

# ‘The Aspiring Musician’

KS4/5



**CHELTENHAM  
BOURNSIDE  
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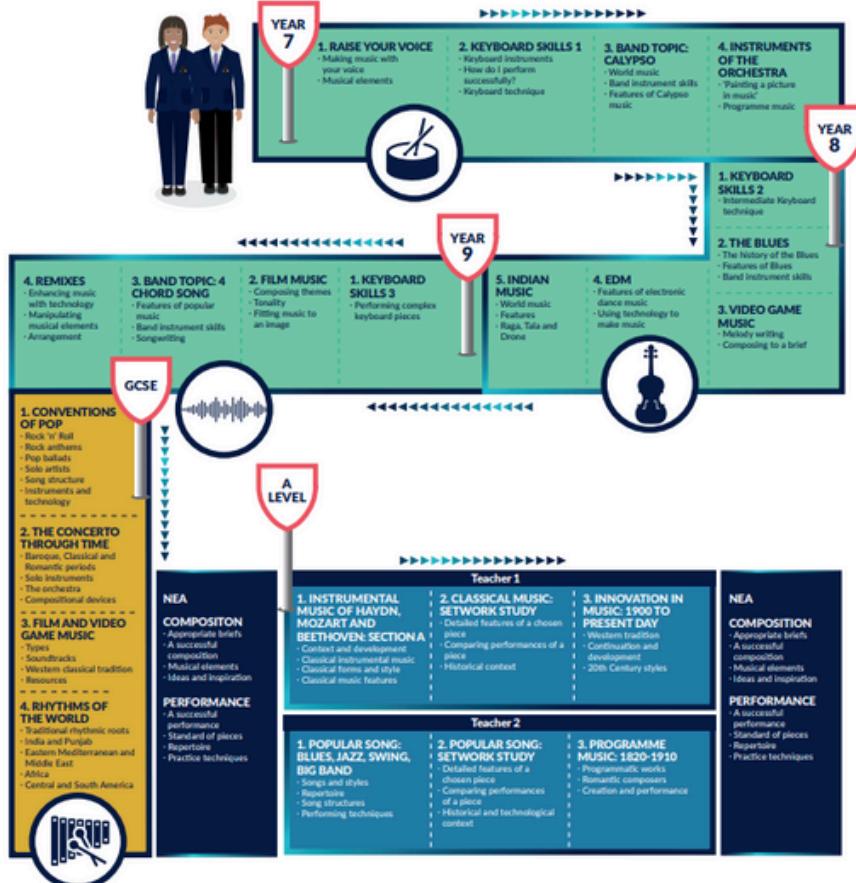


**Inspiring lives through learning**

# 'The Aspiring Musician'



# MUSIC



# 'The Aspiring Musician'



Music is far more than just performance or listening – it is a subject that combines creativity, analysis, and critical thinking. Studying Music at A Level gives you the chance to deepen your understanding of how music works, explore a wide range of styles and genres, and develop the skills to communicate your ideas with clarity and confidence.

Music is important because it connects people across cultures and generations, expressing emotions and ideas in ways that words often cannot. By studying it academically, you gain insight into the techniques, history, and contexts that shape music, from classical traditions to contemporary innovations. This knowledge not only enriches your appreciation but also strengthens your ability to perform, compose, and analyse with purpose.

A Level Music also develops transferable skills that are highly valued beyond the classroom: discipline, teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving. Whether you continue into music-related pathways or other careers, the subject equips you with resilience and adaptability.

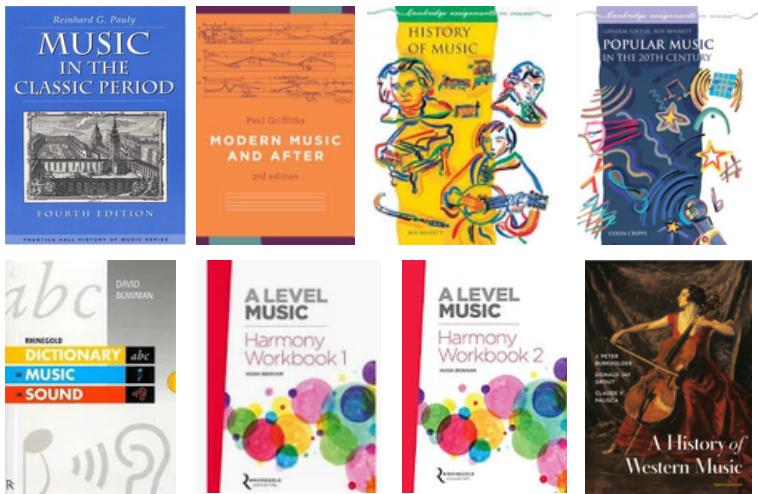
Most importantly, studying music allows you to nurture your passion. It provides the space to challenge yourself artistically, engage critically with the art form, and understand its role in society. We look forward to supporting you as you explore, create, and discover the power of music throughout this course.

**Mr Cutress**  
Head of Music

# Reading list



- **Music in the Classic Period** - Reinhard G
- **Modern Music and After** - Paul Griffiths
- **History of music** - Roy Bennett
- **Popular Music** - Colin Cripps
- **Dictionary of Music in Sound** - Rhinegold Education
- **A Level Music Harmony Workbook 1 and 2** - Hugh Benham
- **A History of Western Music** - Burkholder, Grout & Palisca



# Competitions



Gloucestershire  
Academy of  
Music

## Gloucestershire Young Musician 2026

A competition celebrating top level young musicians in Gloucestershire.

Applicants may play piano, any string (including harp and guitar), woodwind or brass instrument or orchestral percussion to a Grade 8 standard.



## BBC Young Composer Competition

Do you love creating your own music? Whether you compose for orchestras, produce beats, write songs, or experiment with sound in your own way – we want to hear from you!

If you're aged 12-18 and based in the UK, this is your chance to get your music heard, work with professional mentors, and take your creativity to the next level.

# Listen and Watch



## Podcasts



### Music Matters, BBC Radio 3

The stories that matter, the people that matter, the music that matters



### Composer of the Week, BBC Radio 3

BBC Radio 3's Composer Of The Week is a guide to composers and their music. The podcast is compiled from the week's programmes and published on Friday



### Record Review, BBC Radio 3

Building a Library: a guide to the best recordings of the greatest classical music. Each week an expert and enthusiast brings along a wide range of recordings of a well-known piece. They explore the music and the different ways of performing it, ending with a recommendation for your library.



### Composer Rooms, BBC Radio 3

Sara Mohrt-Pietsch interviews today's composers exploring the relationship between their immediate environment and the music they write.



### Opera Guides, BBC Radio 3

BBC Radio 3 Opera guides

# Listen and Watch



## Films/YouTube/TV



### Sonata Secrets

Henrik Kilhamn, a classical pianist goes through pieces from beginning to end – playing, analyzing and presenting his interpretation of them. Guiding music enthusiasts as well as new listeners to further enjoy and explore the treasure of the world's classical music.



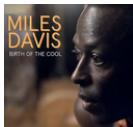
### **Adam Neely**

Video essays, lessons and vlogs on new horizons in music and music theory. Adam Neely brings you a new video every Monday exploring what music means, and what it means to be a musician.



### 12 Tone

12tone is a YouTuber who makes videos about music theory.



### **Miles Davis: The Birth of Cool**

American documentary film about Miles Davis - legendary jazz trumpeter, composer and bandleader.

# Listen and Watch



## Social media

**@musictheoryforguitar / @musictheoryforpianists**  
(IG/TikTok/YouTube) – simple breakdowns of theory.

**Adam Neely (YouTube/Instagram/Twitter)** – explains music theory and creativity in engaging ways.

**David Bruce Composer (YouTube)** – excellent on composition, classical/jazz influences.

**Nahre Sol (YouTube/Instagram)** – pianist who mixes performance, composition, and quirky music insights.

**Minute Music Theory (TikTok/Instagram)** – bite-sized explanations of chords, scales, and harmony.

**David Bennett Piano (YouTube)** – analysis of popular and classical songs, showing theory in action.

**8-Bit Music Theory (YouTube)** – focuses on video game music, but excellent for analysis & composition ideas.

**Rick Beato (YouTube/Instagram)** – explains music theory, harmony, production, and “Why X Song Is Great” series.

# Work Experience and Events



Taking part in work experience and events is hugely valuable for a music student, as it provides real-world insight into the industry beyond the classroom.

It helps students build practical skills, gain confidence in performance and collaboration, and develop a professional network that could lead to future opportunities.

Work experience also allows them to explore different career paths within music, from performing and teaching to sound engineering or event management, giving them a clearer sense of direction.

Ultimately, engaging in these experiences strengthens both their portfolio and their readiness for a successful career in music.

# Work Experience and Events



## Work Experience | Music for Youth

We offer young people the opportunity to work with us on and at events. Opportunity to learn new skills and experience first-hand what goes into making a national event.



## Work Experience at Sutton Music Trust

Offers Work Experience provision for students in Key Stage 4 and 5. Provides students with an insight working in music education, arts management, and event planning.



## Get in Taster Experiences | BBC Early Careers

Offers you the chance to explore the different career paths the BBC has to offer and to find out if our organisation is somewhere you'd like to work in the future.



## Music Performance University Taster | Springpod

In the practical section, you'll apply your knowledge of chords in a two-part notation activity, with the second part encouraging you to create your own unique chord structures.



## LPO Junior Artists | London Philharmonic Orchestra

Our free orchestral experience programme for talented young musicians from backgrounds currently under-represented in professional UK orchestras.



## The Music Works

We are a Gloucestershire charity with a mission to transform young lives through music.



The Careers Team at Bournside deliver regular Inspire Breakfast Lectures. Open to students in Year 10 - 13, these business-focused breakfasts invite speakers from all corners of industry to share their professional experiences and valuable insights with Bournside students over breakfast; opening our eyes to the opportunities available across many industry sectors.

[Take a look at upcoming speakers and reserve your space here.](#)

