

Subject Curriculum Intent: Music

Definition of Subject

'Music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we are from, everyone loves music.' Billy Joel

High quality music making stimulates personal, emotional and intellectual development. Given the right conditions, at Ark Blake we believe that every child can be a musician and that Ark Blake's Music provision can enable all young people to access high quality experiences that deliver life-enhancing benefits.

Students will get opportunities to engage with music from a breadth of traditions and cultures as performers, composers and critical listeners. This develops the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will equip them for a lifelong relationship with Music, enhancing their musical understanding, enjoyment and success. As pupils progress, they will develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon.

Nature of Subject

We aim to create the very best musicians. We challenge students to think, act and speak like those working in the field. We do this through quality first teaching which challenges our students to not only understand different styles and genres of music but requires them to explore, discuss and demonstrate this understanding in creative ways. Music is broken into three main components: Composition, Performance, Listening and Analysis. Pupils are challenged in all lessons to be able to demonstrate understanding and creativity through performance, composition, through collaboration with their peers and through evaluation of their own work. Pupils at Ark Blake will study music that encompasses a wide breadth of genres from Western Classical, World Music, Musical Theatre, Fusion, Music Technology and Popular Music from 1900's to the present day.

Knowledge in Music can be broadly separated into the following areas: knowledge of and the use of the Musical Elements, knowledge of melodic and harmonic composition and arrangements, knowledge of the use and development in Music Technology, knowledge of performance techniques required for each instrument learnt within the curriculum, knowledge of solo and ensemble performances, knowledge of the historical context of the genres studied and the development of musical features within those genres. Within these areas pupils will study specific pieces of music looking closely into the critical analysis of how the piece was composed and performed within its historical and cultural context. By developing an understanding of the context pupils will be able to immerse themselves within the performances of the music and gain a great understanding of the intentions of the composer or artist.

Pupils will develop a variety of skills which are both Music specific and also support the growth of a young person working in a social environment. The Music skills range from being able to compose music in a number of genres and on different mediums, performing music and learning specific techniques for different instruments, pupils will learn the art of practice which in turn will support their own personal resilience and growth mindset. Singing will take a prominent role in most lessons

and pupils at Ark Blake will become confident in understanding how to use their voice musically. As Music lends itself to being a social subject, students will develop their teamwork skills in ensemble performing, problem solving and communicating effectively with one another to grow as musicians. Pupils will also develop their critical listening skills by gaining an understanding on how the music was constructed, how it fits into its historical and social context which in turn will broaden pupil's horizons and enable them deepen their understanding of why is so important in every community and culture.

Threshold Concepts in Music

Performing: Understand how notation works across a number of genres and traditions. Be able to apply the understanding of notation score to several instruments. Understand the importance of music being performed live.

Composing: Be able to apply knowledge of musical elements when creating music. Understand key features used in different music, and why they are used, and be able to apply these to compositions.

Listening and Appraising: Understand the terminology associated with musical elements and be able to apply these when describing a range of music. Be able to compare and evaluate music against certain criteria

Purpose of Subject

The purpose of Music as a subject at Ark Blake is multi-faceted. Nearly everyone enjoys music, whether by listening to it, singing, or playing an instrument. Music builds imagination and intellectual curiosity. Introducing music in primary school and continuing with it at secondary school can help foster a positive attitude toward learning and curiosity. Artistic education develops the whole brain and develops a child's imagination. With encouragement from teachers and parents, students playing a musical instrument can build pride and develop their confidence. Music is a community within itself and many pupils find comfort and excitement knowing that they belong and can thrive in an environment that supports their creativity.

Not only will music education allow children to develop their musical skills, it will also give them the opportunity to work on their math skills, reading and writing skills, science skills, and history knowledge. For example, time signatures in music are an excellent way to incorporate fractions, and lyric analysis and song writing will allow students to work on their reading abilities.

Additionally, developing an understanding about how instruments work will involve information on the physics of sound, and learning about music's place in society will shine a light on important historical events. When pupils finish studying Music at Ark Blake Academy they will take with them a wealth of transferable musical and social skills, musical experiences from the classroom, school concerts and school music trips which will bring a great sense of achievement and often instigate lifelong friendships.

Design of Subject

Ark Blake students will engage with Music both practically and theoretically, developing a range of musical skills, knowledge and techniques that will prepare students for KS4 and beyond and will also develop valuable skills to support them in all other curriculum areas. Students are taught practical performance and composition skills, music theory and listening and analysis of music from great composers. Ark has an extensive KS2 Music programme which develops pupils use of their voice. Pupils should be taught to sing and play musically with increasing confidence and control. They should develop an understanding of musical composition, organising and manipulating ideas within musical structures and reproducing sounds from aural memory.

In KS3 the three components composition, performance and listening and analyses are developed even further. As pupils engage in these components throughout KS3 they start to master compositional techniques from rhythmical to melodic improvisation in topics such as West African Drumming to Blues and Jazz, theme and variation in Western Classical Music, structure development in song writing and engaging with Music Technology whilst learning how to record their compositions, edit and arrange them. Performance is incorporated into all of the units of work. Pupils get the opportunity to learn, practice and perform music on guitars, keyboards, samba and djembes and vocal work. Pupils will engage in independent tasks that will hone these technical skills along with develop their ensemble performance skills in small groups and as a whole class. Listening and analysis takes on a basic format of identifying instruments, musical elements and musical features. This is then developed further to support and challenge pupils in being able to write extended answers allowing them to be critical consumers of music. By being able to listen to music critically, pupils will gain insights into how they can improve their compositional and performance skills in many genres studied.

In KS4 the three components are still the foundations of the GCSE course. In the performance component pupils should be given the opportunity to rehearse and refine performances on their chosen instrument. In the compositional module, pupils will be encouraged to explore a range of compositional starting points and investigate a range of elements, techniques and resources for developing and manipulating ideas to finally, turning them into completed pieces of music. The listening and analyses component gives students the opportunity to reflect on, analyse and evaluate music in aural and/or written form. To achieve these objectives students need to use their knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical contexts and musical language to make critical judgements about the repertoire and context of music within the areas of study. Homework at Ark Blake will always offer an element of practise. Pupils will receive weekly/fortnightly homework based on the skills and knowledge they have been working on to imbed prior knowledge and demonstrate their grasp of the material being studied in class.

Extension of Subject

Our curriculum at Ark Blake Academy goes far beyond what is taught in lessons, for whilst we want students to achieve the very best examination results possible, we believe our curriculum goes beyond what is examinable. As a department we offer a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for those students who want to develop their musical skills and abilities beyond a classroom curriculum. Individual instrumental lessons are available to all students throughout the school. We also have a vibrant collection of musical ensembles which we believe offer opportunities to a wide range of students, allowing them to collaborate with other musicians and thus develop their performance skills, understanding and love of the subject. Where possible and appropriate



we endeavour to expose our students to live music including visits to the theatre and to concerts. All students involved in music at Ark Blake Academy are given regular opportunities to perform in front of others both as individuals and with the various groups. This builds on their performance skills and also helps to develop their confidence and understanding as musicians.