

<b>YEAR 9</b>	
<b>Why now?</b>  As students come from different feeder schools with different specialist input we need to find their starting points, strengths and weaknesses. It allows us to tailor the teaching to each class, and find out more about each individual.	<b>Year 9 Autumn half term 1 - <i>Stand By Me</i> keyboard learning, with options on group work</b>  Through this topic we explore pitch notation in treble and bass clef. We also reinforce the simple but hugely important knowledge of piano keyboards. Those two skills are often passed over in primary and middle schools, and even where delivered well there is a need to constantly drip feed these vital contributions to independent learning. Students then apply those skills to learning the bass line and chords to this well-known song, using listening skills to identify features. Students are assessed not only on notation and keyboard awareness but also on performance of individual parts on the keyboard. Where students make very good progress, we introduce the idea of working together in small groups to perform the melody and drum parts too, though this is an extension task and depends on individual skills shown and developed throughout the unit. Guitars are also introduced, as we learn the bass line on the guitar as well.
<b>Why now?</b> Upcoming ensemble work will require a full pop group—all students will learn the basics of all roles. Often students will excel at one branch of music making and many of our students are keen to move on from keyboard tasks, despite the very great benefits of those skills. Many students enjoy being strong performers once the burden of pitch and fine motor controls are removed.	<b>Year 9 Autumn half term 2 - African Drumming – classwork and group work</b>  Rhythm in performance and notation is the main focus. Practical work is done on djembes and hand held percussion both in class work and in group work.  We will still have top up information on pitch, but we are focused on understanding rhythm as a player and composer.  Students combine working on rhythm notation – including rests with practical drumming group work. Assessments include reading notation, writing notation from demonstrations and practical performance assessments.  Group work starts with taught rhythms on drums, combining simple rhythms to create complex textures. The structure of the taught piece then demonstrates how to control use of compositional devices into a longer piece, including call and response. Students then work on performance skills to play the piece together – a high order skill. Students move on to creating their own patterns to the same structure.
<b>Why now?</b>	<b>Spring half term 1 - Guitar unit <i>Green Onions</i> and <i>Wild Thing</i></b>

<p>Staying with the idea of notation development and independent learning students learn how to interpret tablature and apply that specific form of notation to the guitar fretboard.</p> <p>This of course helps to build towards pop group ensemble instrumental skills to facilitate group work later in the course.</p>	<p>Identification of guitar strings and the techniques of strumming patterns, chord shapes, finger picking are the specific skills. We use Wild Thing to develop chord playing and strumming, and Green Onions to work on finger picking.</p> <p>Students will learn harmony parts that work together – building on ensemble work from the drumming unit.</p> <p>They will develop finger control moving between chords, and in isolating single notes in the finger picking.</p> <p>As with Stand By Me, starting with the bass line is more straight forward, and provides a secure rhythm to add other parts to.</p> <p>The melody line explores the higher end of the fretboard, and requires stronger tablature knowledge to find the notes and cross between the strings.</p>
<p><b>Why now?</b></p> <p>Students have now explored drumming, guitar and keyboards and are ready to try mixed instrument groups.</p>	<p><b>Spring half term 2 – Cover song</b></p> <p>Students will select their own groups in a controlled atmosphere that rewards sensible choices made throughout the course – friendship groups are often the best choices for making music together in small units (especially when choosing favourite styles of music), but of course there are caveats and restrictions to manage those choices.</p> <p>The focus is to pick a song and self-teach various components from that song to prepare for a performance. Students have strong advice about how to select appropriate songs, looking at levels of difficulty compared to their ability on instruments.</p> <p>Notably songs with a limited range of chords is helpful unless one or two members of the group have a lot of previous experience.</p> <p>Easier songs may also have more repetitive sections, or narrower range melodies.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to find their own resources, such as sheet music, tab sheets, video tutorials on youtube etc.</p> <p>Progress is monitored and learning is supported by the teacher, and students are also able to use practice rooms both during the lesson and at other free times.</p> <p>Of course, practice room use is a privilege that needs to be earned by appropriate behaviour and careful use of equipment – so this is carefully monitored.</p>
<p><b>Why now?</b></p> <p>Having built some good skills on instruments, and often having found a group of like-minded musicians to work with (though groups can obviously be changed between units), this is now a good time to explore the 3<sup>rd</sup> element of music – composition. Composition requires some control of instruments – which is where we have been</p>	<p><b>Summer half term 1 – Song writing</b></p> <p>Students work in groups to explore lyric writing, chord choice and decisions about structure.</p> <p>Their own pieces will most likely reflect the music they listen to, but also will centre around their specific instrumental skills.</p> <p>The half term builds on the cover song experience, and communication skills to compose a song, and then practice that song to work towards a performance.</p> <p>Instrument choices will be free, and that is a decision that students will make based on preference, skill, and the requirements of the style of song.</p> <p>There will be stumbling blocks, and sometimes the compositions will end up completely different from the original intention as the pressing needs of time management also become part of the skill set.</p>

focusing, and some understanding of musical devices and choices. This is the culmination of KS3 music making.

Importantly, students should be aware that with both the cover song unit, and the song writing unit, that theoretical learning is still embedded in lessons. Teaching new concepts will still take place, listening skills will be a focus, along with new appropriate terminology to describe music in regards to harmony, melody, rhythm, texture and structure. The main assessments are the practical performances, but there will also be ongoing assessments on pitch and rhythm notation as well as chord construction.