

MUSIC

The Music Department is an important part of the school community which contributes greatly to the overall ethos of Thomas Mills. Many children receive instrumental or vocal lessons and take part in a variety of large scale performances throughout the year. The emphasis in classroom lessons is on practical music-making. The Department is housed in two main teaching rooms and five practice rooms and is well-equipped with a variety of classroom instruments. One of the teaching rooms is a state of the art music technology suite comprising 30 Mac computers all with Logic, Sibelius and GarageBand software. There are a further 14 Mac computers in the other Music teaching room again with Logic, Sibelius and GarageBand software.

Key Stage 3

Pupils in year 7 receive two Music lessons a week one of which is taught in the Music technology suite. In year 8 pupils have one lesson per week. Projects encompass performing, listening and composing, and range from loop compositions and ragtime to blues and film music. There is an annual class singing competition for Year 7.

Key Stage 4

The Department follows the Edexcel GCSE course, with the usual emphasis on the three areas of performing, listening and composing. There are a wide variety of musical styles studied for the listening exam, ranging from Bach and Queen to Beethoven and John Williams. Solo and ensemble performances are assessed as part of the coursework and can be offered on a wide range of instruments or voice. Two pieces of music have to be composed one of which is to a set brief.

For more details see <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>

Sixth Form

Music is offered at AS and A level, following the Edexcel specification.

Performing, composing and listening form the basis of the Music course. Examples of set works studied range from Bach's 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott' to a selection of songs by Kate Bush. Performance is examined through formal recitals to an audience, and a number of style compositions, free compositions and compositions to a set brief are completed over the two years.

For more details see <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>

The Department runs an array of extra-curricular ensembles, which currently comprises of First and Second Orchestras, Year 7 and Senior Choirs, Jazz Group, Samba Group, String Group, Wind Band, Brass Ensemble, Hand Bells, Flute Choir, Guitar Ensemble and Chamber Choir. First Orchestra and Senior Choir take part in regular foreign tours, and have travelled to Prague, Salzburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Paris, Tuscany, Belgium and The Black Forrest in recent years. Large-scale concerts are held at Christmas and Easter, in addition to smaller chamber concerts and a school production in collaboration with the Drama Department. Recent orchestral repertoire has included Brahms Academic Festival Overture and Sibelius' Finlandia, whilst the Senior Choir has performed *September by Earth, Wind and Fire* and *Vivaldi's Gloria*. Opportunities are taken to enter various competitions and festivals, such as A Celebration of Schools' Music at Snape Maltings and the Music for Youth Festival.

At present, instrumental tuition is available in violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, French horn, guitar, recorder and drums. Vocal tuition is also

available. There is a small termly charge which is reviewed annually. Students who take GCSE or A level music receive free tuition.