



# THE DOWNS SCHOOL

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Headteacher: C R Prosser BSc

Deputy Head: C A Butler BSc MPhil

Deputy Head: J A Preston BA



September 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

We would like to take this opportunity to let you know the extra-curricular activities that are going on in the music department and the opportunities available to all students in music. Every year we showcase all of the fantastic work our students who participate in extra-curricular clubs in our various music concerts throughout the year.

## Extra-Curricular activities in music

### Orchestra, Big Band, Junior Choir, Senior Choir, Chamber Group, Ukulele Group, Brass group and Show Band

All of our ensembles are a great opportunity for students to develop their ensemble skills, play in regular school concerts and to mix with other musicians. The groups that are available this year are below, with clubs due to start in the week beginning 19 September. Please note that all music clubs are at lunch times in the music department.

<b>Monday</b>	Chamber Group	Grade 6+ classical instrumental players
<b>Tuesday</b>	Big Band	Musicians of grade 5 standard and above
	Ukulele Club	All ukulele players (beginners welcome)
<b>Wednesday</b>	Orchestra	All instruments, all abilities
<b>Thursday</b>	Senior Choir	All singers (years 10-13)
	Brass Group	All brass players
<b>Friday</b>	Junior Choir	All singers (years 7-9)

## **Instrumental Lessons**

Learning an instrument is a valuable skill which is known to develop confidence and leadership qualities whilst improving communication skills, and being thoroughly enjoyable.

At The Downs we have teachers in violin, viola, cello, double bass, trumpet, cornet, French horn, trombone, tuba, euphonium, clarinet, saxophone, bassoon, flute, oboe, drum kit, guitar (electric, acoustic and bass) and voice. Miss Blake and Miss Jefferies are available for students to discuss which instrument might be a good choice and what is involved.

You can enrol your child for instrumental via the Berkshire Maestros website. The instrumental lessons take place during the school day on a rotation timetable, or students can have lessons at one of the Berkshire Maestros music centres. More information and prices can be found on the Berkshire Maestros website. [www.berkshiremaestros.org.uk](http://www.berkshiremaestros.org.uk)

### **Bringing instruments in to School**

If students are bringing instruments in to school they may store it in the music department during the day. Secure lockers are available to fit most instruments, and students should bring their own padlock to use for these lockers on the days they wish to use them. There is also a guitar rack, and a large instrument cupboard for open storage. Please note that the school cannot take responsibility for instruments left outside the secure lockers.

## **Key stage 3, 4 and 5 Music Lessons in School**

We would like to encourage all children learning an instrument to bring it with them to use in lessons. Sometimes we are not aware of a student learning an instrument or they often forget to bring it to lessons which results in them playing an instrument they may be less confident on. Playing their own instrument for performing and composing can often increase their level shown to their teacher in school, and in turn, get them a better level overall.

I do hope that you see the value of being part of a musical group and learning an instrument and encourage all to attend.

Yours faithfully

*S Blake*

Miss S Blake  
Head of Music