

The Department

Music at Freman College is a popular subject delivered by a well-qualified and high profile department of two teachers and a large team of peripatetic staff. The department is housed in the 'West End', our specialist performing arts block, with its own suite of teaching and practice rooms, an office and excellent ICT facilities and resources, in addition to a generous departmental budget.

There is a strongly collaborative and supportive approach within the department and with our two partner middle schools with both teachers contributing to, and benefiting from, the development of shared schemes and resources. This makes it a particularly welcoming environment for teachers who enjoy sharing best practice and working together. Both teachers teach across the age range with A Level Music forming a part of each teacher's timetable. Staff also share in the organisation and delivery of a superb range of extra-curricular music activities and outstanding performances which play a key role in maintaining the reputation of the college for all-round excellence.

The curriculum

There are nine Year 9 classes each of which has a lesson of music per week. The Year 9 curriculum gives students an insight into various genres as well as developing ensemble, performance and composition skills. There is a big emphasis on enjoyment and performance, in particular using guitars, keyboards and voice. In Key Stage 4 there are currently two GCSE classes in both Year 10 and 11. We teach the Eduqas syllabus. The ability to perform to a reasonable standard is an expectation for students joining the course. In the Sixth Form we also follow the Eduqas specification.

This year we started teaching music to Year 7 and 8 students in our neighbouring feeder middle school, Edwinstree, enabling us to further develop the strength and continuity of the curriculum students experience prior to joining us in Year 9. From September Ryan Meekins, who is currently a music teacher at Freman will take over responsibility for music at Edwinstree but will continue to teach part time at Freman.

Extra-curricular music

We are enormously proud of the breadth and quality of our extra-curricular music. We are particularly fortunate to have large year groups of older students and as a result we have good numbers of able musicians. We find that because of the high profile and popularity of the department we also see a significant number of students taking up new instruments with enthusiasm as they join us in Year 9.

This makes our annual House Music competition one of the great highlights of the school calendar. It also means we are able to deliver an exceptional range of performances across the year. These include more traditional termly concerts, as well as a Live Lounge event to support our school Amnesty group, and a musical (most recently *Guys and Dolls*) on alternate years. We also put on a two night annual extravaganza of popular music playing to sell out audiences. A film about The Event can be seen here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzEdsjP4vQM>. While Covid restricted our plans in 2021, we will return to staging a substantial concert this July.

In addition, we often perform in local churches and at community events as well as taking musicians to do showcase assemblies to inspire students in our partner first and middle schools. We work very closely with our partner middle schools in particular and have recently run various joint musical activities and concerts with them.

The breadth and quality of our cross-curricular music is a key reason why many parents chose to send their children to Freman College and feedback from parents about the work of the department is consistently fulsome.

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