

Music Curriculum Overview - Year 8

	Unit	Details
Autumn One	Hooks & Riffs	<p>Hooks and Riffs explores music based on repeated musical patterns through the genres of Popular Music (Hooks and Riffs) and Music from the Western Classical Tradition (Ostinatos).</p> <p>The unit aims to combine the inter-related musical strands of Performing: Playing and Singing; Creating - Composing and Improvising and Critical Engagement: Listening and Appraising. The music theory focus of this unit is on treble and bass clef symbols as an indication of pitch and musical repeat markings and symbols. Simple rhythmic and melodic dictation exercises encourage pupils to read and use both graphic and staff notations based on repeated musical patterns.</p>
Autumn Two	Off Beat	<p>This unit begins by exploring the origins of Reggae music from Mento, Ska and Rock Steady and looks at the famous Reggae musician, Bob Marley, and his influence on a worldwide audience. The unit uses two Reggae songs as case studies to explore the musical features of the genre: "Yellow Bird": a Caribbean song, and "Three Little Birds". Pupils learn about the different textural elements that make up a Reggae song: bass line riffs, melodic hooks, offbeat chords, syncopated rhythms and the vocal melody line. Pupil's harmonic language is extended and developed constructing chords I, II, IV and V in F Major ("Yellow Bird") and chords I, IV and V in A Major ("Three Little Birds"), performing these in the traditional offbeat Reggae style. The unit ends with a brief exploration into the themes of Reggae lyrics with pupils creating their own short set of lyrics using Jamaican speech style on a specific subject e.g. Black Lives Matter, #Metoo, Climate Change etc.</p>
Spring One	Variations	<p>The unit begins by exploring basic ways to vary an existing theme using the elements of music and simple musical devices in terms of changing: pitch (octave), timbre and sonority, articulation, tempo, dynamics, rhythm and adding: pedal, drone, ostinato, rhythm, decoration (passing notes). This is then developed by progressively exploring and using more complex variation techniques including: augmentation, diminution (revision of note values), canon/round and adding a counter melody, before pupils learn how to vary a theme using changes in tonality and investigate how inversion, retrograde and retrograde inversion can be applied to a theme as more advanced variation techniques. Two traditionally used themes when exploring variations: Frère Jacques (single line melody) and Twinkle, Twinkle (single line melody with chord markings) and for the more contemporary theme from Faded by Alan Walker (2-part melody and accompaniment). The unit ends by exploring Ground Bass Variations.</p>
Spring Two	All That Jazz	<p>This unit develops pupil's understanding of the key musical features of Jazz and Blues, exploring chords, chord patterns and how improvisation is used within Jazz and Blues genres. The history, origins and development of the Blues and different types and styles of Jazz can be interspersed throughout the unit in as much depth as the teacher deems appropriate. Instruments, timbres, and sonorities used in Jazz and Blues are also explored and the different roles between Frontline and Rhythm Section instruments within Jazz and Swing/Big Bands. Pupils learn the characteristic 12-Bar Blues chord pattern using chords I, IV and V as triads in C Major before extending these into seventh chord triads and turn these into a Walking Bass Line. The Blues Scale introduces a new melodic resource on which to improvise using ostinato, riffs and fills within the 12-Bar Blues.</p>
Summer One	All About The Bass	<p>Bass Clef Reading and Notation forms the foundation of this unit which explores a range of commonly used Bass Line Patterns within a variety of different types, styles, and genres of music from different times and places. Pupils begin by exploring the various meanings of the term 'bass' before looking at the Bass Clef and the names of the notes in the lines, spaces and ledger lines on the Bass Stave. Instruments and voices which use the Bass Clef are referred to throughout the unit. Bass Line Riffs, as short, memorable, repeated Bass Line Patterns are explored as pupils realise and perform some famous Bass Line Riffs from Bass Clef Notation from the genres of Rap and/or Hip-Hop.</p> <p>Pupils then explore Walking Bass Line Patterns in the genres of Jazz, Blues, Rhythm and Blues and Rock and Roll, constructing a Walking Bass Line using Chords I, IV and V using notes of the chords (root, third and fifth) and 'extra' Passing Notes, performing a Rock and Roll-style song constructed on a Walking Bass Line and using Bass Line Riffs. The concept of prolonging a Bass Line chord by performing the notes separately, using Arpeggios, Broken Chords and Alberti Bass Line patterns, are explored through a range of music from different genres including Classical and Modern Solo Piano Music, Surf Rock, Popular Songs and Rock and Roll. Finally, pupils explore "pedals", and how a Bass Line note can be sustained or repeated over a long period of time, as a pedal note, exploring their use in Baroque Music, Organ and Keyboard Toccatas, Jazz, Popular Song and Film Music.</p>
Summer Two	Soundtracks	<p>The unit begins with an introduction into the purpose of film music and the decisions and challenges a composer of film music faces. Leitmotifs are an important aspect of film music and pupils explore how composers have used these to represent certain characters and situations within films and how, through the manipulation of the elements of music, these can be changed to suit different on-screen situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How music can enhance the visual images and dramatic impact of film and can reflect the emotional and narrative messages of the drama • How timing is a crucial factor in the composition and performance of music for film • How film music can change the viewer's interpretation of a scene • How to create an effective musical narrative for a film scene, using appropriate techniques to create an intended effect