

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 have improved and grown over the past few years, 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 and 8, exploring a wide variety of musical styles through listening, composing and performing. The lessons generally 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 9-11), pupils choose to study Music as one of their options. In Year 9, students focus on developing their skills and explore the History of Music in preparation for Year 10 and 11, where they study 8 set works across 4 different areas of study.

At Key Stage 5, students study Music to A2 level and have the option to also study for an additional 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 AS and A level recitals. The School's ensembles are regularly entered into local and national festivals and competitions. The Department also arranges a biennial Concert Tour to Europe and have visited destinations including Lake Garda, Florence and Paris.

Music Technology

Across the two Music classrooms, there are 28 Apple iMacs with access to Sibelius Ultimate, Logic Pro and Garageband. There is also a fully equipped recording studio with facilities for recording various types of performance from solo work to full orchestras.

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. Recent productions have included Little Shop of Horrors, Legally Blonde the Musical, Memphis and Ghost. Our production of Legally Blonde the Musical was listed as a finalist for the NODA East Region Best Youth Production.

Ensembles & Choirs

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

Jazz Band
Gospel Choir
Concert Orchestra
Woodwind Ensemble
Saxophone Quartet
Westcliff Singers (Years 9-13)
Junior Choir (Years 7 & 8)
Harmonics (Auditioned Choir)
Wind Band
Junior Band
String Ensemble
WHS Glee (Musical Theatre)