

The Bishop’s Stortford High school

**Music Department Profile.**

**Resources**

The Music Department at TBSHS is thriving. It is housed in a purpose built music and drama space. There are two large teaching rooms, and one music technology room. There are 16 PSR 1500 keyboards, 30 djembes and a Clavinova in one room. The other teaching room is well resourced with classroom percussion, 30 classical guitars, 30 ukuleles, as well as a piano, drum kit and interactive whiteboard. Within the Music Technology department there is a very well-resourced studio with a discreet recording booth. There are 16 PCs with MIDI keyboards, all running Reason and Cubase, as well as notation software. A drum kit for use for recording and concerts is housed in this space. Five practice rooms are a very welcome asset to the school. One of the practice rooms is double the size and accommodates all drum lessons over three days. It is equipped with a drum kit, orchestral glockenspiel, tam tam and timpani. Each of the practice rooms has a piano. Students are able to book and use these rooms outside of lesson times.

**Staff**

There are two full time members of the department teaching music as well as 12 visiting peripatetic teachers offering tuition in all orchestral instruments as well as singing, piano, electric and classical guitar. This provision is organised by the school, with parents paying upon presentation of the invoice. All instrumental teachers are self-employed, organising their own tax and national insurance. The department also receives administrative support to assist with the organisation of events and trips.

**Curriculum**

The Music Department firmly believes in offering a balanced curriculum at KS3 and attempts to offer popular topics that should be well-liked and respected by all students. This philosophy results in a pathway from Year 7 that takes students through topics such as film music, the blues, African music, Indian music, Indonesian gamelan, reggae and classical structures. We aim to cover all units through as much practical music-making as possible, either as whole classes or in small groups and pairs. Students in Years 7 and 8 receive 2 lessons per fortnight, with four lessons per fortnight in Year 9.

At KS4 and KS5 the Music Department follows the Edexcel syllabi. In 2017 the class of 13 students at GCSE level gained an A\* - C pass rate of 92% with 54% of the group achieving grades A\*-A. At A-Level, numbers are usually between 4-8 students, studying both Music and Music Technology. A-Level, results are consistently good, with most of our students achieving A – C grades in the last two years; several of whom have gone on to study the subject at prestigious universities.

**Assessment**

Assessment within the department is in line with the school’s guidelines. There are Assessment Tasks several times per year in KS3. The department has worked hard over the last few years to develop Assessment for Learning and self, peer and teacher assessments are carefully balanced to facilitate maximum student progression.

**Extra-Curricular Music**

Extra-Curricular provision is outstanding and every opportunity is offered to students to become involved in the musical life of the school. There is a concert band, swing band, big band, senior and junior jazz ensembles, a guitar ensemble, brass ensemble, string ensemble, choir, senior vocal group, blues band and numerous rock bands. Rooms are often used by students practising their own material and the music technology room is available most break and lunch times. Each of the ensembles performs regularly throughout the school year at large termly concerts and smaller chamber concerts.

The school ensembles also participate in regional, national and international events. The Concert Band, Swing Band, Choir and Guitar Ensemble have played at “Music for Youth”.