

## MUSIC

Music makes an enormous contribution to the holistic development and wellbeing of our students. The department offers a wide range of co-curricular musical activities for every level of ability in a variety of performance styles, aiming to develop each student's musicality and love of the subject.

In Key Stage 3, our students have the opportunity to develop their performing, composing and appraising skills via a curriculum which embraces a wide range of music throughout the course of history. Students develop the ability to evaluate and form aesthetic judgments, enhance numeracy through rhythm and analysis and literacy through a focus on written music, including its history, language and development. Music enhances our students' attention to detail and develops confidence through performing their work in public. The subject encourages students to collaborate and to think laterally and creatively; all vital to their holistic development, wellbeing and future careers.

We have an outstanding record at GCSE and A-Level. The KS4 and KS5 curricula have a strong practical focus and with 60% being weighted towards coursework, there is the opportunity for keen composers and performers to shine. The academic assessments at both levels encourage an in-depth study of a wide variety of musical styles and genres, from Bach concertos to contemporary works by living composers. Music qualifications are very highly regarded by universities and many of our recent Sixth Form Music students have gone on to obtain choral or instrumental scholarships. Music A-Level works well alongside a broad combination of A-Levels; many of our Sixth Form Music students have subsequently studied Music, Medicine, Chemistry, Law, English and History at Oxbridge and leading Russell Group universities.

### Music department development plan summary: Watford Grammar School for Girls

#### Overview

Academic year that this summary covers	2024 - 2025
Date this summary was published	1st September 2024
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music	Judith Bridges
Name of school leadership team member with responsibility for music	Chris Wilshaw
Name of local music hub	Hertfordshire Music Service

#### Part A: Curriculum Music

At Watford Grammar School for Girls [WGGGS] all academic lessons are one hour in duration. All students at KS3 receive one hour per week of curriculum music. As well as frequent class singing opportunities, our students have access to a range of instruments including keyboards, piano, ukulele, bass, acoustic and electric guitar, drum kit and percussions instruments for whole-class music making. Also, many students learn an instrument both in and out of school time. Lessons are provided by a team of visiting peripatetic music teachers across a broad spectrum which includes voice, band and orchestral instruments. Students enter for external exams through ABRSM, Trinity and Rock School and we organise the administration of those.

We make performance a key attribute in many of our lessons across KS3-5. Many students in Year 7 perform in Junior Choir (from memory) and Junior Orchestra and some perform in Glee Club through audition which is run by our upper 6th students.

All modules we teach have a performance element, as well as developing the key skills of analysis and composition. We have a suite of Mac computers running Sibelius, GarageBand, Logic and Bandlab.

Our schemes of work follow the outlines of the model music curriculum in terms of key musical skills and experiences. We follow the Edexcel GCSE and A Level specification.

To summarise, our KS3 curriculum is as follows:

Year 7 – singing, elements of music with focus on rhythm and pitch, orchestra, keyboard skills, ukulele,

Year 8 – Blues, Lady Marion, Dance Music, Broken Strings, Minor Moods, Riffs and Ostinato.

Year 9 – Pachelbel Canon, Stand By Me, Melody writing, Samba, Chords and Melody, Film Music

The allocation of class time at KS4/5 is as follows:

KS4 – two hours a week for composition, performance practice and analysis.

Assessment of the three modules is divided up as follows:

30% performance, 30% composition, 40% analysis.

Solo performances are completed in October of year 11 and ensemble performances are completed in January of year 11.

Compositions are completed by April of year 11.

Performance and composition coursework are marked internally and moderated externally. The analysis paper is assessed in June.

KS5 - five hours a week for composition, performance practice and analysis.

Assessment of the three modules is divided up as follows: 30% performance, 30% composition, 40% analysis. Composition and performance coursework is marked externally. The analysis paper is assessed in June.

WGGS has a number of students who require additional SEND/EAL/PP provision. This is assessed on a case by case basis, with the needs of every such student individually considered. Adaptations include, but are not limited to, the provision of resources on coloured/larger paper, tailored seating plan, quiet rooms, brain breaks, individualised arrangements with regard to classroom participation depending on their needs. Resources, slides and lesson plans are sent to students in advance; they can also attend catch-up sessions, composition clubs and one-on-one rehearsal and performance opportunities in order to manage anxiety and sensory issues.

## **Part B: Co-curricular music**

This is about opportunities for pupils to sing and play music outside of lesson time, including choirs, ensembles and bands, and how pupils can make progress in music beyond the core curriculum.

WGGS offer a wide range of choirs and ensembles of all sizes. These include Junior Choir, Senior Choir, Junior Orchestra, Senior Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, chamber ensembles that individually cater for current cohorts such as quartets, quintets, octets, Wind Band, A Cappella Choir, Guitar Ensemble, Soul Band, Big Band, Glee Club and many more. A couple of these are student-led, giving senior girls the opportunity to choose repertoire, conduct, coach and prepare

ensembles for public performance. All groups and ensembles are open to all apart from Glee Club, A Cappella and the annual musical where there are auditions. Groups cater for students at all ability levels, there is something for everyone. WGGGS has a number of practice rooms and performance spaces; these are usually in use by peripatetic teachers but any empty spaces are swiftly filled by informal groups who practice, socialise and inspire each other within the department building. The music classrooms are in one building where the large classroom doubles up as a rehearsal space and the regular size classroom has a Mac suite.

Performance opportunities include two large-scale concerts a year, informal concerts, informal and formal performances for KS4/5. Our students provide background music and formal performances for open days, Founders' Day, church services, Holocaust memorial, prize giving celebration evenings, alumnae events and more. As a collaboration between the music and drama departments, WGGGS puts on a whole school musical every year, with a wide variety of opportunities for students; they can sing as soloists or in the chorus, be part of the band, compose/arrange music, be part of stage crew or the sound and lighting team. We have recently put on *The Addams Family* and *Legally Blonde* and are currently doing *Six*. Some of our students have recently auditioned and taken on leading roles in musicals at John Lyon and Harrow School. In the summer term there is a Music competition giving students the chance to perform solo pieces and earn points for their class. Winners then perform at the annual prize giving event.

We have a wide range of instruments in school which students can borrow, hire or use on an ad hoc basis. Around ..... lessons are taught each week by 12 peripatetic staff. Lessons cost £42 per hour, payable directly to the peripatetic staff who are self-employed. The administration and timetabling for these is done in-house by our music administrator. We timetable lessons at KS3 on a rotational basis; at KS4/5, lessons are timetabled during private study periods, break, lunch or before/after school as far as possible.

Many instrumental ensembles are entirely student-devised and student-led; they happen at all times of day from early in the morning until long after the school day has finished. We have some ensembles mixed with Watford Grammar School for Boys. Many students are involved with a significant amount of external music-making, attending the Junior Colleges of the RAM/RCM/Guildhall; they also play with local orchestras such as Watford Youth Orchestra, Harrow Young Musicians and Herts Youth Orchestra and County Youth Orchestra. Some play in National Youth orchestra of Great Britain and NYO Inspire and English Schools Orchestra.

We also run regular masterclasses with the classical violinist Tasmin Little and more recently our girls have been invited to attend masterclasses with Emma Johnson at the Royal Masonic School for Girls.

### In the future

Music at WGGGS is valued and well supported by the Head/SLT downwards. Our department is highly visible within the school; concerts are ambitious in their scope and well attended; we have a good level of equipment. Our schemes of work are the subject of considerable revision and modification each year, as we look for ways to streamline what and how we teach to best prepare our students on their individual musical journeys. For the last few years, we have considered KS3 to be part of a five-year GCSE programme; actively conceptualising it as such allows us to take core skills and elements of the GCSE/A level curricula and introduce them lower down the school at accessible levels. Examples of this include the increasing use and fluency of notation and sequencing software, key skills such as melodic dictation, chord progressions, instrument and element recognition, a sense of the wider cultural context in which music inhabits and how equality, diversity and inclusion should be a strong thread, considered throughout the study of our subject as an integral element.