



MIDDLETON GRANGE SCHOOL

MUSIC LEARNING AREA TRIENNIAL REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2019

Music Curriculum Triennial Board Report 2019

Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel. – 1 Corinthians 14:12

1. Teaching and Learning Programmes

New Zealand Curriculum Compliance

The units from Year 5-10 align with the New Zealand Curriculum achievement objectives of Level 2-5. All four Strands of the Arts Curriculum are covered in a musical context. The new Digital Technologies Curriculum is being integrated into existing programmes, while some units have been re-written to specifically address digital competency in music. Year 10 Music pupils are well-prepared for pursuing Music through NCEA. The curriculum in Year 11-13 classes uses a number of Unit and Achievement Standards from the Music, Music Technology and Performing Arts domains to provide pupils with access to a wide range of music disciplines.

89% of Year 7 pupils are achieving at Level 3B or higher. 91% of Year 8 pupils are achieving at Level 3P or higher. 87% of Year 9 pupils are achieving at Level 4P or higher. 89% of Year 10 pupils are achieving at Level 5P or higher. 81% of pupils are gaining Achieved or higher in NCEA Level 1. 71% of pupils are gaining Achieved or higher in NCEA Level 2. 61% of pupils are gaining Achieved or higher in NCEA Level 3.

As pupils progress through year levels, Music becomes a more specialist subject and as such, less pupils enrol in the course. The lower numbers in senior classes result in statistics being more drastically swayed by a few individuals results e.g. 4 pupils account for 39% at Level 3. While the statistics indicate lower achievement levels through NCEA, it is important to note that the numbers of pupils passing with Excellence remains constant at around 30%.

Special Character and Foundational Principles for Curricula

Biblical concepts and a Christian Worldview are integrated into most units of work across each year level through planning considerations informed by the Foundational Principles for Curricula. All teaching staff are familiar with the FPC and work to integrate these concepts into their classroom delivery. Pupils are encouraged, when selecting performance pieces to consider the messages and intent of the composer against a biblical worldview. Song-writing and composing units incorporate discussion around appropriate and effective Christian expression.

Pupils in Year 7 are taught the history of our school hymn “We Rest on Thee” and learn to play the music. In Year 10 pupils spend a term learning about various worldviews presented in contemporary music and how to measure these against scripture while practising and performing Christian Contemporary Music. The “Hallelujah Chorus” has been chosen as one of the works analysed in Year 11 because of its strong representation of Christian expression in a historical context. Many of our senior pupils perform Christian songs for their solo and group performances, and occasionally they choose to write songs of overt worship.

2. Assessment Practices

Monitoring Pupil Achievement

Each unit of work includes formative assessment opportunities throughout the unit and a summative assessment task is administered at the end of each unit of work. Pupils are provided with an assessment task and marking criteria at the start of each unit to assist in their preparation. A range of assessment strategies are used to ensure pupils receive valuable feedback on their progress. Formative assessment and monitoring strategies include teacher-pupil discussions, checkpoint submissions with written feedback, peer review, self-reflection tasks along with a combination of more informal check-ins.

Assessment tasks are designed to reflect the Achievement Objectives as described in the New Zealand Curriculum with the main components at each year level focussing on the following curriculum levels: Year 7 and 8 – Level 3, Year 9 – Level 4, Year 10 – Level 5. The tasks are designed to allow for a diverse set of learners meaning support and opportunity is provided for lower academic achievers while gifted pupils will still have the opportunity to be stretched in their Music education.

NCEA assessments are administered in accordance with the assessment guidelines outlined by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. NCEA pupils use digital submissions via Microsoft Teams wherever applicable to ensure a portfolio of work is collated and stored. This development has dramatically increased the accessibility of managing multiple files and media types for assessment.

NCEA assessment marking follows the internal moderation process to ensure a rigorous and fair assessment. External moderators' reports have consistently supported our teacher's abilities to assess against the NCEA standards with 100% agreement of boundary marking over the last three years.

Teaching staff maintain Markbooks to record pupil progress and summative results are submitted onto Kamar. Pupil progress is shared formally with whānau through the school reporting process and parents can view results through the parent-portal on Kamar. Where a concern is identified, whānau are notified, and strategies are put in place to ensure adequate support is provided.

Evaluation and Reflective Practise

Regular pupil voice and end-of-unit feedback is gathered primarily through the use of Microsoft Forms and class discussion. The information gathered has been instrumental in our process of re-writing the Year 9 programme to align with the new half-year structure implemented in 2018. The Year 9 surveys were focussed on developing new course content and creating a balanced programme that covered the requirements of the NZC while providing success opportunity for pupils.

Over the last three years extensive pupil voice has been gathered in the senior Music classes to gain insight into the trend of class numbers decreasing. This has provided the department with valuable information about pupil expectations and their perceptions of strengths and weaknesses within the department. As a result of this process, we have modified our programme timeline and adjusted some of our assessment styles and procedures to support them. We are now in the process of gathering a second set of data from these pupils to assess whether these changes have had the desired effect of increasing pupil engagement with course content.

3. Pupils at Risk of Not Achieving Academic Potential

Identification and Early Intervention

Pupils identified as at-risk of not achieving or as priority learners for their academic potential are placed on a register so that their progress can be monitored closely. The number of pupils on the register is as follows: 42 at Year 7, 47 at Year 8, 10 at Year 9, 5 at Year 10, 5 at Year 11, 12 at Year 12, and 4 at Year 13. Every pupil in Year 7 and 8 take music so this accounts for the comparatively high numbers at these year levels. Teachers are aware of who in their class is on the register and is familiar with the strategies put in place to support them, whether that be through Learning Profiles or discussions with Deans, Learning Team Leaders and/or whānau.

Pupils are identified as “at-risk” through a number of processes or networks. These include learning profiles, Dean/LTL/counsellor reports, priority learner profiles, previous experience in the subject, and previous achievement levels.

The Music curriculum is reliant on pupils receiving voice or instrument tuition from Year 9. Pupils who have not received tuition are encouraged to enrol in the itinerant music programme as this greatly reduces their chances of not achieving academic potential. There are still large numbers of pupils who choose not to enrol in tuition, and this makes reaching performance achievement levels difficult. We do not currently make tuition compulsory for all pupils enrolled in Year 9-13 Music; however, we are investigating this avenue to increase achievement levels in Senior College.

For pupils joining Middleton in Senior College, we have an audition and interview process to ascertain the previous knowledge and skills gained by the pupil. This process ensures that pupils are able to meet the required standards before enrolling in the subject and allows us an avenue to identify potential issues to be addressed by early intervention.

Success Evidence

At-risk pupils consistently achieve at levels equal or higher than their peers in many units of work. For pupils who struggle with traditionally academic or literacy heavy work, Music provides an opportunity to develop practical skills. Pupils with literacy challenges often produce lyrics for songs that are well crafted and meaningful. At Year 12 and 13 pupils select standards based on their strengths and weaknesses, this means that pupils who struggle academically, but have gifts in performance or composing, are able to work to their strengths and achieve at high levels.

One example of our identification and intervention process succeeding is with a pupil who had been struggling to gain credits from any subject. Early in the year we met with the Dean and the Parents to put in place a plan, which included scheduled contact and close monitoring. Unfortunately, as the year went on, the pupil’s grades degraded further, and they opted to withdraw from school. We continued to work closely with the parents in supporting their child who went on to take up Music at a tertiary level the following year.

Learning Centre Links

Many of our senior pupils with Special Assessment Conditions are able to sit Music assessments without additional support due to the nature of the assessments. Each year we have a discussion with the Learning Centre about what specific support can be given to pupils and an appropriate plan is put in place to aid them in achieving their academic goals.

4. Transitions from Primary to Middle School to Senior College

Links Between Schools

The Music department has the unique ability to create links across the three schools through the co-curricular programme. This includes running a Year 5-8 orchestra and combining the Year 5-6 choir with the Year 7-8 choir for the Christchurch Schools Music Festival. Senior performance groups (Orchestra Choir, Jazz Band and PerCo) take turns to perform at a Primary School assembly once a year. Year 5 -6 pupils also benefit from receiving two hours a week instrument tuition as a class, for one term each. These initiatives have allowed for a smoother transition between Primary and Middle School for the pupils involved. They become familiar with the teaching staff and facilities which allows them to settle quickly into class routines at Year 7.

For Middleton pupils, the transition from Middle School to Senior College is not significant. Both Music teachers teach a mix of Middle School and Senior college classes, which maintains a high level of consistency across these schools. From Year 9-13 pupils have access to the same co-curricular groups which also provides consistency through transitions. Year 10 pupils experience a course structure and assessment style that is very similar to what they will receive in Level 1 NCEA to give them time to adjust to the NCEA demands.

Areas to be Improved

The biggest areas of concern in the Music department is the transition from the respective CSN schools to Middleton at Year 11. The programme delivery varies hugely between schools and some pupils enrol at Middleton having had little or no Music education at Year 9-10. This results in the Year 11 Music classes being incredibly diverse in needs and puts a lot of pressure on both teaching staff and pupils to reach the standards required by NCEA. The Arts strand of the New Zealand Curriculum document allows for huge diversity in learning opportunities between schools.

We interview and audition all pupils new to Music at Middleton before confirming their place in the class. This is to ensure pupils have received adequate instruction to place them in a position to engage with the course content. NCEA Performance Achievement Standards require pupils to be in their third year of group tuition of an instrument or voice.

We have introduced a number of initiatives over the last two years to help with this process, however there is still room for development. Each year we take a group of performance students on a CSN school tour to raise awareness of the Music department and to make connections with the other schools. This has seen a measurable increase in the number of pupils new to Middleton at Year 11 inquiring and joining co-curricular music groups.

Last year we also hosted music teachers from the CSN schools at Middleton to share with each other about how music education is administered within each school. This has opened the door for further communication about course content and assessment in the hopes that we will be able to create a smoother transition for those pupils and to ensure there is similar music education opportunities to prepare pupils for NCEA Music.

5. Home and School Partnership

The Music Department has a natural and unique way of engaging the wider school community through performance. There is a critical link between the Music curriculum and co-curricular activity. Many community members view the co-curricular as representing what is happening in the classroom and therefore this most visible aspect of music becomes the means to represent. In reality, only around half of the senior music pupils are also involved in co-curricular music at Middleton. Many of them choose to express their musicality elsewhere (church groups, community events etc.). This has been an area of focus over 2018 which resulted in an increase in co-curricular enrolments in 2019.

From a strictly curriculum standpoint, each year we host two significant performance evenings: Rock Night and Café Acoustique. These events are primarily NCEA performance assessment evenings, however the performances are not limited to NCEA pupils as other co-curricular groups are also involved. This is an opportunity for whānau and friends to come and support the performers while enjoying an evening of entertainment. This year we also trialled filming class performances in the Year 7 extension class, collating the performances into one video and sharing the video link via email to whānau. The feedback about this process from pupils and whānau has been positive so we will be looking at other year levels to see if we can integrate a similar approach.

Whānau are sent introduction emails and course outlines at the beginning of each new class (year, semester, or trimester) to inform them of what the course will look like, notify them of assessment dates, and invite them to make contact if they have any questions or concerns. Staff will also make contact throughout the year if they have any concerns or commendations about a pupil's progress. Whānau are engaged with during course selection evenings and information is sent to them about the curriculum in the course selection booklet. Parents are given progress reports through the school reporting process and Parent-Pupil-Teacher Conferences. Teachers update Kamar regularly with attendance and formative assessment results, which allows parents to track their child's progress through the parent portal.

Each year we host visits from tertiary institutions to talk about future pathways for our senior pupils. These visits have been received positively by our pupils, and in some instances have inspired them to continue with their musical studies after graduating.

6. The Future

Areas of Focus for Development

There have been a number of changes in the Music department over the last two years with extensive course modification done from Year 8-10 in an effort to bring technology into the music curriculum and provide a practical focus in each course that is more in line with common practice across schools in New Zealand. By addressing these core factors, we are aiming to increase accessibility of the subject, increase pupil engagement and success opportunities, and reverse the declining number trend in the subject.

The focus over the next three years will be to cement the changes made and integrate similar delivery and assessment processes into the senior classes wherever applicable. To do this we will be focussing on the following core matters:

- Aligning our Middle School curriculum planning fully with the new Digital Technologies Curriculum

- Creating stronger ties with the Music departments at the CSN feeder-schools to enable us to provide a more streamlined and unified Music curriculum moving forward
- Consult with pupils and their whānau to address the ever-increasing issue of workload and “stress points”
- Creating further connections between the curriculum and our pupils’ experiences
- Strengthening the ties between curricular and co-curricular activities
- Investigate and develop a new Senior College course that allows pupils to explore and advance technical skills in film and audio engineering. These skills are in high demand within the music industry.

It is my dream to see the Music department at Middleton be a vibrant place of creativity. Where pupils are motivated to use their skills in relevant expression that builds up their community. Where pupils know they are valued and that their pursuits are of worth. Where God is recognised as the giver of gifts, and it is His work we do.

Challenges Facing the Curriculum Area

The Arts across Western culture have faced declining numbers over a number of years which is of immediate concern for the Music department. Education has progressively focussed on career development rather than focussing on the holistic development of a person. The Arts are increasingly considered to be subjects that do not equip a child for the workplace. Arts teachers are challenged with the problem of having their subjects recognised as a valuable necessary aspect of a child’s development. The Music department at Middleton is faced with the task of promoting a counter-culture subject.

Intentionally prioritising music programmes has been shown to greatly increase pupil’s numeracy and literacy, increase brain function in analytical processing, increase well-being (mental health, emotional and social competency, self-awareness), and increase positive character development. It is important that as a school, we look at the significance of Arts education using research to inform our decision making in order to develop initiatives that increase the accessibility of music education.

The current NCEA review process being undertaken by the Ministry of Education poses some serious concerns. The proposed changes to date have cast a cloud of uncertainty over what our classrooms will look like in three years’ time. This creates significant difficulties in our current departmental process of realigning our curriculum. There is a fear that developing innovative curriculum at this time may be futile. Music is an incredibly diverse subject and pupils at Year 12-13 adapt learning pathways to cater for their individual needs. The current proposal to limit these options will cause significant challenges in creating new and effective programmes in Senior College Music.

The introduction of the Digital Technologies Curriculum and the challenge of ensuring our curriculum delivery is preparing pupils for industry has meant a significant increase in the demands for appropriate technology and software. Technology and software development have been increasing at such a fast rate that equipment that was suitable five years ago is no longer fit for purpose. While BYOD may help to integrate technology into some subjects, it is unlikely to be beneficial in Music. Music technology is often specialist software requiring high-spec hardware to run. Over the last four years, Music has faced significant challenges in integrating new technology systems.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board and the Senior Leadership Team for their support of the Music department as we have navigated significant change over the last few years. It is an exciting time for Music in the school.

Simon Bisseker - Curriculum Leader of Music

An excerpt from a Year 13 pupil's description of their Song Writing intention.

This song is inspired by the emotions and feelings I get when leading others in worship. It reflects the moments when I have felt like I was right where I was meant to be and how nothing else matters. This song carries the energy that I feel when leading others to focus on God. It also reflects on how quite often we can have a dream or desire for our life that we may not feel can be possible. This song includes lyrics that express how I have seen my dream come to life and that doors are opening, which I thought would stay closed. I began this song with the chord progression for the verse. I wrote the verse melody and pre-chorus melody in one sitting, and then struggled where to go from there.

The first verse begins with the idea that I never thought I'd feel as alive as I have in the moments of leading worship. It is meant to portray that energy that builds up as worship gets more intense. It is all about how I am, 'coming back to life,' and feeling the happiest and most energized. The second half of the verse is focused on how in those moments God breaks the thoughts of doubt and fear, and I know that I am right where I am meant to be. In those moments, I believe I am living part of my purpose and feel that my passion for music is rooted in my purpose.

The pre-chorus reflects how worship music restores my strength and I really feel God filling me up. Life drains my energy and in the times of weariness, I can run to God through music and He fills me up again. He gives me victory of every emotion, feeling, thought and situation. Only in Him can I be set free from earthly chains.

The chorus defines how I feel before I come alive in worship. I feel like I am asleep and simply walking through the motions. When I come before God, He restores a fire in me that gives me the strength to keep going. I am filled with the confidence, courage and strength to live a life that worships God through every big or small situation. He lights up my life in a way that no human can. He reveals to me the truth and His promises.

The second verse expresses how I have feared not being able to live my dreams. Being held back by the fear of not being good enough or capable of achieving my dreams has stopped me from reaching my potential. In the moments where I have been leading worship and I know for sure that the power of God is there, I believe my dreams are coming to life. Not only am I coming to life, but my dreams are.

The line, 'to raise a battle cry,' is inspired by a word that I was given at a Church event. A woman spoke over my life that I would, 'war over nations,' and that my time would come when I would see my desires for worship come to life. I want this song to be relatable to others, so instead of mentioning anything about being able to, 'war over nations,' I included the lyrics of raising a battle cry. This is resembling how worship is declaring the truth and power of our God over all our situations. When we sing about how good God is and how He is above all, we are raising a battle cry against the enemy. I believe the word about being able to war over nations holds the idea that as a worship leader, one is raising up the Church to go to battle in worship. The most powerful moments when leading worship have been when I can feel and see the congregation rising up and declaring truth. I come alive when I see others are coming alive too. The fire that God puts in me gives me the strength to go all out for Him and to know that it isn't about me, but God. This gives me the freedom to worship in a way where I am, 'burning wild for God,' so that others are given the freedom to do so as well.

In the second half of the verse, I am declaring that I won't let the enemy defeat me with lies, fear and doubts. I'm no longer bound to those struggles. Alone I am weak, but with God I have the strength to be strong - to be His warrior.

The bridge is a contrasting sound compared to the rest of the song. During this section, the lyrics are more of a reflection on the moments in leading worship. They highlight exactly what is going on and reflects the more direct thoughts and visible aspects of worship. The bridge reflects on being in the presence of God, and how worship is about using the voice God has given you to praise His name. Worship is about giving God the praise. This is the foundation of worship, and all the emotions and feelings that are described in the verses and chorus are what happen in the heart. You can't visually see those changes of coming alive.

An example of Pupil Voice at Year 9:

Why did you choose Music as a subject?	Have you had any itinerant tuition before this year?	Would you say you come from a musical family?	What type of activities do you expect to do in Music this year?
because I like music since I was little and I think I saw that we can write our own songs in the class, I think that this will be pretty exciting: Meeting others and talk about music, so I joined this class.	Yes 5 or more years	Yes	group work, writing songs, studying music in movies and classical music
Because I found it interesting so I decided to do it again	Yes 3-4 years	No	Piece learning, activities
Because I really enjoy playing piano, and listening to music that I have created myself. I also love music because it is a hobby to play piano and I play piano as a side subject.	Yes 3-4 years	Yes	Learning what notes, chords, and scales sound like. Learning sheet music, test our skill in music.
Because I love playing and listening to music	Yes 5 or more years	Yes	Composing, learning about composers and different types of music. playing instruments...etc
Because I love music in general and i wan to carry on doing it. It is something i am very passionate about music and the practical aspect.	Yes 5 or more years	Yes	Composition, Practicals, Theory etc.
Because I enjoy music and I have played the cello for a while. I enjoy working with others and I thought that this would be a fun class; also my parents made me. I also won the scholarship.	Yes 5 or more years	Yes	Maybe learn about some composers and learn how to compose. Maybe study music videos.
because mr bisker is cool i pick music because i find music is interting and fun. i like exporting with music and learning songs on my insruments	Yes 5 or more years	Yes	rock band and composing, group work ROCK BAND
Because, I've been playing 3 instruments over quite a few years and I think music would be a challenge this year because it will be different to year 7 and 8	Yes 5 or more years	No	Group and Individual work and some assignments, writing songs

What aspects or disciplines of music are you most unsure of? Why?	What do you think would make for a more engaging music class in Yr7-8?	How would you describe a "successful" music pupil?
history, because after I learn the history of music I can study better cause I'll understand more about music and how to play it	not here in 7 & 8	knew the history of the type of music he/ she is interested in, know how to write songs, know how to play music and understand why they are playing that, how the instrument work and have their own opinion on different styles.
i'm unsure about my answer to this question	not sure	someone who's mastered at least a couple of instruments, knows several pieces of music between the two of them and is at pretty much top marks for music
Composing.	If my old school had a piano.	At the highest grade, multiple music learned. Can play more than one instrument.
composing, i like all aspects of music but this is the the one i am worst at...	not much..... not much not much not much not much mot much mot much mot much not much	A person who loves the subject and is learning more every period.
Theory because it's not as interesting as practical because practical's are what i've always done and it's what i'm better at	More interactive because I find more practical and physical lessons easier to learn than theory and being told stuff verbal.	Someone who loves music and wants to do it
Again theory. I dislike not knowing how to do it. I am very keen to learn it though.	Working with others and doing group projects. It would be fun to learn music with others. Also, if the teachers give us interesting subjects to study.	Someone who tries their best at everything and gives their best at every aspect of the subject even if they dont like it or know how to do it.
sheet work boring	more playing the instrument you want	best at everything not me
Mostly the history, because no one in my family was really musical except for my sister and me. I think it would be good for me to learn some more of the background of music and what it's really about	Having evenly grouped and individual work set. Having fun assignments to do so we enjoy doing them. Some people will be new to music and may enjoy most of it because it's new and a challenge	Get's into learning about music, focuses and want's to learn more about the topic and explore what it's about and learn from it, because you want to be able to walk out of class every music lesson with something in mind that you've learnt