

M
MUSIC
TEACHERS
ASSOCIATION

ENSEMBLE MAGAZINE

No. 109 / Winter 2019

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**SOUND AND MUSIC'S #CANCOMPOSE
PARTNERSHIPS | 26 TIPS FOR REHEARSING YOUR CHOIR
MUSIC TECHNOLOGY | 20 TIPS FOR KS3**

RESOURCES FOR MUSIC TEACHERS



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WELCOME EDITORIAL



Keith Ayling
Editor

Maybe our role as teachers is to instill a lifelong love of the process of making and creating music.

I recently visited Sherborne School to present a workshop on songwriting to GCSE students. As workshops always are, the room was buzzing with excitement and creativity and it was rewarding to see students make music quickly and joyfully - writing lyrics and melodies in a matter of minutes.

We can often forget the pure enjoyment that simple music making and music creation can bring.

In my position as Senior Lecturer in Songwriting at Leeds College of Music, I've just been asked to present a workshop for a visiting group of sixth form students in December. It prompted me to ask myself the question: what is it that these students need to see to inspire them that a life making and creating music is a life well-spent?

As we enter a new political season, no doubt the discussion over longer term music curriculum strategy will become more intense, but for students who simply want to make music, create music and find a career in music, the discussion will be which road will best develop my skills in an effective way? They will be asking: which road in music will be the most rewarding and the most fun?

These are the questions that we want to answer for each individual student we teach. Maybe our role as teachers of music is to instill a lifelong love of the process of making and creating music. Every other consideration is secondary.

We're excited in this issue to report on a valuable summary of a survey conducted by Sound and Music (page 20) about the barriers that young people face looking to make their own music. Very often this relates to confidence and that is why their early experiences of composing and songwriting can be so pivotal. Our music departments offer extraordinary opportunities to perform in so many different formats, but I wonder what strategies you are finding successful in developing confidence in composing and songwriting? I would love to hear how you are tackling this.

Keith Ayling
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Fb. www.facebook.com/MusicTeachersOrg
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Music Teachers' Association
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#WeAreMusicTeachers

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CONNECTING | INSPIRING | LEADING



CONTRIBUTORS

Features & Articles in the Music Teachers' Association magazine are informed by experts in their field. Here are just a few from this issue.



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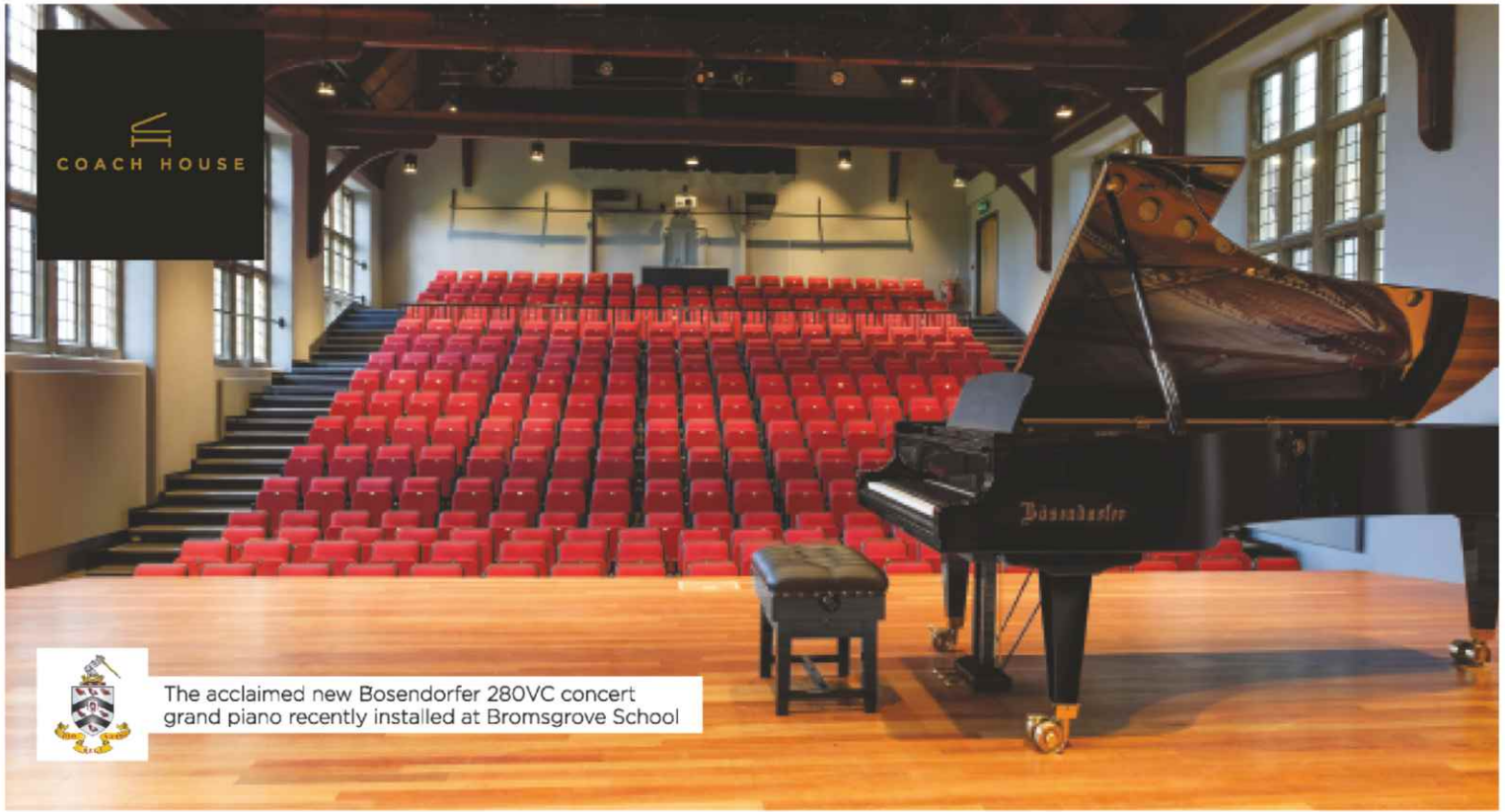
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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Simon Toyne is the Music Teachers' Association President 2019-2021 and Executive Director of Music, David Ross Education Trust & Malcolm Arnold Academy.

As this edition of *Ensemble* arrives, we are (hopefully) enjoying the mammoth job that is the second half of the Autumn Term – one which involves the cranking up of gears, the need for reserves of energy from staff and students alike (including immunity to colds and other illnesses), and a seemingly inexhaustible passion for Christmas carols. However much work this involves, it's always worth remembering that this is the one time of the year when everyone – in schools, businesses, towns, communities at large – expects to hear music, and everyone is moved by it. Christmas without music is unthinkable. And it's such a privilege that we all have to be the musicians at the centre of our communities at this time.

It's a similar position in which we find ourselves as music teachers generally. I believe we have the best job in the world, even though it may not appear that way when having to deal with so many day to day demands and in today's political climate. In music education, we are in a perfect storm - the sharp decline in GCSE and A Level numbers; limited access to instrumental tuition for children from low-income families; most secondary teachers being in one-person departments; only 8% of primary school teachers reporting themselves feeling confident to teach music; the uncertainty over charitable status and indeed the future of the independent sector. To be a music teacher can be an isolated and lonely experience.

There is a need for the Music Teachers' Association as never before – to champion music education, and specifically **music in schools**, to support teachers and, as all good music teachers do, to bring solutions. This is an association of teachers for teachers.

The committee has decided to address these issues head on with three immediate actions: 1) Steven Berryman has become our Curriculum Lead and is forming a curriculum group tasked with producing resources and schemes of learning which are supported by the forthcoming model music curriculum framework. These will be presented to all who attend our May 2020 Conference and will be hosted on our website, available free of charge to MTA members. The concept here is for teachers to be able to select units of work appropriate for their school context which will develop a progressive journey through a three-year Key Stage 3. 2) Tim Garrard has become Partnerships Lead, with a view to developing more effective partnerships between schools, the independent and state sector, with hubs, and with arts organisations. Tim will have a regular column in *Ensemble* in which he highlights best practice taking place across the country. Finally 3) Patrick Johns will be piloting what we hope will be a regular series of MTA podcasts, bringing us all up to date with the latest music education news and exploring key practical elements of music teaching.

Together with a relaunched website in the new year, an increased social media presence (follow us on Twitter @musicteachers_), and more regionally based CPD, we hope that the MTA can become an ever more vibrant and purposeful resource for every music teacher. Please spread the word and urge your colleagues to join us.

You can contact Simon by emailing president@musicteachers.org

ASSOCIATION NEWS



Welcome to the 109th issue of Music Teachers' Association Magazine (Ensemble). The magazine seeks to support you in your music teaching and to network teachers together through the sharing of classroom experiences, advice and wisdom.

Take a look at our Composition Report on page 20 and James Manwaring's new column on p.25 and p.35 for useful, innovative ideas that will help your teaching. We want our resources to be as broad as possible. Why not consider sending in your own? Some of our members will be working in schools with just one music teacher - some will be in bigger departments - but all will have advice that can transform teaching practically. You may discover new inspiration in an old idea that you have forgotten. Everything is valuable.

OUR CONFERENCE

The Music Teachers' Association has one of the most exciting music education conferences in the UK. Moving to a different host school each year, it attracts teachers and heads of department from a wide range of schools and includes an enviable programme of CPD covering all aspects of music teaching.

Our next conference is on May 15-17 2020 at St Paul's School, London.

We begin announcing the programme in January 2020.

OUR WEBSITE

Our website has had a transformation with our new branding and we are continuing to add more information as the year goes on. We want the focus to attract new members and more accurately reflect the association and its national voice, as well as providing resources for the teachers we serve.

www.MusicTeachers.org

OUR PUBLICATIONS

Members automatically receive all of our publications to resource their teaching. This termly magazine has been nominated for 'association magazine of the year' and as a highly respected journal of music education attracts prominent writers from schools and national organisations.

Our Music Directory gives parents choices for schools wishing to promote their music department and the facilities and opportunities they offer. Our Yearbook (PDF) is updated annually with members' details allowing teachers to network further.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Fb. www.fb.com/MusicTeachersOrg
Tw. www.twitter.com/MusicTeachers_

Our mission

It is the Mission of the Music Teachers' Association to provide first-class training, support and networking opportunities to all those who work in Music Education. Through our outstanding publications and our exceptional Annual Conference and CPD programme, we inspire a membership which passionately believes that schools and their pupils' lives are deeply enriched by a high quality music provision.



INVITE YOUR COLLEAGUES TO JOIN US

We have always found that the best way to grow is through personal recommendation. Following a conference or CPD day, inspired members return to their school music departments and enthuse about the techniques learned, the experience shared and the encouragement they have received. By working together, supporting each other and sharing good practice we are securing the future of music education. Encourage a colleague to join us: go to www.MusicTeachers.org to download a membership form.

NATIONAL VOICE

NETWORKING

We are regularly meeting teachers, music hubs and organisations to consider how we can better partner together to promote the value of music education and particularly music in schools. Our President, Simon Toyne, spoke at a number of conferences in October.



Bryanston Music Forum

Simon spoke about 'Music Teachers as Influencers', exploring the role of the music teacher as instigator of 'butterfly effects' in students' lives as well as highlighting some of the work taking place through the David Ross Education Trust's Singing Schools programme.

Kingston Music Service

At Kingston Music Service's Conference, as well as delivering the keynote speech, he led two workshops on 'Developing effective partnerships between schools and arts organisations' and 'Developing the next generation of musicians and music-lovers', in which he compared the disciplined approach to sport in schools and the community with that of music.

Westminster Music Forum

At the Westminster Music Forum, Simon spoke about 'Priorities for the music education teaching workforce – reducing workload and improving teacher recruitment and retention' and shared a panel with Dr Martin Fautley (Birmingham City University).

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UPDATES FROM SCHOOLS

Cambridge choir visit to Rugby School, Thailand

Robert Costin, Director of Music, writes: 'We were delighted to welcome the excellent Chapel Choir of Pembroke College Cambridge to Rugby School in July as part of their Thailand tour. The visit came about by a chance comment to Anna Lapwood, Pembroke Director of Music, and I enjoyed helping them organise a busy itinerary which included visits to Bangkok, Pattaya, Koh Samet and the Noh Bo Academy on the Myanmar/Thailand border.'

The 25-strong Choir spent five busy days at Rugby School, including a day's visit to our local partner school at Wat Koh, a choral day and concert, performing at our Speech Day, and a concert at the Pattaya Orphanage. They also managed to fit in a valuable university discussion with our A level students. The enthusiasm and skill of the Pembroke Choir was a great inspiration to all our students and was a wonderful way to finish Rugby's second year of existence (the Prep School started in 2017 and the Senior School in 2018).'

Robert Costin
Director of Music (Senior)



Dragonsong St George's College, Weybridge

St George's College, Weybridge is a large independent Catholic day school founded in 1869 by the Josephite congregation. This year the school is celebrating its 150th anniversary and one of the major events is the creation of the 'DRAGONSONG' project.

This exciting, dramatic and entertaining new musical work is a retelling of the story of St George and the Dragon. On his quest to confront the dragon, St George learns the core educational values of our school - politesse & douceur (at the heart of our founder's vision), mercy, zeal and more.

The lyrics were specially written for the event by Ben Kaye and the music is by Richard Quesnel (Director of Music at St George's College). This piece is inspired by Benjamin Britten's works bringing children, amateurs and professionals together to retell a sacred story with soloists, chorus and different instrumental ensembles.

Points worthy of interest:

- Over 100 performers on stage, including primary and secondary school children singing and playing instruments
- The College Chamber Choir, an adult choir and professional soloists
- Children from state primary schools in central London are performing alongside children from independent schools
- Workshops to meet the composer and the lyricist, creating original pieces of writing and artwork to accompany the event

First performance:

St George's College Chapel, Weybridge: Friday 13th December 2019 – free entry

And then:

St George's Hanover Square, Mayfair: Sunday 26th January 2020 – free entry

For more information contact quesnel@stgeorgesweybridge.com

UPDATES FROM SCHOOLS

The Windsor Upper Schools



After a successful 2018-19 we are now well and truly back into things in Windsor. July ended with an amazing final concert where over 200 students took part. Whilst we said goodbye to some amazing students we have welcomed new ones in this September. This term we have started working on our November production of *Les Miserables* and we are also looking forward to our Paris Tour 2020.

GCSE & A-Level numbers are still good and we are excited to have 40 boys learning to DJ with Future DJs. We are also now teaching a fresh curriculum in Year 9 which is already proving successful. In the face of cuts and non-existent budgets, music continues to grow in Windsor. We recently performed for Alexander Armstrong at the International Boys' School Coalition Conference. He is a big supporter of music and it was a lovely event.

It is always good to hear from other schools and link up with teachers. Please get in touch if you are ever in the Windsor area and want to visit! And please do follow us on Twitter! @twbsmusic

GET TO KNOW OUR MEMBERS

Debbie Madden is the Director of Music at King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon



1. What is the last album you listened to? **Eventide - Voces 8**
2. What is the last book you read? **Sound by Bella Bathurst**
3. What is the best CPD you've been to recently? **Patrick Johns' Blues session at the MTA Conference this year. It is great to have refreshed our Year 8 unit of work this term with some of his ideas.**
4. What is the best piece of advice you've ever been given? **Be extra patient with everyone (at school and at home) during the last week of each term.**
5. Which item in your classroom is your favourite for demonstrating a simple theory to your students? **Cajón for syncopated rhythms**
6. What are you looking forward to in your school calendar? **The new look House Music Competition (but I still haven't booked an adjudicator - any takers?!)**

Would you like to answer some questions? Choose a few of these (or others) and tell us something about yourself.

Sing for Pleasure

National choral charity Sing for Pleasure is delighted to confirm the four scholarship recipients on its highly acclaimed Young Conductors' Programme during the 2019-20 academic year. The talented young musicians who were successful following a rigorous interview and selection process are:

Gina Baker, a freelance musician and Birmingham Conservatoire BMus Voice graduate, who in the past year has taken on several choirs including; choirs for vulnerable people such as prisoners and those affected by homelessness, and health and wellbeing choirs for NHS staff groups and carers;

Sarah Batten, who holds a music degree from Christ Church, Oxford, and a PGCE in Secondary Music from the Institute of Education, University of London, and who now works as a specialist music teacher at a London school whilst also studying part-time for a Masters in Music Education;

Tristan Weymes, a former Organ Scholar with St Mary the Virgin in Merton, and Bass Scholar with the London Youth Choir, who has amassed both a wide range of singing and some conducting experience in recent years, and who is now studying for a music degree at Trinity College, Oxford; and

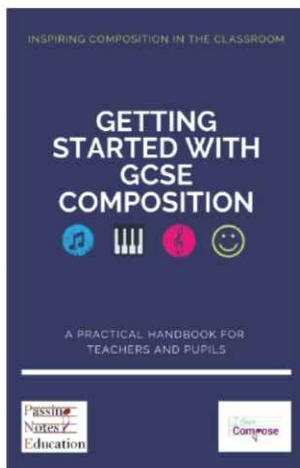
Clover Willis, who graduated with a Music degree from Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge where she was also a Choral Scholar, and who is following a secondary music teaching career in London alongside outreach work leading singing in primary schools and prisons.



The four scholars will benefit from fully funded training during the coming year. During their scholarship they will work towards Sfp's Advanced Level accreditation, conducting complex a capella and orchestrally accompanied works, with an option to take the LRSM in Choral Directing near the end.

Manvinder Rattan, Sing for Pleasure's Chief Executive and Head of Conductor Training, commented: "The calibre of scholarship applicants was very high again this year - unusually, female scholars are in the majority for 2019-20, with past years tending towards a 50/50 split. It heartens me to know that our Young Conductors Programme supports the UK's vibrant choral tradition by helping to mould future generations of choral conductors."

I Can Compose



Passing Notes Education and I Can Compose have teamed up to create an exciting GCSE composition Ebook for teachers. The downloadable booklet contains sections on melody-writing, using rhythm effectively and chords, with links to set works and wider listening. Teachers can find engaging lesson activities, useful starting points and pupil worksheets. "Getting started with GCSE music composition" is available free to download at www.passingnoteseducation.co.uk/resources (enter the code: PassingNotesGCSE at the checkout) and at www.icancompose.com/teachers.

Chris Fish and Rachel Shapey, directors of Passing Notes and I can compose, respectively, will be running GCSE and A level composition CPD days in Manchester and London. If you can't make it to one of these events why not join Chris for a twilight webinar in the comfort of your own home!

Details of all CPD events available on the Passing Notes website: (www.passingnoteseducation.co.uk).

Faber Music

Faber Music Distribution is delighted to announce that, from 1 October 2019 it will be the exclusive, worldwide distributor for the London College of Music Examinations catalogue. The London College of Music Examinations catalogue joins a roster of distinguished music publishers distributed by Faber Music Distribution, including Trinity College London Press, Alfred Music, Edition Peters, Bärenreiter, Sher Music, Jamey Aebersold Jazz and Weinberger.

Merv Young (Head of London College of Music Examinations) said: "I am delighted that London College of Music Examinations are now working with Faber Music Distribution. This relationship will form a key part in our global strategy for the growth and development of our syllabuses across the creative arts. LCME and FMD both share the same passion for promoting all aspects of arts education and I look forward to working closely with them."

Club Europe Concert Tours

Specialist school music tour company, Club Europe Concert Tours are delighted to have formed a partnership with Keys of Change, a music education charity that brings classical music to young people in extraordinary circumstances around the world.

Keys of Change was founded in 2011 by inspirational concert pianist Panos Karan, who alongside his international playing career, travels the world performing and bringing music to many deprived or suffering areas. Panos also founded the Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta (FYS) which was developed out of the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami of 2011; many of its members are survivors of the disasters. The charity are firm believers in the power of music to transform lives.

Panos will be working with Club Europe's young music ensembles around the UK. Would you like him to visit you and your ensemble at your school? This could include a masterclass for your school's ensemble and a conducting workshop for your music leader and possibly lead to a joint concert with Panos either at your school or at a high profile venue. Or you could get involved with the Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta. Perform with them in Japan while on a tour of a lifetime or here in the UK, next time they visit.



To find out more about Keys of Change and how you can get involved, get in touch with Lucy Szymonski at Lucy.s@club-europe.co.uk or give her a call on 0208 772 2861.

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Ocarina Workshop

Adventurous Music-Making

Ocarina Workshop's new 'Adventurous Music-Making' series for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 is nearing completion. 'Music Zero-to-Hero', 'Music World-Explorer' and 'Music Time-Traveller' are ready now. The final two titles, 'Music Music-Maker' and 'Music Code-Cracker' are coming soon. The series enables any pupil to sing, play and compose music in different genres. All 101 arrangements in the five-book series are notated within an octave to be accessible for voices and whole-class instruments. Each book introduces a new aspect of practical music-making, adopting a cross-curricular approach to spread music throughout the school.



As the name suggests, 'Music World-Explorer' introduces music from many cultures, making even the most exotic of scales and harmonies accessible to first-time players. 'Music Time-Traveller' takes classes on an adventure from Stone Age to Space Age, to discover the sounds and customs of each era. Song lyrics provide authentic information on the countries and times visited and musical styles explored. Adding lyrics to instrumental themes by such composers as Susato, Vivaldi and Beethoven gives flexible possibilities for both singing and playing great works in mixed groups. Instrumentalists learn the rhythm of new pieces by singing first and then playing; singers add simple instrumental accompaniments to songs.

This project has taken over three years to come to fruition. The colourful Pupil Books are a welcome addition to whole-class music lessons and the five Teacher Books and CDs provide a comprehensive resource that is designed to work at every level, and particularly with pupils aged 6 to 13.

www.ocarina.co.uk/amm

Royal College of Organists

The RCO is delighted to announce a new scheme for the accreditation of institutions. Under the scheme, which has been formulated very much with secondary schools in mind, the College commits to engaging positively with its accredited institutions in arranging or helping to arrange where possible events, activities, on-site



Certificate of Accredited Membership (CAM) examining and other tailored support for organ tuition and choral direction in the institution. Additionally, organ students at the accredited institution enjoy all the benefits of RCO student membership for half the usual annual cost, including full access to iRCO, the College's online learning resource, and reduced price attendance at RCO classes, events and courses. We welcome enquiries from schools wishing to find out more about the scheme. Please email andrew.mccrea@rco.org.uk.

We are also pleased to announce the availability on iRCO of a series of eight short films which are of particular relevance to teenage organists and their teachers. Co-commissioned with Oundle for Organists, they show what to consider and what to prepare when applying for an organ scholarship, whether at a university, a cathedral, or parish church. A comprehensive reading list is included with the series.

Ambitious teenage organists should look out for the opening of bookings on 1 December for our annual The Organ Student Experience (TOSE) course on 1 December. Offering tuition in repertoire playing, keyboard skills, and choral accompaniment and directing, it will run in Cambridge from 21–26 July 2020 directed by Daniel Moul. Bursaries will be available. Complementing TOSE and offering tuition for those who will attend it, as well as for those not quite ready, is TOSE-in-a-Day which runs in London on Saturday 21 March with tuition from Daniel Moul, Jeremiah Stephenson and Simon Williams.

Charanga

Charanga Musical School continues to break new ground with the release of Yumu, a new area of the platform dedicated to supporting students' music learning between lessons. Teachers can use Yumu to set assignments for their students using their own favourite resources, exercises and pieces, or Charanga's. They can also share a range of ready-made "packages" with pupils to help stimulate and grow their interest in specific areas of learning or musical activity. These include Music World with its avatars, musical games, quizzes, and instrumental courses for beginners. And yet Yumu is open-ended musically and serves children and young people aged 6–16.

"Whether you're a school or an instrumental teacher wishing to support students with online music learning; a music hub wanting to guide young people through the progression routes on offer locally; or running projects to support those in challenging circumstances outside of school, Yumu will offer a simple and effective way to make it happen," said Mark Burke, Founder and Director of Charanga. Charanga will be announcing exciting new collaborations around Yumu in the coming weeks. Free 30-day trials of Charanga Musical School are available to all MTA members at <https://charanga.com/site/free-trial/>.

The Music History Handbook

Paul Terry

Musonix Publishing

The Music History Handbook

New for 2019, The Music History Handbook is an A4-size, 308-page hardback in full colour, forming an ideal introduction to the history of western music from prehistoric times to post-minimalism. It is well suited to the general listener as well as to A-level students wishing to broaden their knowledge of repertoire, particularly those hoping to read music at university or conservatoire.

It contains more than 250 illustrations, 238 music examples and 550 links to freely available recordings of key works in the core repertory. Technical terms are explained in simple language and the book includes a comprehensive index. There are clear explanations of musical styles and structures, with individual studies of principal composers. Special attention is paid to the contribution of women composers and a final chapter traces the history of traditional and folk music from the middle ages, through the creation of commercial popular music at the end of the 19th century, to the emergence of rock and roll.

Written by Paul Terry, author of many of the well-known Rhinegold Study and Revision Guides for GCSE and A-level Music, The Music History Handbook is available from musonix.com/publishing at £19 as well as from Amazon.

Duet Group

Duet Group continues to develop their relationship with numerous independent schools in the UK. Recent instrumental provision includes a Steinway D Concert Grand at Cobham Hall School for the Gilt Hall, a fabulous 18th Century music room which Duet Media are developing as a Concert and Recording Venue with the school. New projects we are working on with clients include leasing everything from single Concert Grand Pianos through to complete 150 instrument fleet replacements and even brand new Chapel Pipe Organs. Duet Group is brand agnostic and we can, and do, do anything to support the needs of education. We have recently started working with YCAT, the Young Classical Artists Trust, and we proudly announce George Harliono, formerly of the Purcell School and now studying at the Royal

College of Music, as the first YCAT Duet Artist. We will be supporting him through his journey and hope to share his phenomenal talent and personality with our client schools.

Plans are underway for the next Duet Philharmonic Youth Orchestra concert which will be Mahler's 9th Symphony in the Royal Festival Hall on 1 April 2021 – audition information will be available soon for this exciting project, now in its 5th season. Duet Group have recently provided assistance with the launch of the 'Sounding Out' programme at the King's School in Canterbury – this outreach music school for children in the local community is sure to become a leading model for this sort of work and we are proud and delighted to have been able to help.

Trinity College London

Our new **Drum Kit and Percussion syllabus** is now available and will be valid from 1 January 2020 with a one-year overlap.

Drum Kit is supported with three new repertoire books covering Initial - Grade 8 and comprehensive online resources. The syllabus covers a wide range of styles including jazz, funk, show, film, TV, latin, reggae and swing. Percussion repertoire lists have been refreshed and the exams cover the full range of orchestral instruments available. Our digital support resources include an overview video, a Drum Kit exam walkthrough video, demos of all the drum kit exercises and some of the percussion pieces.

You can find them at: trinitycollege.com/percussion-resources
For more information on the syllabus please visit: trinitycollege.com/percussion

Our new **Classical Guitar syllabus** is now available and will be valid from 1 January 2020 with a one-year overlap. With new graded repertoire books containing 13 pieces at Initial – Grade 4 and 10 pieces for Grades 5-8, the new repertoire lists feature a wider range of styles, more pieces by female composers and a selection of previously unpublished pieces. The duets option has also been extended to Grade 5. The technical work includes specially composed exercises for each grade, covering the technique required specifically by guitarists, ensuring that all learners put scales and arpeggios into the performance context.

Take a look at our digital support resources at: trinitycollege.com/guitar-resources
For more information on the syllabus please visit: trinitycollege.com/classical-guitar



Howarth of London

Howarth of London have recently produced a series of short videos to promote the care of musical instruments.

The videos are a useful resource for teachers and music staff wishing to learn basic maintenance skills. There are also videos on cleaning and assembly that can be shared with students and parents to reinforce good habits.

The videos are free to view and can be accessed via a link provided by the Howarth Education Department. Contact Laura King for more information at education@howarth.uk.com or on 01903 239 219.

Beat Goes On

20% off 'Christmas Samba' workshops from Beat Goes On!

Now in the third year of our very popular 'Christmas Samba' workshops, we're happy to offer these with a 20% discount! Give us a choice of three festive tunes that you're including in your Christmas / Winter concert and we'll add bespoke Brazilian percussion arrangements that can be learned quickly and performed by your pupils!

This adds a fun and unique twist to your festive celebrations!
For all enquiries please visit www.beatgoeson.co.uk



National Concert Band Festival

NCBF has shared the dates for the 2019-2020 season. Since its modest beginnings over 30 years ago, NCBF - National Concert Band Festival has developed and grown in size and prestige until now it is recognised as the largest, most active, enterprising Festival for wind instrument musicians who play in wind bands or big bands throughout the UK. The ncbf celebrates and promotes the music and activities of wind bands / jazz bands by holding regional festivals across the UK and a National Festival. The organisation aims to provide unique performing opportunities in a friendly, welcoming and musically enriching environment. www.ncbf.info

Regional Festivals

03 November	Kneller Hall, Twickenham
17 November	Newman College, Oldham
24 November	Haberdashers Abraham Darby Academy, Telford
24 November	Sir Thomas Rich's High School, Gloucester
30 November	Antrim, Northern Ireland
01 December	Nottingham High School
19 January	Glengarnock, Scotland
Nationals	
04 & 05 April	Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester

Forwoods

Forwoods, one of the Music Teachers' Association's first Corporate Members, are offering bargains galore in a half-price sale following a series of business acquisitions.

Based in Dover since 2001, following 55 years in Canterbury, they bought the retail operation of Goodmusic in Tewkesbury in 2012, ScoreStore of Arborfield later that year and Gillian Greig Music of Taunton in 2015. All of which has left them with thousands of overstocks in both printed music and accessories.

Stephen Yarrow, long-serving Director of Forwoods, writes, "My first experience of the MMA, as it was then, was an invitation from Marilyn Cleobury-Jones to exhibit at Conference in St Andrew's back in 1995. I remember the occasion well – the atmosphere was all very clubby back then, and a good weekend was had by all! A well-known member of the Association, who was between DoM jobs at the time, volunteered to drive our van full of goodies from Kent to Fife, and we flew up the next day. Our return journey was on the 50th Anniversary of VE Day, and we observed the two-minutes silence in mid-air. We at Forwoods attach great value to our Corporate Membership of the Music Teachers' Association, and we're grateful for the continuing support



and patronage of its growing membership."

The Forwoods sale – all of which is available to browse online at www.scorestore.co.uk – includes a large amount of school ensemble and performance material, as well as some core repertoire titles alongside, admittedly, some rather more obscure lines.

The expansion of the business has propelled Forwoods to the forefront of the UK printed music industry, where it is now one of only a handful of truly independent suppliers, yet offers a personal and professional service which rivals even the biggest multi-national. To find out more, call free on 0800 072 0354 or email stephen@forwoods.co.uk

Steinberg

Steinberg celebrate the launch of Dorico 3!

In September we released Dorico Pro 3 as well as Dorico Elements 3. Dorico has come a long way since its initial launch in October 2016. Many composers, universities, colleges and schools have now moved over to Dorico from Sibelius and are experiencing just how good it is. Something that has become very noticeable, is the number of time saving features inside Dorico.



One of these time saving features that is proving a big hit in Dorico 3, is the new unique 'condensed score' option. With one click of the mouse, you can now condense a large complex full score to something a lot more manageable. The same with split SATB choir works, you're one click away from a piano reduction. Imagine Flute 1 and Flute 2 on two separate staves, one click and they're condensed onto one staff. "That is SO cool" was the comment from one Director of Music! Another major focus has been guitar notation, and Dorico 3 introduces in-depth tab for guitar and other fretted instruments, as well as beautiful classical guitar notation with automatically-positioned left and right hand fingering and string indications.

And if you already have a Sibelius site license, a new Dorico license will cost from as little as about £60 per seat. Please contact your local music shop for a quote and to purchase. For further information, please contact Richard Llewellyn (UK Education Manager): r.llewellyn@steinberg.de and tel: 07841 516 066.



OneStage

"Being part of a Loire wide music festival made such a difference to the overall feel of the tour. The venues were excellent, there was clearly evidence of advertising and posters which inevitably meant that we had great audiences. The whole experience for students and staff alike was extremely positive and worthwhile!"

OneStage are working towards developing a series of festivals in Europe that offer value conscious tours to value-conscious UK ensembles with the aim of showcasing British music making abroad, whilst giving our ensembles the very best possible concert experiences on tour. (www.onestagefestivals.com)

This summer we launched our first in-house festival "Musique en scène" in the Loire Valley France and four music hubs and a university orchestra participated in the festival performing to a collective total of over 3000 local people. The festival is a chance for young musicians to be involved with a larger scale event and to be greeted warmly and enthusiastically by local concert hosts.

OneStage's reputation in the Loire region means that we have exclusive access to many venues including brand new concert halls where local town halls are delighted to receive our performances. In an area rich in history and culture, there is very little musical heritage and local concert promoters and concert goers continually receive the "wow factor" at every OneStage concert. In 2020 OneStage will host a one-off event in June / July in Bonn: Beethoven, Birthdays & Bonn, celebrating the 250th anniversary of Beethoven and 20 years of OneStage. Work is in progress on other festivals across Europe where we believe we can offer exceptional concerts and added musical value. Keep an eye on our website as they will become available to book for 2021! We are already taking bookings for Musique en scène 2021 and both our 2020 festivals are almost sold out. Find out today how your school can participate! tourenquiries@onestage.co.uk

Rodolfus Foundation

Rodolfus Foundation launches fundraising campaign to enable wider access to its residential choral courses

The Rodolfus Foundation, a not-for-profit charity which runs residential Choral Courses for young people aged 16-21 and Junior Choral Courses for 8-15, is launching an ambitious fundraising campaign in 2020 to raise £40,000 to support students attending the courses who might otherwise not be able to attend. The campaign is to celebrate forty years of choral courses.

Founded 1980 by the lifelong music educationalist Ralph Allwood, the Choral Courses have offered 9,000 places for children and young people aged 8-21 to enjoy a very special, formative experience. Courses take place in the Easter and Summer holidays in several locations. This year, the Junior Choral Courses were held at Cheltenham College (2 courses) and Wellington College, and the Choral Courses for 16-21 year olds at Eton College (2 courses), St John's College, Cambridge (2 courses) and Queen's College, Oxford. There are no auditions and a generous bursary scheme, so there is no barrier to every young person who wishes to attend a choral course.

As well as residential courses, the Foundation runs a youth choir, The Rodolfus Choir, which performs in prestigious venues throughout the year. Most of the Choir's singers have come through the ranks of the Choral Courses and a significant number plan to pursue music as a career.

The Foundation is also increasing its outreach work to widen access to the courses, hoping to encourage young people from all backgrounds to experience the excitement of musical teamwork and singing to a high standard.

Applications for next year's courses and bursaries will open at the end of November 2019. With plans for 4 Choral Courses for 16-21 year olds and 3 Junior Choral Courses, we look forward to welcoming almost 500 students next year.

For more information, visit our website www.therodolfusfoundation.org.uk

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Keith Ayling collates a brief summary of a new report on composition from Sound and Music

#Can Compose

In October, national charity **Sound and Music** launched the findings of a national survey, revealing the significant barriers faced by young people looking to compose and create their own music. It is the first report in the UK to focus specifically on creativity and composing, offering a unique perspective on an area often overlooked.



SUMMARY

Drawing on responses from over 500 educators, the report found that:

- 97% agree there should be more opportunities for students to compose their own music
- 42% report a fall in young people's confidence to compose between Key Stage 2 (ages 7-11) and Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14)
- Only 27% of school teachers signpost to external opportunities, meaning few young people are able to progress their talent or interest
- Over 600 barriers reported that prevent young people from creating their own music in the UK
- Near unanimous agreement that creating and composing should be a central element of music education

The analysis highlights the urgent need for change in perceptions, provision, policy and practice. In response, the report offers 21 key recommendations for the sector to address these urgent issues.

Between October 2018 and February 2019, Sound and Music conducted a National Music Educators' Survey, which invited professionals from across the Music Education sector to contribute their experiences and views. They received 551 responses from across the UK, from head teachers and chief executives of arts organisations to teachers and musicians working on the front line. Within the context of the many music education surveys published in recent months, Sound and Music's survey was unique in that it focused specifically on creativity and composing, which is at the heart of our vision and mission: an area often overlooked in discussions about music education, as this report evidences.

Through this national survey, they have been able to collect data that reveals a rich and nuanced picture of how young people are being supported, or not, to compose their own music. Whilst there is overwhelming agreement about the importance of composing as a central element of a young person's music education, there is also equally strong agreement that there are insufficient opportunities for young people to develop their compositional skills. They have found that there are many barriers that need to be overcome if more young people are to be able to develop their knowledge and skills in composing their own music. These barriers are concerned with how young people are supported by educators and, more broadly, the

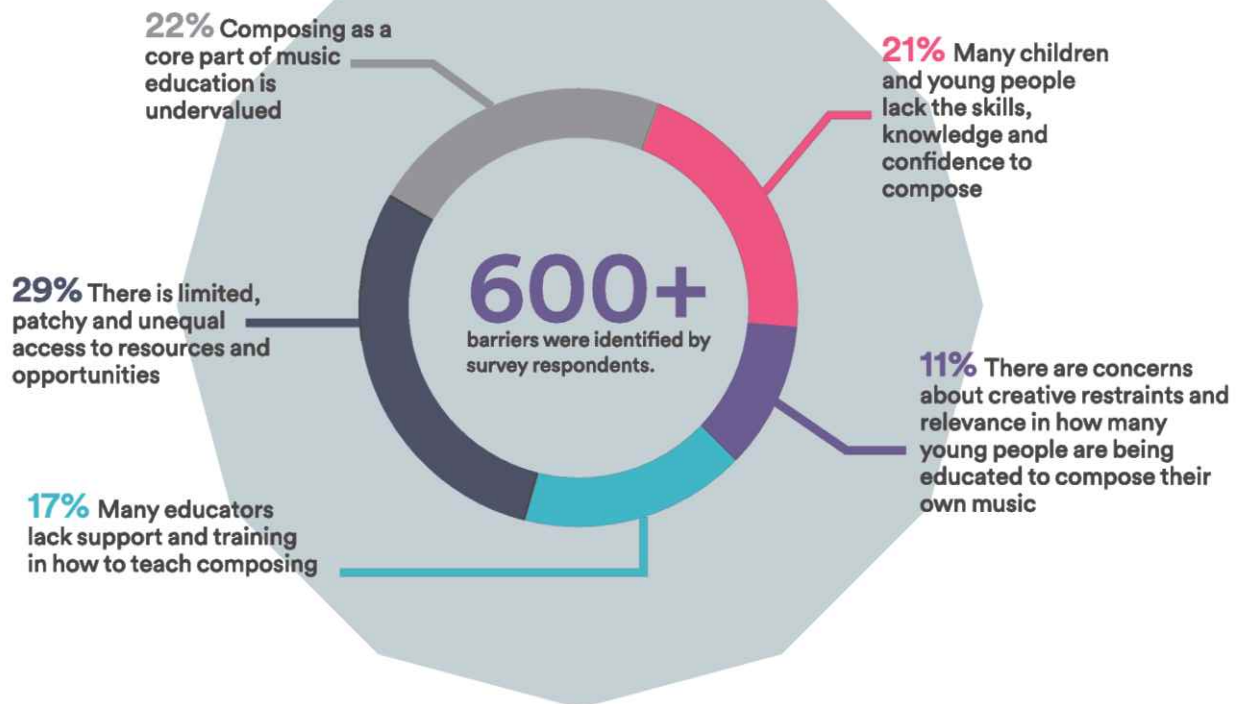
Music Education sector - and point to the need for changes in perceptions, provision, practice and policy.

The findings have identified five main barriers preventing young people's progression in composing, which are further detailed in the full report.

"This matters because now, more than ever, the creative, problem-solving and collaborative capabilities that composing uniquely requires and develops are vital for the future."

Susanna Eastburn MBE

3 There are many barriers that need to be overcome if young people are to be able to develop their skills in composing their own music



The 5 Barriers

The five barriers preventing young people's progression in composing:

Barrier 1: Many young people lack the skills, knowledge and confidence to compose their own music

- Young people start off being equally confident in composing and performing, but over time their confidence swings increasingly towards performing
- Many students lack confidence in themselves as composers and worry about being judged

Barrier 2: There are concerns about the relevance of opportunities available for young people

- Composing using staff notation is far more likely to be taught than composing using digital technologies, despite many educators reporting that Digital Audio Workstations engage young people more effectively
- Opportunities for young people to hear their own compositions performed live are extremely limited

Barrier 3: Many educators lack sufficient support and training in how to teach composing

- Teachers and educators are not accessing training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) focused on composing
- There are issues with how composing is assessed (and perceived to be assessed) in exams, which impact on how it is taught

Barrier 4: There is limited, patchy and unequal access to resources and opportunities across the UK

- Few music educators are supporting young people's progression through signposting other opportunities
- Educators need better resources to support young people to compose
- Opportunities to work with professional composers are few, despite nearly half of respondents saying that these experiences are what would most benefit young people's composing
- There are additional barriers preventing disabled young people from composing

Barrier 5: Composing as a core part of music education is undervalued

- Music as a curriculum subject is being deprioritised
- Schools increasingly rely on external music tuition to fulfil curriculum and examination requirements, which disproportionately affects composing
- Composing and creativity is undervalued
- Performing is prioritised over composing

Conclusions

This survey and analysis has brought home the reality that whilst there are many examples of good practice (which deserve wider sharing, as we say in recommendation 16 below), the barriers that young people face if they want to learn to create their own music are legion and point to a fundamental lack of any strategic approach or infrastructure. Unlike playing an instrument or singing, where there are well-established, well-understood pathways and qualifications for young people, most of which have been in place for many years, there are no consistent progression routes for young composers. Teaching composing and creative music-making is the area of the music curriculum where we know that teachers feel the least confident, yet training and support for educators is thin on the ground, and what activity there is tends to be fragmented, with educators having very limited knowledge of other opportunities because of limited signposting.

Perhaps the starkest finding of this report is that young people's confidence falls dramatically away as they get older, despite evidence that younger children naturally enjoy composing and, when given the opportunity, are as confident in creating their own music as they are performing. This matters now, more than ever, to ensure we have a new generation of talented composers contributing to and regenerating our culture, as well as giving young people the tools so they can thrive and navigate our increasingly complex, changing and automated world. Our creative future needs composers.

Five overarching outcomes have been identified to guide the sector in addressing the issues, together with 21 recommendations that have the potential to address, and in the longer term remove, these barriers.

The five outcomes are as follows:

- There should be more opportunities for young people to compose in and out of school
- Opportunities for young people to compose should be more relevant and diverse
- There should be improved provision of training, support and resources for educators, music education hubs and schools
- There should be improved progression pathways through better networks and signposting
- More value should be placed on composing

1. There should be a consistent range of opportunities, distributed around the country, for young people to compose their own music both in and out of school
2. These opportunities should be led and structured so that young people can develop their skills as composers
3. Young people's music should be routinely performed, showcased and championed in all contexts as appropriate for the music, including placing young people's music alongside that of inspiring role models
4. Young people should have opportunities to develop their composing skills and individual musical voices through composing in their preferred styles of music
5. Composing opportunities should offer access to appropriate resources including digital technology that reflects contemporary practices
6. Young people should be supported to compose music in a range of styles and using different approaches, in order to develop new skills and challenge their creative and social perceptions
7. Ofqual and exam boards should develop improved criteria to assess creative composing skills, and examiners should be better supported to develop their skills and confidence in understanding what makes for 'good composing'
8. Educators should be comfortable in supporting their students to compose in a range of styles and genres, including through the use of technology in a way that reflects contemporary practice
9. Educators should have access to appropriate resources and training to explore a range of styles, methods and contemporary musical practices, including use of Digital Audio Workstations
10. Resources for young people facing disabling barriers should be developed, including adapted technology and the sharing of good practice in order to ensure equality of access for all
11. There should be better signposting to available training and resources for educators locally, regionally and nationally across the UK
12. Continuing Professional Development should provide relevant, subject-specific training that enables educators to develop their classroom practice and confidence
13. There should be more opportunities for young people to meet, work with and learn from professional composers, in all contexts
14. Composers should be better supported to develop their skills as educators
15. There should be improved signposting of opportunities for young people between teachers, music education hubs and other stakeholders locally, regionally and nationally
16. A central hub of information, resources, examples of good practice and opportunities for young people should be developed to facilitate better awareness of and signposting to what is available. This will also serve to identify important gaps in provision.
17. There should be a wider recognition and understanding at all levels, including at policy level, that composing and creating music is an integral part of every child's music education, with policies, data collection and funding to support that
18. The needs of young people who compose should be recognised and supported by key policy documents such as the next National Plan for Music Education, the National Curriculum and the forthcoming Model Music Curriculum
19. All early years settings and primary schools should employ or work with someone who is confident and competent in creative music-making within the school's music curriculum
20. For schools where the National Curriculum does not apply, the role of composing as an integral part of music education should be recognised through other means including Ofsted inspection criteria
21. The positive contribution of composing to young people's musical, social and educational development, and to their wellbeing, should be better understood including through the dissemination of relevant academic research

Download the full report from:
musicteachers.org

More information from soundandmusic.org

Annabel Price
introduces
Ensemble readers
to the inspirational
Rodolfus Foundation



The Rodolfus Foundation: “Inspiring tomorrow's singers”

Compelling evidence from academic research shows that singing in a choir is good for physical health, mental well-being and social bonding. To take just one example, it has now been established that those involved in singing show significant increase in immunoglobulin pointing to an enhanced activity of the immune system.

Academic research also shows a link between musical instruction and enhanced academic ability. Several studies have looked at children's attainment scores in Reading and Maths before and after a course of music study (Hurwitz 1975; Rauscher 1997 and 2007; Gromko and Poorman 1998) and by and large all studies have concluded that there is a correlation between music studies and an improvement in reading, maths and verbal memory.

So participating in music makes us smarter, happier, healthier, more rounded human beings and is particularly beneficial to the developing student.

Someone who believes passionately in the positive benefits of choral singing is Ralph Allwood, a lifelong music teacher, educationalist and conductor, and founder of week-long residential Choral Courses. Since 1980, the Choral Courses have offered 9,000 places for children and young people aged 8-21 to enjoy a very special, formative experience. Courses take place in the Easter and Summer holidays in several locations. This year, the Junior Choral Courses were held at Cheltenham College (two courses) and Wellington College, and the Choral Courses for 16-21 year olds at Eton College (two courses), St John's College, Cambridge (two courses) and Queen's College, Oxford. There are no auditions for the courses; all we look for is enthusiasm for singing and an open mind to learning new skills and collaborating with other singers. Over nearly 40 years, the Choral Courses have helped young singers from all over the world to lift their standards and raise their sights.

The Choral Courses are run by the Rodolfus Foundation, a not-for-profit charity that exists to share the joy of choral music with as many young

people as possible. As well as residential courses, the Foundation runs a youth choir, The Rodolfus Choir, which performs in prestigious venues throughout the year. Most of the Choir's singers have come through the ranks of the Choral Courses and a significant number plan to pursue music as a career.

The Foundation is also increasing its outreach work to widen access to the courses, offering generous bursaries so every child can enjoy the excitement of musical teamwork and singing to a high standard. This year alone the Foundation committed £30,000 of supporting bursaries, and next year there are plans to increase this to £40,000, in celebration of 40 years of the Choral Courses.

Because of the immersive nature of the courses, children invariably report a 'light bulb' moment at some point during the week when everything they are learning crystallises and opens their mind to new possibilities, both musically and in other areas of their life.

“After going, it was as if someone had switched something on inside of me, or perhaps brought to the surface an undiscovered part of my being.” Meg

Applications for next year's courses and bursaries will open at the end of

November 2019. With plans for four Choral Courses for 16-21 year olds and three Junior Choral Courses, we look forward to welcoming almost 500 students next year.

For more information, visit our website www.therodolfusfoundation.org.uk

Annabel Price is the Partnerships and Development Officer at the Rodolfus Foundation.



20 KS3 Tips

1. If you haven't already, then have a look at your schemes of work and add something new. This year we are trying – Cubase, Cajon & more singing.
2. Start lessons with a 'Do It Now' task or a 'Flying Start' approach.
3. Keep your door open during lessons. I have been doing this recently and it has made a real difference to the environment. Also, I quite like people popping their head in as they walk past to see what is going on.
4. Whatever you do don't shy away from traditional notation, as student's actually really enjoy engaging with it.
5. Sing as much as possible and as often as possible.
6. Get yourself a department Cajon – a box drum. I have found it a really useful tool when I am teaching rhythm, but also a good accompaniment for classroom singing. They start fairly cheap, but you may like to go for a more durable one.
7. Listen to lots of music in class. This could be as students enter, and if so, then link it to a 'Do It Now' task. Try and vary what you play them so they are intrigued, surprised or comfortable when they enter the classroom.
8. Chat to other subject teachers and see if there are ways of linking up and undertaking some cross-curricular work.
9. Think about the Summer Term now and make sure that you save some of your "best" topics for then. I teach Year 9 and so by the summer they have taken their options and are starting to think about the future. Music therefore needs to be exciting and engaging for them so that they don't switch off.
10. Lessons in the lead up to Options Evening should showcase a little bit of GCSE. Try unpacking a set work or doing a Brief based composition to ensure that they are aware of what GCSE is all about.
11. Smile more! Key Stage 3 Music can be hard at times, especially when students aren't engaged. Don't pretend that it is something it is not and, ensure that you smile and make the lessons enjoyable.
12. Do you use enough technology in your lessons? Students love music technology and it isn't all expensive and complicated. Try using a loop pedal with your singing & song-writing schemes of work; this is a winner for us and a great tool in lessons.
13. Using a computer to create music is fantastic and there is a number of great websites out there. Check out www.incredibox.com to start with!
14. Sonic Pi is something that we introduced last year and it has worked really well. It is free and has so much scope for Key Stage 3 students.
15. If you don't have access to computers in your classroom, then make sure you book a computer room in advance! Getting students making music on computers is really important.
16. Get rid of tables in your classroom and make the space more exciting and useable.
17. We all find ourselves taken away from the classroom at some point so it's a good idea to prepare cover work in advance. Depending on the time of year, it might be possible to leave something that they have previously worked on. They can build on this previous skill easily, especially if it is something on computers. Technology is great and there are fantastic websites that they can use to work on their music theory skills – www.musictheory.net.
18. Use senior students to help support lessons. It is great for the class as you have another pair of hands, and good experience for the senior student. I have in the past asked A-Level students to support cover teachers when I have not been in school.
19. Make sure you get on the Key Stage 3 Facebook group and any other relevant groups. There are loads of ideas out there and lots of communities that will support you.
20. Don't suffer in silence or do it on your own. Key Stage 3 can be tough and it is important that we enjoy it and deliver it to the best of our ability. Students need to enjoy music and make enough progress to ensure that GCSE Music is within reach.

James Manwaring
is Director of Music
at The Windsor
Boys' School



For more information on this and for extra resources please visit www.manwaringmusic.blog or [@twbsmusic](https://twitter.com/twbsmusic)

Partnerships

Tim Garrard - our new Partnerships Lead - is Director of Music at Westminster School



Media such as Twitter and Instagram are really powerful tools for knowledge, advertising and networking. A lot of what I know to be happening in Music Education around the country is courtesy of the Twitterati, and I'm a huge advocate of music departments tweeting in celebration of music-making in all its forms. So get tweeting! However, people can be unkind on social media, questioning facts, judgement or motive. I don't like it when I see people being unkind. Society is divided enough as it is, and one only needs to turn on the news or programmes such as *Newsnight* or *Question Time* to see how 'them' and 'us' the world has become.

But it's not all doom and gloom! Even at a time in Music Education in which the 'State of the Nation' is bleak, as highlighted on the BBC News earlier this academic year, there's something we can do about it. Whatever might be going on in political spheres, there can be no room for division in the work that we do. Because we all believe, absolutely, in the power of music to transform lives, and we can all help each other to achieve this by talking to each other!

At the beginning of October, I went to a Music Education Conference at Bryanston School in Dorset. It was sensational. The speakers were excellent and, in particular, I would commend members to listen to the story and mission of Jimmy Rotheram, inspirational music leader at Feversham Primary School, and to look at the transformational effect of music in the DRET Schools where Simon Toyne is the Executive Director of Music. This conference was attended by various music hubs, instrumental teachers and classroom teachers from both primary and secondary in both the maintained and independent sectors. And there was no 'them', just 'us'! The Dorset Music Hub is clearly working very hard to deliver fantastic opportunities for Dorset's young musicians, and Stephen Williams and his team at Bryanston were able to accommodate us all in their wonderful new Music building. All of this was achieved because people decided to reach out to each other in partnership and explore what might be possible.

In this edition of *Ensemble*, you will see examples of partnership in London and Canterbury, as well as Dorset, and we hope to share similar stories from around the UK and beyond in subsequent editions. So, if you have good news to share and a story to tell, please do let us know.

In my newly created role as Partnerships Lead for the MTA, I would love to see as much networking taking place as possible. The MTA can be a powerful agent of change in our schools and communities, so if you don't yet know colleagues in schools within your local area, why not pick up the phone or write an email (and sign them up!)? It may well be the start of a fantastic and meaningful relationship that will benefit not only you and your staff, but, crucially, your pupils!

Bryanston Music Conference

It was fitting that Bryanston School's Music Education Conference on the themes of Partnerships and Engagement was itself a partnership with the Dorset Music Hub and MTA, and it was undoubtedly an engaging day. Sixty delegates enjoyed a high-octane talk from Cathy Lamb (leader of Lichfield Cathedral's award-winning singing programme) on the subject of Singing in the Community and Classroom.

President of MTA Simon Toyne led a compelling session entitled 'Music Teachers as Influencers', encouraging the group to consider those significant moments that define one's career and make teaching music so rewarding. We also saw evidence of the extraordinary work taking place in the DRET Academies. Many delegates were fortunate to be hearing, for the first time, Jimmy Rotherham's talk about his uniquely transformative work at Feversham School in Bradford, with recordings of extraordinary lightbulb moments that elicited spontaneous applause from the audience.

Tim Garrard (Partnerships Lead) described Simon and Jimmy's videos as evidence of what surely has to be some of the very best music teaching in the country.

After lunch, Professor Robert Saxton shared the fruits of many years of accumulated wisdom as a teacher of Composition. A naturally charismatic speaker, he also gave an insight into the whys and wherefores of accessing and studying Music at Oxford.

Returning to the Partnerships theme, Lisa Tregale from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's comprehensive and impressive outreach programme, Resound, outlined exactly what a professional orchestra can do to support learning in schools.

Bridget Whyte, CEO of Music Mark, was sadly unable to join us at the last

minute. Dan Somgyi and Clair McColl valiantly led delegates through her presentation about developments in the new music curriculum and at Ofsted.

Meanwhile, writer-and-thinker-on-music par excellence, Paul Harris, kept everyone captivated as he talked about Increasing Engagement. The result of many years of detailed research and teaching, Paul helped everyone in the room to reflect on their teaching methodologies, language and beliefs.

A rewarding and re-booting day ended with a broad conversation on the theme of the power of partnerships to arrest the decline in Music Education. At a time when concerns about Music Education have made it to the BBC *News at Ten*, it was powerful to hear so many constructive comments and ideas from delegates.



Stephen Williams
Director of Music,
Bryanston School

Photos
Left hand side: Simon Toyne (Executive Director of Music, David Ross Educational Trust)
Top: Stephen Williams (Director of Music, Bryanston School) and Clair McColl (Strategic Lead, Dorset Music Hub)
Right hand side: Jimmy Rotherham (Feversham School)



Sounding Out Music Programme

On Saturday 14 September the *Sounding Out* music programme launched with 16 children coming to the Music School at The King's School, Canterbury, for a 45-minute instrumental lesson in groups of four, plus an hour of creative musical activities in a session called *Saturday Jam*.

Since January, generous donations have allowed The King's School to keep the cost to parents at just £2 per week.

Each child has been provided with a brand-new trumpet or violin, music, accessories and a music bag. Instruments have been provided with a generous discount by John Packer and Brittens Music and the music bags were donated by DuetShop. The *Sounding Out* logo has been created by a King's School art teacher.

The intention is that these Year 5 pupils will continue to learn at The King's School for at least two years, with the possibility of then progressing to individual lessons.

More schools in Canterbury will join the programme in future years and several are already expressing an interest in doing so.

The programme is a first step in working in partnership with local schools to ensure that more children are offered the opportunity to develop a love of classical music through learning, performing and creating music.

**Julie Evans, Head of Music Partnerships,
The King's School, Canterbury**





Music Junction

As the summer term started our major music partnership project, Music Junction, came to a spectacular end. The final concert reverberated around the Great Hall as around 55 primary school children alongside 30 pupils from both St Paul's Girls and St Paul's Boys performed with professional musicians from the London Chamber Orchestra (LCO).

Although new to us, Music Junction has been running for nine years and this year had three 'hubs' which connect maintained and independent schools together. We are working with the Westminster hub and this was the first time that the project had been open to primary schools. There were four primary schools in our first year and we enjoyed visiting them as much as they enjoyed visiting us. Our overall contribution was deep and complex. As well as the use of our spaces, we were able to contribute to the cost directly but also, more importantly, in kind. With input from our own young musicians, as well as administrative and organisational support, we were able to reduce the project's possible funding gap. We were also able to offer the services of members of the department, especially our Composer in Residence, Bernard Hughes, to save significant amounts of money in preparing the musical material.

A powerful thing about the project is that the children, most of whom have never played an instrument before, are immediately working towards a performance rather than feeling like they are starting from scratch. They are loaned instruments free of charge and receive six workshops leading up to the performance. The concert is an almost guaranteed success, regardless of how far we all get, as the pupils will have the support of the mentors and professional musicians performing the commissioned piece as part of an 80-piece orchestra conducted by LCO Principal Conductor Christopher Warren-Green.

The project is just as rewarding for our pupils who are given sessions on mentoring and teaching skills on their instrument, as well as the experience they gain taking part in the school workshops. They also get to play side-by-side with a professional orchestra in the concert which many found very exciting. One of the most special parts of the project is to see our pupils working with these young musicians as they start to learn how to play a new instrument. The patience, care and attention, as well as unfailing sense of humour and patience, is inspiring and humbling.

One of the aims of Music Junction is to get more young people engaged in music-making; it is hoped that many of this year's cohort will take part in the next two years of the project after which some might find a teacher and continue further. We have plans to develop a similar scheme locally and are currently amassing unwanted instruments to support this. Hearing the huge sound of the final jubilant bars of the concert it was hard to remember the noises that we heard when the pupils were first given the instruments just a few months earlier. It will be wonderful to see where this project leads in the future.

Leigh O'Hara, Deputy Head St Paul's Girls School, Director of Partnership and Director of Music

26

Tips for rehearsing your choir



1 There is always a choice between being technical and being musical and inspiring. Of course, it is a mixture. But gradually, over the years, I have found that if you go to the pure meaning of the music, as felt intensely by the composer, then technical details tend to come right in the music's wake. Not all of them, of course, and we have to deal with the nuts and bolts. But generally speaking, the musical approach is the more effective. If you love it, let them know that you do!

Ralph Allwood
Founder of Eton Choral Courses and co-founder of Inner Voices

3 When the session is intense - e.g. learning something difficult, or trying to get a desired effect, do something off the cuff - related or unrelated to the music or the technique or harmony the choir is expending all its energy on.

For example, get them out of their seats, mix them up, get them to do some drama, or sing it in a different style. The energy changes instantly!

Ken Burton
Conductor, Arranger, Composer and Choral Adjudicator



2 Make the most of every moment, because there is never enough time in any school! Pick a couple of key points in the piece you are working on and really insist on the best choral sound that you can achieve. Over time the collective sound will become more unified and blended.

Catherine Beddison
Head of Prep School Music
Cranleigh School

4 Start your rehearsal on time - even if no one is there.

Louise Reid
The Peterborough School

5 The more I work with choirs the more I'm reminded that the most important thing to get right is breathing. Once the breathing is right all sorts of other issues, such as phrasing and intonation, seem to fall into place.



6 Obviously, uniformity of vowel sounds is also a key area. If the piece is relatively slow-moving it's often a good idea to simply sing it through to the vowels. Listen carefully to any 'eh' vowel sounds as I often find that they go flat. Get the choir to sing "air" instead - it will brighten the sound and improve the tuning. An additional benefit of singing through to vowel sounds is that the air flow is not impeded by consonants, making it easier to work on phrasing too.

Tim Johnson,
Director of Music
Eton College



7 A quick and easy technique I have found useful for developing a true legato is to rehearse phrases

using only the vowels from the words that have been set. It will prompt lots of hilarity until it becomes familiar, but once it is working effectively, it's a really good way of demonstrating how smoothly it's possible to sing. Then you can begin adding the consonants back in without allowing them to disrupt the legato quality.

Sandy Chenery
Director of Music
Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools



8 One – possibly obvious – tip that constantly works for me is to change the layout of the choir in rehearsals. We often move to a 'horseshoe' shape so that sopranos/tenors and altos/basses are facing each other, and the choir leader can move up and down the middle of the horseshoe. Another interesting experiment if you have a choir singing in parts is to mix them up so that everyone is standing next to someone who is singing a different part – only really for later rehearsals when everyone is confident about the music, but it makes quite a difference to the sound because everyone has to be a leader rather than a follower!

Simon Rushby
Director of Music
Reigate Grammar School

My tip for choral direction would be to try silent intake of breath before singing. There's no need to make a noise when you breathe in!!

10

Joss Sanders
Director of Music
Bedford School



9 Train them to sing with their EARS. We should be producing

'Singing Musicians'. Very very few music educators and choral directors know how to do this or are even aware of its importance. I listen to hundreds of choirs round the world and only a handful put listening at the centre of their music-making.

Suzi Digby OBE
Conductor and founder of The Voices Foundation and Vocal Futures



11

Bring the composer alive!
As part of your choir's repertoire, choose something new and current by a composer that is alive. Invite them to your rehearsal after you have taught your students the piece.

Recently, Stuart Thompson was invited to run a rehearsal on his 'Gloria' with Ewell Castle Chapel Choir. The students were not only excited and awed by him, they made an interesting connection between the piece and the composer. They understood the context of his piece and his intentions and this improved their performance of it. Additionally, he was able to share his experiences as Director of Music at Leeds Cathedral with the enthusiastic students. It is also satisfying to inspire students in rehearsal with compositions of your own - even a

short round or warm up composed for the choir can be a point of discussion and a lot of fun. Something worth trying when energising and refreshing rehearsals. It is worth mentioning that there are many choral composers who are desperate for their works to be performed - they are easily found online.

Adam Assen
Director of Music
Ewell Castle School

13 When you are teaching a two-part piece, especially one where the main tune might be known to the pupils, always start with the harmony line and use a vowel sound rather than the words to avoid preconception. In my experience, as soon as they think that they know what they are going to sing, the children will make assumptions that get in the way of learning. Far better to begin with a clean slate.

14 Flexed knees are so important to the singer. They prevent the onset of tension which can seize the whole body, inhibiting breathing and sound production. They also guard against the nervous trembling that can affect some choristers, especially your soloists. A minimal 'dip' of the knees, imperceptible to those around, can release unnecessary tightening of any muscle, including the vocal folds. I encourage children to 'dip' when approaching the highest note of the phrase and this works like a charm, banishing fear and allowing the sound to flow.

Hilary Cox
Director of Music
The Oratory Preparatory School

15 High positive entries requiring support can be greatly enhanced by the throwing of an imaginary Frisbee.

16 Holding an imaginary small baby fluffy animal in cupped hands mysteriously cures flat notes.

Andy Meyers
Head of Music
Homefield Prep School

17  Listen out carefully for the tuning of leading notes. Often they will be flat, especially in lower voices. Correcting them has a very powerful effect on the intonation of the choir as a whole.

Scott Price
Director of Music
The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School

18 Ensure that you spend enough time on the delivery of text: the correct vowel sounds, final consonants happening on the right part of the beat and, above all, ensuring that singers' faces are engaged with the music, not just going through the motions. It makes for a much more exciting sound.

Mark Wilderspin
Director of Music
St Paul's School

19  This was said to me when I first started learning to conduct: you must know the music better than anybody else in the room. Very often students take the music away and a month later they know it. If you too haven't done your homework, they will work it out within seconds. Your respect will be lost straight away.

20 Know what you are going to do with the music. How are you going to shape it? A series of semi-quavers on a page does not make music. Children have to know your vision, either with you saying it verbally or with you doing it with your hands - shaping it as a conductor.

The text - with vocal music you have a poem that is being sung. You need to understand what it means and what the composer is trying to do. For example if you take Tallis's 'If Ye Love Me', what is it about? It's more than simply love. The two commandments that Jesus gave that changed the Mosaic Law and the way the world thinks about itself. Love the Lord thy God and Love each other as I love you. It is so important that you get across the meaning of that text. So as a conductor you need to understand the text, what the composer is trying to do with that text and then have your own vision of how to bring that alive. **21**

It's the hardest thing in the world conducting choral music because you have to communicate both the music and the poetry. Sometimes the composer doesn't make it easy for you. So, as a conductor you have to get in to the heart of both the poetry and the music. For me that is the most joyous thing of choral conducting.

Paul Mealor
Composer, Conductor, Arranger



Simon Toyne
Director of Music
DRET

These tips about rehearsing a choir are borne out of my having done the exact opposite and needing to come up with solutions myself. Sadly, there is no escaping the fact that, when things go wrong with a choir, ultimately it is your responsibility as the choir's director. If a rehearsal or performance has not gone well, it is all too easy to cut oneself up about it - "if only I had thought about..." is my most frequent thought in those instances.

So, in the spirit of learning not just through sharing good practice but in learning from one's mistakes, here are some practical solutions to some common problems...

22 First of all, get yourself in the right frame of mind to rehearse. Who puts out the chairs? Who gives out the copies? And are there enough to go around? Do the choir have pencils? Who puts everything away at the end? You can delegate all of this to the choir members - I have found, to my surprise, that they enjoy the responsibility. If the sections of National Youth Orchestra can take it in turns to put chairs and stands away at the end of each rehearsal, then so can your choir. Rather than being Atlas, dragged down by carrying the weight of expectation and burden of responsibility on your shoulders (even physically carrying the copies, choir robes etc yourself), aim to become their atlas, guiding them through the music and showing them the way... You are the one with the experience, and they need you to help them.

23 Give yourself enough time in the week to put in the musical preparation. This should be no different from if you were the choir's accompanist, clocking in the hours to ensure complete technical security. Plan the pace of the rehearsal - often, focusing intently on, say, five specific aspects of a piece for no more than 10 minutes at a time, then running through the whole piece at the end of the hour, can be very effective. Think about what your expectations are for each rehearsal and how you will help your singers achieve them.

24 It's very easy to fall into the trap of rehearsals being a "school of correction" (especially when you are tired), waiting for the first error to appear and then you springing into action. This can easily spiral out of control, with both singers and conductor becoming not just increasingly frustrated but also with diminishing psychological resources to turn things around. What you say before you conduct in rehearsal - and this counts for every phrase - makes as much difference as your body language and gesture. Don't forget too, the importance of humour - it was said of Vernon Handley that he "laughed choruses into submission": this is not so much about providing a distraction, leavening the hard work, but about the transforming effect physically of laughter and happiness. Put simply, we sing better when we are happy.

25 Especially if your role as the choir's conductor overlaps with positions of responsibility or administration within the school, try to ensure that you come to the rehearsal with your musician hat on. This means giving yourself space to cut away from what you have been doing for the rest of the day - and turning off the email function on your smartphone. Just as the focus on a sighter in archery removes all extraneous objects other than the

target from view, you need to rid yourself of non-musical distractions. This is always possible, even if it means you finding a quiet space for just one or two minutes. Remember that you can use your warm-ups as a way of providing you with calm focus as well!

26 Finally, think about what have the students been doing before they come to choir. Often, choir practice may come at the end of the school day and they may be both mentally and physically exhausted. Think how much information their brains will have processed already before they come to you. You need to create your environment for music-making in the light of this. At Tiffin, we had tea and biscuits beforehand in the half hour between the end of school and choir (with boys on a rota for providing it, buying biscuits and washing up) and it transformed the rehearsals. Also, I am amazed at how cheap ASDA value biscuits and squash are, and so was happy to provide the funding for this! What used to be very hard work, simply because of the timing of the rehearsal, became a real pleasure. They socialised with each other before the rehearsal started (and got all the pent-up gossip of the day out of their system) and then were ready to focus, reenergise and engage in making music - the core activity which we all enjoy!

Christmas is coming!

If you are looking for ideas for lessons at Christmas then look no further than Christmas Carols.

I love using Christmas Carols to teach students about Theory, Composition and Listening Skills. If you think about it, there is so much that can be learnt from a carol and we are likely to be surrounded by them at Christmas. The best approach is a practical lesson where every student either plays an instrument or sings. It is great to do something practical and it is a good way to get the whole class working together. Here are some of the things you can try and some of the things students can learn:

James Manwaring
is Director of Music
at The Windsor
Boys' School



1. Play a carol and then see if they can change the tonality. Playing 'Away in A Manger' in a minor key will help students to understand what makes a minor key sound the way it sounds.
2. Once you have played through a carol, see if the students can play it backwards.
3. Cadence spotting - what cadences can they hear in the carol you are playing?
4. Name the interval - what interval is at the start of the carol? Can they spot a particular interval?
5. Singing skills - Carols can provide a good chance to get students singing. You can cover singing technique and styles and also how to stay healthy when singing.
6. Why not use carols to teach students about melody? Can they describe the Christmas Carol melody and how could they change it?
7. What happens when they change the rhythm of a carol? Maybe they could swing it, or change the time signature.
8. Challenge students to play the carol in a different style. What needs to change or be adapted to make it work?
9. Naming chords - it might be good to play a carol and then get students to try to name the chords/harmony that underpins the carols.
10. Dynamics are crucial in music, and so it is a good idea to play around with carols and maybe nominate a student conductor to have go.

I am sure that you will be able to come up with more ideas and things that you can teach. Keep the lesson practical and allow the students to come up with ideas. What you are doing is using practical music to teach key skills, and it is a nice way to practise the carols.

Another great idea is to get students to arrange Christmas carols or come up with Theme & Variations based on a Christmas Carol. Ask students to arrange a carol for SATB choir or create a variation that could be used in a carol service.

At this time of year, we need to keep things going and give students a chance to learn in a fun and practical way. Use carols and make sure that you get as much out of them as possible. You could even try to write your own class Christmas song!

Wellbeing in the classroom

The Music Teachers' Association has a vast archive of wisdom from teachers. Here is a compilation of articles from previous issues of Ensemble on the subject of wellbeing.



Tips for Mindfulness

- encourage a minute of mindfulness before individual practice to focus on the trickier parts of a piece
- use mindfulness before orchestral/choral rehearsals to focus on the hour ahead
- use a minute of mindfulness before concerts to calm the nerves and enhance teamwork
- teachers have reported excellent results using mindfulness in daily class registration or before lessons

See www.mindfulnessinschools.org for more helpful information.



Chris Cullen

first published in Ensemble 96

Mindfulness involves learning to direct our attention to our experience as it unfolds, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance. Rather than worrying about what has happened or might happen, it trains us to respond skillfully to whatever is happening right now, be that good or bad.

Brain imaging studies show that mindfulness practice reliably and profoundly alters the structure and function of the brain to improve the quality of thought, feeling and concern for others.

What's the point of mindfulness?

In adults, mindfulness training has been proven time and again to improve health and wellbeing. It also helps people of all ages to learn more effectively, think more clearly, perform better and to feel calmer, less anxious and less depressed. Mindfulness is now recommended by the

National Institute of Clinical Excellence and GPs are referring adults to 8 week courses that reduce stress and help prevent recurrent depression. It is increasingly being used with children and young people in schools to enhance well-being and learning.

How do people learn mindfulness?

Mindfulness is always learned in a highly practical way, through experience rather than talk. We gradually learnt to direct our attention in a more focused way to whatever is actually happening - whether it be our breathing, the sensations on our body, thoughts and feelings or everyday activities such as walking and eating.

Is it difficult?

At first the mind wanders constantly, but with practice we learnt to sustain our attention and direct more skillfully.

Learning Difficulties

Eleanor Farrell

first published in Ensemble 96

Learning a musical instrument is a complex series of processes involving the whole body, brain and spirit, manifesting itself in one learning experience. As teachers it is easy for us to assume that these processes come together naturally but for students with learning difficulties this isn't the case. Students with specific learning differences develop their own coping strategies in day to day life, but where music is concerned we need to help them develop strategies to achieve, and begin to realise their potential.

Coordination, visual distortions, slow processing speeds, impaired memory and attention, organisational skills, mental overload, fatigue, anxiety, frustration, and low self-esteem are just some of the challenges facing an individual with learning differences. For a musician these can impact on the key areas required for learning, including coordination on the instrument, pitch recognition ('high' can mean so many different things to a musician), decoding music, pattern recognition, sequencing and sight reading, difficulties with rhythm, trouble memorising repertoire and scales, as well as difficulties with time management and efficient practice techniques. Fatigue can be a big problem as the individual has to work so much harder than their peers, and as with any sustained struggle, there can be emotional impacts such as significant long-term erosion of self-belief or even depression.



Playing Related Injuries

Sarah Upjohn

first published in Ensemble 96

Is your research based on children of different ages or the teachers teaching those children?

I was employed at the Purcell School initially for one day a week to treat playing related injuries. After a while it dawned on me that the majority of the injuries I was seeing were preventable. I couldn't go on treating preventable injuries without trying to do something to prevent them.

So my work is absolutely based around the children (aged 9-18) but of course in order to change practice - all of the injuries derive from over use or postural positioning - inevitably it has to include the teaching staff.

We've heard this subject talked about in instrumental teaching circles before with concern over posture, particularly working for long hours in small 'music cells' but I think it's quite rare for such research to be done with young children in mind?

The problem is that about four years ago I started to look in to this seriously and some of the injuries I saw were career-ending. Parents, teachers and children invest an enormous amount of time, energy and money in to this and some children were being injured so

badly that they had to stop. As a physiotherapist I felt I needed to go deeper and applied to study a doctorate of education at The University of Cambridge. There is a lot of research in conservatoires and with orchestras saying that introducing a preventative curriculum is very valuable and all of it shows that the logical step is to start doing preventative work sooner, which is where I am placed.

I am not an instrumental teacher, so I am willing to be corrected, but instrumental teachers seem to know so much about their own instrument, and about music, but don't really learn about anatomy and bio-mechanics. You need a body that is working well to get the best out of your instrument. A lot of this information is already known from coaching elite young athletes and elite young dancers about injury prevention and we're transferring it to young musicians. What you do as a musician is phenomenally physical. General fitness, warming up and cooling down and stretching is so important.



Victoria Williamson

first published in Ensemble 96

One mechanism of effect for music and well-being are brain responses to our favourite music, in particular the release of neurotransmitters (for example, dopamine) that are associated with psychological experiences like motivation and pleasure. Hearing favourite music is associated with the activity of neurotransmitters in the brain's reward circuitry: deep connections between the limbic emotion centres of the brain and the higher pre-frontal decision-making and evaluation areas. The latest research indicates that even brand new music can stimulate aspects of this brain reward circuitry, if that new music comes from a style or genre that we already enjoy.



Ralph Allwood

first published in Ensemble 96

It is well known that Heads of Music are expected to fill a wide variety of different roles. She has to please parents, staff, visiting music teachers, pupils, the Head. He has to be a good musician, administrator, diplomat, politician, conductor, teacher. So first of all, if there is too much work for one person, clearly it must be shared out. But I believe that often it is not so much the amount of work as the variety of the work which causes the difficulty. Each requires a different frame of mind, and we find it difficult to flit from one to the other. If I am about to take a choir practice I need to be in a joyful, musical, encouraging and constructive frame of mind.

Administratively the job is much bigger than those who haven't done the job tend to think. A Head of Music needs help with paperwork and decision-making, and it is essential that he delegates very big chunks of work. This brings with it the familiar problems with delegation: that it will be done less well, you feel a loss of control and you don't know when to interfere. The answer is to offer to help from time to time, and take over a few irksome jobs.

A Head of Music expects to be called in, of course, when there are tears. And there are often tears, as we all know. And no tears should be regarded as silly. Always get on their territory. See it from the point of view of the wailer.

I love using the Archers Theme Tune. After discussing a difficult situation and what you're going to do about it, imagine you've reached the end of an instalment of The Archers, and sing the theme tune. Try it. It always makes me laugh.

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

with Richard Llewellyn



Richard Llewellyn has over 28 years' experience in music education, having worked for sheet music publishers, instrumental manufacturers and several international music technology companies around the world.

The latest news in Music Technology

A Music Tech round-up

As we hurtle towards the end of term Christmas Concerts and catch up on all that horrendous marking, it's probably worth just taking a moment to ensure all your lovely students know what your favourite tippie is, or which book vouchers would be most useful! Such a joyous time of the year, but there is a limit to the number of times you can hear 'that' Carol, the unaccompanied solo voice, and the stressful tuning concerns! Ho Ho Ho!

Take a photo and it will play back! Yes, really.

Have you ever thought how useful it might be if you could take a photo of a piece of music (with your mobile phone), and then have it play back? Imagine a tricky study that your student may be having trouble with. Perhaps they're not sticking to the tempo or they're having issues around a particular syncopated passage. Would a free recording of that piece be a useful tool to help them?... Well, now you can! Please may I introduce you to **PlayScore 2**. This is a free app that works on both Apple/iOS devices (iOS 8 or later) and Android. It is a music recognition app (scanner) that can play all kinds of music directly from an image.

Just open the app, take a photo using the app's camera icon and it will automatically load and then play back at whatever tempo you decide to set it at! The music play back is indicated with a red line that scrolls bar by bar. You can easily change the tempo, which may help in getting your students to learn a piece slowly before speeding things up. There are transposing features and loop options. If you decide to go further and upgrade to the full paid version, you can even export the file as a MusicXML file and open it in other notation programs such as Dorico or Sibelius. If you want to go beyond the perfectly adequate free version, there are four subscription options (month/year) for their 'Productivity' and 'Professional' levels.

This is a brilliant free app for all sorts of situations. The PlayScore website suggests it is perfect for teaching music theory. Students could take a photo of music exercises to help them check pitch and rhythm during their studies.



Yamaha keyboards that can even run on portable phone chargers!

Yamaha have launched a brand new range of three portable keyboards. The first one is called the 'Remie' (or PSS-E30) and is the first Yamaha portable keyboard aimed at Early Years (5 years old and under). It has 37 mini keys, 47 different voices and 74 sound effects (these are very good and could be useful in story telling), as well as a fun quiz mode (Guess the sound! And a pitch training mode), 30 preloaded songs, built in speaker/headphone jack and 28 auto accompaniment styles and chords. There is also a lot of potential for using the 'Remie' with SEN/D students and in music therapy sessions. The RRP is £70.00





The **PSS-F30** (bottom of page) is aimed at children aged 6 and above. Still with 37 mini keys, it has more voices (120) and more auto accompaniment styles (114) and a Smart Chord function. The RRP is £70.00.

Finally the **PSS-A50**, aimed at teens and young adults. This portable keyboard also has 37 mini keys, and on-board speaker, different touch responses, a very good built-in arpeggiator with 138 different styles as well as a phrase recorder to loop, playback and record. What makes this keyboard special is that it's also got MIDI connectivity. So you can connect this keyboard to any DAW or sequencer and use it in your recording studio.

These keyboards can run on mains, but also batteries (4 x AA) or even your phone charger bank!

This is a really good keyboard to invest in for setting up your own mini studio. Ideal for schools who need the live keyboard and MIDI controller option. At a width of about 50cm, they also fit nicely in front of each computer on a desk. The RRP is £102.

Seb Skelly – Using Tech to sell Brass Quintet arrangements ...

A little off kilter, but this is a great example on how music tech can be used. Seb Skelly is an extremely talented young British trumpeter, arranger and composer. He has arranged a plethora of brilliant Brass Quintets and sells them via Sheet Music Plus. Arrangements such as 'You've Got a Friend in Me', 'Rollin in the Deep' and 'You Raise Me Up' are all superb. Most of the arrangements (score and parts) are downloadable for about £12.00 (!) per piece. The level is more advanced than intermediate but extremely rewarding to work at, play and perform.

What is clever is that not only do you get to see the score and hear the piece, but you can also watch a video of it being performed with Seb playing ALL the parts! He explains how he does this on his YouTube channel with a combination of dropped octaves (via software), a trusty Shure SM58 microphone, a GoPro video camera and extremely good ears. This may be a fun thing to experiment with your vocal and instrumental ensembles. Please do check out his YouTube channel, along with the 44.5k other subscribers.



Upcoming Events

9 th November 2019	ABRSM Teacher Conference, London
4 th /5 th March 2020	Music & Drama Education Conference, London
15 th -17 th May 2020	Music Teachers' Association Annual Conference, St Paul's School, London.

Music Tours- what do music teachers really think of them?

Club Europe Concert Tours interviewed a group of Directors of Music from the Trinity Group to see what they really thought about music tours. What are the benefits? What are the challenges? And does one outweigh the other?

The benefits

There were lots of these! Many more than there were challenges.

One of the main benefits of going on a music tour according to our panel is that a tour promotes great team building and bonding away from school and generates a new atmosphere and ethos in the department.

Some thought music tours were crucial for building camaraderie among groups as well as a collective identity of the music department. They also help raise the profile and integrity of the department.

The Directors of Music interviewed found that loyalty from students and numbers joining ensembles increase when a tour is on the cards and that attendance at regular rehearsals increased, too.

They liked that music tours give students the chance to perform without some of the usual pressures of home such as mum and dad being in the audience, the pressure of a possible scholarship or even exams. The more relaxed setting of a tour also means students can get to know teachers in a new, less formal way.

Being able to perform a work or piece more than once whilst on tour was seen as a major benefit as it allows ensembles to learn from each performance and having a genuine response from total strangers was felt to boost the morale of students who may have only ever performed to family and friends.



Everyone on our panel said they are one of the only tours in school where there's a mix of year groups, in which young and old can form friendships.



“Being able to perform a work or piece more than once whilst on tour was seen as a major benefit”

The challenges Possible Solutions

The first challenge facing music leaders according to our Directors of Music is the difficulty of tour dates clashing with other trips and of getting a tour in the school calendar. Sometimes they find having to work within the dates the school will allow too restrictive.

Recruiting the right number of students and achieving the right balance of instruments or voices for a viable tour is another challenge. Many of the Directors felt an onus to inspire students with new destinations and opportunities, so that music tours can compete with the often very popular school sports tours.

Cost and offering value for money is also a significant factor with parents often having more than one child to consider, as well as a raft of other opportunities being offered and competing for their cheque book.

Our panel all agreed that coming up with something special and unique such as collaborating with a local group, doing a music workshop or masterclass or travelling to more unusual destinations was key to being noticed in a busy trips calendar. Often consigned to travelling outside of summer they liked the ideas of Advent tours in November and December or heading to warmer climes in October or February which will be busy with tourists doing the same.

Organising a music tour abroad for a band, choir or orchestra takes a lot of work but enlisting the help of a specialist music tour operator can lighten the load. Everyone agreed wholeheartedly that music tours offer different learning and music environments and cultures which greatly contribute to students' personal growth and that provide a fun and memorable school experience.

Our thanks go to all the Directors of Music in the Trinity Group, who kindly invited us along to their meeting so we could conduct this research. To find out more about Club Europe Concert Tours, visit www.clubeurope.co.uk/school-music-tours or call FREEPHONE 0800 496 4996.

Top tip: Plan as far in advance as you can!
The more time parents have to pay, the better the uptake tends to be.

Howarth *of* London Free Online Resources



**Instrument
Maintenance**

•
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**For more
information
Contact Laura King**

education@howarth.uk.com
+44 (0)1903 239219

www.howarth.uk.com

Encouraging young players

Tim Taylor is the manager at Wood Wind & Reed Ltd, Cambridge.

first published in Ensemble 90

All pupils should have the opportunity to enjoy and play music. It is, luckily, not usually that difficult to encourage a child to make a loud noise, bang a drum or blow a whistle. The difficulty occurs when we wish to encourage younger pupils to take up and maintain learning a musical instrument. How can we encourage perseverance and enjoyment at every stage of the learning curve?

Let's make it fun. Yes, fun. Encouragement comes through enjoyment. We have brightly coloured recorders, shiny flutes and pink saxophones. All of which will bring a spark to a child's eye before they have picked up the instrument. Whether learning in a group scenario or on one's own the young player must enjoy every moment of tuition, the instrument must be something that they look forward to playing, not a chore that is forced upon them. I am a flautist myself. I can remember my earliest flute lessons and the fun and laughter that always accompanied them. In this I was lucky to have such a vibrant teacher who varied the lesson structure considerably to suit me all the time. I realise in hindsight, I was learning different aspects of technique and musicianship.

Classroom group tuition is a natural and supportive way to begin learning an instrument. Whether on ukulele, recorder or the new Saxonett, the fun and enjoyment of learning along with one's peers and the mutual encouragement that such a situation often engenders cannot be ignored. Engagement in this situation can be easily gained or lost. It is far too easy to teach technique without enjoyment; yes, the player will have learnt a chromatic scale, but will they have enjoyed it, will they want to continue next term? This is what we must achieve, group sessions must be fun and varied, stimuli must come in all forms, action, listening, seeing. Should we aim for academic achievement or extra curricular

enjoyment? The answer of course is both. All pupils vary. Some will flourish when aiming for an academic qualification. Others flourish simply from the participation. In either case a great deal of encouragement can be engendered from extra curricular activities in schools. Working towards an end of term concert or national competition can give the young musician a great deal of encouragement to persevere with learning their instrument. No one who saw or participated in the National Schools Choir competition televised recently can ignore the absolute enjoyment evident on the smiling faces of the singers involved. Such competitions are available for all the instrument families: the BFS run an annual young flute players competition, the NCBF wind band competitions provide opportunities for bands of all playing levels to take part.

The expense of learning an instrument is often prohibitive before the question of encouragement ever arises. However it should always be remembered that a better quality instrument will produce a better tone with much less effort. This alone will give encouragement to a younger child as they will achieve pitch without a struggle. It is pleasing to see scholarship opportunities arising from the donations of businesses such as the Junior Guildhall Clarinet Scholarship by Wood, Wind & Reed. Such schemes can encourage the young player.

Encouragement can also very simply stem from using a good musical instrument. A younger player can struggle terribly on an instrument that is too large or complicated for their fingers, or made so poorly that it does not respond easily. This is incredibly disappointing when we now have access to a fantastic range of beginner instruments. The recorder has long been a popular choice for many, light and sturdy in its brightly coloured descant form. A very new introduction

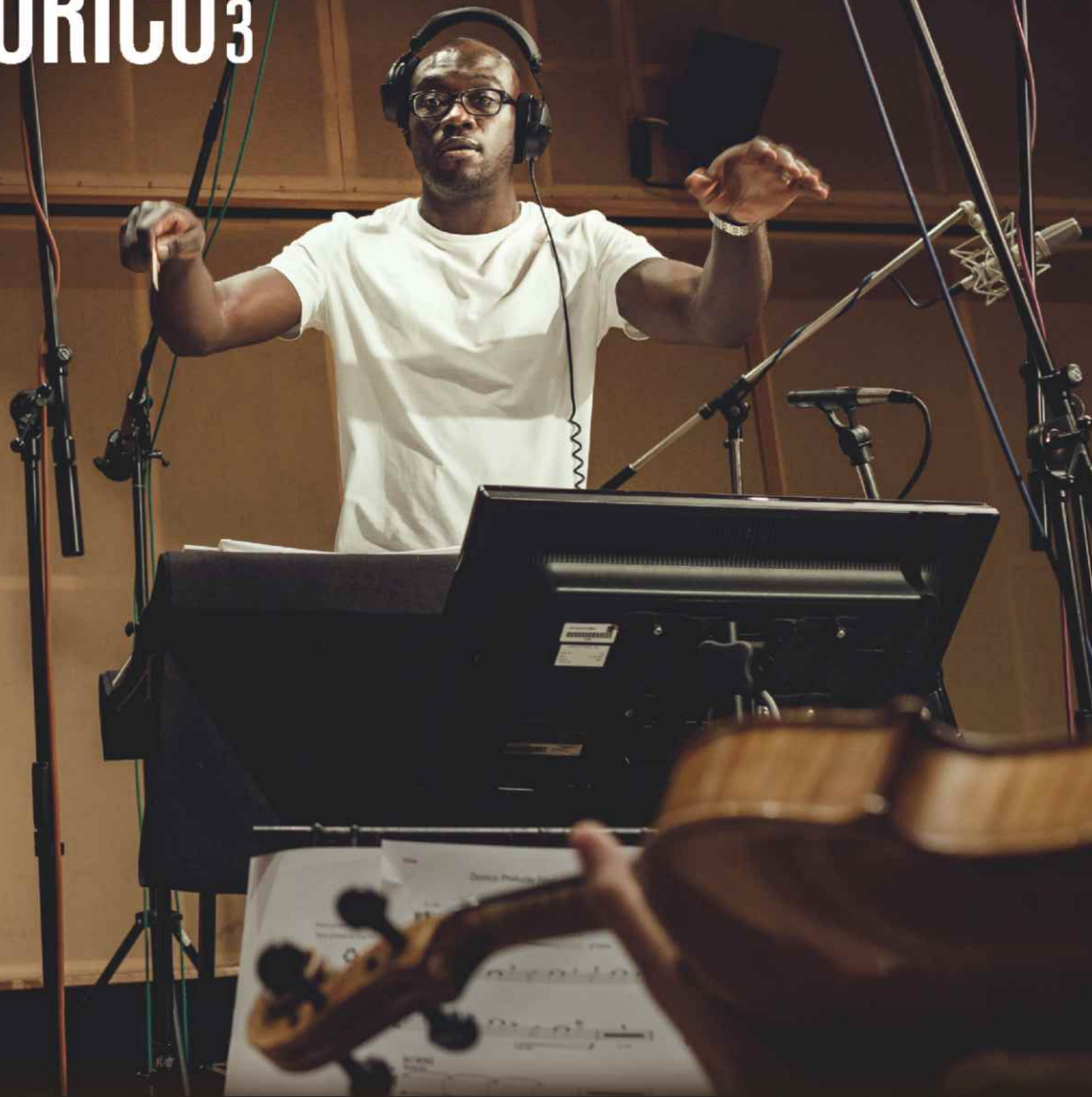


to the beginner music area is the Saxonnet by Jupiter. Featuring a Bb clarinet mouthpiece in brightly coloured blue, and Pear wood body the sound produced is reminiscent of a clarinet. Thanks to the Bb clarinet mouthpiece the transition, once the player is big enough, to a clarinet or saxophone is very easy. These are but a few of the wonderful innovative instruments now available.

There is no easy route to encouraging young players to continue in music. The answer is that music education must take a holistic viewpoint. Group and individual teaching, wind bands and competitions all contribute to creating a varied and dynamic environment in which a young musician can flourish. Hand in hand with the supporting materials of quality musical instruments and scholarship or bursary opportunities from the wider music business community.

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www.bfs.org.co.uk
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NEW MEMBERS



WELCOME to the following new teaching members who have joined since the publication of our last magazine:

Richard Stewart	Music teacher
Joseph Song Mbang	Teacher, Regina Pacis College
Julia Mayall	Head of Music, Altrincham Girls' Grammar School
Joyce Chamberlain	Trustee Bromsgrove Concerts
Sean Dingley	Director of Music, Ridgeway Education Trust
Rachel Moore	Music teacher, Northumberland Woodwind and Theory
Emma Cowper	Music Teacher, Carterton Community College
Gareth Leather	Music Teacher, Queen Elizabeth School
David Conlan	Teacher of Music, St Cuthbert's
Edmund Houlston	Head of Music, Coombe Girls' School
Helen Foster	Visiting Flute Teacher, Solihull School
Catherine Barker	Head of Music and Performing Arts, United Learning
Nicolas Walker	Teacher of Music, Ibstock Place School
Kate Jackson	Trainee Music Teacher, The Windsor Boys' School
Harrison Woolger	Teacher Trainee, Cockburn School
Jill O'Brien (aka Samuel)	Violin Teacher
Thomas Motley	Teacher of Music, Whitgift School
Jessica Allan	Student
Hazel Childs	Teacher, St Mary Magdalen's
Geraldine McCoy	Subject Leader of Music, Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School
Colette Hewitson	Subject Leader of Music, The John Henry Newman School
Alistair Hardie	Head of Academic Music, Ampleforth College
Tom Edney	Trainee Music Teacher, Ripley St Thomas Academy
Rebecca Saunders	Director of Music, Beaudesert Park School
Chao Cox	Director of Music, North London Collegiate Junior School
Anne Marie Heathcote	Class Teacher, Chapel Street CP School
Luana Godwin	Music Teacher, Wydean School
Alice Hague	Assistant Director of Music, St Helens School
Theresa Casey	Curriculum Leader for Music, Allerton Grange School
Samantha Rick	Music Teacher, Bedford Free School
Aimee Stone	Music Teacher, The Swanage School
Teresa Smith	Music coordinator, Spetisbury Primary School
Victoria Robinson	Head of Music, Oldfield School
Ethne Bourn	Music Teacher/Instr. Music Coordinator, Emmanuel College
Gwen Lewis	Music Teacher, Waldegrave School
Peter Gritton	Director of Music, James Allen's Girls' School (JAGS)
Luis Pares	Head of Keyboard, Dulwich College
Roberto Panichi	Lead Practitioner, William Murdoch Primary School
Ruth Gregory	Class Teacher, St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary
Emily Crowhurst	Head of 4-18 Performing Arts, School21
Beth Ellis	Trainee Music Teacher, Hornchurch High School
Elizabeth Potter-Hicks	Head of Music Department, Ravens Wood School
Buster Bennett	DJ and Music Production Tutor, London Sound Academy
Felicity Hayes	Associate Assistant Headteacher, Golborne High School
Kara Hussey	ITT Music
Bethany Crosland	PGCE ITT Secondary Music, Barlby High School
Lisa Ford	Teacher of Music and Music Technology, Royal Russell
Melinda Miguel Andres	Music Teacher, Notley Green Primary School
Alice Stobart	Assistant Director of Music, St Helens School
Michael Heighway	Assistant Director of Music & Head of Academic Music, Westminster School



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OUR OFFICERS & STAFF



Please get in touch with the members of our team to support you in your school.



President / Simon Toyne
president@musicteachers.org

Simon Toyne is Executive Director of Music of the David Ross Education Trust, where he oversees the award-winning music curriculum and enrichment programme across the Trust's 34 state primary and secondary schools. Prior to this, he was Director of Music at Tiffin School and Kingston Parish Church. He is a Director of the Rodolfus Foundation Choral Courses, and is a member of the government's expert panel developing a model music curriculum.



President-Elect / Don Gillthorpe
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Don is Director of Music and Performing Arts at Ripley St Thomas CE Academy in Lancaster where he is also a Lead Practitioner and accredited Specialist Leader in Education. Don's specialisms are in choral music, with a particular focus on establishing a singing culture in a secondary school and boys' changing voices.



Honorary Secretary / Helena McKillop
h.mckillop@tpsco.co.uk

Educated at Birmingham Conservatoire and subsequently at the Sweelinck Conservatoire, Amsterdam, Helena has gained a reputation for developing, expanding and enhancing Music Departments. She is regularly invited to lead seminars on Music Department management and career development.



Honorary Treasurer / John Padley
john.padley@qas.org.uk

John is Director of Music at Queen Anne's, Caversham. During his time at Queen Anne's, he has actively encouraged partnerships with local schools and Queen Anne's hosts the Caversham Music Centre run by Berkshire Maestros. Queen Anne's runs regular inset training for Eduqas A Level Music and would be delighted to hear from anyone about this specification.



Past-President / Simon Williamson
SRJW@wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Simon Williamson is Director of Arts and Music at Wellington College. He is particularly interested in bringing independent and state schools together within the arts.



Keith Ayling
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Keith Ayling is a TEDx speaker with a Masters degree in Songwriting. He visits schools nationwide to run songwriting workshops and is passionate about encouraging creativity in young people whatever their background or ability. He has been nominated as editor for his work on Ensemble Magazine.



Carol Hawkins
Conference Administrator
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Carol is former Music Administrator and PA to the Director of Music at St Edmund's School, Canterbury from 1996 until 2014. Carol has been working for the Music Teachers' Association since 2002 and currently manages the annual conference.



Sophie Kirk
Administrator & Membership
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membership@musicteachers.org

Sophie has 12 years of classroom music teaching experience across all age ranges (3-18) as well as being an instrumental string teacher and ensemble coach. She is an orchestral player, content contributor for Naxos Educational and music administrator at St John's College, Cambridge.

Help strengthen our voice

Officers

The President is voted for by the association and stands for two years. There is also a commitment to serve the association before and after the appointment supporting the current role-holder. Our Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary are also active members serving voluntarily.

OUR COMMITTEE



Please get in touch with the members of our team to support you in your school.



Dr Steven Berryman (Co-opted)
Steven.Berryman@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Steven is Director of Music at City of London School for Girls and a Visiting Research Fellow at King's College London. He is currently seconded to the Education team at the City of London, working across the family of schools.

CURRICULUM LEAD



George Bevan (2020)
bevand@monkton.org.uk

George is fully signed up to the belief that *everyone* can sing, and that singing has the power to transform lives. Endlessly fascinated by the learning process. Blogs at music@monkton



Tim Garrad (Co-opted)
Tim.Garrad@westminster.org.uk

Tim is the Director of Music at Westminster School, London.

PARTNERSHIPS LEAD



Andrew Henderson (2019)
a.henderson@stoneyhurst.ac.uk

Andrew is Director of Music at Stonyhurst College, Lancashire. He is particularly interested in developing high-quality choral provision in schools and fostering an environment where participation in musical activity is seen as the norm.

OPERATIONS MANAGER



Isla Keys (2021)
isla@innotts.co.uk

With 30 years' experience of teaching singing, in addition to class music from Reception to A Level in both independent and state schools, Isla now enjoys working with young singers and directing 2 choirs at Nottingham Girls' High School, also coaching choral scholars at St.Mary's Church.



James Manwaring (2021)
JManwaring@twbs.co.uk

James is Director of Music for Windsor Learning Partnership, a multi-academy trust in Windsor. He teaches and works with students from Years 1-13, runs an adult community choir and writes a music education blog - manwaringmusic.blog. He has been nominated 5 times for Music Department of the Year.



Mark Penrose (2022)

Mark is Director of Performing Arts at Bilton Grange Prep School, which has recently announced its merger with Rugby School from January 2020. In addition to classroom teaching and consultancy, Mark has taught on British Kodály courses and delivered training for iGCSE and A Level Music.



Caitlin Sherring (2019)
csherring@woodcroft.barnet.sch.uk

Caitlin is the Music and Visual and Performing Arts Lead at Woodcroft Primary School. She is a Primary Music Education, Woodwind and Choral Specialist who is particularly interested in utilising the arts as a stimulus for all curriculum areas and supporting whole-school development.

Help strengthen our voice

Committee Members

The members of our committee commit to serving 3 years as part of the team guiding the association. The Music Teachers' Association is unique in that all of the committee (apart from our three employees) are current teachers who volunteer to this important role of strengthening music education in the UK. Committee members are expected to attend three meetings a year and take an active role in supporting CPD, contributions to our magazine and regular email communications.

Members are notified of vacancies every January in advance of the AGM which takes place at the Music Teachers' Conference each May at a different host school. If you are excited about the future of the association and feel you can contribute, particularly if your area of expertise is not currently represented, please speak to a member of the committee.

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THE FINAL WORD

DIVERTIMENTO

Op.48



A sideways look at music education from Jonathan Varcoe

Ideas to help educationally challenged pupils understand musical concepts.

More information is surely needed on how best to help disadvantaged children learn about and enjoy music. We know that dyslexia affects a huge number of children, and we know that many children are on tranquilisers and other medicines to help them cope with stress and depression which often have unwanted side-effects. Some children, after difficult birth experiences, may have slight brain changes making them, at best, slow to grasp concepts or have poor memories and concentration. There are so many reasons why one or even two children from perfectly ordinary families, rich or poor, in each of your classes may need some extra help and encouragement to keep up with the others although they may act and behave perfectly normally.

There are inspirational music teachers who have devised strategies to do just this. One interesting idea I came across many years ago was a book by Eloise Ristad outlining a system to aid reading a simple piano score for those who could not understand how the hands on the

keyboard went left for lower tones and right for higher ones when the notes on the page went down for lower and up for higher notes. After some experimentation she placed the music score in portrait fashion instead of the usual landscape. Immediately the children began to see how the left/right hand motion related to the up/down one (now left/right) on the page. Simple, but a eureka moment for them. Another early system for the piano used colour where printed notes were coloured according to whether they were sharps or flats, that way you can do without a key signature – something so natural to us, but those with poor memories need constant eye checks to the signature at the beginning of the line to check the notes about to be played which is demanding and an enemy of fluent playing to say the least. There are many other such schemes in use today a few of which are well-known, but others, pioneers in their day, such as the two just mentioned are still eminently sensible for certain categories of children.

Did you see the BBC two-part programme 'Vicky McLure's Dementia Choir' back in May? The choir was drawn from a wide variety of dementia sufferers from the Nottingham area. To see the terribly damaged individuals awake from dull forgetfulness and often awkward personal reactions to people who showed vital aspects of their old personalities as they began to sing together was as moving a sight as anything television can offer. It was inspirational but also very sad since the stimulus of singing would soon be forgotten by most of the participants, But they truly experienced the joy of making music during the rehearsals and the performance and one hopes someone will take the group on with weekly meetings to give them something to live for even if they forget in between. There was such love between the participants and such understanding of the problems those with dementia face as well as their long-suffering families, the two programmes were a brilliant and sensitive experience for those of us who had never come face to face with the awfulness of loved ones losing their mind. It was yet more proof that music is very special and can reach parts of the human condition and the human physiomy, particularly the brain, that nothing else can touch.

Music triggered the patient's memories. Most of them were elderly and they tapped in to the old songs they knew when young such as war songs, music hall songs and folk songs. Suddenly they came alive for the duration of the rehearsals and concert. Regular singing meetings did give some a feeling of continuity but many quickly reverted to their quiet internalised state. Is this something some of your senior musicians could do, say, one afternoon a month?

A little time ago when members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra were on strike over pay and retirement benefits. Failure, yet again, to reach agreement with the board of trustees caused Riccardo Muti to tell them that the musicians were the best in the world. 'I hope that the board will remember that theirs is not a job but a mission'.

A nice way of putting it. Perhaps we should see our 'jobs' as a mission though we more commonly use the term 'vocation'.

A roadside canvas hoarding in Helston recently proclaimed news of a choral concert. The main work to be performed was 'Mr H. Purcell's King Arthur.' How wonderfully old fashioned. It's almost as if Mr H Purcell might himself be present at the performance, perhaps some Cornish will expect to see him there; maybe he is a local?

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