

## **Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School**



### **Music Department**

Here at Brentwood Ursuline Music and the Arts are very much embedded into the daily life of the school. The Music Department offers a wealth of performances each year, with approximately 100 music instrumental lessons taught each week, under the direction of a dedicated team of teaching staff, including 12 visiting instrumental teachers.

Our underlying ethos is to provide musical opportunities for all students, whilst fulfilling the highest possible standards. Students are encouraged to participate in ensembles and choirs, whilst the Music Scholars and Music Place students form the backbone of the department, and help to lead the diverse musical opportunities offered to our students. As a Catholic school, music is also a central part of our worship, and it plays an integral part of our day to day assemblies and Mass services held at Brentwood Cathedral.

The department is spread over two floors. Our facilities boast an Apple suite with 30 computers all running Avid Sibelius and Logic Pro X. We also have a digital recording studio supported by the Universal Music Sound Foundation, which includes two live recording rooms, a drum booth and control room. Other department facilities include two large classrooms, a sixth-form teaching room, eight instrumental teaching practice rooms and a music office and staff room.

The school offers instrumental lessons in all orchestral instruments, as well as piano, organ, classical, electric and bass guitars, saxophone, orchestral percussion, and voice, with tuition following a weekly rotated timetable. The school possesses an excellent range of instruments, including sets of African, Indian and Latin American drums, steel pans, 2 Yamaha grand pianos, 10 upright pianos including Yamaha U3, U1 and B1s, a comprehensive collection of orchestral percussion and timpani, electric guitars and drum kits, double basses, cellos and violins, and various woodwind and brass instruments, some of which are available as loan instruments.

The department hosts regular workshops, masterclasses, concerts and trips to London, helping to provide Ursuline students with a rounded musical education. GCSE and A'Level Music are popular courses.

GCSE Music – Students currently follow the Eduqas specification and focus on three main disciplines, including Performance (30%), Composition (30%) and Aural Perception through a Listening examination (40%).

A Level Music – Students follow the Edexcel specification. At A Level, students are examined through Performance (30%), Composition (30%) and a Written Examination (with components in Aural, Analysis of set works and extended written responses (40%).

All KS3 students receive three 50 minute classroom music lessons each fortnight, with Music being an Arts option from year 9 onwards. Students regularly obtain distinctions in ABRSM instrumental and vocal examinations, and reach the finals of local music festivals in Havering, Chelmsford and Southend. Recent past students have been awarded places to study music at universities and music colleges, including Cambridge, Oxford, York, Manchester, Royal Northern College of Music and Trinity College of Music.

The Performing Arts curriculum subjects work closely together during the course of the year, providing students with a variety of performance opportunities. Biennially a large scale musical is performed in the Autumn term, and recent productions have included Little Shop of Horrors (2018). Each year the Music Department hosts two orchestral concerts, three chamber concerts and two Junior Choir concerts. The department organises regular trips abroad, which has included our Chamber Choir singing mass in The Pantheon in Rome and also St Mark's Basilica, Venice.

The department is proud of its classical music tradition, but has developed and grown in recent years to offer students many more opportunities. During each week of term, the following ensembles meet for regular rehearsal: String Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, Clare Quartet, Stage Choir, Chamber Choir, Flute Choir, 180-strong Junior Choir, Gospel Choir and Saxophone Ensemble.

The annual House Music Competition, allows students to lead a large scale event, whilst representing their individual school Houses. The music department is always keen to extend the performance opportunities available to students beyond the school day.

A music scholarship and place programme exists to assist those with a musical aptitude attend the School. Potential music scholars attend a musical aptitude test in the first term of Year 6, with those passing selection attending a competitive audition. The school admits up to 10% of the new Year 7 intake as music scholar/place students

The Music Department is staffed by:

Gregory White – Director of Music  
Roger Humphrey - Classroom Teacher  
Angela Corless - Deputy Headteacher