



# Music

**Wimbledon High School**

*Encouraging students to flourish and thrive*





# Welcome

Music is at the heart of Wimbledon High School and is an integral part of each school day.

Whether it be performances in assembly, taking part in one of the many concerts that fill our calendar, or participating in our weekly Friday Jammin’ performances; we provide opportunities for students to explore their creativity and imagination in a variety of different ways.

There is a strong choral scene at WHS, with an auditioned Chamber Choir, who perform regularly, and two un-auditioned choirs (Canto and A Cappella) which number over 150 students between them. Chamber Choir are taken on tour abroad every two years, and feature at all of our biggest musical events, including our annual carol service, which has featured commissions by Will Todd in the past,

and the winner of our carol composition competition. Our concerto competition is held every Summer term, giving students the opportunity to play a concerto alongside our top chamber orchestra and professionals at the flagship Spring concert. Instrumental groups include a Concert Orchestra that tackles repertoire such as Saint Saens’ Organ Symphony and a phenomenal Big Band.

Students thrive in a busy but supportive environment which is going from strength to strength.

Will Ford  
Director of Music

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**The Music department values all students who have an interest in music whatever their experience and whatever style of music they are interested in.**



# Music at WHS

## Individual Lessons

In addition to curricular music lessons, the school offers individual instrumental/singing lessons for students in Y2-Y13. Lessons take place throughout the school day on a rotational basis and are provided by our Visiting Music Teachers.

Fixed lessons outside of the academic timetable are offered to students in Y11-13.

**Please contact our Music Administrator, Sue Brownrigg ([sue.brownrigg@wim.gdst.net](mailto:sue.brownrigg@wim.gdst.net)) for further information.**

## Ensembles and concert opportunities

We offer a high quality and wide-ranging programme of co-curricular opportunities.

With over 25 rehearsals each week, there is an ensemble for everyone. It is expected that all students taking lessons in singing or an instrument will join one of the school choirs, orchestras or chamber groups and take part in the many formal and informal concerts throughout the year.



# Music at WHS

There are regular opportunities for our musicians to perform at a professional level including our annual feature concert in London where the WHS Concert Orchestra, Big Band, Sinfonia and our choirs perform complex and rewarding music.

## Exams

The school organises Associated Board examinations in the second half of each term.

We offer Trinity Exams alongside ABRSM exams when there is sufficient demand. Students who learn instruments privately outside of school are welcome to take their exams in school.

**Please contact our Music Administrator, Sue Brownrigg ([sue.brownrigg@wim.gdst.net](mailto:sue.brownrigg@wim.gdst.net)) for further information.**

## Scholarships

Music scholarships are available for children entering the school at 11+ and 16+. Further information is available on the Admissions section of our website.



# Music at WHS

The following information is designed to help give you a sense of what is going on musically at WHS. We have a vast array of ensembles rehearsing weekly at WHS, ranging in size, style, and difficulty level.

We would encourage students to sign up to the musical groups that suit them and remember that these decisions are not for the entire year! Each term there is an opportunity to sign up for new groups that are not auditioned.

Please also note that certain groups are auditioned for, and these auditions will take place in the first few weeks of the academic year.

For instruments where multiple auditioned groups are on offer to a particular instrument, one audition will be held, and the appropriate groups then offered and assigned to each student. Once selected, most of these groups will remain the same for the entire year, though there may be some small changes in the summer term with exam leave, and if the project leads to other instruments being needed in the group.



## Larger Instrumental Groups

### Concert Orchestra Open to all above G6 standard

Tuesdays 1.20pm – 2.20pm / Open to all year groups / Auditorium

This is one of our largest ensembles and is open to any instrumentalists that are Grade 6 standard and above. The group tackles big and exciting pieces of orchestral repertoire and leads at many of the high-profile concerts throughout the year. In the past year we've played the Maestoso and Finale from Saint Saens' Organ Symphony No.3 and Danse Macabre. The group has an early lunch straight after period 5 and then rehearses for an hour on Tuesdays in the Auditorium.

### Big Band / Auditioned

Fridays 1.40pm – 2.20pm / Open to all year groups / Auditorium

This group is run by our Head of Instrumental Performance, Mike Wilson. They tackle big pieces of Big Band repertoire, and feature at many of our biggest concerts. The group consists of woodwind, brass and percussion players and the general standard of the group is Grade 8. Auditions will be held in the first few weeks of term.

### Swing Band / Open to all above G3 standard

Thursdays 1.00pm – 1.40pm / Open to all year groups / Auditorium

This group is also run by Mike Wilson. The group tackles upbeat, fun, and big repertoire for brass and wind instruments. This is a brilliant group to join if you are looking to improve your ensemble skills as you work your way up the grades. Lots of students have gone on from this group to join Big Band and perform as top instrumentalists in Concert Orchestra.

## Larger Instrumental Groups

### String Ensemble / Open to all from Grade 3 to Grade 6 standard

Mondays 1.40pm – 2.20pm / Open to all year groups / M11

This group is a brilliant place to be for all budding string players that are around the Grade 3–6 standard. You will work with Beth Britt, a violin teacher at WHS, performing chamber music together, enhancing your musicianship and sight-reading skills. Lots of our students have gone on from this group into Concert Orchestra, Baroque Ensemble and Sinfonia.

### Sinfonia / Auditioned

Thursdays 4.00pm – 5.15pm / Open to all year groups / Auditorium

This group is made up of our top instrumentalists. The group tackles a varying chamber orchestra repertoire, and often are tasked with accompanying choirs, soloists and concertos in our highest profile concerts. They also accompanied our first ever Concerto performance. The group is auditioned for each project, ensuring that we have the correct chamber set up for each piece of repertoire chosen.



## Choral

### A Cappella / Open to all

Tues 8.00am – 8.30am, Thurs 8.00am – 8.30am / Open to Years 10–13 / Auditorium

This choir is for students in Y10–13, features at most of our flagship events throughout the year and tackles a whole host of repertoire. In the past year they have performed a SSA arrangement of the Faure Requiem, led our Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols service, travelled to Rome to sing at the Vatican and sung alongside the Blues and Roots Ensemble in a feature jazz summer concert. Enthusiasm and a willingness to learn and sing is all you need to join this group.

### Canto / Open to all

Wednesdays 8.00am – 8.30am / Open to Years 7–9 / Auditorium

This choir is for students in Y7–9 and features at most of our flagship events throughout the year. They perform in our termly concerts and feature at our spring flagship concert. Lots of singers go on to join Chamber Choir and A Capella.

### Chamber Choir / Auditioned

Mondays 8.00am – 8.30am, Fridays 1 – 1.40pm / Open to all year groups / Auditorium

This choir features our top singers from each year group. There are thirty five singers currently in the choir, and they tackle repertoire that stretches their sight reading and musicality, exploring 4-part music that is often unaccompanied. They have the opportunity to sing regular evensongs at local churches and cathedrals.

### Mansel Voices / Auditioned

Thursdays 8.00am – 8.30am / Years 10–13 / Auditorium

This is a highly selective group of our top singers in Years 10–13, and run by our Head of Singing, Ms Prowse. Students learn the art of singing as 1–2 per part, in close harmony and often without accompaniment. Repertoire varies across a number of genres, and allows students to develop and stretch their musicianship skills to a top level. Many students in this group will be looking at pursuing singing further as they leave school.



## Smaller Ensembles

### 5Guys Wind Quintet / Auditioned

Mondays 8.15am – 8.55am / Open to all year groups / M11

Run by our oboe teacher, Alasdair Hill, this auditioned group features our top wind instrumentalists who tackle small chamber music written specifically for their set up. Repertoire varies hugely, and this is a brilliant place for more advanced players to hone their musicality and ability to play chamber music.

### Jazz Ensemble / Open to Woodwind and Brass players of Grade 3 standard together with an auditioned rhythm section consisting of Piano, Bass, Drums and Guitar

Tuesdays 4.15pm – 5.00pm / Open to all year groups / M11

This is a brilliant group to be involved in if you love Jazz. Mr Whelan is a jazz specialist and trumpet teacher at WHS. He adapts the pieces he chooses to the instrumentalists in the group and provides wonderful tuition for all those involved. It is a great place to learn about improvisation, the Blues, how to play in a group without a conductor, and a whole host of jazz skills.

### Brass Ensemble / Open to all above G4 standard

Thursdays 1.00pm – 1.40pm / Open to all year groups / M11

Chris Ford, our trombone teacher, takes this ambitious and talented young group of brass players. The group tackles a huge variety of music, from jazz standards to Christmas carols. They feature at lots of our top termly concerts.

### Flute Group / Open to all above G5 standard

Mondays 8.15am – 8.55am / Open to all year groups / M10

This is run by one of our flute teachers, Nico Bricht. This is a brilliant group for flute players who want to work on musicianship skills, sight reading and performing in a small group without a conductor.

## Smaller Ensembles

### Clarinet Choir / Open to all above G3 standard

Wednesdays 1.00pm – 1.40pm / Open to all year groups / M11

This is run by one of our clarinet teachers. The group performs a variety of clarinet arrangements. This is a brilliant group for clarinet players who want to work on musicianship skills, sight reading and performing in a small group without a conductor.

### Djembe Group / Open to all

Fridays 8.15am – 8.50am / Open to all year groups / M11

This lively and vivacious group perform traditional djembe pieces that are arranged and taught by our percussion teacher, Stephen Hiscock. The group feature in termly concerts and work together to create an array of rhythmic shapes, patterns and sounds.



## Smaller Ensembles

### Choral and Orchestral Conducting Club / Open to all

Wednesdays 4.15pm – 4.55pm / Open to all year groups / M10

This is a group for our budding conductors to learn the ins and outs of how to lead a rehearsal and conduct. Mr Lavelle will introduce you to a range of repertoire and give you a chance to conduct passages of music in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Conductors in this group will also get the occasional chance to take parts of rehearsals with Concert Orchestra, Swing Band and Canto, working with fellow students on current repertoire with music staff on hand to help. A great place to start your conducting career!

### String Quartets and Trios / Auditioned

Timings dependant on group

We group students of the same ability together, to allow them to explore how to play in a smaller chamber music group without a conductor, and they all pick up a huge number of musicianship skills whilst having fun. The groups are auditioned at the beginning of each academic year and comprise of our finest chamber musicians.



## Piano playing

We want to help students develop their piano and accompanying skills as much as possible and as such, have the following positions available for student accompanists/pianists.

### Piano player in Piano Trio / Auditioned

Fridays 1.00pm – 1.40pm / Open to all year groups / M10

This group is run by Mr Hutchinson, a violin teacher at WHS, and will feature some of our top instrumentalists. The pianist will work with two other string players, as they tackle chamber repertoire and work on their sight reading, musicality, and ability to play in small chamber groups.

### Canto Accompanist / Auditioned on a project basis

Fridays 8.00am – 8.30am / Open to all year groups / Auditorium

This position involves accompanying Canto in their weekly rehearsals. They will need to be confident piano players, willing to work collaboratively with the choir and Mr Lavelle, and adapt their playing to suit the needs of the choir.

### Concert Orchestra Pianist / Auditioned on a project basis

This position involves playing in our Concert Orchestra, often tackling big, exciting but challenging piano parts that are integral to the success of the piece! You will no doubt end up featuring as a pianist at events such as Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, and St John's Smith Square.

### Sinfonia Continuo (piano/harpsichord/organ) player / Auditioned on a project basis

This position involves playing the continuo part in Sinfonia. The group often tackle Baroque repertoire, and the student will have the chance to learn how to read figured bass and accompany the chamber group. There may well be a chance to play the harpsichord/chamber organ at high profile events, though this will be dependent on the project.



## Academic and Exam Clubs

### ABRSM Preparation Club

Thursdays 1.40–2.00pm (Club 1) and 2.00pm–2.20pm (Club 2).  
Open to all year groups / M10

This club is open to any ABRSM candidates that want help preparing for the aural part of the examination. There are two clubs to allow flexibility in which club students attend, and both sessions are run in a similar manner.





# Music Department

## **Contact details**

### **Director of Music**

Mr William Ford  
*w.ford@wim.gdst.net*

### **Senior Tutor and Head of Academic Music**

Dr John Parsons  
*john.parsons@wim.gdst.net*

### **Music Teacher and Assistant Head of Year 7**

Mr Eden Lavelle  
*e.lavelle@wim.gdst.net*

### **Head of Instrumental Performance**

Mr Mike Wilson  
*michael.wilson@wim.gdst.net*

### **Head of Singing and Music Teacher**

Ms Anna Prowse  
*anna.prowse@wim.gdst.net*

### **Music Administrator**

Miss Sue Brownrigg  
*sue.brownrigg@wim.gdst.net*

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