



**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
HIGH SCHOOL**



**MUSIC DEPARTMENT**

# *PRAYER FOR HARMONY*

*(Jacob Boehme, 1575-1624)*

*O Thou Great Incomprehensible God,  
Who fillest all,  
Be Thou indeed my Heaven.  
Let my spirit be indeed  
The music and the joy of Thy Spirit.  
Do Thou make music in me,  
And may I make Harmony  
In the Divine Kingdom of Thy Joy,  
In the Great Love of God,  
In the wonders of Thy Glory and Splendour,  
In the Company of Thy Holy Angelic  
Harmonies.*

*AMEN*



## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Music Department of the Immaculate Conception High School provides students with a firm foundation of music literacy in their Grades 7 and 8 years at this school. It also offers the students the opportunity to advance in their music knowledge and in their ability to sing and/or play an instrument as far as they are capable during their school career.

Music is taught as an intellectual discipline that assists the students in developing their analytical skills. Students develop their spirituality, their creativity, their imagination, and express their emotions constructively in the writing and the performance of musical compositions.

Solo and ensemble performances assist in the development of self-confidence, cooperation and team spirit. Music is used to foster a spirit of harmony among the students.

The school has a symphony orchestra, a concert band, a pop band, a steel band, and a choir (The Glee Club). These groups perform at school and civic functions.

Individual private lessons for piano, voice, and the various string, wood-wind, and brass instruments are also available.

The students are graded according to the international standard set by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and the Trinity College London School of Music in the United Kingdom. The students are entered as candidates for the Theory, and Solo and Ensemble Practical Examinations set by these schools. Students from the concert band, orchestra and the choir have taken these exams over the years.



## CLASS MUSIC

Class Music is a two-year Music Literacy Programme offered to the students in their first two years at this school, that is, in Grades 7 and 8. The programme is based on the Grade Two Theory of Music Syllabus of the International Music Examinations set by The Associated Board of The Royal Schools of Music, ABRSM, United Kingdom.

All students are encouraged to take the ABRSM Examination at the end of the two-year programme in Grade 8. This examination is usually done on a Saturday in the middle of the month of June. The ABRSM makes allowance for students who worship on a Saturday, to take the examination early on the Friday afternoon before the exam on the Saturday. Letters with detailed information about the examination are given to the students to give to their parents/guardians.

The students also do an End of Year School Examination at the end of the Grade 7 year and the Grade 8 year. Periodic tests are given to the students during each school term.

The End of year Examination is based on the work done throughout the school year. Students are advised to revise the class work, homework, the exercises that were done in the Past Paper Booklets, and the tests. A list of the topics to revise, and revision is also done in class.

The students are to have two booklets of the ABRSM Grade 2 Past Examination Papers. The exercises in these booklets will prepare them for the ABRSM Theory Examination in June. Throughout the school year the exercises from these booklets and exercises from other sources are done as classwork and homework, and some of the questions in tests are based on them.

For the school year beginning in September 2018, the incoming Grade 7 students must have the Grade 2 Past Paper Booklets for the years 2015 and 2016. These papers will be available at the bookstore at school. The then Grade 8 students, the current Grade 7 students, will continue using the Grade 2 Past Paper Booklets for the years 2014 and 2015.

Each student is also required to have her own descant recorder. The teachers use the descant recorder, other instruments, and audio-visual aids to assist the students in the understanding of the theoretical concepts being taught. Each student should also have a hard cover note book, a music manuscript book, 2B pencils, black or blue ink pens, erasers, and a ruler.

Students are taught that music is a language used to express thoughts and emotions. As a language it is readable, can be written and then recited.

### **THEORY OF MUSIC - MUSIC LITERACY**

This course gives students the opportunity to acquire the basic knowledge of; the notation of music, musical terms and signs, rhythm patterns, intervals, scales, keys and chords, and the different classification of musical instruments. The outline of the two-year course is as follows:

1. A brief definition of music and the role music plays in life.
2. Listening to different musical extracts to determine the message the composer is communicating, that is, the character and mood of the music.
3. A brief look at the science of sound production and perception.
4. Italian terms and signs that indicate the tempo, dynamics, and performance directions used in musical compositions.
5. A brief history of the development of music notation. The invention of notation (neumes) and the music staff in the Middle Ages by the Italian Benedictine Monk, Guido of Monaco., (Guido d'Arezzo).
6. The Treble (G) and Bass (F) Clefs. The Letter-names (Pitch-names) of the notes on the Treble and Bass Staves and extending to two ledger lines above and below these staves.

7. The Alto and the Tenor C Clefs are also introduced mainly for general knowledge purposes but are not used extensively as the Treble and Bass Clefs in the work at this level.
8. The instruments used in the Symphony Orchestra and the Classification of Musical Instruments based on the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, e.g. Chordophones, Aerophones etc.
9. Note values of semibreve, minim, crotchet, quaver, and semiquaver, and their equivalent rest signs. Students also use the mathematical values of the notes, 'whole note', 'half note', 'eighth note' and 'sixteenth note'. The other note values, for example the breve, thirty-second note, and the sixty-fourth note, are also introduced, but are not used extensively in the work at this level.
10. Metre in music and the simple time-signatures of two minim and two crotchet counts in each bar, and three and four minim, crotchet, and quaver counts in each bar. Rhythmic patterns using the above time signatures are used for; the placing of bar-lines, and the grouping of notes. Tied notes, single-dotted notes and rests. Double-dotted notes and rests are introduced but are not used in the exercises at this level.
11. The proper grouping of the different note-values for the different time signatures.
12. Irregular grouping of notes, e.g. triplets.
13. The Keyboard Chart is used in the teaching of the intervals of the semitone and the tone.
14. Accidentals; the Sharp, Flat and Natural Signs and how they affect the pitch of the notes, and their proper use in adjusting the pitch of notes in a piece of music.
15. Enharmonic notation – the same sound with different pitch names.
16. The sound and construction of the Major Scale. The major scales for the Grade 2 ABRSM Syllabus are C, G, D, A, F, B flat, and E flat major scales. Their key signatures, tonic triads, numerical intervals within the scales, and music written in their keys or tonalities are done in the exercises.

17. The minor scales from the ABRSM Grade 2 syllabus, the ones related to C, G, and F major scales, that is, A, E and D natural, harmonic and melodic minor scales, their key signatures, tonic triads, numerical intervals within the scale, and music written in their keys or tonalities are done in the exercises.
18. Other scales, such as; the Ancient Greek Modes and the influence of the mathematician Pythagoras, the chromatic scale and the pentatonic scale., are also done. The students listen to and/or play music based on these scales.
19. Students are taught to compose a four-bar rhythm using a monotone.
20. The analysis of a melody written on either the Treble or Bass Staff, by answering questions, for example, about the tonality, dynamics, phrasing, style, tempo, duration of notes and rests.

### **THE PRACTICAL PROGRAMME**

1. The Descant Recorder is used to play simple melodies and the major and minor scales. The correct technique and fingering used to play the various note-patterns are taught.
2. Solo and ensemble playing.
3. Group projects.

### **AURAL TRAINING**

Listening is very important in music education, and the students are given aural exercises.

1. Students tap or conduct the pulse of music in duple, triple and quadruple times.
2. Rhythm patterns, of the music to be played and the theory exercises, are tapped to gain a clearer understanding of the note-values and their relation to the main beats in the music.
3. The different scales are sung as well as played on the recorder. Simple sight-singing and vocal exercises are done so that students develop an awareness of proper breathing techniques for singing, the pitch of the notes and the key

of the music, for example, different melodies are played and the students are to sing the tonic or key-note to end the melody.

4. The recognition of rhythmic and melodic changes in four-bar melodies written in simple time.
5. The identification of features played in a short piece. The features would relate to the dynamics, gradation of tone, articulation and tempo.
6. The recognition of different types of sounds and the timbre of the different musical instruments and voices.

Students are encouraged to continue their music education after the Grade 8 year. The school makes provision for private tuition, and so some students continue to do the higher-grade level examinations, for Theory, set by The Associated Board of The Royal Schools of Music. A few students have also learned to play the various orchestral instruments and have taken the higher practical grades set by The Associated Board of The Royal Schools of Music, and the Trinity College London School of Music. A few students have even achieved the diploma levels set by these international music schools.

The foundation of music tuition and performance that has been set by the Franciscan Sisters and the past teachers of the Department must continue to be preserved and allowed to develop for the benefit of future generations.

The light must always shine!

*AD ASTRA PER ASPERA!*

*THROUGH DIFFICULTIES TO EXCELLENCE!*