



Leigh Academy Mascalls Music Development Plan (Academic Year 2025/26)

Field	Detail
Academy Music Lead	Ben Gosling
Local Music Hub	Kent Music Hub
Date of Issue	September 2025
Date to be Revised	August 2026

Key Aims and Objectives

As a thriving and successful Music Department within the Faculty of Performing Arts, we are true believers of the importance of instilling a lifelong appreciation and love for music in all of our students. We are able to achieve this through our diverse, thorough and well-structured curriculum, complemented by our offer of a range of extra-curricular opportunities across all year groups.

We believe every student should have the opportunity to:

- Realise and develop their personal music taste through an appreciation of a wide variety of music styles from around the world.
- Create their own music through the use of key skills on different instruments as well as through the use of music technology such as SoundTrap software.
- Increase their confidence through regular rehearsal and performance opportunities both within a classroom setting and to the wider academy community.

Part A: Curriculum

Key Stage 3 MYP Curriculum (Year 7, Year 8, Year 9)

Our students benefit from 1 lesson of Music per week for the entire academic year. Music lessons are 1 hour in length and include regular do-now tasks, listening tasks, rehearsal/performance opportunities on multiple instruments and regular reflection tasks throughout each unit of study.

Year 7: The Musical Toolkit: Exploring Voice, Rhythm, and Narrative

Vocal and Performance Skills

- The **Vocal Music** and **Ensemble Skills** units primarily develop practical performance techniques and ensemble performance skills. Students will learn to use their voices effectively, focusing on pitch matching,

breath control, posture, and clear diction. They'll also develop aural skills by listening to and replicating melodies and harmonies. In **Ensemble Skills**, the focus expands to coordination, communication, and collaboration as they learn to perform together, maintain a steady tempo, follow a conductor or leader, and balance different musical parts. This unit reinforces skills like sight-reading simple music or playing by ear within a group context.

Core Musical Knowledge and Literacy

- The **Elements of Music** unit is foundational, building upon students' musical literacy. Students will learn the terminology and practical application of key concepts like Rhythm, Pitch/Melody, Harmony, Dynamics, Tempo, Texture, Timbre/Sonority, and Structure/Form. This knowledge is applied in other units later in their study, especially **African Music** and **Music for Storytelling**, where students will analyse and reproduce specific rhythmic patterns, melodic shapes, and textural changes. They will develop skills in notation reading (both traditional and graphic) and composition, using the elements as building blocks for their own musical ideas.

Cultural Context and Appreciation

- Through the **African Music** and **Disney Music** units, students develop music listening and appreciation skills. In the **African Music** unit, they will gain an understanding of poly-rhythms and call-and-response structures, developing the skill of performing complex rhythmic layers and improvising short melodic or rhythmic phrases both independently and as part of an ensemble. The **Disney Music** unit allows students to explore the relationship between music and drama, learning how leitmotifs and orchestral colours (timbre) are used to evoke emotions and represent characters. Both units foster critical listening skills as students analyse music from different cultural and commercial contexts, articulating their observations using appropriate musical vocabulary.

Creative and Analytical Skills

- **Music for Storytelling** is the main unit for developing compositional and creative skills. Students will practice translating non-musical ideas (narrative, emotion, character) into musical choices, demonstrating their understanding of the elements from previous study. They will learn techniques such as motif development, varying instrumentation, and manipulating dynamics/tempo to create tension, excitement, or calm. This unit also strengthens analytical skills as students evaluate the effectiveness of their own and others' compositions in communicating a specific story or mood; this is done through thorough peer feedback.

Year 8: The DNA of Pop: Genre, History, and Influence

Performance and Instrumental Skills

- The **Cover Songs** and **Samba** units are central to developing practical performance and instrumental skills. In **Cover Songs**, students will refine their ensemble and solo musicianship, focusing on accurately learning and performing established popular songs. This involves improving coordination, sight-reading/reading tablature (when using guitars/keyboards), rhythmic accuracy, and dynamic control within a group. The **Samba** unit specifically develops the complex rhythmic layering commonly associated with **Samba** music, where students learn the skills of leading/responding and maintaining stamina during performance. These units collectively enhance practical application and collaboration skills.

Listening and Contextual Analysis

- The **Gaming Music**, **The Beatles**, **Britpop**, and **Blues** units heavily develop critical listening and analytical skills. Students will learn to recognise and articulate the stylistic features and social context of various genres. The **Blues** unit focuses on understanding the 12-bar structure, improvisation, and harmonic progression (I-IV-V). **The Beatles** and **Britpop** provide a timeline for exploring pop music evolution, focusing on changes in song structure, production techniques, instrumentation, and lyrical themes. The **Gaming Music** unit introduces the concept of adaptive music and sound design, where students analyse how music is used to create atmosphere, pace, and dramatic effect within a visual medium, adding a dimension of media analysis to their studies.

Creative and Compositional Skills

- Compositional skills are heavily integrated across these topics. In the **Blues** unit, students will practice

improvisation over a standard chord progression and compose simple bass lines or melodies that fit the genre's constraints. The **Gaming Music** unit encourages students to compose short, looping themes (using Chrome Music Labs) or stings (short musical phrases for events), demonstrating skills in creating music for a specific, functional purpose. **Cover Songs** may lead to arrangements or creative modifications, developing skills in re-contextualising existing music. Overall, this year focuses on using musical knowledge to create works that adhere to or playfully subvert specific genre conventions.

Year 9: Mastering Music: Production, Performance, and the Screen

Advanced Composition and Media Skills

- The **Film Music** and **Electronic Dance Music (EDM)** composition units significantly advance students' compositional and arranging skills. In **Film Music**, students apply their understanding of musical elements to create specific moods, tensions, and atmosphere by carefully selecting relevant existing pieces. **EDM** Composition focuses on digital music production skills, including sequencing, looping, synthesis/sound design, mixing, and mastering basic tracks using SoundTrap software. Students learn about the structure and sonic identity of electronic dance genres, requiring high-level aural precision in rhythmic and frequency layering.

Performance, Analysis, and Cultural Context

- The **Music of Queen**, **Reggae**, and **Music for Stage and Screen** units refine advanced stylistic performance and analytical skills. In **The Music of Queen**, students analyse and perform simplified versions of music that is complex in structure, harmony (multi-part vocal/instrumental), and production. The **Reggae** unit introduces complex off-beat rhythms, developing a deep understanding of the “skank rhythm” and bassline construction, emphasising the cultural and political context of the music. **Music for Stage and Screen** serves as a capstone, requiring students to analyse the relationship between music, narrative, and character across different media formats (musicals, films, TV), requiring sophisticated use of musical vocabulary to articulate observations as well as developing a deep understanding of how music is often adapted for use between stage and screen.

Independent and Collaborative Music Making

- The **Musical Futures** unit, often delivered using a non-formal, student-led pedagogy, focuses on developing autonomy, leadership, and self-directed practice. Students improve their skills in negotiating roles, peer teaching, self-assessment, and independent problem-solving within a band or group context. This unit elevates practical musicianship by requiring students to learn repertoire quickly, often by ear, and demonstrate high levels of creativity and adaptation in their performance or arrangement choices. This unit prepares students for Key Stage 4 by fostering independent working habits and mastery of their chosen instrument/voice.

KS3 Assessment Criteria	Method of assessment
Criterion A (Appraisal/Understanding)	Listening task questions, extended written tasks and knowledge organiser tests each module.
Criterion B (Creation/Preparation)	The creation and regular rehearsal of compositions, performances and presentations throughout the module.
Criterion C (Performance)	The live performance (or recordings) of music or submission of original compositions towards the end of each module
Criterion D (Reflection/Evaluation)	Written reflective task built upon throughout and evaluated at the end of each module

Key Stage 4 EDUQAS Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Performing Arts

Students receive 5 lessons of Music per fortnight for all of Year 10 and Year 11.

Unit 1: Performance (30% of Qualification)

Overview of unit

- In this unit, learners will gain a holistic knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to reproduce an existing piece of professional/published work.

Unit 2: Composition (30% of Qualification)

Overview of unit

- In this unit learners will gain, develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to create and refine an original music composition.

Unit 3: Performing Arts in Practice (40% of Qualification)

Overview of unit

- This unit introduces learners to areas of the performing arts that need to be considered when responding to an industry commission. Learners will need to draw on their knowledge of the skills and techniques needed to reproduce an existing piece of professional/published work from Unit 1 alongside their knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to create and refine original work from Unit 2.

Key Stage 5 RSL Level 3 Music Practitioners

MUSPRA365 - Auditioning For Music (15 credits)

This unit aims to develop the skills to participate effectively in the audition process.

The purpose of this unit is to present the learner with the opportunity to explore, analyse and develop their own audition techniques and experience through a combination of theory and practice, relevant to industry standards and expectations.

MUSPRA349- Planning For A Career In Music (15 credits)

The purpose of the learning assessed in this unit is to familiarise learners with the processes associated with effective career planning.

The aim of the unit is to provide opportunities to align/link their overarching career aims with how their course can help, defining the way the learner engages with their learning.

MUSPRA327 - Understanding Recording Techniques (5 credits)

The aim of this unit is to analyse and discuss key aspects of acoustics and recording techniques.

The purpose of this unit is to explore the various key aspects of recording to develop the skills of a producer or recording artist.

MUSPRA385 - Improving Instrumental Practice (15 credits)

This unit aims to facilitate the development of learners' abilities to develop technical skills as an instrumentalist/performer, understanding instruments and equipment relevant to context and encompassing Health & Safety considerations.

The purpose of this unit is to generate a practice schedule which facilitates the learners' development and analysis of instrumental progress, through an understanding of instrumental/equipment requirements and Health & Safety considerations, thereby enabling skills to plan for future development.

MUSPRA318 - Listening To Music (10 credits)

The purpose of this unit is to introduce learners to the concept of perceptive listening and develop skills for application of listening skills to development of their own musical output.

MUSPRA387e - Rehearsal Skills & Live Music (performance (30 credits)

Students will design a 20 minute performance of existing or original music to an audience. This will be set to a given brief from the exam board published each year.

Part B: Co-curricular Music

Music Tuition Lessons

- Weekly peripatetic lessons are available to all students for: Drums, Guitar, Piano, Clarinet and Flute.
- We are hoping to be in a position to offer lessons in Singing by the end of the 2025/26 academic year.
- Lessons are publicised on the school website, during form time, and via regular letters home to parents/carers.
- Pupil Premium (PP) students are eligible for subsidised lessons.

Music Ensemble Groups

- Music ensemble groups are currently in development at the academy. We hope to be able to offer ensemble groups for ukulele, guitar and keyboard for the beginning of the 2026/27 academic year.

Extra-curricular Music Opportunities

- Annual School Musical Event - Each year, the performing arts (music, dance and drama) combine to put on a school musical performance. These are hugely successful with an average cast size of 60 students performing to an audience of 500+ parents, family members and local primary school students.

Part C: Musical Experiences

Performances

- Students have opportunities to perform at annual events, such as our Rising Stars Concert, Exam Showcase, Open Events and OnMas Festival.
- Opportunities include performing work from lessons/clubs, as well as solos or duets of their own work.

Trips/Visits

- Key Stage 4 and 5 students have the opportunity to watch live Musical Theatre Performances.
- Key Stage 4 and 5 students take part in a seminar from Water Bear College of Music.
- Pupil Premium students are eligible for full subsidisation of curriculum-necessary trips.

In the Future: Our Aims Moving Forward

- Expand our offer at key stage 5 to include a specific Music Technology course following continued growth of the subject at key stage 4.
- Increase engagement in instrument lessons and encourage formation of student bands.
- Ensure the Music Studio is fully equipped and operational to improve music technology skills and enable professional recording.
- Offer more performance opportunities to showcase talents to the wider school.