



Westlake Girls High School
Te Kura Tuarua o ngā Taitamawāhine o Ururoto

Music at Westlake



Westlake Girls High School has a proud reputation for musical excellence. Our vibrant and energetic Music Department offers a wide range of opportunities for students of all experience levels – from beginners exploring music for the first time to advanced instrumentalists and vocalists seeking extension.

With award-winning choirs, instrumental ensembles and contemporary groups, there truly is something for everyone. We're committed to nurturing talent and fostering a lifelong love of music.

Our Music Department is led by Fiona Wilson, our Head of Performing Arts Faculty.

Year 9 Music (Rotation)

All Year 9 students take Music for one term as part of their option rotation. This taster course introduces the fundamentals of performance, composition and music research – perfect for those new to music.

Year 9 Music Academy

Our specialist Music Academy is a full-year course for experienced students currently learning a musical instrument or voice. It offers an advanced level of practical music-making (theory and composition), alongside musicianship skills such as keyboard, guitar and aural training. Students join either an orchestra, band or vocal ensemble to develop ensemble awareness, with regular opportunities to perform at school events, community concerts and local music festivals. Applications are made during the online enrolment process.

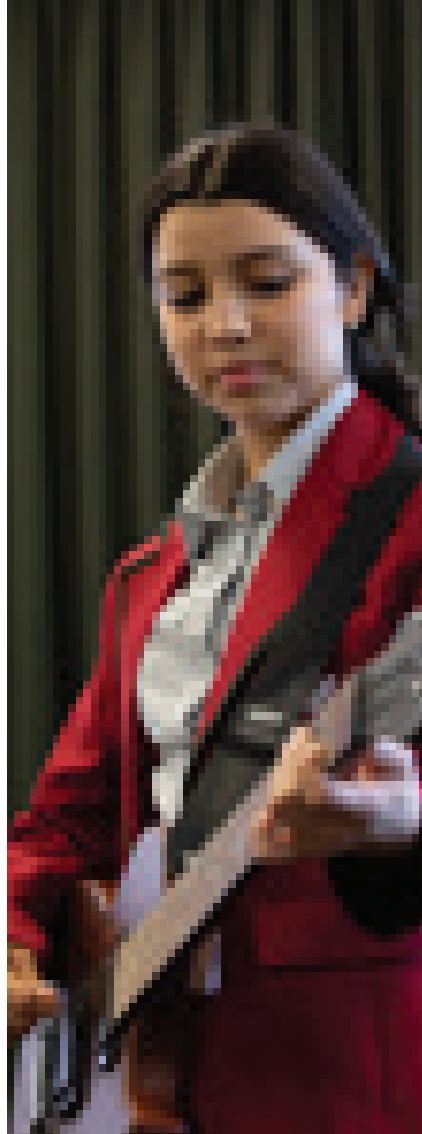
Year 10 Music

Students, including those from the Year 9 Academy, can opt into Year 10 Music. The course explores both Classical and Contemporary styles, with a strong focus on performance. All students are expected to begin or continue learning an instrument.

Pathways in Music

Many Westlake students go on to study music at tertiary level, both in New Zealand and overseas. Some become full-time musicians or pursue postgraduate study here and overseas. Our Music Department works closely with the Careers Team to support students exploring music as a career.

We are also privileged to employ some of Aotearoa's leading musicians as tutors and directors, and internationally renowned composer David Hamilton is our Composer-in-Residence. Students have regular opportunities to connect with professionals working in the music industry.



Choirs

Westlake has four auditioned choirs and one all-comers choir:

- **Cantare** – Premier Treble Choir
- **Choralation** – Premier Mixed Choir (with WBHS)
- **Cigno Voce** – Senior Treble Choir
- **Nota Bella** – Junior Treble Choir
- **Kotahi Voices** – All-comers Choir (non-auditioned)

Auditions are held in the final two weeks of Term 3, with catchups at the start of the following year for new students.

Our choirs regularly perform at school events and in the wider community. Highlights include the Auckland Regional Big Sing and our annual Westlake Gala.



Recent Highlights

Cantare, Choralation and Nota Bella are regularly recognised with Best Festival Programme awards at the NZCF The Big Sing Regionals. Cantare choir has been awarded Gold and special trophies at the National Finale since 2017.

International Tours and Collaborations

Westlake choirs have historically achieved international success in overseas Festivals. In 2024, Cantare travelled to Malaysia and Indonesia, winning the Teenage Choir division and competing in the Grand Prix at the Bali International Choir Festival. At home, our choirs also collaborate with prestigious musical organisations such as the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Auckland Choral Society, Auckland Chamber Choir, Luminata Voices, North Shore Brass Band and recently featured in the hit NZ film 'Tinā'.





Instrumental Groups

Westlake offers a wide range of instrumental groups for all levels. We hold auditions for Premier and Academy groups in Term 4, with Year 9 students receiving information through their intermediate schools and via our website.

Premier Ensembles (mixed with WBHS)

- Westlake Symphony Orchestra
- Westlake Chamber Orchestra
- Westlake Concert Band (based at WBHS)
- Westlake Big Band (based at WBHS)

Instrumental Academy Groups (WGHS only)

- Taharoto String Orchestra
- Symphonic Band
- Jazz Band

We also offer a range of smaller groups, including:

- Chamber Music Groups
- Rock Bands
- Volante String Group
- Silver Keys Flute Choir

At the 2025 KBB Music Festival, our Symphony Orchestra, Concert Band and Big Band were awarded Gold and Best Performance awards. Chamber Orchestra and Jazz Band received Silver and Taharoto Strings and Symphonic Band earned Bronze. In 2026, the Jazz Band achieved a Silver at the National Jazz Band Festival, and our premier ensembles enjoyed a concert tour to China, performing in Beijing, Xi'an, Hangzhou, and Shanghai for two weeks.



To explore music at Westlake further,
including audition details and programme information,
please email: musicadmin@westlakegirls.school.nz