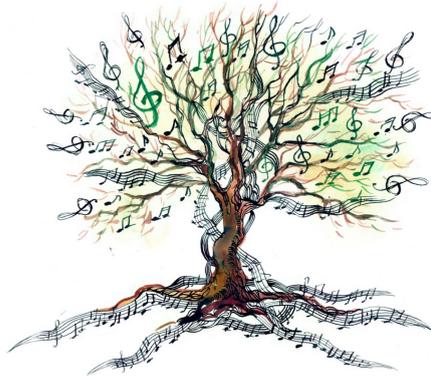


Music Department Information



The Staff

Mrs Jane Lodge - Director of Music, teaching Reception, Y2, Y6, Y7 and Top Form

Mrs Amanda Jarvis - Teaching Music and Brass lessons (part time), to Woodlands, Y3, Y4 and Y5

Miss Lizette Bailey - Teaching Music (and English), Y1, Y5, Y6, Y7 and Top Form.

Music Administrator - the first port of call if you have any questions about anything:
musicadmin@beechwoodpark.herts.sch.uk

The music administrator prepares all the timetables for the individual lessons.

Plus 15 IMTs (Instrumental Music Teachers)

Music in Y2:

Class lessons - have an hour of music each week, next year to include some class ukulele lessons

Group lessons - these start in the Lent Term, and parents can sign up for 'experiences' in brass, strings, woodwind. These are a group of 5 lessons where the pupils can see, hear and have a play on some of the instruments available to learn at Beechwood.

Individual lessons - emphasis is placed on academic work in the Junior Department, and we therefore advise that individual lessons start in Year 3. Quite often pupils are not quite ready with their coordination for learning, and learning can take a lot longer at this age, which can lead to a feeling of not achieving much. In class lessons, we teach many basic facts and understanding of music providing the foundations for learning and this helps to speed up the learning process - learning an instrument is not easy, when you are trying to understand the music and the techniques of the instrument.

However, there are some pupils who do display exceptional talent and who are ready to start in Year 2. For these pupils, we carry out short fun assessments first, communicate with form teachers to check the pupils are on track with their academic work, and start lessons if this is in the best interests for the child. These will take place during a pupils' lunch break.

Choir /music activities after school - starting in Lent Term and providing an extra element of learning to that taking place in the class music lessons.

Music in Y3... and beyond:

Pupils continue with class music lessons, start individual lessons and can take part in many of our co-curricular activities. At present we have:

4 choirs, 26 instrumental ensembles and 4 theory groups, as well as music technology activities.

There are some groups open to all pupils and some which are invite only. We look at the spread of choirs, ensembles and activities on offer each term to ensure we are catering for all pupils and all abilities.

Why learn an instrument?

At the moment, we timetable approximately 270 individual lessons each week for pupils in Y3 and above - with about 50 pupils learning more than 1 instrument, a few learning 3 instruments.

The following are just some reasons to learn an instrument.

Ensemble - social skills / work as a team, but also including leadership and discipline

Routine for practice - helping pupils' all-round organisation, discipline, efficiency

Playing in concerts - performing - learning confidence = a great skill

Scientific studies show correlation between higher academic achievements in children exposed to music.... Even creating a larger brain! Music stimulates parts of the brain that are related to reading, maths, and emotional development. Often found that musicians are very good at focusing and concentrating as they have developed these skills when playing an instrument and learning a piece of music.

Aids coordination - doing different things with arms (and legs - drumming) and as well as reading music. Musicians are very good at processing many pieces of information simultaneously and learning pieces improves memory.

Can be a wonderful way of relaxing - good for mind, body and soul.

Which instrument?

Can start learning at any time - Y3 upwards. Later take up = faster learning. We have a Top Former who has just taken his grade 1 piano after 13 lessons... and done very well, gaining a distinction.

We teach the following instruments at Beechwood:

Brass - tenor horn, cornet, trumpet, french horn, pbone/trombone, euphonium, tuba

Keyboard - piano

Percussion - drum kit, timpani and orchestral percussion, tuned percussion (such as marimba, xylophone, vibraphone).

Strings - violin, viola, cello, mini bass/double bass, harp, acoustic guitar, electric guitar

Voice

Woodwind - recorder, flute, clarinet, oboe, tenoroon / bassoon, saxophone

If pupils cannot decide which instrument to learn we run fun 'toots, doods and pbuzz' co-curricular groups (which is a great way to try out a fun and easy flute, clarinet and trombone). We also offer short 10 minute trial lessons where the pupil can meet the teacher and have a good try on the instrument. The teacher can also see if the child is suited to the instrument - has the right mouth shape, has big enough hands etc.

Learning the instrument:

Once a pupil has decided to learn an instrument, lessons are timetabled each week and are rotated so that a different lesson/activity is missed each week. Timetables are put up on the Parent Portal, on notice boards in school and on the IMT Google Classrooms. Pupils will receive 30 half hour lessons each year.

We have many instruments which we can hire out if you don't wish to purchase an instrument straight away. If you do wish to purchase something, we can advise on where to go, and which sort of instrument would suit your child the best.

Practising the instrument does need to be done each week at home - we recommend short sessions regularly (at least 5 times) throughout each week. Learning an instrument always has many ups and downs, some techniques are harder to grasp than others, some pieces are more tricky... please do encourage your child to work through the more challenging times and not give up straight away. It does not matter at all if you do not know anything about music - in fact this then means that the pupils then take greater ownership of their learning and don't end up relying on parents helping; this then leads to faster progress and better understanding in the long run.

The teachers will give detailed notes in notebooks about what to practise each week and parents are very welcome to come and watch a lesson every now and then to see what is being learned, how best to support the work at home, and to meet the teacher.

End results:

Performing - we provide as many performing opportunities as possible throughout the year in the form of:

concerts - lunchtime, Summer concert (large), competition, special events, choir tour, visiting old people's home

Exams - not to be taken on lightly...they need a lot of work and are the culmination of many months of learning. Please trust us that we know when a pupil is ready for an exam, or not, and will decide when these happen. If pupils take exams at the right time for them, then it will be a positive and rewarding experience, and hopefully an enjoyable one. In our last set of exams 56 pupils took exams, and we had the following results - 15 pass, 27 merit, 14 distinction

We offer different exam boards to cater for everyone's different needs.

Some instruments are harder than others - pupils will take exams at different times, please don't be tempted to compare!

Scholarships - 11+ and 13+

These are for the very talented musicians to think about for their next school. The requirements for each school can be very different - some require a certain exam standard while some are looking for potential. All schools require pupils to be able to play musically and be fully involved in the musical activities at Beechwood over a substantial length of time. We will be in touch if we think your child is suitable for a music scholarship.