



The
Yehudi
Menuhin
School

CURRICULUM POLICY

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Revision History

Date	Revision
November 2017	
September 2018	Updated
Spring 2021	Policy numbers updated and policy brought in line with current curriculum
Spring 2023	Policy altered to reflect new instrumental Music structure. Drama added to list of academic subjects offered.

Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions

Abbreviation / Acronym	Definition
BMus Degree	Bachelor of Music Degree
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EHCP	Education, Health & Care Plan
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
PE	Physical Education
PSHE	Personal, Social, and Health Education
RSE	Relationships and Sexual Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs

Aim / Objective / Statement of Intent

The Yehudi Menuhin School provides full-time supervised education for musically gifted pupils aged 8-19 years in accordance with Section 8 of the Education Act 1996. The School is not selective in respect of academic ability and admits a high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

This policy sets out the basis of the curriculum across all subjects taught at the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with: -

- P1.3 - SEND Policy
- P1.5 - Teaching, Marking & Assessment Policy
- P1.9 - EAL Policy

Introduction

1. The School provides highly skilled teaching staff across the academic and music curriculum. Each pupil has an individually tailored timetable. Schemes of work ensure that the subject matter is appropriate for the age, attainment levels and needs of the pupils including those with an EHCP (Educational Health and Care Plan).
2. The School's curriculum and schemes of work promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
3. Pupils study a combination of compulsory and optional subjects. They are entered for public examinations at Key Stage 2, GCSE, AS and A2 Levels. They may also take other examinations, especially in Music, EAL and Modern Languages.
4. Pupils with **Special Educational Needs or Disabilities** are integrated into as much of the curriculum as possible, as the small classes makes it much easier to provide whatever individual care and attention they may require. An Individual Education Plan is drawn up for all pupils identified as having a specific learning difficulty or disability and is reviewed at regular intervals. There are currently no pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) at the School.
5. All lessons, including music tuition, are conducted in English. The international nature of the School means that the teaching of **English as an Additional Language (EAL)** is of particular importance. Pupils for whom English is not a first language are assessed as to their individual needs and are supported in the classroom and in individual or group lessons. **Further information can be obtained in P1.9 EAL Policy.**

6. The School does not hold a “Gifted & Talented” Register or have a separate policy, as all pupils would appear on this by virtue of their musical ability.

The Curriculum

7. The curriculum is divided between academic and specialist music tuition.

Music

8. In keeping with our aim to promote the development of musical excellence and independence, all pupils have substantial practice time scheduled into their daily timetables, as appropriate to their age, stage of technical development and recommendation of their Professor. Pupils also have the option of using evenings and other free periods for extra practice time.
9. Pupils will generally receive two hours of lesson time with a Professor on their First Study instrument per week. Instrumental lessons are a part of the curriculum at YMS, as opposed to being a paid extra. As such, and as with any other curriculum subject, to avoid further compression of pupil time at a later date, lessons missed due to pupil absence, teacher absence or the scheduling of other School activities will not ordinarily be rescheduled. With the agreement of the Director of Music, some lessons may be rescheduled if it is felt by the Professor that it is in the best interest of the pupil to do so.
10. Studio classes, in which the Professor will work with an entire class as a group, are regularly timetabled in accordance with each Professor’s preferred method of scheduling.
11. In addition to lesson time with a Professor, pupils will also receive support from other members of the Music Department, as and when it is considered appropriate. This may include direct guidance from a Resident Music Assistant, who frequently liaises with Professors about pupils’ progress and expected practice routines in order to provide further individual attention. Additional contact may be provided in the form of an Assistant Teacher or Supporting Tutor, as agreed through consultation with the pupil’s Professor and the Director of Music. Other than on rare occasions when a senior pupil may have a particularly intense programme of study (for example, in preparation for a competition), additional support is generally provided as a remedial measure, and will naturally decrease as pupils become more independent as they progress through the school.
12. Although pupil progress is consistently monitored through lessons and concert performances, all pupils are formally assessed in music performance each term. Each assessment requires pupils to prepare different repertoire and/or musical exercises, carefully selected to provide a clear and consistent framework for instrumental and musical development. Assessments are usually held in the Menuhin Hall and, in most

cases, are chaired by the Director of Music, with an External Assessor and the Deputy Director of Music in attendance. No formal marking criteria are applied; instead, constructive feedback written by the External Assessor is given to pupils and Professors. Where a performance does not meet an acceptable standard, or where it may be considered beneficial to a student to give a repeat performance, the Director of Music may request pupils to retake an assessment.

13. Unless with prior agreement with the Director of Music, First-Study string players are required to take piano as a Second Study and receive one thirty-minute lesson with a Second Study Piano Teacher per week.
14. All First Study violinists will be expected to play the viola at some point during their studies.
15. First Study pianists are encouraged to choose a Second Study instrument and receive one thirty-minute lesson per week. Second Study options available to First Study pianists typically include, but are not limited to:
 - Violin
 - Guitar
 - Harp
 - Jazz piano
 - Harpsichord
 - Voice
 - Conducting
16. Subject to teacher availability and when considered appropriate for an individual's development, pupils may also request lessons on a Third Study. Depending on the nature of the activity, such provision is usually undertaken at the parents' expense.
17. Supplementary activities designed to support the pupils' development are regularly woven into the timetable throughout the academic year. Typical examples include coaching sessions with the Director of Music, classical improvisation classes, masterclasses and lessons from visiting artists, chamber music projects with guest artists, presentations from industry figures, Alexander Technique, and workshops on matters such as stage presentation, performance anxiety, memorisation, how to rehearse and practice efficiently, and general life skills associated with a musical career.
18. Supporting studies including theory, aural, music history and analysis, choir and classical improvisation are included which are not in pursuit of academic qualifications but underpin the practical studies of each student.
19. Performance opportunities feature as an integral part of the weekly timetable, with Lunchtime Concerts scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday throughout each Term. Regular public-facing events, both at the Menuhin Hall and in partnership with external venues, are a feature of the school calendar, and annual Winter and Summer Festivals,

focused on pupil performances, provide fitting finales to the calendar and academic years.

20. Chamber music is considered essential to every pupil's education and all students will be allocated to a chamber ensemble. Chamber music coaching sessions take place every week and are delivered by a range of teachers across the Music Department.
21. Orchestral playing also plays a significant role in the school's musical activities and several orchestral concerts are scheduled each year. Protected orchestra rehearsals are timetabled as part of the school day, and the number of rehearsals and the nature of their format is determined by the Director of Music in consultation with the artist(s) leading each specific project.
22. Choir is an equally important element of study, and protected choir rehearsals are timetabled into the school day. Choral performances are an integral part of the School's concert programming.
23. The School's Saturday morning provision is mostly devoted to the furtherance of the pupils' chamber music activities, with every child involved in group reading sessions (created to widen knowledge of the repertoire, diversify groupings and improve sight-reading skills), ensemble rehearsals or chamber coaching. On some occasions it may be deemed necessary to reallocate this time to other activities such as orchestra rehearsals, choir rehearsals or supplementary workshops.

Academic

24. As an Independent School, we are not bound by the English National Curriculum. Pupils spend approximately half the day on their academic studies (the remainder being occupied by music), and therefore the range of subjects is more limited than in a mainstream school. Nonetheless, an essential core curriculum content is covered. Music Conservatoires in Britain usually require **five GCSE and two A Level** passes for entry to the BMus degree. As of September 2020, The Royal Academy of Music requires 2 Advanced Level (A2) passes or Pre-U certificate exams, including music.
25. The average year group size is 11. Classes are small (between 1 and 17 pupils). In some subjects, pupils are taught in mixed age-group classes according to attainment.
26. There are three academic groups, C, B, A, ascending in age. Each group is subdivided as in the table below:

Usual Age	YMS Class Group	N.C. Year Group
11-12	C1	7
12-13	C2	8

13-14	C3	9
14-15	B1	10
15-16	B2	11
16-17	A1	12
17-18	A2	13
18-19	A3	14

Table 1

- The **C group** comprises the three years of Key Stage 3 – ages 11 to 14 – with subject specialists teaching all classes. It is divided into C1, C2 and C3 classes, corresponding to Years 7, 8 and 9.
- The **B group** caters for the two-year courses to GCSE (Key Stage 4) and is subdivided into **B1** (Year 10) and **B2** (Year 11).

27. In the **C and B groups** all pupils study the Core Curriculum which enables them to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and consists of:

- Music
- English Language and Literature (EAL for overseas pupils for whom this is appropriate)
- Mathematics

28. The **A group** consists of pupils aged 16 – 19 following AS-level, A-level or post-A-level courses. Pupils study Music and 1, 2 or 3 other subjects in the A1 and A2 years. The subjects currently offered are:

- English Literature
- Mathematics
- History
- Biology, Chemistry
- Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Turkish and Italian.

29. Three further **Foundation Subjects** are usually studied by all British pupils and by those with sufficient English:

- Science – Biology and/or Chemistry
- A Foreign Language (usually German)
- History (taken by those who only choose one science subject)

30. Pupils therefore usually sit seven GCSE subjects before moving on to A-Level. Some pupils may study for more or fewer GCSE subjects by agreement with the Director of Studies.

31. Subject choices may be changed depending on student choices and availability of teachers.
32. Most pupils take their A-level exams in the A2 year, but some carry one or more of their A-levels over to the A3 year. In addition to A-levels, pupils have an intensive programme of instrumental music and a demanding and varied musical education programme. This prepares them for entrance and scholarships to the leading Conservatoires in the UK and abroad or for university entrance. They take increasing responsibility for their own independent study and participate in community engagement programmes. They remain fully integrated into all other school activities including concerts, tutor group meetings, PSHE, sport and Art.
33. Pupils are offered the opportunity of following the Goethe Curriculum for German and of taking exams set by the Goethe Institute. A B1 qualification (approximately equivalent to AS level) is required by many German conservatoires.
34. Pupils take Art, Drama, and physical exercise alongside their examined subjects. Pupils have two periods of timetabled sport (including swimming) each week. Any non-swimmers are taught how to swim in our indoor pool.
35. The School's curriculum covers the following areas:
 - **Aesthetic and creative development**
As a specialist music school recognised as a Centre of Excellence in the Performing Arts, the aesthetic and creative element in the curriculum is paramount. All pupils study Music and Art throughout their time at the School. Pupils in the Cs have IT and Drama lessons. Trips are organised to concerts, art galleries, museums and places of interest. Visiting speakers and performers come to the School to give talks, masterclasses, workshops and concerts. The General Studies course includes modules in food and nutrition (including cooking skills), Politics and Philosophy, public speaking, art history and a financial awareness module.
 - **Mathematical development**
The understanding and appreciation of numbers is central to the development of logical and clear expression. All pupils study Mathematics until at least GCSE level.
 - **Human and Social development**
The personal and social development of every pupil and their responsibility to others and to their environment are central to the School's aims and objectives. The School is a small and close-knit community. Important moral and character-building messages are reinforced at Morning Meetings, Tutorials and House meetings. Our PSHE programme teaches important values and life skills. The whole school experience provides opportunities for pupils to develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience and determination, which underpin success in education

and employment. The school does not teach Religious Studies as a specific subject but promotes tolerance of all faiths (and none) and promotes British Values. The school provides economic education to support pupils in preparation for adult life.

- **Scientific development**

In a world dominated by technology and scientific discovery, scientific literacy is very important. All pupils study Science up to the end of Key Stage Four.

- **Linguistic development**

In an increasingly globalised world, the ability to speak several languages is a significant advantage. The study of literature helps linguistic development and enhances cultural capital.

- **Technological development**

Young people are used to modern technology and use it freely and without fear. It is important to allow pupils the freedom and the responsibility this brings to use all forms of technology wisely and sensibly.

- **Physical development**

Musicians need to build stamina and strength to sustain hours of practice, cope with frequent long-distance travel, and perform in peak condition. Physical exercise is an important element of the school programme. Pupils have two hours of timetabled exercise each week, including one hour of swimming.

- **Humanities**

The School provides tuition in History and the history of Music.

Timetable

36. The day begins with practice at 8:00 a.m. All pupils, including day pupils, are required to attend. Registration is taken each weekday at breakfast, lunch and supper. All pupils are registered on a Saturday morning and Saturday evening, and then once on Sunday.

37. The day is divided into 11 sessions between 08:00 through to 20:00. Breaks are scheduled for breakfast, mid-morning, lunch, mid-afternoon and supper.

38. Each pupil has an individual timetable with academic and instrumental lessons. Private Study and practice times are also scheduled.

39. All pupils have a Tutor assigned and attend a tutorial on a weekly basis. The PSHE curriculum is also delivered during these sessions.

40. At the beginning of each term, every pupil is given a printed copy of his/her individual timetable. Timetables are subject to change in order to accommodate educational visits, additional practice, masterclasses and other events. Changes to timetables are shown on the noticeboard near to the Dining Hall and on the monitors around the school.

41. There are times when clashes arise. When necessary, music tuition, masterclasses, orchestral rehearsals and performances take priority over academic lessons. The music timetable endeavours to minimise the impact on academic subjects by varying who misses what and by taking exam classes into account.

Private Study

42. Realistic private study / homework assignments are set in all subjects every week as a means of reinforcing material covered in class. Four 1-hour Private Study sessions for the C groups are supervised each week by a member of staff. B groups also complete PS in the boarding house and are loosely supervised by house staff.

Careers Guidance

43. The vast majority of pupils aspire to a career in music, although some decide to explore other avenues. Senior pupils meet regularly with the Director of Music, Deputy Director of Music and with the Director of Studies to discuss career direction.

44. GCSE and A Level choices are discussed with pupils and with parents. Choice is inevitably limited by the specialist curriculum with its emphasis on music.

45. Talks by people in the music profession are organised, on an ad hoc basis, to expose pupils to various aspects of careers in the music world. Pupils are supported in making applications to Universities and Conservatoires.

Extra-Curricular Activities

46. A programme of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils. Activities are assessed to minimise the risk of injury to pupils and are often supplemented according to the season/weather. Extra-curricular activities include:-

- Yoga
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (Bronze, Silver & Gold)
- Table tennis
- Swimming
- Cooking
- Trips to concerts
- Trips to local places of interest
- Board Games
- Keyboard Skills
- Walks in areas of outstanding beauty and local nature trails

47. In addition, pupils attend Lunchtime and Celebrity Concerts and Masterclasses,

and participate in concerts and orchestral and chamber group tours.

Appendix 1: Curriculum Plan

D, C and B groups

The table below indicates the number of lessons per subject each week for the respective year-groups.

	C1	C2	C3	B1	B2
Maths	3	3	3	3	3
English	3	3	3	3	3
Science	3	3	3	3 or 6	3 or 6
Music	5	5	5	5	5
German	3	3	3	3	3
History	2	2	2	0 or 3	0 or 3
IT / Drama	*see note	*see note	*see note	0	0
Swimming	1	1	1	1	1
Sport	1	1	1	1	1
Art	1	1	1	1	1

Notes : C groups do 1 term of IT and 1 term of Drama.

In addition, some students also have additional lessons in the following:-

- EAL (up to 3 lessons – possibly instead of English or German)
- Japanese, Chinese, Italian (usually 1 lesson per week)
- Music support lessons – usually 1 or 2 depending on need
- Other subject support lessons (usually Maths, English and Science) – usually 1
- Support lessons from Teaching Assistant – usually 1.

This is determined on an individual basis and on teacher availability.

A1 and A2 Groups

In the A1 and A2 groups, students all study Music and then usually choose two or three other subjects from the following

Subject	Number of Lessons per week
Music	6
English Literature	4
History	5
Biology	5
Chemistry	5
Maths	5
German A level	3 or 4
German Goethe	3
French	3
Italian	2
Japanese	1
Chinese	1
Turkish	1

In addition:

- Students may receive EAL lessons (between 1 and 3).
- Some students also receive subject support lessons, particularly in Music.
- Some students receive an additional support lesson from Teaching Assistant.
- All students have 1 lesson each of swimming, art and sport.
- A1 and A3 students receive 1 lesson of General Studies.
- C group students receive an IT / Drama lesson on a carousel basis