



🎵 STRAND 1: PERFORMANCE

KEY STAGE 3

CURRICULUM PLAN (2025-2026)

STRAND 2: COMPOSITION



STRAND 3: LISTENING AND APPRAISING

YEAR 7

	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6
CONTENT FOCUS	<p>'I'VE GOT RHYTHM!' A strong sense of pulse is essential for all musical activity and must be introduced early and reinforced throughout Key Stage 3. This unit develops students' understanding through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Practical activities: pulse games, rhythmic patterns, ostinati, cyclic and polyrhythms. 🎵 Listening and composing: students create and perform rhythm pieces in groups or as a class. 🎵 Notation skills: introduction to rhythm grids and standard rhythmic 	<p>'SONORITY CITY' This unit develops students' understanding of orchestral instruments, their families, and the concept of timbre and sonority. Pupils explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Instrument construction, sound production, and characteristic timbres. 🎵 The layout and grouping of a modern symphony orchestra. 🎵 One orchestral family per lesson, with a focus on identifying and describing sonorities. 	<p>'KEYBOARD SKILLS (TREBLE)' This unit introduces and develops students' keyboard technique while reinforcing their understanding of treble clef notation. Pupils learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Identify and read notes on the treble clef staff, including middle C and notes up to high C. 🎵 Perform simple melodies using correct fingering, hand position, and posture. 🎵 Understand and apply note values (semibreve to quavers) and basic rhythms in performance. 🎵 Play short pieces using both hands, where appropriate, to build coordination and fluency. 🎵 Develop aural skills by listening to 	<p>'KEYBOARD SKILLS (BASS)' This unit builds students' confidence and fluency in keyboard playing, with a focus on reading and performing music in the bass clef. Pupils learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Identify and read notes on the bass clef staff, including low C to middle C. 🎵 Perform simple left-hand melodies and bass lines, using correct fingering and hand position. 🎵 Understand the role of the bass clef in harmony and accompaniment, especially in two-handed playing. 🎵 Reinforce rhythmic understanding through note values and timing accuracy. 🎵 Explore musical texture by 	<p>'KEYBOARD SKILLS (TREBLE & BASS)' This unit develops students' ability to play with both hands simultaneously, reading from the treble and bass clefs. Pupils build on their previous knowledge to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Read and perform music using grand staff notation, coordinating left and right hands. 🎵 Understand the relationship between melody (right hand) and accompaniment or bass line (left hand). 🎵 Play simple two-handed pieces with attention to timing, dynamics, and articulation. 🎵 Develop hand independence, finger strength, and fluency. 🎵 Explore chord shapes and broken chord patterns in the left hand to support melodic lines. 🎵 Begin to interpret musical expression and structure in performance. 	<p>'SAHARAN SOUNDS' This unit explores the key rhythmic features and traditions of West African drumming. Pupils learn about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Performance techniques and how they affect timbre and sonority. 🎵 Creating and performing cyclic rhythms and combining them into polyrhythmic textures. 🎵 The use of syncopation and its offbeat feel. 🎵 Call and response structures and the role of the Master Drummer. 🎵 African instruments and their unique sonorities. <p>Pupils compose, improvise, and perform their own African-inspired rhythm</p>

	<p>notation (semibreve to quavers).</p> <p>♪ Musical concepts: accents, time signatures (2/4, 3/4, 4/4), bar lines, and conducting patterns.</p> <p>♪ Genre links: exploration of the march (2/4) and waltz (3/4) to contextualise pulse patterns.</p>	<p>Optional lessons allow deeper exploration of fanfares and the harmonic series, particularly within the brass and percussion sections. Where possible, students perform on real orchestral instruments as a “class orchestra.” If resources are limited, keyboard voices or students’ own instruments can be used to simulate orchestral sounds.</p>	<p>and copying short melodic patterns.</p> <p>♪ Begin to understand musical structure, such as phrases and repeated sections.</p> <p>The unit supports independent learning, encourages accuracy and expression, and lays the groundwork for future performance and composition tasks at GCSE level.</p>	<p>combining bass clef parts with treble clef melodies.</p> <p>♪ Begin to understand chordal structure and how bass notes support harmony.</p> <p>This unit supports notation reading, technical development, and prepares students for more advanced performance and composition tasks at GCSE level.</p>	<p>This unit strengthens notation reading, technical control, and musical expression, laying a solid foundation for GCSE performance and composition work.</p>	<p>pieces, revisiting and extending their knowledge of rhythm notation, including dotted and tied notes.</p>
<p>NOTES</p>	<p>♪</p>					
<p>ASSESSMENT METHOD</p>						

	TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3
CONTENT FOCUS	<p>JAZZ & BLUES</p> <p>This unit introduces students to the key features of Jazz and Blues through listening, performing, and composing. Pupils explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ The 12-bar blues structure, walking basslines, and blues chord progressions. ♪ Key stylistic elements such as swing rhythms, improvisation, and blue notes. ♪ The historical and cultural context of Jazz and Blues music. ♪ Performance skills through solo and group work, including instrumental and vocal parts. ♪ Improvisation techniques using the blues scale. ♪ Listening and analysis of key Jazz and Blues pieces to identify musical features. ♪ Composition tasks that apply learned techniques in a creative context. <p>This unit supports the development of musical expression, ensemble skills, and confidence in improvisation, all of which are valuable for GCSE Music.</p>	<p>OFFBEAT: REGGAE</p> <p>This unit introduces students to the key features of Reggae music through listening, performance, and composition. Pupils explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ The origins and cultural context of Reggae, including its roots in Jamaica and its role in social and political expression. ♪ Key musical features such as offbeat rhythms, syncopation, bass-driven grooves, and simple chord progressions. ♪ Instrumental and vocal performance skills through learning and performing Bob Marley's <i>Three Little Birds</i>. ♪ Listening and analysis of Reggae songs to identify stylistic elements and instrumentation. ♪ Composition tasks that apply Reggae techniques, including rhythm, harmony, and structure. <p>This unit supports the development of ensemble performance, rhythmic accuracy, and creative composition, while deepening students' understanding of music as a form of cultural identity and expression.</p>	<p>"GLOBAL GROOVES & MODERN MOVES"</p> <p>This engaging half-term unit introduces students to a variety of global and contemporary musical styles, combining listening, performance, and composition activities. Pupils explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ Samba: Performing energetic Brazilian rhythms using percussion instruments, focusing on polyrhythms and ensemble coordination. ♪ Video Game Music: Analysing and creating music that enhances gameplay, exploring mood, atmosphere, and digital composition techniques. ♪ Musicals: Performing and understanding songs from musical theatre, with a focus on character, storytelling, and dramatic expression. ♪ Folk & Sea Shanties: Exploring traditional music and its cultural roots through group singing and rhythmic accompaniment. ♪ Ukulele Skills: Learning chords, strumming patterns, and song accompaniment to build confidence in solo and group performance. ♪ Film Music: Listening to and composing music that supports visual storytelling, using leitmotifs, dynamics, and texture to create mood. <p>This unit develops students' practical skills, musical understanding, and cultural awareness, while laying strong foundations for future performance and composition work at GCSE level.</p>

NOTES	<p style="text-align: center;">🎵 NOTES</p> <p>🎵 Summer term SOL designed to be engaging and keep interest high despite options for GCSE having been picked.</p>					
ASSESSMENT METHOD						



KEY STAGE 3

CURRICULUM PLAN (2025-2027)



NOTES ON EXAM BOARD/GCSE LINKS:

🎵 YEAR 7

👂 Rhythm and Pulse

- GCSE Link:
 - 🎵 All Areas of Study (especially AoS3: Music for Ensemble and AoS4: Popular Music)

Relevance:

- 🎵 Develops understanding of beat, tempo, time signatures, and rhythmic notation.
- 🎵 Prepares students for rhythmic dictation and analysis in listening exams.
- 🎵 Supports composition and performance with accurate timing and rhythmic structure.

👂 Sonority City (Instruments and Sonority)

- GCSE Link:
 - 🎵 AoS1: Musical Forms and Devices
 - 🎵 AoS3: Music for Ensemble
- Relevance:
 - 🎵 Introduces timbre, instrumental families, and how sound is produced.
 - 🎵 Builds vocabulary for describing sonority and texture in listening questions.
 - 🎵 Supports understanding of orchestration and instrumental roles in composition.





🎹 Keyboard Skills

- GCSE Link:
 - 🎵 Component 1: Performance
 - 🎵 Component 2: Composition
- Relevance:
 - 🎵 Develops practical skills in melody, harmony, and chord progressions.
 - 🎵 Provides a foundation for composing and performing confidently.
 - 🎵 Reinforces understanding of pitch, scales, and musical structure.

African Drumming

- **GCSE Link:**
 - 🎵 AoS3: Music for Ensemble
 - 🎵 AoS4: Popular Music
- **Relevance:**
 - 🎵 Explores polyrhythms, call and response, and cyclic patterns.
 - 🎵 Enhances ensemble performance and listening skills.
 - 🎵 Introduces world music traditions and cultural context, useful for appraising unfamiliar music.

Links to Eduqas GCSE Music (Year 7 Topics)

Topic	GCSE Area of Study / Component	Skills & Knowledge Developed
 Rhythm and Pulse	All Areas of Study (esp. AoS3: Music for Ensemble, AoS4: Popular Music)	Develops understanding of beat, tempo, time signatures, and rhythmic notation. Prepares for rhythmic dictation and supports accurate performance.
 Sonority City	AoS1: Musical Forms and Devices AoS3: Music for Ensemble	Introduces timbre and instrumental families. Builds vocabulary for describing sonority and texture. Supports orchestration and composition understanding.
 Keyboard Skills	Component 1: Performance Component 2: Composition	Develops melody, harmony, and chord progression skills. Reinforces pitch, scales, and structure. Builds confidence in solo performance and composition.
 African Drumming	AoS3: Music for Ensemble AoS4: Popular Music	Explores polyrhythms, call and response, and cyclic patterns. Enhances ensemble skills and introduces world music traditions for listening and appraising.

YEAR 8

Jazz and Blues

- **GCSE Link:**
 - Area of Study 4: Popular Music
 - Area of Study 3: Music for Ensemble
- **Relevance:**
 - Introduces 12-bar blues, improvisation, swing rhythms, and expressive performance.
 - Develops understanding of musical roots in African American history and influence on later genres.
 - Supports listening and appraising skills through analysis of structure and harmony.

Reggae

- **GCSE Link:**
 - Area of Study 4: Popular Music
- **Relevance:**
 - Teaches offbeat rhythms, syncopation, and bass-driven textures.
 - Encourages discussion of music as a form of social and political expression.
 - Builds rhythmic awareness and ensemble performance skills.

Samba

- **GCSE Link:**
 - Area of Study 3: Music for Ensemble
 - Area of Study 4: Popular Music
- **Relevance:**
 - Explores polyrhythms, call and response, and cyclic patterns.
 - Enhances ensemble coordination and understanding of world music traditions.
 - Prepares students for rhythmic dictation and texture analysis.

Video Game Music

- **GCSE Link:**

- Area of Study 2: Music for Stage and Screen
- Relevance:
 - Develops understanding of leitmotifs, mood, and atmosphere.
 - Encourages use of music technology and digital composition tools.
 - Supports analysis of how music enhances narrative and gameplay.

Musicals

- GCSE Link:
 - Area of Study 2: Music for Stage and Screen
- Relevance:
 - Introduces character themes, reprises, and dramatic structure.
 - Builds vocal performance and ensemble singing skills.
 - Encourages analysis of lyrics, mood, and storytelling through music.

Folk Music

- GCSE Link:
 - Area of Study 3: Music for Ensemble
 - Area of Study 4: Popular Music
- Relevance:
 - Explores traditional melodies, modes, and cultural storytelling.
 - Encourages ensemble playing and listening skills.
 - Provides historical and cultural context for musical development.

Ukulele Skills

- GCSE Link:
 - Component 1: Performance
 - Component 2: Composition
- Relevance:
 - Develops chord progressions, strumming patterns, and accompaniment.
 - Supports solo and ensemble performance confidence.
 - Provides a practical foundation for composing with harmony and structure.

Film Music

- GCSE Link:
 - Area of Study 2: Music for Stage and Screen

Relevance:

- Develops understanding of leitmotifs, underscoring, and musical storytelling.
- Encourages analysis of how musical elements (tempo, dynamics, instrumentation) create mood and atmosphere.
- Supports listening and appraising skills through comparison of film cues and use of musical vocabulary.
- Prepares students for 8-mark evaluative questions in the listening paper.

Links to Eduqas GCSE Music (Year 8 Topics)

Topic	GCSE Area of Study / Component	Skills & Knowledge Developed
Jazz & Blues	AoS4: Popular Music AoS3: Music for Ensemble	Improvisation, 12-bar blues, swing rhythms, historical context, expressive performance
Reggae	AoS4: Popular Music	Offbeat rhythms, basslines, social/political themes, cultural identity
Samba	AoS3: Music for Ensemble AoS4: Popular Music	Polyrhythms, syncopation, texture, ensemble performance, cultural context
Video Game Music	AoS2: Music for Stage and Screen	Leitmotif, mood, structure, music technology, composing for narrative
Musicals	AoS2: Music for Stage and Screen	Character themes, vocal performance, dramatic context, structure
Folk Music	AoS3: Music for Ensemble AoS4: Popular Music	Modal melodies, storytelling, traditional forms, cultural context
Ukulele Skills	Component 1: Performance Component 2: Composition	Chord progressions, accompaniment, harmony, solo/ensemble performance

CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS IN MUSIC

Year 7

Topics: Rhythm and Pulse, Sonority and Instruments of the Orchestra, Keyboard Skills, African Drumming

- ✓ **Maths:**
 - ♪ Rhythm and pulse involve counting beats, time signatures, and patterns—great for reinforcing fractions and division.
- ✓ **Science:**
 - ♪ Sonority and instruments link to sound waves, vibration, pitch, and materials (physics).
- ✓ **Geography:**
 - ♪ African drumming introduces cultural and regional studies of Africa.
- ✓ **History:**
 - ♪ Instruments of the orchestra can include historical development of Western classical music.
- ✓ **PE:**
 - ♪ African drumming includes physical coordination and ensemble work, similar to team sports.

Year 8

Topics: Blues and Jazz, Reggae, Samba, Video Game Music, Folk Music, Ukulele Skills

- ✓ **History:**
 - ♪ Blues and jazz connect to African American history, slavery, and civil rights.
 - ♪ Reggae links to Jamaican history and post-colonial identity.
 - ♪ Folk music can explore British and European cultural heritage.
- ✓ **Geography:**
 - ♪ Samba (Brazil), reggae (Jamaica), and folk music (various regions) offer global cultural insights.
- ✓ **ICT/Computing:**
 - ♪ Video game music introduces digital composition, sound design, and music technology.
- ✓ **English:**
 - ♪ Lyric analysis in blues, reggae, and folk can support poetry and narrative themes.
- ✓ **PSHE/Citizenship:**
 - ♪ Reggae and blues often address social justice, identity, and resilience.

ORACY

Key Stage 3 (Ages 11–14)

1. Group Work and Rehearsals

- Collaborative Dialogue: Students negotiate roles, solve problems, and reflect on performances.
- Leadership and Direction: Pupils may lead warm-ups or conduct small groups, developing clear and confident speech.

2. Musical Analysis

- Structured Discussion: Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary to analyse music in more depth.
- Debate and Critique: They engage in discussions about genres, composers, and performance quality.

3. Presentation and Performance

- Introducing Pieces: Students may present their compositions or performances to the class, explaining context and intent.
- Verbal Feedback: Giving and receiving peer feedback builds confidence and critical thinking.

Cross-Curricular Oracy Skills

- Drama and English Links: Music often overlaps with drama and English, reinforcing storytelling, tone, and expression.
- Cultural Context: Discussing the origins and meanings of music from different cultures enhances both oracy and cultural literacy.