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# OUR CURRICULUM



M U S I C

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PHILOSOPHY & NARRATIVE



*Music gives a soul to the  
universe, wings to the mind,  
flight to the imagination and  
life to everything.*

*Plato*

# OUR PHILOSOPHY

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Music has been at the heart of human existence and has been a feature of every known human society since the beginning of time.

It is intrinsic to our lives: often defining moments and framing emotions. It provides us with entertainment and a means of escape; is an antidote to stress and a language for personal and collective expression.

The curriculum at Turton provides a foundation to understand and navigate this essential aural experience.

As composers, performers and listeners we discover the place of music in history, culture, time and place so that we can truly appreciate the significance of music in our lives and develop the knowledge and skills that allow us to take part on all three levels.

It is through our study of the six principal ingredients of music and their means of interaction that we learn to distinguish between different genres and through our own performing and composing that we gain a deeper understanding.

# KEY STAGE THREE

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## Year 7

In year 7 students explore the fundamental building blocks of music - tempo, dynamics, rhythm, pitch, timbre and texture. These principal ingredients are first defined and explained through the use of clear listening examples taken from a wide range of genres. Short composition and performance tasks allow the students to demonstrate their understanding of these musical elements. They explore the nature of each of the building blocks and practise identifying changes and differences in their usage.

An introduction to traditional music notation forms a crucial part of the course in year 7 where students explore how music is communicated through the standard western notational system. This system presents them with a method of understanding and expressing rhythm and pitch. They learn to read and employ four principal note lengths and how to apply these within three main time signatures. Pitch on the treble clef is taught including basic ledger lines so that pupils are able to decipher simple melodic material. Clapping rhythms and simple melodic pitch work on the keyboard provide basic performance and composition opportunities to enhance and demonstrate understanding.

Timbre is explored in year 7 through study of the main orchestral instruments. Students look at how their size, fabric, construction and method of sound generation produce the resulting pitch and timbre for each instrument.

Our journey through musical history starts with the exploration of Renaissance, Baroque and Classical periods. Students take examples by Byrd, Bach, Mozart and Beethoven to illustrate how the musical building blocks compare in each period. They start to develop a feel for the unique features of each era and how they have influenced life and culture. Pupils learn how musical periods influence one another and discover how various significant events in musical history changed the way music sounds, is composed and performed.

## Year 8

Year 8 work builds on the students' understanding of the principal ingredients of musical language by adding more depth and including more practical experiences which reinforce learning through practical application. A film music module allows more detailed exploration of dynamics and tempo in context and Italian terminology facilitates the accurate description of these aspects. Creative composition work involving scoring keyboard tracks to short film clips help

# KEY STAGE THREE

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students explore the relationship between rhythm, pitch and timbre and how these can be employed and manipulated to create desired effects and styles.

Our journey through musical history continues with the Romantic and C20th periods, where all listening material is chosen to help explain how the principal musical ingredients are employed in different ways to attain a particular style or sound. Tchaikovsky and Bernard Herrmann provide two of the principal study figures and we finish our journey with blues, jazz and film music, giving students a solid overview of their musical heritage.

A module on Blues music provides the opportunity to expand their knowledge of pitch to involve pitch combinations working both vertically and horizontally resulting in harmony and melody. Chord shapes and patterns are explored; melody lines, riffs and improvisation. Students are now able to perform longer melodic lines, create simple harmonies and melodies themselves and analyse these features during study.

## Year 9

Students are now encouraged to use their individual instrumental specialism as a more intrinsic part of lessons. Our study of rhythm and pitch now puts more emphasis on how these elements are expressed in notated form - both in terms of traditional notation and various forms of tablature. Practical experience reading and performing music in these different notations ensures a deeper understanding of instruments such as keyboard, guitar and drums, as well as all instruments that employ traditional notation.

We re-visit the five musical periods of history studied in year 7 and 8 and add further depth, ensuring that the principal styles and main stylistic features found in our Western Classical canon are securely understood. Score reading is introduced so that musical examples from the periods can include a more detailed visual analysis of work of the great composers. A greater range of music software is employed with increased focus on individual composition and performance work where material is revisited more frequently and there is more time dedicated to the improvement and revision of initial ideas.

There is an increasing emphasis on personal aural skills. Students learn to dictate basic rhythms and melodies by ear, with technical work on chords and chord patterns, providing a useful tool to facilitate more detailed compositions.

# KEY STAGE FOUR

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Listening to specific set works such as Haydn's Symphony No. 101 and songs from The Beatles' 'Sergeant Pepper' album are central to the students' understanding of how particular styles are created.

Stylistic studies are divided into early and late Western Classical styles building on previous studies and new modules on folk music and popular music. By the end of the course they will be fluent in the use of subject specific terminology and able to identify music of a variety of different styles and provide supporting evidence for features of each.

Work on composition provides opportunities for students to apply what they have learnt from the study of exemplar material and the music of famous composers to their own creative work.

The fundamental building blocks of music are fully explored and appropriately applied to their own composition work, expressed through the confident and detailed use of standard notation.

Students will have developed their performance skills enabling them to communicate pieces of music, ensuring they give the performance a real sense of direction and an understanding of appropriate stylistic traits.

# KEY STAGE FIVE

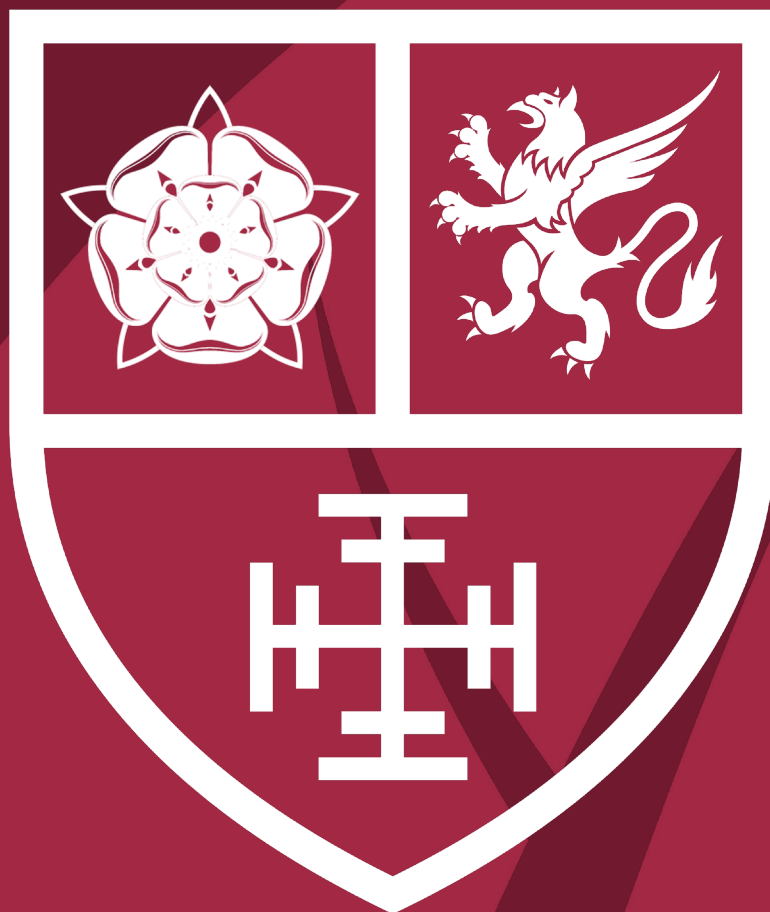
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A level music requires the students to delve further into analytical consideration of exactly how the principal ingredients of musical composition are employed by different composers throughout history to attain sounds and styles that become specific to individuals.

Advanced listening skills become intrinsic to all aspects of the course as students develop the ability to listen to and analyse fine detail quickly and accurately. This analytical material then needs to be described in a detailed but concise manner through extended written work and essays.

Composition work requires extreme technical proficiency, underpinned by a secure understanding of historical styles whether they be directly referenced or implied. Works need to have artistic integrity and a real sense of completeness. Students develop a command of the full range of musical ingredients in order to discover a personal style.

Performance work involves preparing for a solo or ensemble recital that demonstrates personal mastery of the student's specialist instrument. Delivery is fluent, stylistically accurate and engaging and so performance work during this course focuses as much on live delivery as it does on advances in technical ability.



BUILDING ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAST  
TO HELP THE CHILDREN OF TODAY  
MEET THE CHALLENGES OF TOMORROW