



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. Twice a year there are assessments by external examiners, presenting the opportunity for each student, their tutor and Head of Instrumental Department to review progress together and offer encouragement, guidance and advice on specified areas. 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 at the end of the Spring Term and posted on the School's web-site. There is some student choice at all levels, but especially in the selection of GCSE and A-level subjects. 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, Drama 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 in

Year 6 take national standardised tests in May and use is also made of standardised end-of-year tests for Year 5 and Year 4.

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.

For most students, the GCSE range covers the core of Music, English (Language and Literature), Mathematics and Double Science plus options in Modern Foreign Languages and Humanities. Exceptions include EAL students who may follow a reduced GCSE programme without, for example, English Literature and/or German or French. Compulsory GCSE re-sit options in the Sixth Form are for students who have previously achieved grade D/4 or lower 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 and Religious Studies (included in the Enrichment Studies programme in the Sixth Form) and Fit to Perform are timetabled across the age range. All students participate in choir on a 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 a Statement of Special Educational Need. We also support any students for whom English is a Second or Additional Language. Lessons are predominantly 1:1 with some 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.

Middle School

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. The provisional choice of subjects will be considered by the Head of School before options are confirmed.

In line with national specifications, but with modifications which take into account our specialist nature, all of our students in Years 10 and 11 offer these subjects at GCSE: Music, English (Language and Literature, which leads to two GCSE passes), Maths, Double Science and German or (in certain circumstances) French; plus any one subject from the Humanities pool (History OR Geography; Art OR Drama OR Citizenship) or a combination of two (optional) if musical commitments allow it; plus an extra subject (optional), either Additional Science or French (as second language). Not all subjects will be offered each year this is dependent upon expected numbers. It is not possible to take Double Science or Double Language plus two Humanities options.

Sixth Form

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

We look carefully at choice of subjects, general level of academic ability and instrumental needs and commitments in order to find the right programme for students. Students will want to discuss plans with parents, subject teachers, instrumental teacher and Head of Department and (for those already at Chetham's) the personal tutor.

The provisional choice of subjects will be considered by the Head of School in consultation with the Instrumental Head of Department and students are likely to be interviewed by one or other before these choices are finalised. Students are always welcome to seek them out beforehand to discuss options. Not all subjects will be offered each year this is dependent upon expected numbers.

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