



## Gravesend Grammar School

### Music Department

At Gravesend Grammar School we recognise the importance of musical education and the benefits it has on young developing minds. Music is both a focus for study and a means of communal expression with students developing musical understanding and skill (while appraising, composing and performing) in classes, in option groups, individually and as a part of school ensembles.

#### **The Department:**

The GGS Music Department is still young, with our first GCSE Music cohort being examined in summer 2021. With such a fresh department there is ample opportunity for growth and development, and would be ideal for someone who wants to be involved in shaping the future of a subject as it expands. Our culturally diverse school embraces creativity and takes every opportunity to come together to celebrate our successes across the school community. The Music Department plays a big part in combining our school traditions with modern facilities and ongoing opportunities.

We are a committed team with a love of our subject and a supportive, collegiate atmosphere in which all staff are valued. The Department currently has three members of staff; one full-time Subject Leader, one Extra-Curricular Lead, who also oversees technician responsibilities, and one part-time Music Instructor, who supervises student rehearsals. Gravesend Grammar School also has several supportive non-specialist staff who dedicate a lot of their time to the department.

In usual circumstances Extra-Curricular activities thrive, with a School Band, School Choir, Samba Band, Recorder Club, Senior Jazz Ensemble and at least one large scale Musical Theatre performance per academic year. We also have a growing peripatetic provision, with four Visiting Music Teachers offering one-to-one tuition in a wide range of instruments.

We have established links with other departments, in particular Drama and Art, as well as connections with other local schools, our local Council and our local music hub, Kent Music. Connections with the local Council have allowed us to build our profile within the local community.

#### **Resources:**

One of the main features of our department is our purpose-built recording studio, with a baby grand piano, PA system, electric drum kit, Mac (with Logic Pro) and a variety of guitar and amps. This space is of course perfect for band rehearsals and recording groups. In addition, we have three well-equipped Practice Rooms available for student use.

The Music Department is also fortunate to have a recently refurbished dedicated Computer Room as our primary teaching space; the room has 34 PCs, each with its own midi keyboard, and teaching resources include an interactive whiteboard and digital projector. The Department has developed its schemes of work to incorporate a range of challenging and creative technology and software into our subject, including Focus on Sound, Audacity, Flat.io, Sibelius and Bandlab for Education.

For large-scale events we have access to two indoor spaces; our Theatre space is perfect for contemporary gigs and larger rehearsals, and our school hall, which recently took delivery of a new

Wyvern organ, is used for whole school productions and more formal school events. We also use the school Quad for outdoor performance and for our annual Summer Festival we erect a stage on the school field.

Staff have their own workspaces either in the Department Office or in the study area of the Staff Room. All staff are provided with their own work laptop.

#### **Extra-Curricular:**

Extra-Curricular Music has been going strong at Gravesend Grammar School for many years with several ensembles, including our School Band, School Choir, Samba Band and Recorder Club, performing throughout the year at a variety of venues and events. In addition, we have a lunchtime provision of clubs to build the confidence of players of any standard, particularly in piano and guitar, as well as our Practice Rooms being available for students to book for their own rehearsals.

We also have several student led bands, who rehearse under the supervision of our staff to guide and encourage creative development, who are given several opportunities to perform and record their material.

Our connections with several local organisations also provide additional extra-curricular opportunities.

#### **KS3 (Year 7 & 8):**

We are looking forward to developing our KS3 curriculum for September 2021 with the addition of dedicated Music lessons throughout Year 7, which are currently being taught combined with Art and Drama. Year 7 students take part in fortnightly singing assemblies, which are also used as rehearsals for our Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, which is held annually at a local church and has taken place for well over five decades.

In Year 8 students currently develop and reinforce their musical understanding and practical skills using their voices, instruments and music technology. Crucially, through listening, composing and performing activities they strengthen their creative ability, self-confidence and self-expression.

#### **GCSE (Year 9-11):**

Our GCSE course follows the Eduqas syllabus and students currently have a strong set of predicted grades for our first GCSE cohort being examined this summer. GCSE Music encompasses appraising, composition and performance to create a well rounded and engaging curriculum.

#### **A-Level:**

We are planning to offer A-Level Music for the first time in September 2021, following the Eduqas syllabus.

#### **Professional Development:**

The Department follows school procedure and ensures that staff are both properly developed through Appraisal, INSET and external courses, as well as encouraged to be reflective practitioners. Whole-staff CPD activities are timetabled on Friday afternoons and there is scope for someone to develop a particular specialist interest if they desire within the department.

#### **The Future:**

We believe that the study of Music, and the creative arts as a whole, should provide our students with both an independence of mind, and the essential communication skills necessary in their future lives. Alongside our supportive Leadership Team we hope to take the department and our students forward, building on our current achievements, both in terms of academic attainment and results and also in continuing to develop a respected and supportive culture of Music throughout school life.

*February 2021*