

Music Department

A brief description of the department, its aims and its facilities.

Westcliff High School for Girls places great value and importance upon a good musical education. The resources and accommodation for Music are excellent and we are based in our own purpose-built facility.

Music in the Curriculum

All pupils have the opportunity of fully developing their musical potential, whether as performers, composers or informed listeners.

All pupils study Music in Year 7, 8 and 9 once a week, exploring a wide variety of musical styles through listening, composing, and performing. The lessons adopt a creative and practical approach, in order that pupils learn about the subject through direct experience and gain an appreciation for a wide range of genres and cultures.

GCSE Music and A level Music are both popular choices of subject with many pupils continuing their study of Music at University or Music College. At Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11), students delve into the depths of music history and theory and develop important skills in composition and performance. The three components – performing, composing, and appraising – are all interrelated, and students develop their knowledge and understanding of the four areas of study through a variety of musical contexts, elements, and language: Musical Forms and Devices, Music for Ensemble, Film Music, and Popular Music.

In Year 12 (KS5), students study the Eduqas AS Music qualification, following onto the full A2 qualification in Year 13. There is also the option to study for an addition AS qualification in Music Technology over 2 years.

Musical Instrument Tuition

Over 10% of our pupils take part in school-based Music tuition. Lessons from peripatetic staff are available on the full range of orchestral instruments, including percussion, as well as piano, classical, bass and electric guitar, drum kit and singing.

Concerts

The Department has an extremely busy extra-curricular timetable. In the Autumn Term the Music Department hosts a Live Lounge and Winter Concert, which showcases the Department's many ensembles and talented soloists as well as a Carol Service at a local church. The Department is also involved in performing at numerous festive events around the Christmas period including Carols in the Afternoon for the Mayor. The Spring Term is focused around the annual whole school production and House Music competition. A Summer showcase is held towards the end of the school year and, in addition to this, there are also A level recitals.

Music Technology

Across the two Music classrooms, there are 28 Apple iMacs with access to Sibelius Ultimate, Logic Pro X and GarageBand. There is also a fully equipped recording studio with facilities for recording various types of performances.

Stage Productions

Music is a prominent feature of dramatic productions, in the form of both incidental music for plays and the presentation of fully staged musicals. The productions feature state of the art sound and lighting and are of the very highest caliber and NODA award winning. Recent productions have included Sister Act, 9 to 5, Little Shop of Horrors and Legally Blonde the Musical. Our production of Legally Blonde the Musical and 9 to 5 were listed as finalists for the NODA East Region Best Youth Production and Little Shop of Horrors was the winner of this category.

Ensembles & Choirs

Numerous ensembles meet weekly, enabling participants to develop their musicianship skills as fully as possible. Ensembles include:

- Jazz Band (advanced)
- Big Little Band (beginners)
- Woodwind Ensemble
- String Ensemble
- Ukulele Ensemble
- Gospel Choir
- Westcliff Singers (Years 9-13)
- Junior Choir (Years 7 & 8)
- WHSGlee (Musical Theatre)