



Music

KS3 Curriculum Plan 2025-2026

St Aloysius RC College

Overview

The KS3 music curriculum at St Aloysius' RC College aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop their skills as performers, composers and appraisers through a diverse and stimulating programme of study. Through these disciplines, we intend to provide students with the necessary skills to develop into well-rounded musicians in an environment that is inclusive and fosters creativity and individuality. The Music Department at St Aloysius promotes the school's culture of high expectations and is designed to challenge, support and inspire students of all experience levels.

Each week KS3 classes receive one fifty-minute lesson which is always centred around practical work. The department is built on the philosophy that meaningful musical learning and progress is realised through the students experimenting and being creative with instruments rather than spending time completing worksheets.

Towards the end of the KS3 curriculum there is special focus provided to music technology. The production of music through electronic means is a thriving industry that boasts a diverse array of career opportunities and these are communicated to students in the form of specialised careers lessons; in addition, students will develop sequencing skills that are essential for the composing component of the Music GCSE course.

Feedback is constant and formative assessment is ongoing. Summative assessments occur at the end of each half term. Informal feedback is provided every lesson and there are frequent opportunities for students to evaluate their own work, as well as the work of others. Formal feedback is provided each half term in the format of FAR tasks (Feedback, Action, Response) in line with school policy.

Year 7

Essential foundation skills are developed in Year 7 that are necessary to support students' development throughout KS3 music. The KS3 curriculum begins by bridging gaps in learning from primary school music. It helps to develop and reinforce students' knowledge and understanding of rhythm and pitch notation through exploring singing and use of instruments and explorations of textures such as 'call and response,' and 'polyrhythms.' Rhythmic understanding is supported by consistent exercises and warm-ups which becomes embedded into classwork, and is further utilised throughout KS3 and KS4.

Keyboard skills are introduced soon in the third term of Year 7 and the students continue to develop their knowledge of rhythm and pitch notation through two half terms of focused keyboard work. Knowledge of musical elements is key to students technical understanding of music and also serves to develop their appraising skills; throughout Year 7 students are introduced to various musical elements that apply to different areas of their learning and they are required to use these musical elements to make critical observations, not just about music they hear but also about their own practice and performance and that of their peers.



The Year 7 curriculum culminates in a term-long Band Skills scheme of work that introduces students to a selection of new instruments: ukulele, guitar, bass guitar and drums. Students will also continue to develop their keyboard skills in this period. In the first half term students will receive lessons that are focused on specific instruments and necessary entry-level skills are taught. In the final half term, students work in bands on a mixture of instruments to practice for a final band performance.

Year 8

The Year 8 curriculum is written to further develop students' ensemble skills through various forms of music. It begins by introducing more advanced rhythmic sequences and polyrhythms as well as greater variety of pitch/ range within an ensemble singing unit. Students then move onto studying Film Music and develop their skills from Year 7 of composing melodies in order to create their own Leitmotifs. They then move onto Blues music and are introduced to typical structural elements of music such as chord progressions, bass-lines, developing their ability within improvisation. They will continue developing their band skills through practice and performance of the 12 Bar Blues, incorporating improvisation within the Blues scale to their final performances.

Students then move to the 'Rhythm and Metre' unit, working in groups to create a final performance which builds on their polyrhythmic skills through strophic form and Theme and Variation.

In the final term, composition skills are further developed through a Band Composition scheme of work that encompasses the last half of Term 3. Students will use their prior knowledge of band work and ensemble performance, this time going a step further and composing their own short song in a group. This scheme of work utilises students' knowledge of chords, as well as the learning they have completed on the Blues, Ensemble Singing and Rhythm and Metre units.

Year 9

At the start of Year 9 music from the modern era is explored. Students build on their understanding of music having a combination of elements to create texture, and create music which demonstrates this. Students will be introduced to GCSE language and will use key terminology to make technical observations on music, something they will develop throughout Year 9.

From Term 2 onwards a special focus is provided to the development of students' popular music knowledge and improvisation skills, through study of Blues and Rock n Roll music. They will build on ensemble skill knowledge in Term 3, learning to play a piece of complex rhythmic minimalist music, and finally tying their skills together as they complete an extended song writing project. This is a chance for the students to be creative and individual with less restrictive parameters. This half-term long project also directly prepares students for the composing component of the GCSE Music course.



Year 7	Term 1A Rhythm and Notation	Term 1B Arranging and Texture	Term 2A Arranging and Texture 2	Term 2B Melody	Term 3A Melody 2	Term 3B Melody and Accompaniment
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic rhythm notation: semibreve, minim, crotchet, quaver Unison, call and response and polyrhythm Musical elements: rhythm, tempo, dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic pitch notation: conjunct/ disjunct melody. Musical elements: pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, melody 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes within a C Major scale Musical elements: rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, melody, structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orchestral families Conjunct/ Disjunct Musical elements: rhythm, tempo, dynamics, melody, pitch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure – 16 bar melody Conjunct and disjunct melody Musical elements: rhythm, tempo, dynamics, melody, pitch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combining melody and accompaniment.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and responding to notated rhythms Vocalising rhythms Composing rhythms Performing rhythms Playing unpitched percussion instruments with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and responding to notated pitches Singing with effective technique Singing in a group Vocal intonation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing the keyboard with effective technique Playing a basic melody on the keyboard Reading treble clef keyboard notation: CDEFGAB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising different orchestral instruments aurally and visually Playing orchestral melodies on the keyboard Use of effective and expressive keyboard and vocal technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading pitch notation Reading rhythmic notation Playing keyboard, ukulele, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing instruments with effective technique
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rhythm and Notation: Perform a piece utilising singing and rhythms (polyrhythms and call-and-response) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP1 Exam: Singing Sing an arrangement of a simple 1-octave range song. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arranging and Composing: Play an arrangement of a simple 1-octave range song on keyboard utilising composition techniques such as 'round' 'ostinato' and 'tempo.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melody: Perform a piece in pairs or solo, accurately and expressively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melody Composition: Perform a piece in pairs or solo, accurately and expressively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP2 Exam: rhythm and pitch notation, rhythmic dictation, musical elements, listening tasks, recognising orchestral instruments



Year 8	Term 1A Singing Ensemble Skills	Term 1B Melody and Riffs	Term 2A Blues	Term 2B Blues 2	Term 3A Rhythm and Metre	Term 3B Band Skills
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melody • Counter-melody • Bass-riff • Harmony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combining different parts together. • Major/ minor • Types of scales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Bar Blues structure and chords • Blues scale • Common chord sequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Bar Blues structure and chords • Blues scale • Common chord sequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polyrhythm • Different parts of a song structure • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes an effective band performance
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating an arrangement from different parts • Use of effective and confident vocal technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing as part of an ensemble • Performing riffs/ melodies with effective technique/ rhythm • Playing keyboard, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing 12 Bar Blues chord sequence on keyboard • Improvising using the Blues scale • Playing keyboard, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing 12 Bar Blues chord sequence on keyboard • Improvising using the Blues scale • Playing keyboard, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing as part of an ensemble • Performing melodies • Performing chord sequences • Performing bass-riffs • Composing drum beats • Playing keyboard, ukulele, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing as part of a band • Playing keyboard, ukulele, guitar or drum kit with effective technique
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singing Ensemble Skills: effective and confident performance utilising different parts of an arrangement (bass-riff, melody, counter-melody and any other appropriate elements). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Music: Performance of a piece of music which has clear sections and confidently played parts (riff, melody, ostinato etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blues: Perform a blues/ Rock n Roll song as an ensemble. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blues 2: Perform a blues/ Rock n Roll piece as an ensemble. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhythm and Metre: Perform a polyrhythmic piece with multiple sections accurately as part of a group ensemble. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP2 Exam: chords, distinguishing between major and minor chords, rhythm and pitch notation, rhythmic dictation, musical elements, listening tasks. • Band Composition Performance: Perform an original song as part of a band.



Year 9	Term 1A Syncopation	Term 1B Syncopation 2	Term 2A Chords and Melody	Term 2B Hooks and Riffs	Term 3A Ground Bass	Term 3B Ostinato
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features of hip-hop/ modern music • Syncopation • Bass-riff, counter-melody, drum kit parts etc. • Conjunct/ disjunct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swing rhythms • Blues scale • What makes effective improvisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic features of Logic Pro X • Using loops • Basic sequencing • Recording using a midi keyboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riff • Chords • What makes an effective hook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Song structure • Complex features of Logic Pro X • Further sequencing • Plugins: reverb, delay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Song structure • Complex features of Logic Pro X • Further sequencing • Plugins: reverb, delay
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing on keyboard/ other instruments • Composing and improvising conjunct melodies • Playing different rhythms to create polyrhythmic textures • Playing keyboard, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing as part of a band • Playing 12 Bar Blues chord sequence on keyboard • Improvising using the Blues scale • Playing keyboard, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logic Pro X: setting tempo/time signature, using loops, inputting and editing notes, recording using a midi keyboard • Composing melodies, chords and drum beats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing as part of a band/ ensemble • Playing syncopated chords/ bass riffs • Playing major/ minor chords with inversions • Playing keyboard, guitar or drum kit with effective technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logic Pro X: setting tempo/time signature, inputting and editing notes, recording using a midi keyboard • Composing melodies, chords and drum beats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logic Pro X: setting tempo/time signature, inputting and editing notes, recording using a midi keyboard • Composing melodies, chords and drum beats
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syncopation: Perform a piece using different elements, accurately and expressively with clear structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syncopation 2: Performance of a piece of music which has clear sections and confidently played parts (riff, melody, ostinato etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chords and Melody: Perform a blues/ Rock n Roll song as an ensemble. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hooks and Riffs: Perform a piece for a band with different instruments together in an ensemble. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimalism: Perform a piece of Minimalist music and arrange/ develop the final performance to include variation and textural changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP2 Exam: conjunct/disjunct melody, rhythm and pitch notation, chords, dictation, musical elements, listening tasks • Song Writing: Compose a song on Logic Pro X