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Chetham's  
School of Music

## **Curriculum Policy**

The key concern of the curriculum at Chetham's is to offer breadth, balance and quality in the context of the music specialism of the school. We aim at a fine balance of timetabling, staffing and resourcing in pursuit of both outstanding instrumental performance and high academic standards.

Instrumental programmes are tailor-made for the aptitudes and interests of the individual student, as far as practicalities allow. Over a third of our timetable is devoted to music, so students can expect to study music for more than three hours a day plus practice time. The music programme is varied and filled with opportunities to support the development and understanding of the student. Areas include instrumental and vocal study, aural training, chamber music, orchestral training, choral work, academic study, improvisation, jazz, composition, music technology and music therapy. All students have a principal study and usually a second study instrument, with two individual lessons a week on their principal study, plus one further lesson on their second study. Individual practice is also scheduled up until the Sixth Form.

In years 7, 9 & 11 students give a recital to their Head of Instrumental Department and the Joint Principal (TR) in order to review progress together and offer encouragement, guidance and advice on specified areas. HoIDs also visit instrumental lessons for technical evaluations and progress discussions with each student and their instrumental tutor. In year 12 students undertake a mock conservatoire audition to an external panel. There are also performance and master classes as well as ensembles, both large and small, in which students participate as part of their musical development.

On the academic side, details of courses and options are set out in three curriculum handbooks, for Lower and Middle School and for Sixth Form, which are issued during the Spring Term and posted on the School's website. There is some student choice for students going into Year 9, but more significantly going into Years 10 and 12 in the selection of GCSE and A-level subjects respectively. Extracts from the 'Introduction' pages of the three curriculum handbooks can be found at the end of this policy.

The Junior School curriculum is broadly in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum for Key Stage 2. ICT is taught through subject-based topics. Music, German, French and Fit to Perform are taught by specialist staff from the Senior School. Close curricular links are maintained between the Junior Department and Year 7. Towards the end where practicable, Year 6, students have 'taster' lessons with colleagues from the English, Mathematics and Science departments in the Senior School. Children with specific educational needs receive specialist help from the school's Compensatory Education Department, with which close links are maintained by the Head of the Junior Department. Students take internal nationally-standardised tests in May.

In Years 7-9 our Key Stage 3 programme places an emphasis on the development of appropriate skills across a broad and balanced range of subjects, with the central aim of promoting good learning habits as the basis for subsequent studies.

At GCSE, for most students the curriculum range covers the core of Music, English (Language and Literature), Mathematics and Combined Science (Trilogy) (double award) plus options in Modern Foreign Languages and Humanities. Exceptions include EAL students who may follow a reduced GCSE programme without, for example, English Literature or Modern Foreign Languages. Compulsory GCSE re-sit options in the Sixth Form are for students who have previously achieved lower than grade 4 in English Language and/or Mathematics.

In the Sixth Form, all students take Music A-level and then choose two (or, in a few cases, one or three) additional A-levels. Most typically, students pursue three subjects for the full two years.

Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE) (included in the Enrichment Studies programme in the Sixth Form) is timetabled across the age range. Fitness is timetabled up to Year 11. All students participate in choir on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. There is also an Enrichment programme in Year 9, encompassing Thinking/Study Skills and Careers Awareness.

ICT is delivered as a separate subject in Year 7 and 8 based on the skills and readiness need for the technological world. In the upper years at school ICT is delivered through curriculum areas.

The Compensatory Education department supports students who have any learning differences or have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). We also support any students for whom English is an Additional Language. Delivery is either via 1:1 lessons, small group lessons or in-class support.

Each academic department has its own departmental guidance including, among other things, subject-specific aims, teaching approaches and assessment procedures; and other relevant documentation, including schemes of work, professional review papers and risk assessment(s).

There is a keen awareness of opportunities to promote cross-curricular activities, especially those which enhance the links between Music and the wider curriculum, and/or underpin fundamental British values, in day-to-day teaching and learning. The full breadth of Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural aspects embedded in our curricular provision is set out in the detailed separate *SMSC* document.

## **Lower School**

The aim of the Lower School curriculum is to promote good learning habits across a broad and balanced range of subjects. The emphasis is on development of skills rather than coverage of large quantities of material.

Students enjoy a great deal of variety during this phase of their education, prior to the increasing specialisation at more senior levels of the school. Given the nature of the school, we always keep the instrumental/academic balance in mind. Most important of all, we try to provide programmes of study which serve the best educational interests of all our students.

The curriculum consists of Music, Mathematics, English, Science, History, Geography, French, German, Art, Drama, Personal Social Health and Economic Education, ICT, Fit to Perform.

All students sit the MidYIS base-line test during one academic lesson at some point in Years 7, 8 or 9 - the timing for a particular student depends on when they join the school. No additional preparation is required for this aptitude test.

## **Middle School**

We aim to offer our students as broad an education as possible until the end of Year 9 but the greater depth required for GCSE work and an increase in the demands of music and instrumental work require students, upon entering Year 10, to make a choice in the number of subjects studied.

In line with national specifications, but with modifications which take into account our specialist nature, all of our students in Years 10 and 11 take these subjects at GCSE: Music, English (Language and Literature), Maths, Science (Double award) Students can choose two subjects from the following option blocks, with a maximum of one subject from each block:

- Option block 1: French, German
- Option block 2: History, Geography
- Option block 3: Art, Drama

In addition all students will attend the following timetabled activities/lessons between 8.30am and 4.30pm:

- Timetabled instrumental work and practice: minimum 7 hours per week\*
- Fit to Perform (previously PE): 1 hour per week
- Personal Social Health and Economic Education (not examined): 1 hour per week
- Choir: ½ hour per week
- Tutor Period/Assembly: 1 hour per week
- (\*plus a minimum of 7 hours evening and Saturday morning commitment).

Once individual choices are clear, then your workload, academic and musical, is discussed by the Head of Instrumental Department and Head of Middle School, following which recommendations are made regarding academic subjects. The aim is to strike a balance between musical progress and academic commitment. If a subject has too few students opting for it, it may not run and you will be asked to choose a different subject in its place.

Year 10 students will sit the Yellis base-line test, for which no preparation is required, during one timetabled academic lesson.

## **Sixth Form**

At Chetham's we are primarily concerned with striking the right balance between the provision of a rounded education which will prepare you for Higher Education and the needs of your music specialism.

When deciding on your Sixth Form academic programme, you should consider your own capabilities, your instrumental needs and your future plans. We look carefully at your choice of subjects, your general level of academic ability and your instrumental needs and commitments in order to find the right programme for you. You will want to discuss your plans with your parents/carers/ guardians, your subject teachers, your instrumental teacher and Head of Department and (for those of you already at Chetham's) your personal tutor.

There are 4 option blocks from which to make your choice of subjects. You will be expected to choose Music plus 2 subjects from Blocks 2-4; it may be possible to choose 3 if you feel 4 A levels is feasible. Only choices consistent with the blocking system can be considered; restrictions of time and resourcing mean that we are unable to offer you a completely free choice of options. Do not, therefore, choose more than one subject from each block. The exception to this is French and German; we may be able to consider dual linguists if you flag this on your option form. Please note also that whether a course goes ahead will depend on its viability in terms of numbers opting for it. We reserve the right to withdraw a course if take-up is minimal. However, this should not deter you in the first instance from applying for the combination of subjects which attracts you.

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5
Music	French German Biology Physics Music technology	Chemistry History Geography Music technology	Mathematics Further maths English literature Art	PSHE and electives

There are 5 hours teaching time per week assigned to each subject. In addition, you are expected to spend approximately 3-4 hours per subject per week on prep. / private study.

The ALIS base-line test, for which no preparation is required, will be taken by all Year 12 students during one timetabled academic lesson.

## **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Electives**

All students, but especially students on a less academically demanding A level programme, will be encouraged to follow our wider skills curriculum which will also allow them to get involved with our Outreach programme and other activities linked to music.

In addition to their chosen subjects, Year 12 students follow PSHE/Electives for one period per week. These studies complement A-Level study and assist in developing and providing evidence of skills valued by universities, colleges and employers.

Students choose one option which offers them the chance to experience new areas of study, for instance Beginner's German, American Studies and Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).

PSHE topics will also be delivered to all Y12 students throughout the year. Topics will include Study Skills; Health; Mental Health; E-safety and building a positive online profile; Relationships and sexual health; Money Matters; Alcohol, Smoking/Vaping and Drugs; Preparing for life after Chetham's.