



OXFORD
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

A Level Music

Sixth Form study options



We aim to foster a lifelong love of music through academic study and performance.

The Music Department comprises:

- Dr Peter Foster – Director of Music
- Mrs Sinead Andrews – Teacher of Music
- 21 Visiting Music Tutors
- Mrs Luci Brooks – Administrator

Accommodation in the Music School includes two classrooms, one equipped with sixteen computers and keyboards, a recital room which houses a Steinway Model B concert grand piano, and eight practice rooms.

Individual Music Lessons

These take place in study periods, at lunch times, before or after school. Studies include: piano, singing, violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, percussion (orchestral or drum kit), harp, classical guitar, electric guitar, recorder.



Scholarships and Exhibitions

All OHS scholarships are awarded on merit and independently of parental income. Details of how to apply for a scholarship will be sent out once your daughter has received the offer of a place. In auditions, applicants are asked to perform two contrasting pieces of Grade 8 standard or above and to talk about the music in their lives. Award holders are expected to show leadership in school music, contribute strongly to school ensembles including helping to direct them, and receive solo opportunities in high-profile concerts.

Do apply – we would like to hear you!

Oxbridge Applications

We can offer specialist tuition for the music courses and choral and organ awards entrance tests.

Edexcel A Level Music

We offer the Edexcel Pearson A Level specification in Music. This is a broad-ranging syllabus which allows students to follow their own passions and interests in performance and composition, and covers a wide range of musical styles and periods in the set works which are the subject of the Unit 3 exam. We feel this course is well suited to Oxford High pupils because:

- It offers scope to stretch and challenge the most able musicians in the areas of performance and composition that particularly interest them.
- The syllabus content is varied and interesting, balancing traditionalist academic rigour with the new and quirky.
- The set works include works and composers which are likely to be known by some students, but also rewards curiosity and willingness to engage with the unfamiliar and the new.
- The balance of breadth and rigour in the course makes it an excellent foundation for studying many subjects at university, not just Music.

The three assessed components are:

Component 1: Performance (30%)

- A 10 to 12-minute recital on the candidate's main instrument (including voice), recording during March/April of Year 13. Top grades are accessible to pupils who can perform music of Grade 7 standard or higher, although a higher level of maturity and technical assurance is expected than in ABRSM grades.

Component 2: Composition (30%)

- A 4-minute composition, in the candidate's choice of style, to a brief chosen from four offered by the exam board.
- Exercises in harmony, following standard conventions which are taught during the course.

Component 3: Appraisal (40%)

- A two-hour exam comprising a mixture of short answer listening questions and essays focused on the set works, and their wider context.

The areas of study covered in the Appraising paper are:

AoS1 Vocal Music.

Works by J. S. Bach and Ralph Vaughan Williams

AoS2 Instrumental Music.

Works by Clara Wieck-Schumann and Hector Berlioz

AoS3 Film Music.

Works by Danny Elfman and Bernard Herrmann

AoS4 Popular Music and Jazz.

Works by Kate Bush, The Beatles and Courtney Pine

AoS5 Fusions.

Works by Claude Debussy and Anoushka Shankar

AoS6 New Directions.

Works by Kaija Saariaho and Igor Stravinsky

Performing Groups

There is a performing group for you, whatever your ability and musical tastes!

Senior Orchestra

A full symphony orchestra comprising around 50 players. Recent performances include Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony*, Schubert's *Unfinished*, Vaughan Williams' *English Folk Song Suite*, highlights from *Les Mis*, and *The Best of Bruno Mars*.

String Orchestra

A group of around 20 advanced players. Sometimes, this group is also joined by advanced wind or brass players to form a chamber orchestra. Recent performances include Holst's *St Paul's Suite*, Bach's *3rd and 4th Brandenburg concertos*, and Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Greensleeves*. This group often accompanies concert or choral performances in school concerts.

Concert Band

A group which is led by Sixth Formers for advanced wind, brass and percussion players, which plays an eclectic and entertaining range of music.

Senior Choir

A large, un auditioned group for all those who enjoy singing. They are sometimes joined by guest tenors and basses. Recent performances include Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Holst's *Hymns from Rig Veda*, a fully staged production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and a selection of Sinatra hits.

Senior Chamber Choir

An auditioned choir for advanced singers specialising in more challenging music. They sing a range of musical styles both with and without accompaniment.

Chamber Groups

Good instrumentalists are encouraged to form chamber groups, and are given as much help and coaching as they need.



Band Coaching

We encourage bands in all styles and genres to form and explore the music they would like to play. Coaching is available in school to help you find your musical voice and prepare for your first gigs.

Musicals

Collaborations with the Drama Department are a major feature of our activities – our singers take on dramatic roles and our instrumentalists form the band. There are two productions each year – a Senior School and a Lower School musical.

Concert Schedule

We run a busy concert schedule providing opportunities to perform in Oxford's beautiful and inspiring venues. The concert calendar includes:

- Major Senior Concert in external venues in Oxford. These include the Sheldonian Theatre, the University Church, Oxford Town Hall, Merton College Chapel, St. Barnabas Church, and The Holywell Music Room.
- A Sixth Form concert (planned and run by students) in the Music School Hall.
- Lunchtime concerts in school.
- Open Mic nights.
- Our annual Carol Service, taking the form of the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols, in the local church of St. Andrew's.
- Opportunities to perform more widely outside school. We have recently collaborated in two professional productions with Oxford Opera, in which our students formed part of the chorus.

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