

Higham Lane School

Higham Lane School is a large secondary school and sixth form in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, with 1,428 students. 5.2% of students have SEN support, 2.5% of students have EHCPs, 16.4% are eligible for Pupil Premium and 18.1% of our students have English as an additional language.

Music Curriculum at Higham Lane

Introduction

Music is currently delivered by two music specialists who are highly qualified and experienced teachers. The department is led by Carolyn Davenport (full-time) and Sally Watson (part time 3 days).

The Music Department has two well-equipped rooms, five practice rooms with piano and drum kits, a student instrument storeroom and music office. Music classrooms are equipped with fifteen keyboards, computers with Sibelius software and a teaching piano. Ukuleles, djembes, guitars, amplifiers, samba, soprano steel pans and a variety of pitched, handheld percussion instruments are also well resourced.

Our KS3 Music Curriculum has been designed to engage, inspire and challenge students focusing on ***composing, performing, listening and appraising*** and to build upon prior knowledge at KS2. As students join us from a wide catchment area of different primary schools, our aims are to build confidence within the main 4 skills and to introduce the foundations of music theory, playing a variety of instruments and promote engagement and motivation during lesson time in a practical way. By being creative, experimental and inventive, our students are encouraged to work individually, in pairs or within a group ensemble to equip themselves with knowledge, understanding and skills within various genres. Students also begin to understand and recognise how music shapes their daily emotions, whether being through diverse cultures, history or daily life.

Schemes of learning and learning resources

Schemes of learning are clearly designed to engage, inspire and challenge students using basic elements of music, their voices, body percussion and percussive instruments, Western versus World to reinforce key content during carefully structures topics, regular informative and formative assessments and many opportunities to recap and reinforce prior learning. As singing is a vital part of the Music National Curriculum, we encourage students to use their voices as much as possible during their KS3 lessons. Alongside our schemes, knowledge organisers are incorporated to deepen and retain prior information, keywords and characteristics of each topic, work journals to encourage independent, home learning and conversation booklets enable us to define and share core knowledge for our students to consider when marked within the schools marking policy.

Lessons at KS3 and KS4

Students are issued with a topic booklet that our lessons are built around. Subject knowledge focusing on keywords, characteristics, performance and/or compositional tasks that are key with level descriptors on how to achieve during an assessment or for the listening paper in year 11.

Our lessons begin with a '***Do Now, rapid recall***' activity for students to recall and recap essential knowledge independently or in pairs. These activities are streamlined across the department, as are our power points for consistency, but teachers may devise their own, differentiating between the teaching groups. Starter activities enable teachers to check for students understanding and assists to consolidate future learning. Further strategies for students to remember what they have learn includes thorough, effective questioning and explanations. Teachers use a variety of questioning strategies such as '***cold***

call', 'no opt out' and 'think, pair, share' discussions to ensure all students participate actively during lesson time. **Modelling of tasks** is also key when introducing, supporting and reinforcing students learning as they improve their work using the success criteria that is set and lesson challenge.

Lessons at KS4

Our KS4 Music curriculum follows the OCR specification which includes 3 components: **Performing, composing and listening skills.**

Our aim is to actively engage students in the creative process of performing and composing to GCSE level and to develop effectively into true musicians. The curriculum provides an opportunity for students to take a personal interest in the areas of study relating to the listening examination and to be inspired and engaged as students are introduced to different cultures and musical styles. Whether this is through performing, composing or listening, students will develop creative, imaginative and intuitive capabilities to become confident musicians either through private or CMS instrumental lessons, composing using various forms of software, such as Sibelius or listening to genres they have never considered exploring before. Students are also encouraged to continue with their instrumental lessons privately, or via County Music Service within school as this creates a sound baseline for the GCSE performance component of the course worth 60 marks.

Extra-curricular at Higham Lane and Musical Experiences

Beyond our class teaching, students are given the opportunity to expand their musical experience by attending extra-curricular within school and Warwickshire County Music Service. Enrichment activities are also encouraged and we are hoping to increase such events during our next academic year.

At school we currently offer the following activities:

- School Choir
- Jamming Club
- School Orchestra
- Keyboard Club
- Djembe Club
- Ukulele Club
- GCSE support in composition, revision and catchup sessions during and after school
- Room bookings during lunchtimes and after school
- Annual Carol Service, Christmas Concert and Summer Showcase
- Money raised by the department at concerts e.g. ticket sales and refreshments allows the school to extend their budget to cover purchasing new equipment, as well as maintaining existing resources
- Visit to a local Residential Care home
- Transition assemblies
- A Musical production linked with the Drama Department being an essential part of our enrichment at the end of the academic year
- Trips

Instrumental provision by County Music is:

- Strings: Violin, Viola and Cello
- Guitar: Acoustic and Electric
- Woodwind: Flute, Clarinet and Saxophone
- Piano and Keyboard
- Drums

Future developments

County Music Hub

Following a successful meeting with Warwickshire County Music in regards to how we can work together promoting music in Nuneaton, the following will take place from September 2024.

- County Music hub will be based at Higham Lane
- Workshops and instrumental lessons for disadvantaged students will be strongly promoted and encouraged by working closely with the SEND department
- Extra provision will be provided for students to partake in instrumental lessons during and after school
- Instruments will be loaned to students
- Government funding will be available for students to purchase instruments via County Music
- Alternative funding will be sourced from local charities e.g. Nuneaton Rotary Club

A level Music

- Negotiations have been taking place with our 6th form to offer music as there is no provision for A level music within the local area, only Music technology
- Having taught A level to a very high standard in the past (2008-2014) at Higham Lane, achieving results that enabled students to continue their education within Russell Group Universities or Music Colleges of their choice, we are hoping that Music will be included in the prospectus from September 2025

Higham Lane North from September 2025

<https://www.hlna.co.uk/>