Subject Overview
KS3 Music
Technology

At Shireland CBSO Academy, the Year 9 Music Technology curriculum is a gateway into the world of modern music-making, where creativity meets technical skill. It is designed to inspire pupils to become confident and capable digital musicians, equipping them with the tools and understanding to compose, perform, and produce music using contemporary technology. This course builds on the foundational knowledge developed in earlier years and introduces pupils to the exciting possibilities of digital audio workstations, synthesis, live performance with MIDI controllers, and professional recording techniques.

The curriculum is ambitious in its scope, aiming not only to teach pupils how to use music technology but to help them understand how and why it works. Pupils will explore the building blocks of sound design, learning to shape and manipulate audio using oscillators, filters, envelopes, and effects. They develop rhythmic precision and performance confidence through finger drumming and sampling, and they gain hands-on experience with microphones and audio interfaces to record and edit their own music. These experiences are not only technically enriching but also creatively empowering, allowing pupils to express themselves in ways that are relevant to the music they listen to and the world they live in.

What makes this curriculum particularly relevant is its grounding in real-world musical practices. Whether pupils are layering tracks in a DAW, experimenting with synthesised sounds, or preparing a live performance, they are engaging with the same tools and techniques used by today's top artists and producers. This relevance ensures that their learning feels meaningful and applicable, sparking curiosity and encouraging independent exploration.

By the end of Year 9, pupils will have developed a strong foundation in music technology, supported by a growing vocabulary and a portfolio of creative work. They will be able to talk about their musical choices with confidence, understand the technical processes behind their creations, and apply their skills in both individual and collaborative contexts. This prepares them not only for further study in music or sound engineering but also for a lifelong engagement with music as a listener, composer, and performer.

Discipline		Year 9
DAW proficiency	Sequencing and editing Track layering and balancing Signal Flow Use of effects Automation and mixing	Use Soundtrap to compose simple melodies and layer tracks using software instruments. Editing and comping multiple takes. Trace the path of audio signals from microphones to the DAW, effects chains Apply reverb, delay, chorus, distortion.
Sound design and synthesis	Oscillator types ADSR envelopes Filters and LFOs Contextual awareness	Create and edit software instruments using different waveforms (sine, sawtooth, triangle, square) Further edit software instruments using Attack, Decay, Sustain, and Release envelopes. Apply filters and modulate sound parameters with LFOs to create movement in software instruments. Identify, define, and replicate key stylistic components of sound design techniques.
Performance and rhythmic skills	Finger drumming Timekeeping Sampling Performing	Use MIDI controllers to perform rhythmic patterns in time with a pulse Practice playing in sync with a metronome Trigger and manipulate pre-made samples/loops to create short mixes Rehearse and refine performances.

Recording techniques	Microphone type and placement Audio interfaces Recording vocals and instruments Mixing	Experiment with dynamic and condenser mics to record vocals and instruments Set up and use audio interfaces to connect microphones and instruments to the DAW Record clear sounding vocals and instruments using suitable microphone techniques Balance levels and apply EQ to ensure clarity and cohesion in the final mix.