The group will perform songs as a class and will be assessed on the level of difficulty of the parts they can play and how well they play in time and tune within the group.  | Talk to your child about what techniques they have used to help them play together. Encourage your child to come to the music department to practice using the instruments at break and lunchtimes. |
| 6 | Making a Band – Band Skills 1 | ‘Musical Futures’-based project introducing informal learning in music.Pupils are introduced to the way pop musicians learn through listening and copying. The class will put together their own cover songs in small groups and will be responsbile for their own learning.Resources that are given to support pupils include: original audio files and short, simple tracks including riffs, hooks etc. Simple notation is also provided. | Pupils will be monitored on their progress in different areas. They will be encouraged to reflect on: how to work in groups successfully, how to manage their time effectively and how to work through problems with a resilient attitude. | Listen to music together that you and/or your child like and talk to them about how they think a band works together. For examples, is one person in charge or do they take turns with different jobs? Is that the same for every band? |

Year 8

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| Term | Theme | What students will learn | Key assessment | How you can support your child |
| 1 | Blues - Improvising and Performing  | Students learn about the background to the Blues from a historical and cultural perspective. They also learn about the influence of Blues on popular music throughout the last century. They learn the features of the 12 bar blues, how to play it in a variety of ways and how to improvise using the Blues scale. | In small groups students will create their own versions of a Blues piece, including a melody, accompaniment and improvised sections. Some groups might include lyrics and a vocal line. Each student will be assessed on the difficulty level of what they play and their contribution to the group. | Talk to your child about what they have learnt about the Blues and how they think it has influenced the music they listen to today.  |
| 2 | Making a Band – Band Skills 2 | Musical Futures-based unit continuing to develop informal learning skills in music.Students revisit the ways pop musicians learn through listening and copying.Students are also introduced to careers in the music industry. | The groups will perform cover songs as and students will be assessed individually on the level of difficulty of the parts they can play and how well they play in time and tune within the group. | Listen to music together that you and/or your child like and talk to them about how they think a band works together. For examples, is one person in charge or do they take turns with different jobs? Is that the same for every band? |
| 3 | Music for Thriller and Horror | Students learn about the features of music for thriller and horror films, mainly in the effect of music in these film genres. They listen to, watch and play selected soundtracks and get inspiration for creating a soundtrack for a thriller film trailer. In small groups the students will compose soundtracks and record them. They will then evaluate how effective their soundtracks have been by watching them with the film clip. | Students will be assessed individually on the ideas they contribute to the composition, and on how effective it is overall.  | Talk to your child about music for films and how music links to the action. |
| 4 | African Drumming | Students learn about the main features of African Music and its backgrounds and origins. This includes the oral tradition and role of music in community. The focus is on African Drumming: how the music is learnt, and how performances are lead by the master drummer and often includes improvisation. | In small groups students will use African drum rhythms to create their own piece. Each student will be assessed on the difficulty level of what they play and their contribution to the group.  | Talk to your child about what they have learnt about African music and whether they think it has any links to the music they listen to today. |
| 5 | Just Play 2 | Students will develop their ensemble skills playing together as a class using guitars, keyboards, drums and other instruments available. | The group will perform songs as a class and will be assessed on the level of difficulty of the parts they can play and how well they play in time and tune within the group. | Talk to your child about what techniques they have used to help them play together. Encourage your child to come to the music department to practice using the instruments at break and lunchtimes. |
|  | In at the Deep End | Musical Futures-based unit developing informal learning even further. Students choose their own song in small groups of friends and create their own cover version. | The groups will perform cover songs as and students will be assessed individually on the level of difficulty of the parts they can play and how well they play in time and tune within the group. | Listen to music together that you and/or your child like and talk to them about how they think a band works together. Ask them how easy or difficult they find working as part of a band and why. |

Year 9

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| Term | Theme | What students will learn | Key assessment | How you can support your child |
| 1 | Pachelbel’s Dream – Remix and Arranging | Students learn about ground bass and how it is used to structure a piece of music. In whole class and small groups pupils use improvised and existing material to create a composition based on Pachelbel’s Canon. They also listen to and explore different songs which use the bass from Pachelbel’s Canon. | Each student will be assessed on the difficulty level of what they play and their contribution to the group composition. | Talk to your child about what they have learnt about remixes and what they think of the different styles of music they have heard. |
| 2 | Making a Band – Band Skills 3 | Musical Futures-based unit continuing to develop informal learning skills in music. Students revisit the ways pop musicians learn through listening and copying. | The groups will perform cover songs as and students will be assessed individually on the level of difficulty of the parts they can play and how well they play in time and tune within the group. | Listen to music together that you and/or your child like and talk to them about how confident they are about working on their cover songs now. |
| 3 | Music for Film (Spring 1 and 2) | Students learn about the features of film music for film and the way in which music can change to match or enhance the mood. This unit builds on their understanding from Year 8 and extends their understanding of memorable music in film, such as themes and leitmotif, and the way they can be manipulated to demonstrate change in the story or character. Pupils put this knowledge to use by composing the soundtrack to a cartoon. | Students will be assessed individually on the ideas they contribute to the composition, and on how effective it is overall.  | Talk to your child about music for your favourite films and how music links to the action.  |
| 4 | In at the Deep End | Musical Futures-based unit developing informal learning even further. Students choose their own song in small groups of friends and create their own cover version. | The groups will perform cover songs as and students will be assessed individually on the level of difficulty of the parts they can play and how well they play in time and tune within the group. | Listen to music together that you and/or your child like and talk to them about how they think a band works together. Ask them how easy or difficult they find working as part of a band and why. |
| 5 | Song Writing | Students use their prior knowledge of chords and structure, as well as their improvising experience to write their own song. They direct their learning, and choose whether to begin with music or lyrics. Some students may choose to use IT for this unit and write dance music. Pupils study copyright and how this affects both artists in the industry and their own consumption of music. | The group will compose songs individually, in pairs, or in small groups and will be assessed on how well their songs have an effective chord sequence, clear structure and effective melody. | Talk to your child about what features they have included in their own music from songs they listen to. |