

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Music department at Malmesbury School has a tradition of excellence, both in the curriculum and in the quality of extra curricular provision. Music forms an integral part of life at Malmesbury School, in both the National and extended curricula.

Music is taught throughout the school by two full time teachers and one part time teacher. We have also employed a full-time technician since 2004.

The department is well resourced with excellent facilities for performing, composing and listening to music. There are three purpose-built classrooms, two with 16 keyboards, stereo hi-fi, SMART board, TV/DVD and piano and smartboards. One of them now has a suite of 16 computers equipped with Sibelius and Cubase software. There are 4 practice rooms (4 with pianos, 1 with a portable recording studio) and a larger group practice room with drum kit and amplifiers. We also have a Recording Studio with state-of-the-art equipment (PC, mixer, 2 synthesisers, logic and cubase software and an extensive supply of microphones and stands).

In years 7,8 & 9, Music is taught for one 60-minute period per week, which continually strives to develop skills in performing, composing, listening and appraising. At Key Stage 3, students follow a course of six units per year, assisted by a course booklet for each topic. The current curriculum consists of material produced by the Head of Music and the other Faculty staff.

There are now approximately 50 students studying Music at Key Stage 4 and 7 students at Advanced Level. The department follows the AQA board for GCSE and EDEXCEL for 'A' level. and has individual student course booklets are used to support the course with an extensive collection of CDs, MP3s and class texts made available.

Since 1999 we have offered Music at A level and have specific Mac computers for composition and sequencing work. There are currently 7 students studying the subject at post -16 level.

The number of students having instrumental lessons has increased dramatically over the last few years with a substantial new uptake on drums, keyboard and guitar. There is a woodwind teacher, a brass teacher, two guitar teachers, a singing teacher, two piano teachers and lessons in violin and lower strings. We often play host Associated Board examination visits for our voice and woodwind students. To enhance skills in ensemble performance there are orchestras and Choirs, as well as chamber orchestra and a Big Band.

Extra curricular music making is an area of considerable achievement at Malmesbury School. A popular Christmas Concert tradition has been established over the last 35 years, resulting annually in an epic three-night performance that is enjoyed by the community as a whole. Malmesbury Abbey is the setting for the Carol service which involves school and staff choirs and is an event special to the school and town. By way of showcasing the considerable achievements in GCSE and A level coursework, a special Chamber Concert is put on during March featuring A level recitals.

School productions over the years have included rock shows such as 'You Really Got Me' (featuring the music of the Kinks), 'Jesus Christ Superstar', 'Macbeth' (featuring the music of Queen) and Pink Floyd 'The Wall'. 2002 saw a production of 'The Wizard of OZ' with a full orchestra made up of students. In 2004 a group of solo singers and a jazz ensemble provided a musical backdrop to the school's outdoor production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in the Abbey Gardens. This was followed up by a series of traditional summer shows: 'Bugsy Malone' (2005) 'Guys and Dolls' (2006), 'Oliver' (2007), 'Return to the

forbidden planet' (2008), 'Grease' (2009), 'Joseph' (2010) and musicals moved to the Winter with 'Scrooge' (2010) 'The Boyfriend' (2012), 'Oh What a lovely war!' (2014), 'Back to the 80s' (2015), 'Little shop of horrors' (2017) and 'We will rock you' (2019).

In recent years we have been fortunate enough to establish links with the WOMAD Festival. Since 2007 when our Soul Band opened the first Charlton Park festival, the school has run a project involving Local Primary schools and visiting artists from the WOMAD organisation featuring a plethora of genres from around the world. The project involves a week of coaching and workshops led by professional practitioners, followed by a performance in the Abbey before the Festival gig on the main stage. It is the perfect way to finish the year in Music for both school and community.

Christopher Bradshaw – Head of Music
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