

Curriculum intent and rationale

The music curriculum at Heartlands Academy is delivered through the academy 'Mastery Teaching and Learning' framework and has two aims.

The first aim, is to give all students the ability to continue playing musical instruments and appreciating music, either within education or outside of it. This aim is achieved through initially exposing students to a variety of musical styles and instruments in Years 7 and 8 and then encouraging them to focus on a single discipline in Year 9 and into Key Stage 4, if they choose to do so.

The second aim, is to deliver a knowledge-based curriculum, that creates culturally literate students, who are able to access conversations and ideas that have been a part of western society for centuries. Students learn about music from around the world, with an emphasis on the cultural icons of different genres; like Beethoven, B. B. King, Bob Marley & Eminem. They also learn about the history surrounding music, such as the slave trade, poverty and feminism.

Overall, the music curriculum aims to inspire students to be creative, collaborate, independent and to develop a passion for their preferred musical styles. This is achieved by allowing students to gain substantive, disciplinary and procedural knowledge, throughout both Key Stages 3 and 4.

The music curriculum is sequenced to ensure that each new skill (underpinned by procedural knowledge) that students learn, builds upon the previous one. For those studying Key Stage 4, the final Year 11 performance is in mind. Therefore, the Key Stage 3 curriculum starts with the basics of drumming and rhythms, and slowly works through melody and chords, towards improvisation and ensemble performance.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum gives students the chance to critically assess music, challenges them with real life problems in the music industry, and asks them to solve the problem.

The quality of music varies greatly in Key Stage 2 from primary teaching. Heartlands Academy's Key Stage 3 music curriculum is designed to reinforce what they may have already experienced (choral singing, African drumming, playing the ukulele), whilst also ensuring that no child is left behind. Students that have received a good quality Key Stage 2 music education (or those who have had music tuition) are stretched through leadership and creativity tasks. An example of creativity tasks may be that students are challenged to create new rhythms in African drumming, or to use more than one musical element.

In Year 7, the focus is on skill development and procedural knowledge over four disciplines – percussion,

keyboard, ukulele & the voice, and how they are used within the seven musical elements. Each discipline is also accompanied by teaching the students key knowledge. Key knowledge is made up of musical terminology, which students use in practical and critical exercises as well as through learning about the culture that surrounds music.

Students start off with rhythm and the aim of developing an understanding of how timing works, whilst learning about African drumming culture. From there, students take rhythm and add melody to it, whilst learning about the piano instrument and western classics. Students then compose on the keyboard using musical elements. From here, the curriculum begins to be more collaborative, as students learn the ukulele, but also learn it in an ensemble setting, with students learning about live performance. Finally students move onto the blues and reggae, learning about the slave trade and African American culture.

In Year 8, both skill development and procedural knowledge is still in focus, but with a more creative and collaborative attitude. The year starts with rap, which reengages students after the summer break. Students create their own hip-hop songs, with a focus on social justice and their own lives. This allows ties to English, drama, history and personal development.

The creative element continues through to a song writing course. Students are given in-depth music theory knowledge, as well as an introduction to some notable songwriters. A study of jazz allows students to connect their newly acquired music theory knowledge to improvisation.

The final term is focused on pop music. In the first half term, students work as an

ensemble to arrange a well-known pop song to suit their new band. Students use the procedural knowledge and skills previously gathered through the year. Finally, students choose their own pop song to arrange, creating real autonomy.

In both Years 7 and Year 8, students are assessed formatively throughout the process with weekly teacher and student feedback during practice time and after informal performances. The bell task at the beginning of lessons focuses on knowledge retrieval. Knowledge retrieval and learning is also done through teacher questioning. Students self-assess through a green reflection sheet every two weeks and there is a summative assessment at the end of each half-term, allowing students to receive a grade.

There is a shift in style in Year 9, as students move closer to Key Stage 4. This may mean the end of students' school music lessons, therefore, it is important that they are given a sense of independence and creativity, so that students can continue with music regardless of whether they choose music at GCSE.

At the start of the year, students choose an instrument which becomes their 'project' for the year. This has been designed for a few reasons. Firstly, engagement is higher when the students use their instrument of preference and they are able to work within genres that they find most interesting. Each half-term students are given a two-part project to be completed just before the break.

In autumn one, students learn to understand their chosen instrument and how to practise. Their project is to give a presentation on the anatomy of their instrument and to describe and perform

warm-up and practice drills, meaning they are developing their knowledge of their chosen instrument. In autumn two, students perform a solo piece, as well as creating a case study of a 'master of their instrument'.

The spring term then shifts to song writing. In spring one, students create a case study of a chosen songwriter and, in pairs, create a song that is similar to their chosen songwriter's style. In spring two, they replicate their song in a different genre style and perform both songs before Easter break.

The summer term is focused on performance. Students work in small ensembles to perform one cover and one original song. Students also give a short presentation on great performers in music. The final year of Key Stage 3 prepare students for music in Key Stage 4, by putting a large focus on performance, on critical evaluation of music, and of understanding job roles within the music industry. This gives students the tools to continue music in life regardless of what they choose to do at GCSE.

BTEC Firsts in Music help students take their first steps towards a career in the music industry. They learn essential skills and procedural knowledge; from performing and composing, to producing, sound engineering and promoting a new track, album or concert.

The BTEC course is divided into four units. The mandatory units are introducing the music industry and planning an event. The chosen units are introducing music performance and introducing music sequencing.

In Year 10, students are taught music

sequencing over autumn one. Autumn two and spring one are then used to complete their coursework. In spring two, students plan their concert performance. In the summer term, students complete their final performance.

Feedback is limited in the BTEC course, therefore student reflection is vital and is done through reflection and practice log and through students assessing and discussing work with each other.

In Year 11, students sit one exam in January, which allows students to resubmit work in spring one, before they start the main exam period.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the curriculum intent has had to be altered slightly. In order to prioritise the safety and well-being of our students, practical lessons have been put on hold for the whole of the autumn term. Students develop a better theoretical knowledge in the topics they are currently studying, in tandem with development of their aural skills and being able to listen and critically analyse music from all periods, depending on their topic.