



### The Music Department

The Music Department is a vibrant and thriving area of school life. The Music department's mission at St Mary's is to give our students a positive, practical experience of music. The curriculum is broad and offers students the opportunity to learn about music from different times, places and world traditions, as well as the more formal aspects of music such as learning about stave and graphic notation.

We believe firmly in a holistic approach to music education and all music lessons offer our students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through practical participation. The department itself comprises two large classrooms which are well-resourced with a range of electronic keyboards and percussion instruments and a suite of computers and laptops, which include the latest version of computer software to enable our students to compose successfully. We also have a selection of acoustic and electric guitars, two electric drum kits and three acoustic drum kits. As well as the two main teaching areas, there are two large practice rooms. The department's facilities are available before school, and during break times and lunchtimes for students to continue to develop and hone their musical skills.

The extra-curricular programme offers students from across the school the opportunity to come together and enjoy creating music in a range of ensembles. These include The School Orchestra, the Jazz Orchestra, Key Stage 3 Ensemble, Chamber Choir, School Choir, Folk Ensemble, Chamber Orchestra and String Ensemble. There are many other opportunities for individuals, small groups and ensembles to perform.

There are two showcase events organised by the department: one at Christmas and one nearing the end of the summer term. We hold Carol Services at the end of the autumn term and have recently begun presenting a Carols by Candlelight service for local parishes. There are further opportunities for singers and instrumentalists to perform at liturgies and awards evenings, as well as throughout the Diocese at venues such as St Mary's Cathedral. Record numbers of students are now involved in these ensembles. To aid us in our work, we are supported by an excellent team of highly qualified visiting instrumental tutors, all of whom are practising musicians, performing on the national and international stage. Tuition is available in all orchestral instruments plus piano, keyboard, guitar, drum kit and voice.



**Music  
Department**



**Results:**

Music is a popular and successful subject in the school and each year results are excellent. Recent highlights include:

- 57% of pupils achieved at least a Grade 7 in GCSE Music over the last 5 years
- Every GCSE Music pupil achieved at least a Grade 5 in 2022
- 63% A\*/A in A Level Music over the last 5 years, and 78% A\*-C. 100% pass rate over this period

**Curriculum Music:**

**During Year 7 and 8** students receive two lessons of Music per fortnight. Recent topics at this Key Stage include: Music for Special Events, Keyboard Skills, Programme Music, Movie Soundtracks and The Music of India and China.

**Students continue to study Music at Year 9**, receiving one lesson per fortnight. Recent topics for this Year Group have included: Popular Music, Variations, Samba, Folk Music and Developing Ensemble Skills and Music in Media.

**Students at GCSE Level** receive 5 lessons of Music over the course of a fortnight. We currently follow the Edexcel Specification.

**Students at A level** receive 9 – 10 lessons of Music over the course of a fortnight. We currently follow the Edexcel specification.