



The **Thomas Mills High School & Sixth Form** GCSE Music Curriculum is based on the Edexcel course. The Edexcel GCSE Music curriculum aims to develop well-rounded musicianship by integrating **technical, constructive and expressive knowledge**.

- **Technical knowledge** focuses on understanding how music is created, including skills in performance, composition and the use of musical notation and technology. Students learn how to play or sing with accuracy, fluency and control.
- **Constructive knowledge** involves understanding how musical elements—such as melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, tonality, structure, sonority, tempo, dynamics and articulation—are combined to create coherent and purposeful compositions. This knowledge enables students to analyse and construct music across diverse genres and contexts as well as analysing the 8 different set works.
- **Expressive knowledge** emphasises communication and interpretation, enabling students to make informed artistic decisions that convey mood, character and intention in both performance and composition.

Together, these areas ensure that students become confident, creative and analytical musicians, capable of engaging critically with a wide range of musical styles. The main assessments this year are centred around the three important elements of the GCSE examination: performing, composing and appraising. The final exam comprises all the elements with 30% for Performing (solo and ensemble), 30% for Composing (free composition and brief composition) and 40% for the Appraising written paper.

Year 10			
Term	Topic	Knowledge and Skills	Useful Links
1	<b>Performing:</b>	Pupils continue to develop their solo performance skills on their chosen instrument or voice, guided by their instrumental or singing teacher. They will focus on accuracy, expression and confidence in preparation for a class concert.	<a href="#">Piano Sonata No.8 - Beethoven: Piano Sonata No.8, first movement - Edexcel - GCSE Music Revision - Edexcel - BBC Bitesize</a>
	<b>Composing:</b>	This term introduces pupils to composing music in response to a set brief. They will explore musical ideas and techniques while learning how to shape a short original piece to a brief, e.g. discovery of a new planet.	<a href="#">The Brandenburg Concertos - Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No.5, third movement - Edexcel - GCSE Music Revision - Edexcel - BBC Bitesize</a>



	<b>Appraising:</b>	Pupils study two key instrumental set works: Beethoven's <i>Pathetique Sonata</i> and Bach's <i>Brandenburg Concerto</i> . They learn to identify musical elements and understand historical and stylistic context.	
<b>Assessments:</b>		Pupils will be assessed through a solo or ensemble performance as part of a class concert at the end of the term. To support this, teachers will provide ongoing verbal and written feedback, helping pupils develop confidence, technique, and musical expression. For composition, pupils will complete a short piece in response to a set brief. They will receive clear guidance, examples of strong work, and written feedback on their drafts to help them shape and refine their ideas effectively. In appraising, pupils will sit listening tests on Beethoven's <i>Pathetique Sonata</i> and Bach's <i>Brandenburg Concerto</i> . Verbal feedback and class discussion will help pupils understand key features of the set works, supported by teacher modelling of how to approach listening questions and analyse musical elements.	
2	<b>Performing:</b>  <b>Composing:</b>  <b>Appraising:</b>	This term focuses on ensemble performance. Pupils develop skills in musical collaboration, timing and communication through rehearsing and performing in small groups or ensembles.  The Spring reintroduces pupils to the free composition component of their GCSE portfolio. Pupils begin planning and creating their own piece with full creative control. They may choose to build on the piece they began in year 9 or start something completely new.  Set work studies are expanded with additional wider listening. Pupils deepen their analysis of <i>Brandenburg</i>	<a href="#">Instrumental Music from 1700 to 1820 - GCSE Music - BBC Bitesize</a>



		and <i>Pathetique</i> , comparing them to similar styles or contrasting genres through essay writing and discussion.	
<b>Assessments:</b>		<p>This term, pupils are assessed on another solo or ensemble performance. For composition, pupils will submit a free composition draft, accompanied by a written commentary. Teachers will give structured feedback on both the composition and commentary, with examples shared in class to support clarity and creativity in pupils' work.</p> <p>Appraising will be assessed through a written comparison essay on <i>Brandenburg Concerto</i> and <i>Pathetique Sonata</i>, with links to wider listening. Pupils will practise this through guided classroom activities, regular feedback and model answers provided by teachers to build confidence in writing and listening analysis.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Performing:</b></p> <p><b>Composing:</b></p> <p><b>Appraising:</b></p>	<p>Pupils refine both solo and ensemble skills, leading to a final class concert performance. They continue to build confidence and musicality through regular practice and peer feedback.</p> <p>Pupils will continue to work on their free compositions and refine their ideas with regular verbal and written feedback.</p> <p>Study shifts to Fusion music, with a focus on analysing set works from this genre – <i>Samba Em Preludio</i> by Esperanza Spalding and <i>Release</i> by Afro Celt Sound System. Pupils will further develop their aural skills and essay responses.</p>	<p><a href="#">Samba Em Prelúdio - Esperanza Spalding: Samba Em Prelúdio - Edexcel - GCSE Music Revision - Edexcel - BBC Bitesize</a></p> <p><a href="#">Release - Afro Celt Sound System: Release - Edexcel - GCSE Music Revision - Edexcel - BBC Bitesize</a></p>
<b>Assessments:</b>		<p>There are three assessments this term. The performance assessment, once again, checks pupils' progress with this element of the course. Any concerns will be reported to the pupils' teacher and repertoire choices will be discussed.</p>	



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## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW: MUSIC

	<p>Pupils will submit their free composition and commentary. This will be almost finished at this stage and minor suggestions will be made with written and verbal feedback.</p> <p>Pupils will complete listening tests and essays based on the Fusion set works. Some will now be able to write the essays without a writing frame, but these will be available if necessary. Essays will be discussed and planned as a class before they begin to write them.</p>
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