



HEDINGHAM SCHOOL
AND SIXTH FORM
ACHIEVEMENT & EXCELLENCE

Official Sensitive

23 September 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian

Year 10 GCSE Music

Your child is currently taking GCSE Music, and as we are still early in the school year, I would like to take this opportunity to make clear the expectations for certain aspects of the course. This letter will also outline some suggestions on how parents can further support their child in taking the course.

The course is split into three units: Performing (30%), Composing (30%) and Music Exam (40%).

Performing

Students improve their performance skills, over the course, and by the end must have a solo and ensemble performance of minimum 4 minutes in length. Students are provided ten 20-minute school funded lessons with our experienced peripatetic music tutors each week per term. As well as general performance preparation time in the classroom, these lessons are a highly supportive measure in ensuring students build the skills and confidence in preparation for recording their music coursework.

Therefore, due to the cost to the school and also the impact on students' performance coursework, it is imperative that students attend every lesson and make the most of their time there. Lack of attendance may result in a lunchtime detention. Additionally, students will only be able to maximise the potential of these lessons by practising in between.

What can parents do to support Performance?

- Ensure your child has the music equipment to learn performance skills. If there is a problem with this, such as financial constraints, please contact me as soon as possible.
- Please set a realistic routine at home whereby your child will practice regularly.
- Check-in with your child on how they are progressing, playing their music to you and the family. Your child should have a practice diary, which I would appreciate you looking at with your child and sign-off and/or comment on practice sessions at home.

Composing

Students develop composition skills over two classroom lessons a fortnight. By the end of Year 11, students submit two compositions – one based on their Year 10 composing work, and the other in response to a brief set by the exam board when students are in Year 11. To ensure students have enough time to develop skills in completing the composing coursework, as in previous years, students are requested to come to work on this during a lunchtime once a fortnight.

What can parents do to support Composing?

- All composed music is accessible from any computer via either Noteflight or Soundtrap browser-based software (we go to Soundtrap in the Spring Term). Please ask your child to play you their music to take interest and share successes for what is a complex aspect of music making.

Music Exam

By the end of Year 11, students should have developed good listening skills, which involves aurally analysing different music features across a range of elements (i.e. melody, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation etc). Music is unfamiliar and so students need to develop good general listening skills.

The unfamiliar music is from the following areas of study:

- Area of Study 1: Music Forms and Devices (Baroque, Classical and 'Romantic' Music)
- Area of Study 2: Music for Ensembles (i.e. Musical Theatre, Bands includes blues music)
- Area of Study 3: Music for Film
- Area of Study 4: Popular Music (includes Indian Bhangra, Pop Music, and Fusion Music)

In addition to this, there are two pieces that they will have prepared for, called 'set works'. These are:

- Toto's Africa
- Bach's Badinere

What can parents do to support the Music Exam?

- Please encourage your child listen to a wide range of music. One area that has shown to have a really positive impact on student engagement in music is attending a gig or concert.
- Discuss the music that is heard around the home. Questions that can help include: What instruments are playing? Can you count to the beats in the music? What time signature is it?

I hope that this gives a good basis to give parents essential information on how students are completing the course, but also provide ideas for how you can further support your child in their journey of completing the GCSE Music course.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Mr Cull
Leader of Music

Headteacher • Paul Finch BSc (Hons) PGCE NPQH

Yeldham Road • Sible Hedingham • Essex • CO9 3QH • Telephone 01787 460470

e-mail: enquiries@hedingham.essex.sch.uk • Website: www.hedingham.essex.sch.uk • Registered Company No. 8330173

