



WIRRAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Discover, Thrive, Belong

Music Development Plan Summary 2024-2025





Overview

Below is an overview that outlines some of the key information regarding music at Wirral Grammar School for Boys:

Detail	Information
Academic year that this summary covers	Academic Year 2024-2025
Date this summary was published	Tbc
Date this summary will be reviewed	Tbc
Name of School Music Lead	Mr K McCabe
Name of Music Hub	Edsential

Part A: Curriculum Music

This section addresses the content taught during lesson time, the duration dedicated to music lessons, and the music qualifications or awards that pupils can attain. An overview of the music curriculum for each year group is available on the Wirral Grammar School for Boys website. The website also details the time allocated for curriculum music for each key stage and term (or each half-term) of the academic year.

At Wirral Grammar School for Boys, the music curriculum has its foundations based on the [National Curriculum](#) with elements from the, incorporating elements from the [Model Music Curriculum](#) (March 2021). These elements are integrated into our teaching framework, with adaptations to suit our learners and our specific educational setting. Within the music curriculum, the golden threads of performing, composing and appraising are intricately woven throughout. The curriculum is designed with a focus on sequencing these skills to ensure a cohesive and progressive learning experience.



Key Stage 3 Curriculum Overview

Pupils in key stage 3 receive 1 hour of curriculum music per week.

Year 7				
Find your Voice	Elements of Music	Keyboards: Performance and Practice	Accompaniment Workshop	Folk Music
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of Voice Types and Range Understanding of Warm Up Routines How to practice effectively Solo Performance Skills Ensemble Performance Skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitch, Dynamics, Duration, Tempo, Texture, Timbre or Sonority, Articulation and Silence Graphic Notation and Graphic Scores Traditional Notation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keyboard Geography Traditional Notation reading Performance Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major and Minor Chords Accompaniment Skills Vamping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral Traditions Arranging Skills
Year 8				
I Guess That's Why they Call it 'The Blues'	Shake, Rock and Roll	Songwriting	Film Music	Caribbean Music Traditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the cultural significance of the blues Improvisation using the blues scale. Extension chords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History: The Birth of Popular Music Vocal Technique Ensemble Singing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hooks, Riffs and Syncopation. Melody Writing Creating Chord Progressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the needs for music and the moving image. Composing for Film Film Music Appraising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating Caribbean Styles – Merengue, Salsa, Calypso, Soca Understanding Syncopation.
Year 9				
All About That Bass	Music for Dance	Video Game Music	Songwriters Showcase	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bass clef notation Using bass riffs. Using Alberti bass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Composing a waltz melody. Understanding Country and Western bass lines. Compound Time – The Irish jig and reel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Composing character themes and leitmotifs. Using music notation software. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Composing melodic hooks and vocal lines. Composing chord sequences. Arranging for a pop music ensemble Using music notation software. 	



Key Stage 4 Curriculum Overview

Pupils in key stage 4 receive 2.5 hours of music per week.

In Years 10 and 11, students undertake the [WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Music](#). This course offers students extensive opportunities to develop their abilities both as solo performers and ensemble musicians as performing makes up 30% of the final grade awarded. Throughout the course, students explore a diverse range of musical genres and styles, gaining insight into the conventions, as well as the melodic and rhythmic characteristics, inherent to each style.

Update for GCSE is well above the national average and results are also well above the nation average for selective schools.

Key Stage 5 Curriculum Overview

Pupils in key stage 5 receive 5 hours of music per week.

In Years 12 and 13, students undertake the [RSL Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners \(Performance\)](#). This course is vocational and highly practical; it aims to equip learners with the skills, knowledge and understanding for entry into employment in the music industry or progression into music courses in higher education. The qualification aims to provide practical structured learning with the opportunity to specialise in one area of the industry (performing, composition, technology or music business).

Part B: Co-curricular music

This section addresses the opportunity pupils at Wirral Grammar School for Boys have to sing and play music outside of lesson time. The provision of extra-curricular music is a key feature of our school and participation levels are exceptionally high. Over one third of all boys participate in music lessons and we have no fewer than 18 ensembles, each led by a specialist music teacher. Student involvement at every level form a key feature of our music provision and this is facilitated through our pupil-led Music Society. Visits overseas, regular Music Society and Chamber Concerts, music competitions and a host of community activities all combine to make extra-curricular music something that is very special at Wirral Grammar School. Our parents believe that our music provision contributes significantly to pupils' cultural and spiritual development.

The Music Department has a staff of qualified professional instrumental teachers who visit the school during the week to give tuition on a wide variety of instruments. Every boy entering the school will have the opportunity to have lessons on an instrument of his own



choice and all Year 7 boys can receive the first set of ten lessons at half price. Currently over 250 boys in school receive music lessons, with approximately half of Year 7 taking advantage of the subsidised rate.

Pricing:

Instrument Choices

- **Piano and Keyboard:** Students can learn classical and contemporary styles, focusing on technique, reading music, and performance skills.
- **Guitar:** Acoustic, electric or bass guitar lessons are available, covering a wide range of genres from classical to rock.
- **Strings:** Violin, viola, cello, and double bass lessons emphasise technique, musicality, and ensemble playing.
- **Brass:** Trumpet, French horn trombone, and tenor horn, baritone horn and tuba instruction focuses on embouchure, breath control, and ensemble playing.
- **Woodwind:** flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon and saxophone instruction focuses on embouchure, breath control, and ensemble playing
- **Percussion:** Drum kit lessons cover rhythm, coordination, and reading percussion notation.
- **Voice:** Vocal lessons are tailored to individual student needs, including classical, pop, and musical theatre techniques.

The lessons are scheduled on a weekly basis and the length is thirty minutes. Lessons are usually arranged on a rota system so that a boy may not miss the same period more than once each half term. Experience has proved that this is not detrimental to the pupils' general progress, which is monitored closely. Some lessons can be timetabled for a lunch-hour or after school, though priority for these lessons goes to senior boys studying for exams.

Charging Policy

In year 7, the first set of ten lessons are subsidised by the school, and the current charges are £120 for ten individual, or £70 for ten shared lessons. After the initial ten lessons, the normal charges will apply, which are £170 for ten individual, or £95 for ten shared lessons. This money should be paid directly to the instrumental tutor.

The Department has some instruments available for short-term loan, although the expectation is that boys will purchase their own as soon as their familiarity with the instrument increases.



Instrumental/Vocal Ensembles

- **Full Choir** This group is open to pupils in all year groups and pupils can join following a successful audition in September. Full choir rehearses after school on Friday.
- **Chamber Choir** rehearses on a Friday lunch time. Membership is by invite from the Head of Music to boys with broken voices in Year 9 upwards.
- **Year 7 Choir** is open to any pupil in year 7 with a passion for singing. They rehearse on a Monday lunchtime.
- **Keyboard Group** rehearse on a Thursday afterschool and is open to pupils in all year groups who have achieved approx. grade 2 in piano/electronic keyboard.
- **Concert Band** is open to any pupil who has achieved grade 3+ on their instrument. Concert band rehearse on a Thursday after school.
- **String Group** is open to violin, viola, 'cello and double bassists in all year groups. They rehearse on a Wednesday lunchtime.
- **Big Band** is open to rhythm section, and horn players who have been invited to attend by the Head of Music. The band is made up mainly of boys from WGSB but also some girls from the adjacent girls' school. They rehearse on a Wednesday lunchtime.
- **Wind Wizards** is our junior concert band. They specialize in performing their own jazz arrangements and is open to any pupil who plays a woodwind or brass instrument. They rehearse on a Tuesday lunchtime.
- **Rock Bands** we currently have 5 Rock Bands in school, they are open to vocalists, guitarists, bassists and drummers who have a passion for music. They rehearse at various lunchtimes throughout the week depending on which year group they are in.
- **Brass Group** is open to any brass players who have achieved approx. grade 3. They rehearse on a Thursday lunchtime.
- **Electric Guitar Group** rehearse on a Friday lunchtime and is open to anyone who has been playing guitar for approx. 1 year.
- **Samba Band** rehearse on a Thursday lunchtime. This group is open to any pupil with an interest in performing.
- **Clarinet Sextet** rehearse on a Thursday lunchtime. This group is open to clarinetists who have achieved grade 5 on their instrument and have been invited to attend by the Head of Music.
- **Folk Group** rehearse on a Wednesday afternoon. This group is open to violinists who have achieved approx. grade 3 standard in their instrument.
- **School Production** happens annually in March and is presented in collaboration with the adjacent girls' school. Auditions take place in September for boys in years 9-13. This academic year we will be presenting 'Legally Blonde: The Musical'

Part C: Musical Experiences

This section covers additional musical events and opportunities that we organise, such as concerts, shows, trips and events. Within the academic year there are several additional musical opportunities that take place.



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- **Winter Concert**

Wirral Grammar School for Boys' annual Winter Concert offers students the chance to perform before a public audience. The concert takes place at The Civic Hall in Ellesmere Port and tickets are available for parents to buy.
- **Autumn Chamber Concert**

Pupil in all year groups are encouraged to perform in the Autumn Chamber Concert. This concert will include performances who have been learning their instrument/voice for a very short time as well as seasoned performers. This even takes place in the school hall and parents are able to come and watch.
- **Beatles Story Visit**

This visit is open to Year 12 pupils taking the RSL Music Performance qualification and links directly to the 'Understanding Musical Styles' unit. This visit aims to introduce pupils to the significance of the cultural impact of 'Merseybeat' and its importance to the local area.
- **British Music Experience Visit**

This visit is open to Year 10 pupils taking the GCSE and links directly to Area of Study 4 (Popular Music). This visit aims to cement pupils understanding of the development of popular music chronologically from the 1950s to the present day.
- **Carol Service**

Annually, our Full Choir, Chamber Choir and Brass Group perform at our School Carol Service providing them with valuable performance experience. The Carol Service is a highlight of the school calendar, fostering a sense of community and pride among students, staff, and attendees.
- **Spring Concert**

Wirral Grammar School for Boys' annual Winter Concert offers students the chance to perform before a public audience. The concert takes place at The Gladstone Theatre in Port Sunlight and tickets are available for parents to buy.
- **Spring Chamber Concert**

Pupil in all year groups are encouraged to perform in the Autumn Chamber Concert. This concert will include performances who have been learning their instrument/voice for a very short time as well as seasoned performers. This even takes place in the school hall and parents are able to come and watch.
- **'Unplugged' – Songwriters Night**

This evening takes place in the summer term and provides pupils in all year groups the opportunity to perform their own original songs in front of an audience. This event takes place at NYX Bar in Heswall.
- **School Production**

Our joint school production takes places in March each year in the school hall. This is a collaborative event taking place with pupils and staff from Wirral Grammar School for Girls.
- **Summer Concert**

Wirral Grammar School for Boys' annual Winter Concert offers students the chance to perform before a public audience. The concert takes place at The Tung Auditorium at The Yoko Ono Lennon Centre in Liverpool and tickets are available for parents to buy.



Part D: In the Future

A passion for music underpins everything we do. We are proud of our department and the opportunities it offers our pupils. In future, we hope to maintain the quality of performance in difficult economic times and continue to give our boys a 'real life' experience through regular performances of a wide variety of music in a wide variety of external venues.