



# ENSEMBLE MAGAZINE

No. 116 / Spring 2022

CONNECTING  
INSPIRING  
LEADING

# WELLBEING

RESOURCES FOR MUSIC TEACHERS



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# WELCOME EDITORIAL



Keith Ayling  
Editor

## Work less.

## Your students will thank you for it.

When you board a plane, there is a safety demonstration from the airline crew. We've heard them so many times that we assume we know what's coming. I always find it entertaining if the crew do something different, particularly if they have a sense of humour. It can bring your attention back to the matter in hand and it makes the entire plane smile.

One of the interesting sentences they use is regarding the oxygen masks. "Please place the mask over your own mouth and nose before assisting children."

It's not your first instinct is it?

If you have children, your first instinct is always to protect them, to make sure that they survive before yourself. Some of us might be the same about our pets! But the reason airlines use this policy is because statistically you get more time to help others if you put your mask on first. But surely it will just take a minute or two to help at least a couple of people around you get their masks on and working? So, why shouldn't you help them first?

There is a concept called 'time of useful consciousness'. It is basically the amount of (useful) time you have left before you can't think correctly anymore.

At 35,000 feet the average person will have between thirty and sixty seconds of 'useful consciousness'. Your consciousness begins to degrade almost instantly because the oxygen in your blood will begin leaving your bloodstream through the lungs for the

lesser ambient atmospheric pressure in the aircraft. At just a little higher, 40,000 feet, the time reduces to 15-20 seconds.

So it's fairly sensible to do as the airline crew say.

This issue of Ensemble is about wellbeing. I wonder how many of us really take care of ourselves? We work long days, evenings and weekends. We use many different platforms to communicate and many of them intrude on our rest time. We answer texts, messenger or Whatsapp messages from colleagues when we should be with our partners and families. We read/answer emails just before we go to bed - the worst possible time to stimulate our cognitive functions, when they need to rest.

A firefighter does not run into a burning building without their protective clothing and breathing gear.

Take this opportunity to reset your routine.

Take up yoga, walking or a new sport;  
Listen to music again for pleasure;  
Go to more concerts;  
Read more fiction;  
Drink more water;  
Eat more salad.

Work less.

Your students will thank you for it.

Keith Ayling  
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# JOIN US



**If this is the first time you have read Ensemble Magazine, welcome!**

You may have been recommended to the Music Teachers' Association by a colleague and recently joined. Please accept our welcome to the most vibrant association of music teachers in the UK. We hope that we can support your teaching, your students and your career by connecting you with experience and wisdom from colleagues around the country. The Music Teachers' Association is the largest and longest established association of music teachers in the UK, supporting all who are connected with a school music department. In challenging times we must work together and stand together for the future of music education.

## Membership rates 2021

Full Membership	£68
Instrumental / Self employed	£51
Administrator (retired/associate)	£34

Graduate/PGCE/NQT                      FREE

[MusicTeachers.org/join-us](https://www.musicteachers.org/join-us)

Visit [MusicTeachers.org/join-us](https://www.musicteachers.org/join-us)  
or email [sophie@musicteachers.org](mailto:sophie@musicteachers.org)  
for more information.

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# CONNECTING | INSPIRING | LEADING



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**Sarah Alexander**  
Chief Executive and Creative Director of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain



**Lyz Cooper**  
Founder and Principal of the British Academy of Sound Therapy



**Liz Dunbar**  
York Secondary Music Pathfinder Lead



**Gemma Scotcher**  
Head of Communications and Public Affairs for UK charity, Education Support



**Catherine Barker**  
Head of Music and Performing Arts at United Learning

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



Don Gillthorpe is the Music Teachers' Association President 2021-2023 and Assistant Principal and Director of Music, Ripley St Thomas CE Academy, Lancaster.

It is difficult to write for an edition of Ensemble focusing on wellbeing without first acknowledging the underlying hypocrisy: I am, have always been, and—most probably—will continue to be pretty bad at establishing any kind of meaningful work-life balance. As a member of my school's leadership team, I increasingly find myself advising colleagues to make sure that they rest, look after themselves, make time for their families; this is, however, something that I have never really managed properly for myself.

When I started teaching, people used to comment with incredulity at how I juggled a full teaching timetable with rehearsals every lunchtime and after school, plus professional music-making at evenings and weekends. My stock response was that I got paid to be a musician all day, every day and that I was lucky in that respect: my 'hobby' was also my job. This was just about doable when I was straight out of university, but I have significantly less energy for such dashing around now. The thing that I have come to realise—helped by being much older and a tiny bit wiser—is that my luck really came through not burning myself out back then.

The (nearly?) post-pandemic world is odd. We had a strange, disrupted period when co-curricular activity stopped and boundaries were completely eroded through working from home; we then moved into a time of bubbles and scare-stories about singing which caused a lot of extra work through risk-assessments, and a great deal of time stitching videos together. Then there was the bizarre autumn term 2021: no bubbles, back to full-on co-curricular rehearsals, rebuilding, re-energising and, in many cases, restarting. For many—me included—this was the toughest term of our teaching careers and that makes teacher wellbeing all the more important.

For those of you relatively new to the teaching profession: it has been really difficult, more difficult than normal. Those of us who have been teaching forever have

found the same. Stick with it, but make sure that you make time to switch off. Personally, I like to get into school early or stay late (...and I really do mean 'or', not 'and') to get tasks done so that I avoid doing too much planning or marking at home; those boundaries between home and work which were removed during lockdown need to be restored and respected. Whether or not this is the right routine, you need to find a healthy working pattern which works for you and your family commitments. Also—and here comes some more hypocrisy—sometimes we have to keep our perfectionism in check and realise that not everything needs to be perfect in every minute detail. Are you doing more work than your pupils for their education? You shouldn't be.

For those of us who've been here a while: take your own advice. You, like me, will have been supporting and guiding colleagues who have struggled to keep their heads above water. You have been a great source of comfort to them, now do the same for yourself. If you burn out, you will be of no use to your pupils and you will come to resent your work; that would be a real shame, given that we do the best job in the world. Remind yourself of how brilliant curriculum and co-curriculum music can be; reignite your enthusiasm for our wonderful subject and make the effort to find enjoyment in it. I intend to try much harder to do the same.

Please remember that the MTA's core purpose is supporting teachers. We will continue to hold that at the heart of everything that we do. Please do get in touch if we can help you in any way; we are always stronger together.

Don Gillthorpe  
MTA President  
[president@musicteachers.org](mailto:president@musicteachers.org)

# ASSOCIATION NEWS

CONNECTING - INSPIRING - LEADING



Welcome to the 116th 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 Wellbeing feature section (from page 19) which has valuable ideas and resources to help you through teaching in these times.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Fb. [www.fb.com/MusicTeachersOrg](http://www.fb.com/MusicTeachersOrg)  
Tw. [www.twitter.com/MusicTeachers\\_](http://www.twitter.com/MusicTeachers_)

The Music Teachers' Association is the largest and longest established association of music teachers in the UK, supporting all who are connected with a school music department.

Our year-round CPD programme of webinars, podcasts, e-bulletins and Ensemble magazine, supported by our Facebook Staffroom and Annual Conference, enables music teachers to connect with each other, share ideas, develop good practice and work together in partnership.

The MTA works with our partner organisations, HMC, ISM and Music Mark, to support and advocate for music in schools, inspiring a membership which passionately believes that every child should benefit from outstanding music education.

To join the MTA for only £68 per year, visit [www.musicteachers.org](http://www.musicteachers.org)

## OUR CONFERENCE

The Music Teachers' Association Conference is back at **St Edward's, Oxford** and we are very excited to announce that Yolanda Brown - saxophonist, composer and broadcaster - will be our special guest on Friday as a keynote speaker and panellist.

**Our EARLY BIRD pricing closes on 14th March.**

The full programme will be announced soon, with a broad mix of sessions to strengthen your teaching. Go to [musicteachers.org/events/conference](http://musicteachers.org/events/conference) to register your place. Hotel details are available from this page as well.

## OUR PUBLICATIONS

Members automatically receive all of our publications to resource their teaching. Our termly magazine has been nominated for association magazine of the year and is a highly respected journal of music education. Our Music Directory (for independent schools) gives parents details on music departments and our Podcast, Online CPD, regular e\*bulletins and Facebook Staffroom complete our comprehensive resources for your teaching.

## OUR WEBSITE

Our website is a hub for our work and continues to be the focus for conference details. We want 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](http://www.MusicTeachers.org)**



# EVENTS & PODCAST CONFERENCE 2022

Whilst the full programme will be released next month, we can give you a taster of some of the sessions we already have confirmed:

- Join our Mainstage sessions, where panel discussions will be looking at topics including Curriculum Design, Equality Diversity and Inclusion in Music Education, the National Plan for Music Education, Successful partnerships, Career Progression and Music in Higher Education
- Do you feel like a beginner where music tech is concerned? Then join one of our small group workshops lead by the St Edwards team taking music tech back to basics
- Hear from Rachel Shapley as she leads a hands-on practical session looking at Composition in the Classroom at KS3
- We'll be hearing from Alex Aitken on music theatre and members of Low Island band on making it in the music industry
- Be inspired by our year 6 and 7 singing workshop, as schools local to Oxford join forces and are directed by Bob Chilcott
- Join our dedicated KS1 session, as Rebecca Berkley looks at putting together inspiring schemes of learning for this age group, and use your expertise as a music teacher to support non-specialist colleagues in feeder primary schools
- Receive 1-on-1 mentoring from our expert coaches, choosing between either professional development coaching or teaching and learning support

Ultimately the conference is your opportunity to learn, be inspired and build up an invaluable support network across our music teaching community.  
**Early-bird pricing will be in place until the 14th March 2022.**

## PODCAST

Shortlisted for Outstanding  
Music Education Resource

Our Podcast, presented by Patrick Johns, continues to grow and deliver high quality guests and up to the minute comment on music teaching. It is a fantastic tool to introduce your colleagues to the Association and its work. Please make sure you send it round your departments or to your networks. It has been shortlisted for Outstanding Music Education Resource of the year!

### Recent Episodes this term:

#### Episode 51.

Dr Phil Mullen talks about the new series of webinars provided by MAC Makes Music, promoting inclusivity; Stephanie Bissell and Natalie Wild chat about wonderful work done by the Music in Secondary Schools Trust (MiSST); and Dr Liz Stafford chats about curricula past, present, and future, with details of a forthcoming curriculum conference.


#### Episode 50.

Paul McCreesh and Simon Toyne announce the latest Gabrieli Roar project, featuring the music of Michael Praetorius; Abigail D'Amore introduces Every Copy Counts, a campaign to help schools with the copying of music; and former Charlie Parker sideman, Jazz legend Dick Hyman chats about all things Jazz.

#### Episode 49.

In Episode 49, Elliott Smith introduces The Teaching Gadget; Gill Davies talks about her role at the MTA, including forthcoming events; and X-Factor and Britain's Got Talent vocal coach, Annabel Williams, chats about singing: repertoire, technique, and her favourite singers.

LISTEN ON  Spotify

Listen on  Apple Podcasts



## ONLINE EVENTS

Monday 7th March, 5:00 – 6:00pm  
**MUSIC TEACHER MONDAY:  
Well-Being**

Live sessions will be open to all;  
playback available to members only.

Thursday 10th March, 5:00 – 6:00pm  
**WEBINAR: MTA in  
conversation with John  
Holmes**

Introducing ARSM – ABRSM's performance-only diploma. Join ABRSM chief examiner, John Holmes, as we discover:

- What's involved in an ARSM exam
- Who the exam is for and its benefits for students
- The relationship between Grade 8 and ARSM
- Top tips for creating a programme
- How the marking criteria works in practice

Live sessions will be open to all;  
playback available to members only

Monday 4th April, 5:00pm – 6:00pm  
**MUSIC TEACHER MONDAY:  
Exam Preparation and Focus**

Live sessions will be open to all;  
playback available to members only



## As we gain confidence to be back in our classrooms again, the challenges linger

Dr Steven Berryman

@steven\_berryman

Many of us continue to adapt and refine, modifying our plans to cater for the missed opportunities our students have experienced as we navigated the regulations and confines of keeping everyone safe in education. The Music Teachers Association has kept the curriculum conversation alive through our webinars, through Ensemble and played out on social media with the frequent interactions and sharing practice. There is a renewed energy to keep the advocacy for a music education for all alive; with three members of the Music Teachers Association active on the DFE National Plan for Music Education refresh panel we are working hard for our subject community to keep music a priority.

We have some interesting conversations ahead for the curriculum and our subject community. Catherine Barker and I joined a panel discussion for the Confederation for School Trusts digging into the challenge and opportunity of leading music across a group of schools. An MTA event in February explored this work further, with Simon Toyne and Margaret O'Shea joining Catherine and me. Music is increasingly seen as a vehicle for trust-wide collaboration and many of our members will undoubtedly be stepping up to lead at scale.

Working across multiple settings brings new ways of working, and may include considerations of how shared curriculum ambitions can function across different school communities. What we have learned from the lively debate around models of curriculum is that we care deeply about getting the curriculum

right for our schools. We know how essential teacher expertise is to build a satisfying curriculum, and we know that as a subject community we can supportively challenge each other to reflect and refine our curriculum design. Ultimately we build on our colleagues' thinking, and it has been thrilling to see generosity of colleagues to share their

department's work.

We are moving away from polarised curriculum debates of knowledge and skills, progressive and traditional, classical and popular; we're shifting towards deep reflections of who we're teaching as much as how and what. As a subject community we are committed to championing equality, diversity and inclusion through our work and we recognise there is more to do to develop this work. I compel you to explore the work of Sound Connections and UK Music Masters 'IM IN' to keep the EDI conversation alive in your own setting. And do reach

out to the MTA, your subject community, if you can see ways for us to support your thinking.

Keep sharing your work. There is such strength in hearing of curriculum successes be those particular projects that have worked well, or resources that have enabled you to grapple with the reality of blended learning. Think too of how we can support you as a music teacher, as a subject community, to enable your own deep thinking about your curriculum. We're keen to ensure we demonstrate the power of collective thinking and how together we can create engaging, ambitious and inclusive curriculums for all.

**We know how essential teacher expertise is to build a satisfying curriculum, and we know that as a subject community we can supportively challenge each other to reflect and refine our curriculum design.**



# Ask James

James Manwaring (Windsor Learning Partnership) is our Teacher Support Lead, helping members to find quick solutions to everyday questions that arise in the classroom.

How are we already so far in to 2022? It seems like only yesterday I was thinking about September, then suddenly Christmas, and now I feel I am planning the summer. Life is a funny thing and when you work in a school you feel like you are on a conveyor belt that keeps on going. But sometimes you must get off, take time for yourself, and reflect on the positives. This year has started well for me in so many ways but has also been tough. I think we are all experiencing the knock-on effects of the pandemic and it is sometimes hard to see a way forward.

### How do you find time for yourself?

I get asked this a lot and the answer is always, well, I don't always. I don't like that answer, but the reality is that some terms are fuller than others. But I find time for myself by carving out time, setting aside evenings and putting 'Free Evening' in my diary so that I don't fill it.

### Is it okay moving from Mac to PC?

I have had this question a couple of times and it is also one that appears on Facebook. The simple answer is, of course it is fine! I loved my Macs, they were beautiful, not only to use, but to look at. But, they are pricey and I was in a situation where it was either PCs or nothing! I am entirely happy with the PCs I have and they work really well. It all comes down to budget and getting the most you can for your students!

### What is Music Teacher Monday?

Music Teacher Monday is a new zoom that I have started with Liz Dunbar. It is a monthly gathering of music teachers on zoom to share, care and inspire. Think casual sit down chat, but on zoom with seventy-five other teachers. Liz and I want to support teachers, encourage them and send them off with ideas. If you have any questions about when it is then please just email me.

### Can MTA support me, I am struggling a bit?

Yes, we can. I am Teacher Support Lead for MTA and I am here to help if and when I can. I am also growing a team of teachers within MTA who can help me to help you. Don't suffer in silence or try and go it alone, we want to do all we can to support the sector. All you need to do is reach out, and no question is too big or small.

### How do you recruit to A-level?

I have just completed a series of seasons in my schools for Year 11 who are thinking of sixth form. I run a session where I basically used the music, songs and scores that have impacted me over the years. I use each extract to talk about music with passion and excitement, asking them what they love. I avoid lots of information about the course, but just drop in the things they need to know. I aim to make the sessions full of music and hopefully as inspiring as possible. I want them to picture what studying music is all about and link it to their own passion for music. I love running these sessions as it also reminds me why I teach. I finish the lesson playing them the pieces of music that really showed me that I wanted to be in a classroom. The facts about the course and the % of coursework etc. are important, but you need to grab their attention and get them excited about the thought of studying music.

### How do you engage key Stage 3 students?

This is sometimes tricky but at the moment I am opening the doors of the music room to Key Stage 3 and I aim to be as present as possible in the music room to chat to them and get to know them. I have students coming in and working on compositions, and some coming in to play their instruments. I try to make the music department an open space for students with the hope that they mix with the older ones and commit to taking their music making further.

I wish you all the best for the weeks ahead and please do get in touch if you need any support from me. And I hope that you are able to join Liz and me for Music Teacher Monday! Full details will be given in the Friday e-bulletins in the lead up to each monthly session.

Ask  
James  
on ZOOM

**James Manwaring, Music Teacher Support Lead**  
**teachersupport@musicteachers.org**

If you would be interested in a Zoom session looking at typical questions you may have for classroom teaching, department development and extra-curricular work, please get in touch. No question is too small.

# Helen Byard

Primary Music Teacher  
Edenbridge Primary School, Sevenoaks, Kent



I hope it is widely acknowledged and accepted that music, and the arts in general, got us through the lockdowns. It was a vital requirement for connecting with others, releasing creativity, contemplation, and comradery. At my school, we kept regular online music lessons going throughout. Each class received a thirty-minute interactive Zoom lesson. During this time, we sang (I think they sang) played wooden spoons, hit cushions and participated in lots of action songs. The Early Years and KS1 classes were often accompanied by parents happily being penguins in the kitchen, jumping up and down alongside their smiling children, amused by the dad dancing. The upper key stage children engaged in the lessons, keen to be unmuted to share their keyboard skills and tuned in to the shared YouTube clips of stomp-like body percussion, enthusiastically trying to re-create the routines. I am so glad these lessons kept going for the pupils at home. I feel that they loved seeing each other every day, sharing moments of delight, and having fun and that their musical learning was not completely disrupted. I feel these sessions kept children 'in the moment' and for a little while the boredom of being stuck at home was relieved. It seems that actually this short blast of music time together had a big knock-on effect on the rest of their day.

Personally, as a teacher, it was a lot of hard work creating the individually prepared PowerPoints that would get across the learning objectives remotely, with embedded music clips and links. It took twice the time to create a thirty-minute online lesson than it usually does to teach a full hour in person. And five live Zoom lessons a day felt like being a full-time entertainer at a children's party.

A year on from the last lockdown and I am now teaching the same unit again (all year groups concentrate on 'Pitch' in Term 3) but I am noticing the gaps. I can tell the children that did not participate in any live lessons, but I can also hear the children that did. They do remember! I am listening to funny anecdotes about their mum loving BonJovi and the whole family 'rockin' out for the rest of the day. I am hearing how music enriched their lives every day of lockdown and it makes all the effort worth it. I hope going forward that music continues to play an important part in all children's education. During the pandemic, the music community materialized, collaborated and became more visible. This momentum, during a challenging time, highlights more than ever the role music plays in well-being.

'In school' Year 6 pupils logging on to the live music lesson



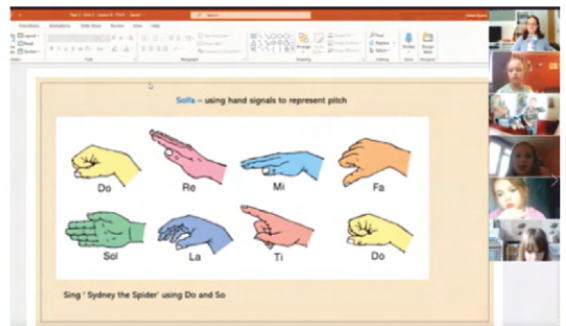
Online Recorder Club and Choir



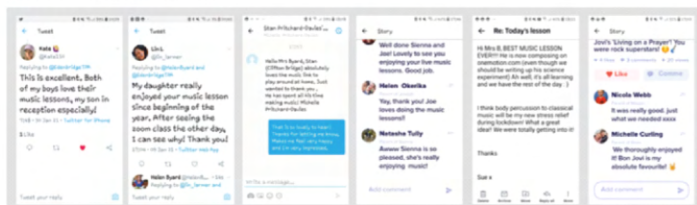
Reception class – Interactive action songs



Year 3 – Pitch lesson using Solfa



Parents' Feedback via Twitter



## UPDATES on WELLBEING FROM TEACHING MEMBERS



### Michael Wright

Teacher of Music, Drama and Games,  
MD for the Modern Music Ensemble at Chigwell School

#### FOR MUSIC TEACHERS

##### Do you have a healthy work/life balance?

No, this is self-inflicted. I now work in a boarding house in addition to completing my Master's study; the music department I work at is super busy with extracurricular/events program on par with my full timetable. I feel work has become more taxing due to making up for time lost during the pandemic; we are cramming in as much as we can so that students do not miss out (again) on a chance to develop and immerse themselves in music making. It's unrelenting and brutal at times; I wish I felt I had support just to offload my thoughts without coming across as whingey.

##### What do you do to maintain a healthy work/life balance? (advice, tips, websites, apps)

There isn't much separation regarding a work/life balance as mentioned earlier. The way I cope with it is find the joy in embracing time spent with my boarders, going on activities, or getting involved with boarding events in the house and at school. I also compose and create content, via my YouTube channel and Blog. Both give me (time permitting) an opportunity to use my experiences as a music teacher and former professional in a constructive manner. Being part of the MTA community really helps, though I feel lost in the shuffle regarding my involvement. I wish the MTA and I could be more involved as contributing outside of my job will give me some justification in the effort I put in my job.

##### Is there a difference between empowerment and delegation?

Yes, massive difference! The former enables growth and ownership of one's career, ensuring development is organic and rewarding. We do it all the time as teachers, students grow from the trust given to them to learn for themselves. The latter can be belittling, especially if anyone is like me in their ambitions to lead a team or feel like their contributions matter. It is important to fostering a good spirit and the team leader must be aware that what they delegate is not going to demote or waste the talents of their team.

#### ABOUT STUDENTS

##### Have you noticed changes in student wellbeing over the last few years?

There are noticeable issues with some students, totally understandable given what some have had to go through over the last few years. My current Year 7s look longer to settle and mature into the year than previous ones, more low-level disruptions, behavioural/friendship issues. It seems they don't have the same social tools as previous years.

##### What strategies do you employ to care for your students mental health?

Music clubs, I run loads and encourage students in their breaks and afterschool to get involved. I also take time to listen to students, knowing that our conversations are important to them feeling heard.

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# CORPORATE MEMBERS' NEWS

## Youth music tours in the UK - one way to get back to performing

Since the start of the pandemic, specialist youth music tour operator, Club Europe have been scouring the length and breadth of the UK to be able offer an alternative to foreign travel. Club Europe's Head of Concert Tours, Lucy Szymonski explains: "While some music leaders are still understandably reluctant to face the prospect of organising a tour abroad, we have found some wonderful gems in the UK, which may be an option for young ensembles that would like to get back on tour. From South coast seaside cities like Brighton and Bournemouth to a wonderful coastal tour in North Yorkshire, ensembles can feel like they're really getting away without having to fly anywhere. The Cotswolds, Suffolk, Jersey, the Isle of Wight, The Lake District... there really are some lovely spots in the UK just waiting to welcome young ensembles.

With Covid very much still with us, even if only travelling in the UK, we are now offering new comprehensive Covid insurance, which we hope will give teachers the confidence and reassurance they need to get back on tour."

For more details of Club Europe's UK music tour destinations, go to [www.clubeurope.co.uk](http://www.clubeurope.co.uk) or email Lucy at [Lucy.s@clubeurope.co.uk](mailto:Lucy.s@clubeurope.co.uk).



Stainer & Bell is thrilled to announce the publication of an exciting new resource for primary schools and youth choirs.

### The History Express

Time-travelling backwards from the Invention of the Internet to the Big Bang, this new upbeat collection is an irresistible and joyful celebration of Music and History, loaded with extra cross-curricular applications for STEM subjects.

With catchy music and humorous poems by acclaimed collaborators Russell Hepplewhite and Helen Eastman, this flexible book is a brilliant resource for specialist and non-specialist teachers alike, with short notes on the lyrics, piano backing tracks (via QR codes), and suggestions for group and class discussion. Each individual song is also available as a separate download pack, with the music, melody sheet and lyric sheet, plus additional QR codes for helpful melody teaching tracks. [stainer.co.uk/d113](http://stainer.co.uk/d113)

## Rodolfus Foundation



### The Rodolfus Foundation appoints new President, Roderick Williams OBE

The Rodolfus Foundation has appointed the operatic baritone and composer Roderick Williams OBE as their new President. He joins existing Vice-Presidents

Edward Gardner OBE and James Bowman CBE. Both Roderick and Edward are alumni of the Rodolfus Choral Courses and the Rodolfus Choir. Roddy is passionate about broadening access to choral music and is very supportive of the Foundation's recent new project in Hackney, East London, the Rodolfus Choral Academy. The project consists of a highly trained choral conductor visiting two primary schools in the borough with little music provision, offering a day of choral singing in each. The choral leader teaches each class choral pieces that stretch and delight and at the end of the year, the two schools will come together in a large-scale performance. Some of the keenest singers will be invited to join local choir the Hackney Children's Choir, as well as the possibility of attending a Rodolfus Choral Course on a bursary.

The Foundation has also appointed two new vice-presidents, Jenny Watson CBE and mezzo-soprano and BBC New Generation Artist Helen Charlston. Jenny is a board member and consultant, previously chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission and currently chair of the House of St Barnabas, a charity which seeks to break the cycle of homelessness, amongst other roles. Meanwhile, Helen, who is also ex-Rodolfus, is one of the UK's most promising young soloists, providing our young singers with inspiration and guidance. [www.therodolfusfoundation.org.uk](http://www.therodolfusfoundation.org.uk)

## Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH Dorico 4 is here!

In January 2022, Steinberg released a new generation of its family of music notation and composition software for macOS and Windows, with new versions of the professional Dorico Pro 4, the mid-range Dorico Elements 4, and the completely free Dorico SE 4.

The focus of these new releases is on speeding up workflows, whether they are focused on composition, arranging, or publishing. In particular, the new smart import feature for bringing MIDI material in from Cubase or another DAW makes it quick and easy to produce a beautifully notated score, and Dorico can even transcribe contrapuntal keyboard music into multiple voices automatically, saving huge amounts of time. Students and teachers alike will love the ability to see traditional staff notation and the familiar piano roll and MIDI editing tools of a sequencer together in the same view, seamlessly linked together, and the ability to input notes by interacting with on-screen piano keyboard, guitar fretboard and drum pad panels make the process of writing music more direct and engaging.

In addition to the powerful new features and workflows in Dorico 4, this is also a landmark release for another reason: Dorico 4 is the first product to use the new Steinberg Licensing system, beginning the transition away from the eLicenser technology that Steinberg's software products have relied upon for decades. There are many practical advantages to Steinberg Licensing, not least the fact that there is no longer any need for a USB-eLicenser or indeed hardware dongle of any kind: you can activate the software permanently on your computer simply by signing in with your Steinberg ID email address and password.



If you would like to buy individual licenses of Dorico 4 for faculty to get up to speed with its many improvements, you can do so: site license updates will be available in the early summer. These site license updates will take advantage of new capabilities of Steinberg Licensing to make the software easier to deploy and license in schools, including integrating with your existing identity management systems for staff and students, and existing device management systems. If you would be interested in trying out the new site license features please contact Steinberg's UK Education Manager, Richard Llewellyn at [r.llewellyn@steinberg.de](mailto:r.llewellyn@steinberg.de) and tel: 07841 516066.

For more details about the new features in Dorico 4, please visit <https://www.steinberg.net/dorico/new-features>

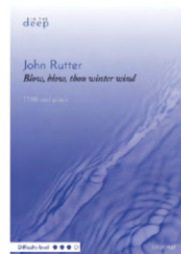
## OUP

An inspirational new series of pieces for TTBB voices: In the deep



'In the deep' presents a varied selection of choral repertoire for tenors and basses, including school, college, community, and church ensembles.

Featuring pieces in two to five parts, with or without piano accompaniment, the series offers authentic re-scoring of well-known works alongside imaginative material written specially for TB forces. From traditional a cappella to modern concert material, the repertoire provides programming solutions for inspiration, refreshment, and reflection.



## Royal College of Organists

### RCO in-person events and courses return

We are delighted to announce that after a two-year break for the Covid pandemic our programme of in-person events and courses for organists is back. This means ambitious teenage organists of grade 7 level and above can spend six stimulating days on The Organ Student Experience (TOSE) course in Oxford, 26–31 July. Under the artistic direction of Daniel Moulton, Head of Organ at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, students benefit from the broad study programme which embraces repertoire, technique, keyboard musicianship, and choral directing and accompaniment, as well as the opportunity to play many of Oxford's finest organs and to make friends with other organists of their own age from across the UK and beyond. An early booking discount applies until 28 February with bursaries available from the Royal College of Organists in full or partial support of the fees. Full details can be found at [rco.org.uk/events.php](http://rco.org.uk/events.php) where all our events and courses are listed. RCO Student Members and Affiliate Student Members (those attending schools accredited under the RCO Institutional Accreditation scheme) enjoy full access free of charge to the large bank of learning resources on iRCO, the RCO's virtual campus and resource hub. For full details of this and about membership and accreditation please visit [rco.org.uk](http://rco.org.uk).





# MTA Conference

ST EDWARD'S OXFORD

13th – 15th May 2022



Gill Davies  
Conference and  
Events Manager

The conference is always a highlight in our calendar, and 2022 is set to be extra special; after three years of interruptions, we will finally be reunited in person, and we cannot wait! While many members return to conference year after year, we know there are new members who won't have had an opportunity to attend before. So we caught up with Gill Davies, Conference and Events Manager, to find out what's planned.

**What is the Conference for?**

The conference unites music professionals with a common goal: to deliver exceptional music education to the young people of today. With a comprehensive and diverse programme, we aim to guide, inspire and encourage best practice across the sector, providing CPD sessions with inspirational speakers, and a host of lively panel discussions on today's most relevant topics.

**Where is it held?**

The conference is always held at a host school, and this year we are heading to St Edward's School in Oxford.

**When is it?**

The conference will run from the 13th-15th May 2022, with the programme starting at lunchtime on Friday, and closing after brunch on Sunday.

**Who attends?**

We are joined by up to 120 music educators; whilst many are classroom teachers, we also welcome instrumental teachers, music administrators and retired teachers. We are keen for more Trainees and Early Career Teachers to join us, as we can offer great support for those at the start of their career in teaching. Delegates come from a mix of schools from both the state and independent sectors, as well as primary and secondary settings.

**What CPD will there be?**

Expect a great choice of inspirational CPD! There will be more than twenty-five sessions covering topics from curriculum design and the National Plan for Music Education to practical sessions on how to integrate performance in the classroom, composition, analysis and music technology platforms. There will be singing workshops and an instrumental masterclass, as well as sessions on film, music theatre and the importance of the arts to name a few. We have also expanded our mentoring programme, giving attendees the chance to sign-up for a 1-on-1 mentoring sessions across either professional development or teaching and learning.

The full programme will be released in March, but I can reveal that award-winning Saxophonist, Broadcaster and Author, YolanDa Brown will be joining us on the Friday afternoon as a panelist and key-note speaker which we're thrilled about.

**What else is on offer?**

We have a lively trade fair, where you can meet representatives from music organisations such as exam boards, instrumental suppliers, technology platforms and tour companies. Visit every stand over the weekend for the chance to win some great prizes! We're also excited to be hosting some performances in St Edwards' stunning Olivier





**YolanDa Brown**  
Panellist &  
Keynote Speaker

**Book Before  
14th March 2022.  
Early Bird  
Deadline**

Hall. And let's not forget this is also a chance to just relax and have fun with peers and friends, and for many the highlight is a spectacular black-tie gala dinner that will be held in a marquee on the lawns on the Saturday evening.

**What if I haven't been before?**

As part of our commitment to welcoming new members to the conference, we will be hosting a dedicated coffee break for all our first-time delegates, with a number of our longest standing attendees and committee members on hand to give you a warm welcome. The atmosphere is friendly and open, and we can guarantee you will leave having build up some great connections.

**How much does it cost?**

A full weekend ticket costs £240 if you register before the 14th March 2022. This includes full access to the whole programme of events, and includes Friday lunch, Friday supper, Saturday lunch, a ticket to the gala dinner and Sunday brunch, as well as complimentary coffee and tea throughout. The cost is £185 for Trainees, early-career

teachers, instrumental teachers, music administrators and retired teachers. Whilst we recommend joining for the full weekend, it is also possible to register for Saturday only. Invoices can be made out to yourself or your school.

**What about accommodation?**

We don't include accommodation as some people prefer to make their own arrangements, but we've teamed up with two hotels in Oxford to offer great pricing. There are currently rooms held at the Easyhotel 2 minutes from St Edwards at just £100 for 2 nights, or at the Jury's Inn Oxford at £264 for 2 nights. These are offered on a first come first served basis, so we recommend booking early; details of how to access these offers are on our website.

**How do I to register?**

Simply go to [www.musicteachers.org/conference](http://www.musicteachers.org/conference) where you will find all the information, and a link to the registration form. We look forward to seeing you in May!



Alex Tester  
Director of Music,  
St Edward's Oxford

**Alex Tester, Director of Music and the Arts at St Edwards, is leading on the conference programme.**

"We are very much looking forward to hosting the MTA Conference 2022 at St Edward's Oxford this year. It's an honour to put together a programme for the first live conference since 2019, and at such an important time as we reinstate so much of what we do in school music departments. St Edward's enjoys its position of being a boarding school on the edge of a vibrant cultural city, and the conference will hopefully reflect that: I am hoping that there will be a real focus on music as a local concern within our own schools, a community concern through partnerships, and a national concern through what we are all hoping to achieve for our subject. I do hope you'll join us in May."



## This is Trinity: Arts Resources To Inspire Your Teaching

This month, Trinity College London has launched a brand new, topic-based arts resource: *This is Trinity*. This is Trinity is specifically designed to provide support, advice and inspiration for teaching and assessment in the arts. It addresses a wide range of content from across Trinity's product suite of music, drama and Arts Award and brings together the most relevant information on a specific theme. Every month there will be a focus on a key topic from the world of music, drama and the wider arts, such as SEND, primary music making and progression and industry development. A carefully curated collection of easily accessible resources, such as webinars, PDFs, videos and blogs will explore different aspects of the topic.

We kick start the year with the very first, and timely, theme - Embracing Digital. Recently, we've all had to make rapid changes to our ways of working and adapt to the increasingly digital environment. Within the 'Embracing Digital' resources you can find specific guidance on how to engage effectively with Trinity's own digital offer. You can also hear from practitioners who have fully and effectively embraced the digital approach. So, if you want to know more about the new Overall Performance criteria, an online music school working with touring musicians to deliver virtual lessons or to simply download a useful checklist for entering a Digital Grade or Diploma exam, it's all here for you in one place.

Visit: <https://learn.trinitycollege.co.uk/this-is-trinity>

## Hal Leonard

Hal Leonard's Essential Elements Music Class (EEMC) is the new online solution for primary music that everyone's talking about. Already used by thousands of schools across North America, EEMC is arriving in the UK from March 2022.

Affordable, inspiring, and simple to use, Essential Elements Music Class provides a bank of learning resources for more than 500 of the best-known songs from pop, film, and musical theatre. Popular songs that children know and love, appropriately arranged and bursting with interactive tools such as lyric videos, backing tracks, and printable notation to engage school choirs, assemblies, and classroom music-making.

In addition, EEMC also offers ready-made, fully customisable classroom music lessons for ages 6–11 and digital whole-class instrumental methods, as well as a host of interactive learning tools such as a virtual music-book library, classical listening maps, and classroom playlists. With whole-school access at only £99 per year, EEMC offers affordable access to hundreds of popular song resources to enhance singing strategies, and so much more! You can sign up for updates on EEMC's progress at [www.eemusicclass.co.uk](http://www.eemusicclass.co.uk)

## Orchestrating Change

The mission of Me2/Orchestra is to erase mental health stigma one concert at a time. Its groundbreaking model is challenging audiences to reconsider their misconceptions about mental illness. Founded by Ronald Braunstein, a celebrated conductor diagnosed with bipolar disorder, a film of its story has now been made. To watch the thirty-second promo, learn more and see what people are saying about Orchestrating Change please go to: <https://orchestratingchangethefilm.com>

## Onestage

Music Tours can encourage well-being. Many of us book 'the next holiday' well in advance and use it as a tool to get through the next few months, knowing that there is something exciting, new and fun to look forward to. Having a Music Tour planned at the end of term, can work in the same way, whilst providing an additional learning objective as well as:

### EXPLORING A NEW DESTINATION -

Our senses are triggered when we are in a new environment, exploring a new town or city, or visiting an attraction like a Museum or Castle to awaken the senses.

### WORKING TOGETHER -

Producing a performance to a new audience strengthens connections within the ensembles and creates memories.

### RELAXATION -

Incorporating some downtime on tour allows students to create friendships and connect with each other.

### LEARNING OUTSIDE THE

**CLASSROOM** - This allows learning to develop outside the school walls and bring these skills into a new environment.

Talk to **OneStage** about opportunities in the UK or abroad which can broaden horizons and create positive, musical experiences for your students.

[www.onestage.co.uk](http://www.onestage.co.uk)

## ISM

### ISM Trust Teach Meets

Do you have something to share about your music education work that will interest and inspire others? Want to hear from and talk to other teachers and practitioners working across a range of music education settings? Join the ISM Trust's free Teach Meets.

These online events are for teachers and led by teachers, embedding joint practice development and collaboration at the heart of your work. Open to all educators and leaders, they offer opportunities to collaborate and discuss with colleagues.

Primary and early years: 7 March 2022, 4-5.30pm

Secondary: 8 March 2022, 4-5.30pm

**BOOK FOR FREE:** [ism.org/seminars](http://ism.org/seminars)



# WELLBEING

for MUSIC TEACHERS



# EDUCATION SUPPORT

## The Teacher Wellbeing Index



Gemma Scotcher

Gemma is the Head of Communications and Public Affairs for UK charity, Education Support.

This interview by Patrick Johns, originally appeared on 'Teaching Notes', the Music Teachers' Association Podcast

Teaching is stressful. We all know that. Sometimes it's very, very stressful. Many of us have been pushed to breaking point and don't know where to turn. I'm sure this is an emotion that we've all had at some stage in our teaching careers. It's also a specialist job and these types of roles need specialist advice. Where can we get that?

Well, one place is a charity called Education Support. It's the only UK charity dedicated to supporting the mental health and well being of teachers and education staff in schools, colleges and universities. Patrick Johns interviewed Gemma Scotcher, Head of Communications and Public Affairs, recently to find out more.

### What is education support?

Education Support is the only UK charity that focuses on the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and all education staff. We're actually 145 years old. We've been doing this for a really, really long time and we think that what we do is unique because it is so specific to the education workforce. But when we were first set up, we were a Benevolent Fund for teachers. By 1927, the main reasons that people were coming to us were nervous breakdown, housing and consumption, as they called it then. We've changed a lot over the years and,

since 1999, we've been providing free counselling and a grants service as well, which is a bit of a nod to that Benevolent Fund from all those years ago. So we're quite a different organisation now, but still with a very single minded focus on the education workforce.

### So how does it work in practice, for teachers who are suffering from stress or other mental health issues? Do they pick up the phone and ask for help?

We've got a range of different services. The big important one is that we have a free 24/7 confidential helpline that is dedicated to teachers and education staff. You can call at any time. One of the things that's unique is that you can access a qualified counsellor. They understand the heritage of who we are and the issues that teachers are likely to be facing in their workplace.

### Do you find that inquiries and requests for support fluctuate throughout the year or do they remain constant?

We get a consistent stream of calls throughout the year, but there are definitely peaks and troughs. Quite obviously, August is pretty quiet. Everyone's hopefully relaxing, recharging and they're not thinking about work. But we get real peaks in November and I

think it's quite clear why the autumn term is the hardest. By this point in the year, it's dark and it's really busy. Everyone's in the final run up to Christmas so November is a really busy time. When you look at the whole year and the usage numbers, it tends to be just before holidays when people have really just had enough.

**I imagine that in 2020 and parts of 2021—I'm thinking specifically of course of COVID and home teaching—the numbers went up enormously?**

That's a really interesting point. Everybody says this and expects that it was actually the opposite. I think that teachers are the kind of people that often think of others first. They ask how are the kids doing? How are the parents doing? What does the school need? During COVID, everyone was just in survival mode. Actually the numbers were down during COVID. We were also scratching our heads over it, and have only just managed to work out why. Now, we're getting a huge amount of calls. We're eighteen months into the pandemic and people are exhausted. Now is the time when teachers are realising they just need to talk it out.

**What do you find are the most common issues or situations that teachers come to you with?**

In terms of our helpline, the detail of those calls is confidential. We do know that the most common type of session on our helpline is what we'd call a single session of counselling. Teachers call for practical help but they also ring up for emotional support. And by and large, that's the main reason that they call.

We publish our annual Teacher Wellbeing Index, where we survey the teaching workforce, and ask them detailed questions about symptoms of poor mental health. We ask about workload,

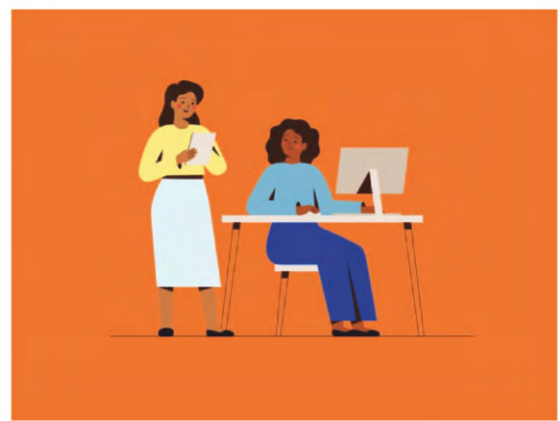
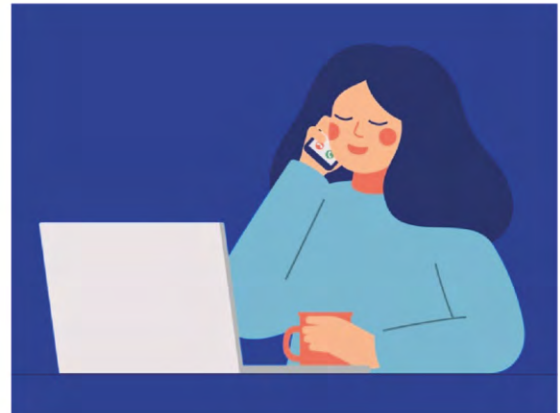
work-life balance, trust and support from SLT and good working relationships. This year's report gives us a picture of teachers working in the shadow of COVID as well as cumulative five year data. This picture, across those years, does show that stress and workload as issues haven't gone away. They were an issue before COVID, but everyone just knuckled down and tried to get through it.

We're conditioned to think stress is normal. If you're not productive, you're not winning. But I don't buy into that. Caring for yourself, so that you can show up for the kids that you're responsible for is really important. Taking care of yourself isn't selfish, it's not self indulgent, it's so vital. And if you're at the point where you're having physical symptoms, because you're stressed out, that's definitely the time get some support. Particularly now, because the kids have had so much time out of the classroom, we know that a lot of them are struggling. If our teaching workforce is unwell, how do we address that?

Music is a hugely important part of life. How do we bring our students through COVID, maintaining emotional and social development? Music is a vital way of creating connection and joy during difficult times, which in turn boosts resilience.

**Do you see any variation in the mental health between, say, younger teachers and older teachers, and also teachers who are new to the profession? For example, somebody who may have started teaching in their 40s?**

That's a really good question. Our Teacher Wellbeing Index looks at this quite closely. There's a difference in the kinds of symptoms that different career stage teachers might experience. So teachers who have only been teaching two or



“Music is a vital way of creating connection and joy during difficult times, which in turn boosts resilience.”

five years are more likely to have panic attacks, mood swings, tearfulness and changes to appetite such as under eating. Then if you look at the senior leader who has been in the profession slightly longer, they're more likely to experience things like insomnia and acute stress. There are really interesting differences between the career length.

However, it's tricky to make really firm conclusions, because we know that there are a lot of early career teachers who are straight out of university and career changers who might be slightly older. Is it about age or career length? It's probably a bit of a mixture of both.

One of the questions that we also asked was, how much does your training prepare you to manage your own mental health and your pupils mental health? Early Career Teachers are much more likely to say that their training did prepare them. I think there's a few things going on there. I think that partly shows that there has been an increased effort by providers to include mental health and wellbeing in the training, which is amazing. More experienced teachers are less likely to remember the specifics of their training.

**You obviously provide an unbelievably necessary and useful service. And I know that the work that you do will help everybody. Could you tell us how teachers should get in touch with you?**

If you need immediate support, or you want to talk through something that is stressing you out in your workday call our helpline. It's free and it's 24/7. 08000 562 561. Come and talk to us, we will listen.

But if you're just thinking more generally about managing your wellbeing there are a range of ways you can get in touch with

us. We have so many free resources on our website such as how to tackle burnout, managing anxiety, leading with vulnerability. If you're on your SLT, and you're asking how can I make the culture of my school prioritize mental health, we have resources. Additionally there is our social media and newsletter.

**That's brilliant. Thank you so much for your time and for the wonderful work that you do.**

**"If we fail to act on these findings we are complicit in the damage to the lives and opportunities of those responsible for teaching, guiding and inspiring our nation's next generation."**

**SINÉAD MC BREARTY,  
CEO EDUCATION SUPPORT**



**Helpline: 08000 562 561**  
[www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-organisations/research/teacher-wellbeing-index/](http://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-organisations/research/teacher-wellbeing-index/)

# LISTENING AND APPRAISING? TRY LISTENING AND SUPPORTING

Catherine Barker

Catherine is the Head of Music and Performing Arts at United Learning and President Elect of the MTA



## “Regrets, I've had a few...”

A regret I have about my musical training is how I have been trained to listen in detail. I struggle to hear a piece of music holistically: my mind wants to separate the layers, to analyse the harmony, to explore why and how the creator has constructed the music. I envy how my children listen to new music and are consumed by the entire soundworld, the story and the unexplained magic of what they are hearing. For them, this applies equally to a wide range of music, without hierarchy.

Of course, the ability to *really* listen is a great gift. As musicians our ears are finely tuned and receptive to nuance, holding us in good stead when identifying detail and subtleties.

Alongside this, it is possible that those who are active in music making may have increased emotional sensitivity (Hunter and Schellenberg 2010). It seems reasonable to conclude: we, as music teachers, can be very good listeners to people.

Those who have met me will know that I love to talk. I'm nosy (read: curious) and enjoy getting to know people, discovering what drives them. For all of us, conversations are the central part of informal and formal communication in our departments and wider education settings. In these interactions, we have the potential to enthuse, inspire and encourage. As we continue to navigate an uncertain world in 2022, this sort of leadership is more critical than ever.

How is this possible mainly through listening, and not talking? There are differences when listening to people: with music, we have knowledge and structures to draw on and we continually make inferences based on this. There are similar

systems that we can make use of that enable us to employ our listening 'super powers'.

For me, coaching techniques are a central part of my toolkit that I use day to day at work, in schools and when working with colleagues who are looking for answers. Invariably, people know what to do and how to do it – and a careful conversation where they are listened to has the potential to draw this out.

### Coaching is described as:

'A one to one conversation that focuses on the enhancement of learning through increasing self-awareness and sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee, through questioning, active listening and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging environment.'

(Christian Van Nieuwerburgh)

Coaching itself can be surrounded in mystery – do you have to be some kind of savant or high status motivational speaker to do coaching? Is a high level of training necessary? This is true to an extent. When done badly, there is real potential for harm in coaching.

However, the principles can be taken into any conversation, giving a sequence that is straight forward to follow - this is like the musical language and structures that we know so well. The listener (i.e. the coach) can then help the speaker (i.e. the coachee) to work through what is bothering them and find a good way forward.

Many will be familiar with Sir John Whitmore's GROW model of coaching:–

**Goal** – What result are you aiming for?

**Reality** – What is happening now?

**Options** (including obstacles) – How can you make progress? What might get in the way?

**Way forward** – Action steps

Andy Buck offers a similar version of this, the BASIC method, and adds an additional set of introductory questions making it more informal and conversational:

**Background** – What's happening, what's on your mind?

**Aim** – What you want to achieve? How will you feel if you do?

**Strategy** – What approach might work? What other ways could work?

**Intent** – What will you do? What are your next steps?

**Commitment** – Will you really do this? What could stop you?

Through the series of questions, the listener remains inquisitive, shows empathy (potentially by mirroring, body language and facial expression) and stays positive. Again, these traits feel like core skills of musicians. We are professionally curious, always investigating new repertoire and seeking out talent; we are able to relate to each other within ensembles through highly developed non-verbal cues. And, relentless positivity? The members of the Music Teachers' Association have shown this in spades in the past two years.

As a next step, why not try these questions on yourself if you are facing a problem that you want to solve? Or, try out the sequence with a trusted colleague who will allow you to practice your questioning and listening. Most importantly (to quote the Pulitzer-winning, Lin Manuel Miranda, one of my heroes): talk less, smile more...

### Further reading:

The Basic Coaching Method - Andy Buck  
Your Total Coach - Keith Nelson  
An Introduction to Coaching - Christian Van Nieuwerburgh  
Coaching for Performance - Sir John Whitmore

# TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE



Liz Dunbar

Liz is the York Pathfinder Secondary Music Leader at Huntington School, York

A lot of our most fulfilling learning experiences happen in groups, teams, orchestras, choirs, bands. We love the joy of collective music making. And the drive to improve technique and work on the fine detail, is fueled by the knowledge of what it feels like to be right in the thick of it – playing our part in making music with others.

We push ourselves a lot further working like this; aspiring to be better, matching the skill and effort of others, supporting one another in the process. It makes us happy when we work in collaboration with others.

I've been thinking a great deal about the power of collective music making recently, and have started working on ways of capturing the drive it gives us, and applying it to aspects of study which we might normally associate with working alone.

Now, don't get me wrong: working on your own is good too. Sometimes it's the only way to get things done. Solitude provides quiet time and privacy, but it can also be isolating and drain our energy. It's all about balance.



At Huntington, we have a well established 'Paired Piano' scheme that runs before school. I've talked about how it works before - so I won't boil my cabbages twice, except to say that the impact that working with a partner has had on some individuals' wellbeing, drive and confidence, has been quite remarkable.

We've employed various mentoring pairs techniques in classroom for years at KS3, but it's still not properly embedded at KS4 and 5. If you are anything like us you will probably do a lot of paired and small group work in the curriculum at KS3, yet beyond the ensemble work required for performance papers, do very little truly collaborative work in the other 70% of the courses at GCSE and A level.

The pursuit of individual exam grades, and the pressure to track and measure in every waking moment, definitely

lessens our motivation to encourage students to work together.

When the conditions are right, working collaboratively and creatively is energising. Just as in live music making, the act of discussing, rethinking and fixing, elicits new ideas and solutions.

I see in our own students at A level in particular, a natural desire to share and collaborate through online chat groups. When they get stuck on something they consult the hive mind.

They work it out together.

So, I decided to do something with this, and asked Year 12 and 13 students to collaborate in pairs with aural training, research, analysis, harmony, and essay writing. When I first asked students to write essays in pairs their faces were a picture. They were totally thrown by it, but once they understood what I was looking for, and that I was encouraging them to pool their research and ideas - to use their phones and tablets to chat and gather information, and to talk about their thinking processes, they were really up for it.





One of the first things I tried was a 'fixing and improving' essay task, where pairs of students took essays they had already written as individuals, plus my feedback and annotations, and collaborate in a rewrite. This proved to be particularly powerful when students' work differed in areas of strength and weakness. Working in pairs facilitated a range of bespoke home remedies, some useful, some not so useful. But that's where I could step in with tried and tested solutions.

While I'm only in the embryonic stages of exploring the pairing technique in this context, I'm finding that students are entering the classroom already talking about the focus of the lesson, their findings and their thoughts. They've actually done the prep because they're working in partnership with someone else. They are energised, chatty and happy. In recent weeks, a number of students have articulated

that they feel increasingly comfortable asking one another for support, both within and across year groups, and I find that they are collectively more confident and more willing to open up in lessons when they are finding things particularly challenging.

Homework/extended learning tasks that I've set in pairs that have been successful so far:

- Essay research, planning, structuring, writing, rewriting
- Four-part harmony tasks
- Short composition/improvisation exercises
- Aural training (one student plays/vocalises while the other notates)

We've also recently put manuscript whiteboards up on the walls of all our practice rooms, a move which has gone down a storm with both students

and visiting specialists. No more wasting time hunting around for a scrap of manuscript, or heading off on an expedition to find a printer that has both ink and paper.

Yes, of course students work independently as normal. You still need the numbers to stick in the little boxes, but not every single piece of work needs to be a test piece. I've found that asking students to work collaboratively 50% of the time, is having a positive impact on their spoken and written fluency, aural dexterity, their resourcefulness and their ingenuity. Most importantly, it's bringing more of the energy, trust and laughter that's generated in ensemble music making, to the academic classroom. Feel free to get in touch if you want to know more.

<https://huntschoolmusic.com>



# MUSIC CHARITY URGES NATION TO EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH GROUP MUSIC-MAKING

Helena Asprou is the content and communications producer for Orchestras for All

“Music departments can be a safe haven for students,” says Artistic Director Emma Oliver-Trend

In the UK, it has never been more important to protect the health and wellbeing of our aspiring young musicians and music leaders. As the creative arts sector continues to be immobilised following the devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic, government cuts to music funding in schools and a lack of widespread musical opportunities also present significant challenges.

According to the ISM's recent report, titled *The Heart of the School is Missing* and which surveys more than 1,300 music teachers across the UK (2020-21), extracurricular musical activities have been discontinued in 72% of UK primaries and 66% of secondaries, while almost one in ten schools are not teaching music as part of the curriculum at all.

That's why national youth music charity, Orchestras for All (OFA), has launched an ambitious five-year strategy to break down barriers to ensemble music-making, providing exciting new opportunities to three distinct groups: its National Orchestra for All (NOFA) members, under-resourced secondary schools as well as teachers and music leaders participating in its Modulo and Music Leadership Training programmes.

## Music is a universal language

Orchestras for All believes that all young people should have access to the life-changing experience of playing music with others, regardless of the daily challenges they may be facing – whether that's due to a physical disability, mental health condition, rural isolation or economic deprivation – and has worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to keep its audience feeling positive and engaged. It doesn't think of wellbeing and music-making as two separate things; it sees them as having the potential to be intertwined, interlinked, creating a blended world that supports young musicians' health and wellbeing through the power of music-making.

OFA's Artistic Director, Emma Oliver-Trend, said: “The pressures on young peoples' mental health are mounting up and this is exactly the sort of time when music really earns its keep! All those responsible for young peoples' wellbeing should be ramping up their opportunities for them to explore self-expression through reflective, creative, collaborative and expressive processes. Music departments in schools offer something very special and are sometimes referred to as 'safe havens' by students – a unique place where young people can explore life through music, providing a secure and constructive outlet for their self-expression.

“If music teaching is reduced in schools, we widen the gap even further between young people who have 'the privilege of' access to music-making opportunities and those who do not. Anyone who works closely with young people will know how life-affirming and life-changing music can be and it's shocking to think that this, along with other subjects that support young peoples' personal and social development, would be considered to be lowered down the priority list at a time when our young generation face increasing personal and social challenges. At what cost?”



## An ensemble with a difference

NOFA – the UK's only completely inclusive national youth orchestra – has been a lifeline for its members during the pandemic. With 50% in receipt of free school meals, 14% living with emotional, social and behavioural challenges, 48% from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds, and 8% living as young carers, OFA has increased the welfare intervention and support both on its courses and outside of events to nurture its young musicians and boost their mental health.

Thanks to Zoom video conferencing, NOFA members were able to meet twice as often in 2020-2021, allowing them to reap the many benefits that come with playing in an ensemble: growing in confidence, forging lifelong friendships, using a musical instrument as a means of self-expression, developing social and communication skills, improved memory and emotional intelligence, and promoting a sense of calm for those struggling with symptoms of anxiety, depression, trauma or grief.

Former NOFA member and ambassador, Isaac, said: "When my dad became sick with his chronic pain, my sister got glandular fever and then chronic fatigue syndrome, and my mum worked a lot of the time, so I took on a young carer role. NOFA was a place where for a bit of time each year, I did this wonderful thing with lots of people – and it was just for me."

A NOFA parent commented: "Seeing my daughter, who finds the rigours and demands of many aspects of life so very difficult, thriving as part of such a wonderful orchestra is something that will always stay with me."

Describing why wellbeing is so vital for young people today, Elli Chapman, OFA's Wellbeing Lead, added: "Young people have the weight of the world on their shoulders. It's an increasingly fast-changing and interconnected world, where many of the jobs of today will be obsolete by tomorrow. Why doesn't this



huge source of talent, innovation and energy for change translate into a stronger and more productive workforce?

"Music is a powerful contributor to young peoples' wellbeing and can bring balance and pleasure as well as social, emotional and educational benefits. At OFA, we are committed to enabling our members to manage their own wellbeing, helping them to understand what they as individuals need in order to be the best they can at any given moment. As staff, we are responsible for removing barriers to participation and offer both high challenge and equally high support."

## Making an impact

Meanwhile, despite 22.6% of OFA's Modulo participants being school pupils on free school meals – higher than the national average of 15% – continuing to offer its activities online during the pandemic meant a total of forty-seven secondary schools and seven hundred young people were able to experience the joy and togetherness of group music-making. The charity's online Music Leadership Training continuing professional development courses have also empowered music teachers by equipping them with the skills needed to run an ensemble – with over 159 courses downloaded in 2020-21 academic year and eighty teachers signing up for four webinars, led by special guests such as conductor, Sian Edwards, and folk musician, Emily Askew.

Orchestras for All understands that it's crucial to ask young people what they need and want, considering the thoughts and decisions of its inspiring alumni, trustees and Youth Board before implementing changes across the charity. The education of young people in the UK has been impacted – and they should absolutely have an input on what level of support they require from an organisation.

“ It's an increasingly fast changing and interconnected world where many of the jobs of today will be obsolete by tomorrow.

OFA's Wellbeing Lead Elli said: "It's imperative that we equip them with the skills, confidence and aspirations to tackle some of the biggest problems facing our human family. As a sector, we need to support and develop the next generation of changemakers. I utterly believe in their capabilities. It is all too easy to fall into the trap of creating too big a distinction between 'young people' and 'adults'.

A common perception is that experience can only come from age and therefore only older people make good leaders. Are we collectively disregarding the impact of having leaders start early? We need to step up to the plate and support young people to run the world."

**Boost your wellbeing**

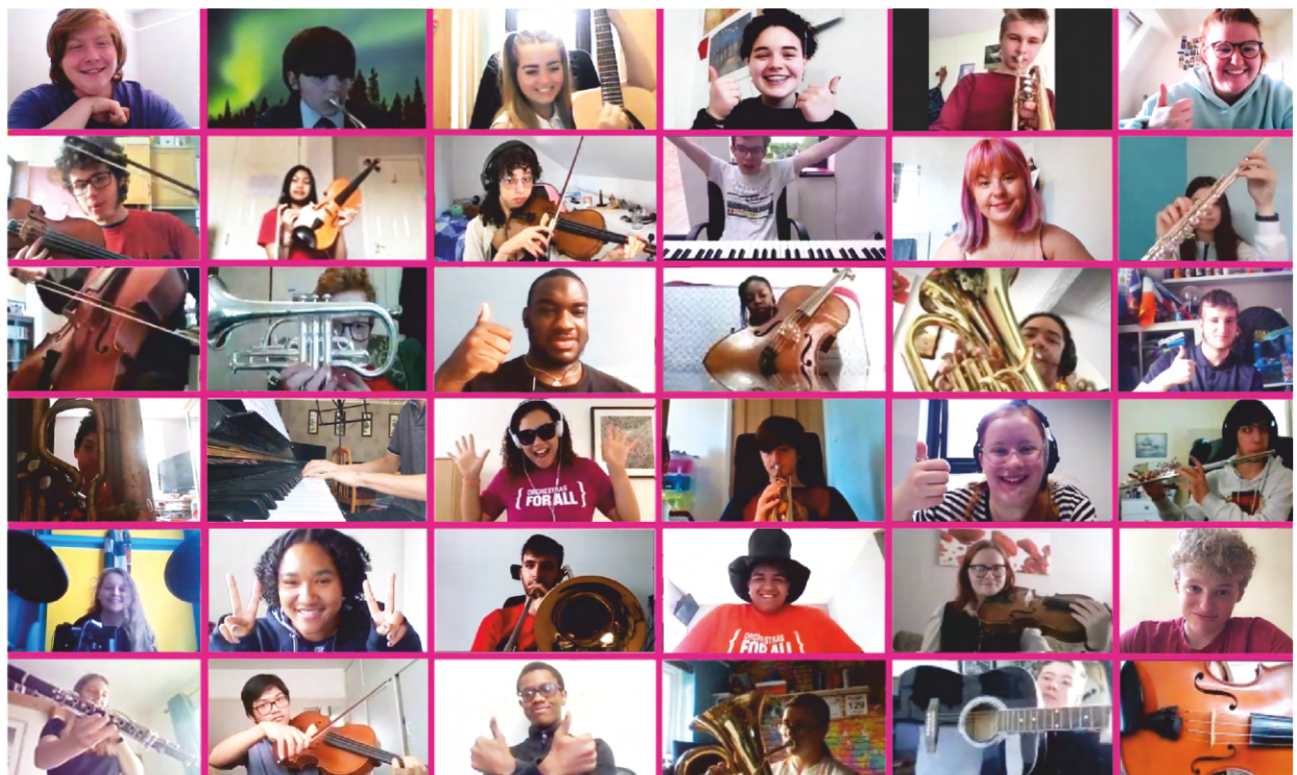
Sharing her expert advice on how to lift your spirits in tough times, Elli said: "Take a moment to breathe and be present in the moment. Try and do five things every day that are just for you – these could be small things like playing your favourite tune on the piano or painting your nails. Make a gratitude jar and fill it with moments (written on post-its) about things you have done that made you happy or proud, or other memories you want to keep. Take them out whenever you need a reminder or are having a bad day."

Kate, OFA ambassador and former NOFA trumpeter, added: "It's an

extremely hard time for everyone and we are all in the same boat. Coming from Northern Ireland, which has one of the highest rates of poor mental health in the UK, I'd like to say please remember to check in with your friends and family – a text can go a long way, let alone a quick phone call! To keep yourself busy, it can be an amazing thing just to put on some music and hold a concert in your house for your family. Even picking up a book is a great way to pass the time."

Using a combination of musical creativity and innovation, we can continue to protect our health and wellbeing, inspire others and achieve lasting social change.

To find out more about Orchestras for All or to sign up to its Music Leadership Training programme, please visit [orchestrasforall.org](http://orchestrasforall.org). You can also stay in the loop with all the latest stories by subscribing to OFA's monthly newsletter via [bit.ly/OFAnewsletter](http://bit.ly/OFAnewsletter).



# New training being developed for trauma and mental health-informed singing



Celia Barberia  
Head of Sing Up Foundation

Music for Good is delighted to have secured funding from the National Foundation for Youth Music to further develop and roll-out a programme of training for singing teachers and leaders. Working with Sing Up and the Sing Up Foundation, the training and resources will be focused on trauma and mental health-informed theory and practice and will be rolled out via Music Education Hubs in 2022. Music for Good Director and Practitioner Emily Foulkes has developed training based on her Masters research and will be joined by psychotherapists and other specialists to further refine and develop training and resources.

In order to help inform the training, a short survey (<https://bit.ly/M4GSUFTraining>) is available for singing teachers and practitioners to complete. The survey also provides an opportunity for leaders to express their interest in the training and sign up for updates. A mixture of face-to-face and online, the training will be available nationally to teachers and facilitators of singing with children and young people.

Emily says 'particularly at this time, as we are emerging into life post-lock down, we know that mental health challenges

are prevalent and mainstream services are likely to be under tremendous pressure. Equipping singing and music practitioners with skills and understanding in trauma and mental health could have a significant impact, especially as singing is fast becoming recognised for its potential to promote wellbeing.'

The Sing Up Foundation was set up in 2018 with the mission to produce, promote and create opportunities for children and young people to improve their mental health and wellbeing through singing. With its commitment to this mission and the expertise of Sing Up, this is an exciting opportunity to disseminate training and resources to a wide audience and ultimately improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people through singing. Celi Barberia, Head of Sing Up Foundation says, 'Time and again, research has proved the impact that singing can have on health and wellbeing and we're excited to help support teachers and leaders to incorporate this mental health-informed learning in their practice. At this critical moment with a growing mental health crisis, this work with Music for Good will support leaders today and also create resources and opportunities that will have long-lasting impact.'

For more information about this CPD programme or the work of Music for Good visit [www.musicforgood.uk](http://www.musicforgood.uk) and for more information about Sing Up Foundation [www.singupfoundation.org](http://www.singupfoundation.org).

## 25% off joint membership of the MTA & ISM

Did you know that you can join the ISM and the MTA and get up to 25% off the cost of both memberships? Music teachers with both ISM and MTA memberships will have access to the complete range of services a music teaching professional needs today, along with connections across the music education sector in the UK.

### What is the ISM?

The ISM is the UK's professional body for musicians and a subject association for music. They support over 11,000 members, including classroom and peripatetic music teachers, with a unique set of professional services. The ISM is politically and financially independent, and tirelessly campaigns to protect music teachers and promote music education. They were awarded Individual Member Association of the Year at the UK Association Awards 2021.

### What are the benefits of an ISM membership?

- expert legal assistance
- unpaid fees recovery service
- DBS, PVG and Access NI safeguarding checks
- £10m public liability insurance cover
- discounted instrument and equipment insurance
- dedicated legal and tax helplines
- extensive online advice

- award-winning professional development
- 24-hour counselling helpline and face-to-face counselling support
- physiotherapy service
- exclusive music-related and lifestyle discounts
- access to a community of over 11,000 music professionals

### How much does joint membership cost?

Joint membership costs £177.75 a year for MTA VMT/instrumental members, and £186.75 for MTA full members.

### How do I join?

MTA members can now join the ISM online at [ism.org/mta](http://ism.org/mta). You can also call the ISM's membership team on 020 7221 3499.

# WELLBEING in the NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ORCHESTRAS

Sophie Lewis

Sophie Lewis is the Chief Executive of the National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain

## There isn't an easy way to say this.

The last two years of cancelled activities and residential programmes had a devastating effect on the wellbeing of many of the 600 young musicians aged eight to fourteen who form NCO's annual membership. And for those already struggling with their mental health or conditions such as autism, the impact is greater still.

It has been, quite frankly, heart-breaking to hear from many parents and carers desperate for their child to get back to playing with us. The synonymy, time and again, with no prompting, drawn between the wellbeing of their child and participating in NCO, is both explicit and confirmatory.

It upholds our simple belief that making music enhances wellbeing. That's nothing new but it is very hard to prove and possibly why, in part, educational policy makers take little notice. In summer 2020, to inform our replacement online programme, we asked hundreds of children and their parents what mattered most to them.

Having fun and feeling happy, making friends and learning new musical skills came out top. In that order. At the very least, the pandemic exposed the negative impact on musically inclined children's wellbeing, when their purpose and passion is taken away.

NCO's nascent vision is 'to be a place where children (and grown-ups) flourish through music'. This redefines our purpose by placing wellbeing front and centre and now has an unexpected urgency. It does not mean that music is any less important to us, far from it, music is the driver of our vision.

This inextricable link between music and wellbeing is obvious to everyone involved directly or indirectly in the artform and at any stage of their lives. But it isn't simply a human response to something we enjoy; it goes far deeper than that. Professor Martin Seligman from the University of Pennsylvania and founder of the theory of Positive Psychology states:

Wellbeing can't just exist in your own head. Wellbeing is a combination of feeling good as well as actually having meaning, good relationships and accomplishment.

Seligman's theory is that wellbeing can be achieved when a combination of Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment is experienced (PERMA). It isn't hard to see the

relevance to making music, is it? It reminds us that music is powerful and explains the emotional fallout when it is taken away through the sharp shock of a natural disaster.

That fallout was palpable in the final months of 2021, when we delivered orchestral days for around 300 children, the first NCO activity to take place in person since March 2020. It was emotional. Children beamed and families openly wept as they raced up at the end of the day to offer their profound thanks that we had held our nerve and gone ahead, creating 'incomparable joy' as one kind parent put it.

'Grown-ups' (also part of our vision), from conductors to music tutors, support team to office staff, also rejoiced. Both visibly and by their own admission they were lifted, inspired and their reason for believing in the power and impact of music and music education was validated and revitalised.





Our 2022 programme will be, like many others, a hybrid of in-person orchestral programmes and digital activities. The two will complement each other and enrich each other, allowing us to make deeper and more regular connections with the young musicians that we serve; embedding musical learning and creative expression, shared experiences and wellbeing at the heart of the daily lives of young people.

And so, with our friends and colleagues from across the UK's music education sector, we will continue to play our part in supporting wellbeing through music. The past two years have demonstrated how resilient and imaginative the sector can be. Now is the time to advocate collectively for music's profound contribution towards individual wellbeing in young people and, consequently, its relevance to society. We need to imagine a world in which this is never questioned.

[www.nco.org.uk](http://www.nco.org.uk)

# SOUND AFFECTS

## The positive benefits of music



Lyz Cooper MA MSc FICNM

Lyz Cooper is the Founder and Principal of the British Academy of Sound Therapy

Despite the increasing amount of good-quality research demonstrating the wider benefits of music making, it seems that we still have a long way to go before decision makers at Ofqual value the benefits of keeping music in the curriculum. I acknowledge that I have little experience in working in mainstream education, and having worked with many teachers, I empathise with the increasing stress they face daily. I hope that this article will add another perspective to the discourse on the importance of music in education. In my opinion, as we navigate the COVID-19 crisis, it is more important than ever that music remains in the curriculum because of the related benefits it has on the mind, body and emotions.

Research has shown that abilities nurtured and developed through music education and training may be effectively applied to other cognitive tasks.

I have been working with sound and music as a therapeutic tool for over twenty-five years and for the last twenty-two years have enjoyed running The British Academy of Sound Therapy (BAST). At BAST we conduct research and teach a range of different ways to improve health and wellbeing with sound and music.

Doctor and professor of neurology, Oliver Sacks, stated in his book *Musophilia*, that 'more neural processes are involved when we engage in music than any other activity we undertake'.<sup>1</sup> Engaging in music helps our learning, behaviour, creative expression, appreciation of each other (and the world we live in), social skills, rhythm, numeracy, literacy, language - not to mention motor coordination, mood state, self-regulation, resilience, the immune system – I could go on...and on! Basically, music delivers so much more than enjoyment alone.

Research has shown that abilities nurtured and developed through music education and training may be effectively applied to other cognitive tasks. An example of this is a study by Martins et al., (2018) who demonstrated how a 24-week programme of Orff-based music

education 'significantly enhanced manual dexterity and bimanual coordination in participant 8 year-olds compared to their active control and the passive control group.'<sup>2</sup> The active control group in this study engaged in sports-based activities, demonstrating that music based activities may enhance co-ordination more than sport. Another study conducted on eight year-old children by Loui et al., (2019) showed that children playing one or more musical instruments for at least thirty minutes a week 'scored more highly on verbal activity and intellectual ability.'<sup>3</sup> It is not only this study that shows that music based activities may help with the development of language, intelligence and listening – another study by Peretz et al., (2015) measured how certain brain regions were co-activated by using neuroimaging. They found that 'parts of the neural circuitries established for language may have been recycled during evolution for musicality, or vice versa, musicality may have served as a springboard for language emergence'.<sup>4</sup>

Music-based activities can also help improve behaviour and reduce stress. At BAST, we have conducted research projects in schools exploring the effect



We discovered that as few as six weekly forty-five minute music making sessions using a rhythm and movement protocol developed at BAST improved attention span, mood state, communication and behaviour and reduced stress.

In a study by Davidson and Krause (2017), it was found that engagement in a music activity has an impact on social skills and social inclusion and provides support for students with mixed abilities and needs.<sup>5</sup> At The British Academy of Sound Therapy we run Sound Arts and Voice Arts courses that include a range of different activities encouraging improvisation, collaboration and participation in music-based sessions for health and wellbeing. A variety of different activities can be conducted with a wide range of outcomes in mind including lowering stress levels, improving social skills and mood-state for example. Sometimes a piece of art can be used as inspiration, or it could be a story or lived experience. Usually easy to play instruments such as chimes, drums, singing bowls, gongs, voice and shakers are used, enabling a group, with little guidance, to succeed in creating something wonderful together.

It is not just music making that can be beneficial for health and wellbeing - research has shown that singing is good for you. As well as reducing stress by regulating the breath, singing has been shown to boost the immune system, lower cortisol (the stress hormone) and increase dopamine (a neurotransmitter associated with improved mood-state).<sup>6,7</sup>

Immunoglobulin A (IgA) is an antibody blood protein that is an important part of the immune system. We make IgA and other types of antibodies to help fight off sickness. A study by Kreutz et al., (2004) showed that as few as two group signing sessions lasting sixty minutes, the positive effect of IgA was increased.<sup>8</sup>

I'd like to summarise with a quote by the CEO of the International Society of Musicians, Deborah Annetts who said: 'Music is a National Curriculum subject that has a vital role in our education system. Music brings enjoyment and significant educational benefits to students. While staff shortages in schools are concerning, and schools will be looking for solutions to cope with the current pressures, simply cancelling music lessons and

redeploying music teachers cannot be the answer...Music and music teachers must be given the respect that they deserve and music should be treated as the statutory subject it is.'

Music is one of the most ancient and universal ways that humans express themselves and communicate with each other. Music is present in our lives and is found in every culture and enjoyed by every age group. Music is the human condition expressed in the most beautiful ways. Music transcends boundaries and creates a space where culture, belief, experience and identity can be heard and shared. Who knows what the wider implications of cutting music from the curriculum would be? In my opinion to cut music from the curriculum, especially during one of the most difficult times in recent human history, would be very sad indeed.



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**The British Academy of Sound Therapy**  
[www.britishacademyofsoundtherapy.com](http://www.britishacademyofsoundtherapy.com) | [mail@britishacademyofsoundtherapy.com](mailto:mail@britishacademyofsoundtherapy.com)

# National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain

## What Matters Most

'From just ten days with playing with NYO, I genuinely feel like my life has had a complete gear change.'

*NYO musician, January 2022*

Sarah Alexander is the Chief Executive and Creative Director of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain



Running an organisation like the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, I have the pleasure of hearing remarks like this from teenagers all the time. In the charity's seventy+ year history, there are countless young people who have shared sentiments like this – from clarinettist and composer Mark Simpson clarinettist, to Laura Ayoub of the Ayoub Sisters – but the most recent feedback form from the rehearsal residency and tour we ran over the New Year spoke volumes: after two years of uncertainty, scaled-back music lessons, performing in 'Zoom rooms' and isolating from other young people, the nation's teenagers don't simply 'want' to play music as a hobby, they need it.

We saw this first-hand in January 2022, where we gathered 180 teenagers into two orchestras to rehearse and perform in Warwick Arts Centre and London's Barbican Centre. With our arrival date scheduled for 27th December 2021, we tried to showcase positive leadership and optimism to the young people we work with, all the while knowing the Government could pull the plug on concerts or gatherings at any moment. And when we were able to rehearse together at last, the relief was palpable. That's one of the reasons we called our concert series 'Open Up & Let Loose!': anyone with a teenager in their household will know quite how pent up they have felt over the past

years, and these concerts allowed our musicians to pour out their frustrations and joys through performance and shared experiences.

That's what we do at NYO: music is a vehicle for creativity, self-expression, and for teenagers to share what matters most to them in the world. It's why we reacted with horror to the latest Ofqual proposals to 'redeploy' music teachers to other 'core' subjects: this marks the latest assault on music education in schools, clearly showing that the Government aren't getting the memo that music isn't just a 'fun' activity for young people to do alongside their academic studies. (And, even if it were, would that be so bad, after years of disruption in the lives of young people?)

Music is a vehicle for creativity, self expression and for teenagers to share what matters most to them in the world.

Since the pandemic knocked all of our in-person projects out of the diary, we worked hard to deliver musical activity online for as many young people as possible. But we quickly realised that while an online space allowed us to reach further and wider than a physical project might, we had to adapt our digital activity to support young people with different access needs and varying mental health challenges: not every household can afford stable broadband, the right technology, or the space in their house to facilitate online participation, just as not every musician we worked with was able to work online due to a range of mental health issues or neurodiversity needs. Now, as we come back to live activity, we have a lived understanding of why we can't jump to a 'one-size-fits-all' model of activity, and need to flex our programmes with the help of a highly-skilled pastoral team, drawing on best practice in the youth sector.

One of these highly-skilled individuals is NYO's Head of Support, Ewan Caseman, who works as the Pastoral and Inclusion Manager at a school in South London when not working on NYO projects, and shares my concerns. He, like us, has seen first-hand the effect of the pandemic on young people over the past few years. 'Mental health problems amongst young people at school have sky rocketed since the pandemic started,' he explains. 'There has been a substantial harmful shift in

independence, confidence, self-esteem and a huge rise in anxiety-related concerns. Behavioural concerns have increased greatly, and young people require types of additional interventions they may not have previously.'

While we acknowledge there isn't such thing as a magic prescription for these complex issues, there is a huge body of evidence we are collecting from the young people we work with every day that music is providing a much-needed escape from difficult feelings, supporting teenagers to feel confident, push themselves out of their comfort zones, express their emotions, and achieve their potential through music-making. This is just as important for the young people we encounter across all our work as it is for the young people performing. We regularly tour to schools to forge connections and build common ground between NYO musicians and the teenage audiences they meet. These side-by-side performances, workshops, and relationship-building moments are just as crucial as our concert outcomes on the UK's greatest stages, as they give young people from a wide range of backgrounds an experience of the transformative power of coming together through music, with new horizons to aim for.

'Playing in person with other musicians was an absolutely amazing feeling and we really need to keep doing it in these difficult times' - NYO musician

'Even though I knew music was powerful before this project, it has really shown me how music can be used as a positive light whilst also being really fun and inclusive.' - NYO musician

The tragedy here is that, for so many of these young people, this is the only opportunity they have to perform with others and express themselves through their playing, because music lessons in their schools have been sidelined, and local orchestral projects have had to cancel due to Covid. We are even seeing a shift in applications to NYO and NYO Inspire, our programme for musicians at state schools playing at Grade 6 or above: music is dropping off the radar for so many young people, and by sidelining music lessons in school, leaders are sending the implicit message that it is less important, less valid, or less commercially viable than so-called 'core' subjects.

'Music is a fundamental fragment of the culture and curriculum of the young people I work with on a day to day basis,' Ewan added. 'The lessons delivered are persuasively structured in a way that engagement with learning becomes priority. When young people are engaged, enthusiasm thrives, which in turn impacts positively on the wellbeing of the individuals.'

Of course, without teaching young people instruments and encouraging them to progress, the world's greatest symphony orchestras will be bereft of players in a few short

years. But NYO is not a 'symphony orchestra training ground', and nor do we believe giving young people a grounding in music is simply to create brilliant performances. Our mission is to see the potential of every teenage musician in the UK unlocked through the power of orchestral music, which reaches far beyond simply shaping the next generation of performers.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the testimonies of the musicians we have come into contact with over the years. Recent NYO alumna Emily, who is currently studying for a Master's degree in Chemistry at the University of Birmingham, credits her music education with making her the person she is today.

'Music helped with my confidence, leadership skills, and I think even putting it on my CV helped me secure a place at university,' she explained. 'A common rhetoric is that music 'isn't a real subject' and is not worth a place within the curriculum. I was fortunate enough not to really experience

that attitude during my time at secondary school: music is very much a subject and taught me a broad range of skills such as longform writing, public speaking and critical analysis which have really helped me in other areas of my life. Even now I still play, and particularly love Russian composers like Rachmaninov and Stravinsky. I love playing the top level, difficult stuff alongside my science and volunteering

with St John Ambulance. So many years of being a musician with a packed rehearsal schedule taught me self discipline and time management skills which now allow me to work hard and still commit to the things I enjoy.'

It is so clear that the power of a positive music education has an impact on so much more than learning how to play notes on a page. And it's why, in 2022, we continue in our mission to open up orchestral music to as many teenagers as we possibly can through NYO and NYO Inspire. We know we share this mission with thousands of passionate educators across the country, who are fighting against the odds to keep music lessons in their schools, and we would love to hear from you to help us make the case collectively and offer young people who are traditionally underrepresented in the orchestral sector progression routes towards high-level musical experiences. Please get in touch with us if you would like to connect the young people you work with with a peer group beyond the school environment, to help put a rocket under their musical development and reignite their ambitions which are in danger of being extinguished by a curriculum which no longer caters to a broad range of subjects. Email us at [info@nyo.org.uk](mailto:info@nyo.org.uk) or visit our website, [nyo.org.uk](http://nyo.org.uk).



Photo by David McCaffrey

*NYO's Open Up & Let Loose! concert from the Barbican Centre in London will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on 22 February*

# MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

with Richard Llewellyn



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

## The latest news in Music Technology

My 2022 started with a scroll through a list of composer's anniversaries for possible inclusion in upcoming concerts. I was delighted to see that 2022 is the 150th Anniversary of Vaughan Williams's birth on the 12th October 1872 in the little Cotswold village of 'Down Ampney'. This was five years before technology came to music with the advent of recordings and Thomas Edison's invention of the phonograph (1877). Ok, a pretty tenuous link but just imagine a world when you can't hear recorded music, and how this may have affected any compositions. No external influences from music we now hear all the time on LP's (1931, when Vaughan Williams was 59), over the (transistor) radio (1954), cassettes (1963), CD's (1982), or the seventy million tracks streamed on Spotify!

Fact of the Day: 'Down Ampney', the tune Vaughan Williams wrote for the hymn 'Come Down, O Love Divine' (and the village where he was born), was sung at Westminster Abbey as his ashes were interred alongside Purcell in the North Choir Aisle. Also played during his burial service was his setting of the 'Old Hundredth' (All people that on earth do dwell), with that beautiful trumpet descant in verse three, originally composed for the Queen's 1953 coronation - which could also be a useful addition to any forthcoming Platinum Jubilee Concert! Vaughan Williams died at the grand old age of eighty-five in 1958.

### King Bluetooth!

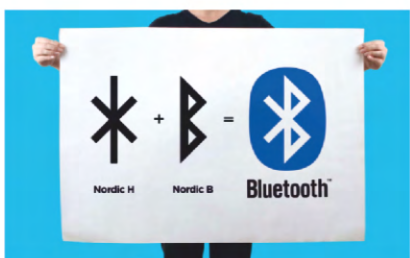
Bluetooth speakers are becoming a useful tool in the music cupboard. Not only useful because they are mobile, they can also kick out enough volume to use as backing tracks for ensembles and can boost the sound of any mobile phone music app. They work by using a variety of low-power radio frequencies. First appearing in 1994, the name 'Bluetooth' came about when Dutch inventor Dr. Jaap Haartsen (born in 1963) named it after the Scandinavian King Harald 'Bluetooth' Gormsson. Bluetooth apparently united all the tribes in Denmark in the 10th Century, hence, Bluetooth® brings two devices together in perfect harmony! Even the globally recognised logo for 'Bluetooth' bares his bind rune initials 'H' and 'B'.

### Minirig

Keeping on the theme of Bluetooth®, one very good British brand of Bluetooth® Speakers I have come across recently is 'Minirig'. They are based in Bristol and have been developing their speakers for over ten years. They produce three different speakers that range in price from the £99.95 (RRP) for the Minirig Mini, through to £139.96 (RRP) for their top selling Minirig 3 and also the MiniSub 3.

The **Minirig 3** is the one of the best Bluetooth® speaker for schools. Not only is it portable, with loud (40 watts amp!) high quality sound and incredibly stable, it also has an amazingly long 100 hours of battery life! And if that's not powerful enough, you can link up other minirigs. Recommended in music education by the wonderful Ben Sellers and 'Transformance Music' ([www.transformancemusic.org](http://www.transformancemusic.org)), Minirigs have also worked well on tour for 'Performance without Borders' and the Norwich 'BreathEasy Singing Group'.

And to help give you a clear conscience, they use recycled packaging, biodegradable plastics and will repair any damaged Minirig from as little £10 via their excellent UK Customer Service Team. More info at [www.minirigs.co.uk](http://www.minirigs.co.uk) and for Educational Discounts, please email [support@minirigs.co.uk](mailto:support@minirigs.co.uk).



### New Keyboards

There are three new keyboards I'd like to tell you about. The first two are both from Yamaha; the 61 Key PSR-E473 at the RRP of £412, and the bigger 76 key PSR-EW425 at £545.

Both these Yamaha keyboards have loads of new features, including microphone input with effects, separate L/R outputs (no more using the headphone jack!), USB audio and MIDI interfaces and a new 'Mega Boost' feature for increasing the volume by +6dB, useful if you've suddenly got a keyboard solo that needs to cut through.

The quality of voices and backings has been improved and the voice selection method has been refined with direct access to instrument categories instead of the traditional 3-digit number system. The bigger PSR-EW425 builds on all this with the addition of unique vintage organ sounds, great for R&B, gospel & jazz. The best-selling Yamaha keyboard in education is still the PSR-E373, but these new keyboards offer some nice additional touches. For more information and videos, please go to [www.uk.yamaha.com](http://www.uk.yamaha.com)



### Words make Music!

Founded in 1946 and famed for its calculators and digital watches, Casio started making electronic (Casiotone) keyboards in 1980. Since then there have been digital cameras, mobile phones, electronic guitars, keytars and the Digital Horn (DH-100)!

Now Casio have launched a new digital keyboard with rather fun vocal synthesis. It's called the CT-S1000V (Priced at £429) and it can be linked up with their 'Lyric Creator' app (iOS or Android). You write your words into the app, and the app automatically divides them into syllable units (editable) which can then be sent to the CT-S1000V to play. Your words can then be 'sung' by over 22 preset vocal sounds (including 'Death Voice' and 'Animal!'), all of which can be manipulated to change the 'singers' age, gender, vibrato and more.

It is of course still a portable keyboard, with sixty-one touch sensitive keys, 800 sounds, 100 vocal pre-sets, stereo speakers, headphones, pedals, audio in and outputs built-in sampler, 243 built-in rhythms and it can run on six AA batteries for about three hours, oh, and it's Bluetooth® compatible! And so much more... More info at <https://music.casio.co.uk>



Richard Llewellyn recently chatted with Rachel Shapey, the Director of 'I Can Compose' – a website dedicated to helping students in composing techniques for GCSE and A level music. The website is full of really useful resources. Rachel also runs several courses, as well as workshops and CPD training for teachers.

## TECHNOLOGY & COMPOSITION WITH RACHEL SHAPEY

### What types of music technology software and hardware would you recommend for students working towards their GCSE and A level exams and why?

We are really fortunate that there are so many options available for different budgets now. I've taught in various schools some with a Mac Suite, one with Chromebooks and PCs and one with no technology whatsoever! Although I'm a fan of Macs, the hardware you purchase will largely be determined by your budget and IT department preferences. In terms of DAWs, GarageBand and Cubase are great options for GCSE. For notation software, having been a lifelong Sibelius user I switched to Dorico a couple of years ago and really enjoy the interface and intuitive features of the programme. It's made for musicians - I like that students can start composing straight away without constraints such as having to decide on a time signature and key signature. And they can change their minds easily without the score going crazy! The different 'modes' of working allow you to seamlessly move between score versions and you can create and save all your ideas in one file using the different 'flows' rather like a composers' notebook. I wish I'd had it when I studied GCSE and A level!

### At what point can students start using music technology?

At any point! Chrome Music Lab (free) is great for younger pupils first exploring music technology and is a useful tool for teaching the musical elements such as rhythm and pitch. Creating soundscapes and exploring timbre using a DAW can open up opportunities for pupils to hear and experience instruments that may not otherwise be available.

### Does the quality of the recording of a composition matter in GCSE and A Level Music?

I always advise to strive for the best quality recording possible given the equipment and resources available. Although the recording quality shouldn't technically affect the marks awarded for the composition itself, it's always better if listening is a pleasurable experience and the examiner can hear all the details. For Sibelius, Dorico and Finale users I wouldn't be without the virtual playback engine NotePerformer (noteperformer.com), for achieving a high-quality recording.

### Do the different classroom exam boards differ much in how much music technology can be utilised?

All the exam boards (AQA, Eduqas, Edexcel and OCR) accept the use of music technology in realising a performance. In terms of composing, any music technology can be used, provided everything included has been created by the student. However, it is not a requirement to use music technology. Using a DAW can really make composing accessible for students - the cloud-based apps such as SoundTrap and BandLab really came into their own during lockdown.

### Will I get marked down if I use too many loops, and are these seen as cheating!?

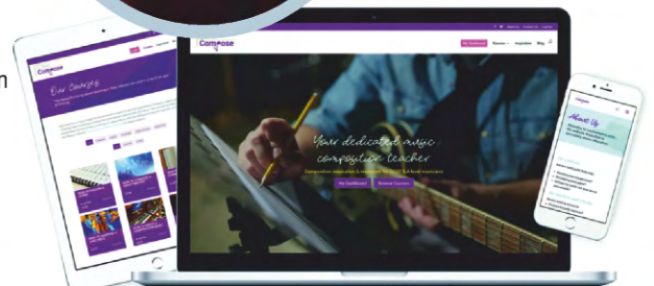
Steer clear of using pre-recorded loops! Students can create their own loops but must declare if they have included loops from the DAW they're using and should be aware that this will usually result in being marked down.

### What top tip would you give to teachers when using music software and hardware in the classroom?

Is the use of music technology meaningful and necessary here? Always keep the teaching musical and use technology as a vehicle for helping pupils achieve the musical outcomes.

### What help and support is available for teachers trying to get their students engaged with music technology tools?

Midnight Music ([www.midnightmusic.com.au](http://www.midnightmusic.com.au)) is a great website dedicated to supporting teachers using music technology. It includes lesson plans, downloadable guides, interactive worksheets and many other useful resources - do check it out! Teaching Music through Music Composition: A Curriculum using Technology by Barabara Freedman has lots of useful lesson ideas and activities to get students composing using technology. Musical Futures also offers a 'Technology in the Music Classroom' course to help teachers feel more confident with delivering music technology lessons.



# LET'S GO

Ian Hillier, Director of Music St George's, Ascot talks about a return to touring with Musica Europa



It would be an interesting statistic to ascertain just how many articles you have read in the last two years that started, or at least included in the first sentence, the word COVID. Probably, you would answer 'too many!' Happily however, the ever positive side of my optimistic nature has to respond that despite tragedy and awful things around us, things are now (finally) returning to normal. Some resemblance of normal at least and if not that, then at least things are getting better.

For those who are either musicians who teach or teachers who are musicians, music in schools and for that matter in amateur circles or musicians in the profession, have had a particularly challenging, stressful and soul-destroying time. Things are getting better, less social distancing between performers on stage and between audiences in seats. More audiences rather than less, more performers rather than less. By April 2020 half the world's population, 3.9 billion people in ninety countries, were ordered to

stay at home. One of the most incalculable losses of the time is the damage to live music and to the teaching of music in schools. Memberships of choirs, orchestras, bands and groups suffered in some cases irreversibly and even up until last month those feel good, self-affirming, musical, valuable and spiritually uplifting carol services and concerts were being cancelled throughout the land in every venue faster than one can imagine. Except perhaps the occasional brass band in a covid free but wet and muddy farmer's field.

Those of you like me who are thrilled and excited that normality seems to be returning. The students in my school and staff are so excited for the re-emergence of live music, and nothing encapsulates that more than the opportunity to go on tour again. After the cancellation of our Music Tour in 2020 and 2021 we are off to Salzburg and Vienna this July. As people we all need things to look forward to and despite the tour being six months away

all my students are full of enthusiasm and excitement. I'll be honest, our biennial tours are amazing. They are amazing because the last fourteen have been organised by Musica Europa and I know that in July tour number fifteen will be just as impeccably organised and first class. Great fun, rewarding and very special. They offer a real bespoke service. Choosing flights and transport to and during the tour, hand-picked venues, hotels, restaurants, and excursions each to your specifications and with their expert input which make each tour perfect. Musica Europa has a wealth of experience providing support, advice and suggestions at every step of the planning and using local bi-lingual guides who know each town, city and village, each venue. They know the hosts and those who encourage audiences and are always and forever welcoming. Their staff and team never underestimate the part music plays in our lives and they always encourage the efforts of our young musicians in their formative years.



Ask any former student and they will recount adventures, visits, music making and people from past tours as though they were yesterday. Each tour has its own memories and high spots, moments to treasure and performances in venues that really do fit the sound, size and character of your ensemble be it singing in magical settings like Montserrat Abbey or the vast space of Milan Cathedral to playing in an impressive slate mine, a palace, a castle or in a village on top of the world such as Radicofani or Marvão.

Exploring salt mines, tasting sherry, the story book excitement of Hungarian armed guards on the coach checking passenger lists in communist days or the comedy of trying to entertain your students with Flamenco dancing in Seville (not my strong point). Performers will never forget the church full to bursting in Assisi with standing room only, or crowds in San Pellegrino with a stunning party afterwards.

Nor will they forget the unexpected grandeur of Orvieto Cathedral, the magic of Blois early on a Sunday morning or the stunning sight of Jerez Cathedral at night. Fantastic meals are essential on tour but just the thought and you are transported back in a second whether it be a fish lunch in Poreč and an evening supper in Varaždin with such amazing people from the Music school, or lunch in Sirmione and a picnic in the perfection that is Castelo de Vide.

Unexpected memories linger that you don't expect - the stunning acoustics of the Santa Maria church in Carmona or the peace and tranquillity of the little French wine producing village of Uchizy, the glories of Padova Basilica and the intimate and beautiful church in Cortona. Hotels that have great facilities and ideal managers, advertising that is stylish and excellent, my students won't forget the people they meet, the kindness of strangers or the amazing job that Musica Europa does. Of all the venues mentioned above and many not on the list (because the list would be too long!) I would happily return to each or any tomorrow with Musica Europa.

#### Our recent tours are listed here:

- Normandy (1992) - including Caen Abbey, Lisieux Cathedral & Mont St. Michel
- Austria & Hungary (1994) - including St Peter's in Vienna, & Wilton Abbey in Innsbruck
- Burgundy (1995) - including Mâcon, Autun Cathedral, La Rochepot
- Venice (1997) - including St Peter's in Venice, Vicenza, Padova
- The Charente region of France (1999) - Blois Cathedral, Alnay, Lanville
- Prague (2001) - Brno, Uherské Hradiště
- Portugal (2003) - Castelo de Vide, Marvão, Evora
- Croatia (2006) - Poreč, Rovinj Basilica, Varaždin Cathedral
- Catalonia (2008) – Barcelona Cathedral, Solsona, Montserrat Abbey
- Lombardy region of Italy (2010) - Milan Cathedral, Bergamo, Lovere, San Pellegrino
- Tuscany (2012) - Florence, Montepulciano, Cortona
- Andalucía (2014) - Seville, Cordoba, Carmona, Jerez Cathedral
- Padova & Venice (2016) - including St Mark's and St Giorgio in Venice
- Rome & Assisi (2018) – including St Peter's in Rome and Orvieto Cathedral

After two difficult years our young people need to perform together, travel together, rehearse, live and work together. It is part of their education and formative experience that they are missing out on, so book your tour and expand their musical horizons. You can make no better resolution this year.



# RSL CLASSICAL VIOLIN

Dan Francis reports on the new violin syllabus



With everything else happening since the beginning of September, RSL Awards' entry into the world of qualifications for Violin may not have been at the front of your mind. However, it's worth taking a moment to consider where it sits amongst everything else you offer in school. RSL Awards has a great track record of providing repertoire to support Drummers, Guitarists, Pianists and Vocalists in their musical development and you'll have seen an evolution in the breadth of styles covered over the last thirty years. The introduction of a Violin syllabus, alongside RSL Classical Piano, was a logical next step in our mission to provide relevant and rigorous material for use by teachers and learners.

## Intent

Working with Ruth Elder of the London String Group, and drawing on the experiences of Violin teachers across the country, the team focussed on arranging repertoire and exercises that are as relevant as possible to learners discovering and developing their musical identity in 2022. Providing a better balance of genders and cultures than seen previously was a key focus, as was creating a broad range of styles from the Western Classical Tradition, Contemporary Classical, Crossover Classical and Pop Music. The team also looked at how to take what is essentially solo repertoire and create a more engaging and meaningful learning experience. The inclusion of Duets and Backing Tracks alongside a printed piano accompaniment has enabled learners to develop and experience a sense of ensemble whilst preparing solo material: vital for any musician but a useful way of keeping individual practise interesting. The interactive sheet music players – Replay and the Learning Platform App – are also useful tools to make practise more meaningful and fun.

Website and contact: [www.londonstringgroup.com](http://www.londonstringgroup.com)

## Implementation

The pressure on music in schools is high and the what, where, why, when and how students access instrumental learning are all critical questions within the wider debate. Introducing recorded digital and live-streamed exams

alongside the traditional in-person model was one thing, but we wanted to make sure the material could be implemented as part of a wider focus on progression. On a practical level, this means students and teachers can download individual tracks from within the syllabus for use towards performance assessments while the background information is helpful for wider contextual understanding and listening. From a composition perspective, each grade also contains Technical Studies, written exclusively by Ruth Elder, which are designed to introduce the skills and techniques relevant to specific musical styles and provide really useful insight for composers. There's also great scope for further creative exploration, not just through the improvisation exercises, but through using the tracks as a stimulus for ensemble performance and arranging.

We're really pleased to have collaborated with **HerEnsemble**, the UK's first Women and non-binary orchestra, who have recorded some exclusive arrangements of repertoire from the syllabus. This link will take you to a playlist of works by Clara Schumann, Lili Boulanger, Florence Price, and Dua Lipa: <https://bit.ly/3sAaVE5>

To learn more about Her Ensemble, check out their website here: [www.hersenensemble.org](http://www.hersenensemble.org). Contact them directly via [herensemblemusic@gmail.com](mailto:herensemblemusic@gmail.com).

## Impact

Some of our earliest adopters of the syllabus have already seen some great results come in from their first exam and we're very keen to know what impact the RSL Classical Violin is having, or will have, on your musical delivery. Join us on Thursday 24th February 2022 at our Round Table Q&A to tell us more or email us via [business@rslawards.com](mailto:business@rslawards.com).

To sign-up for our Events and Webinars for the term ahead, visit: [www.rslawards.com/events-webinars](http://www.rslawards.com/events-webinars)

Grade Six Technical Study:

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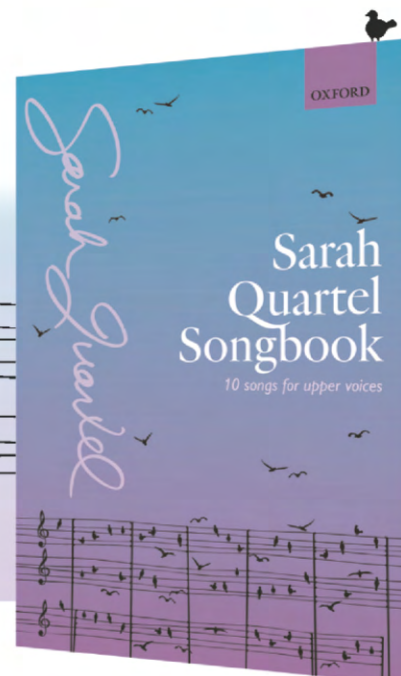
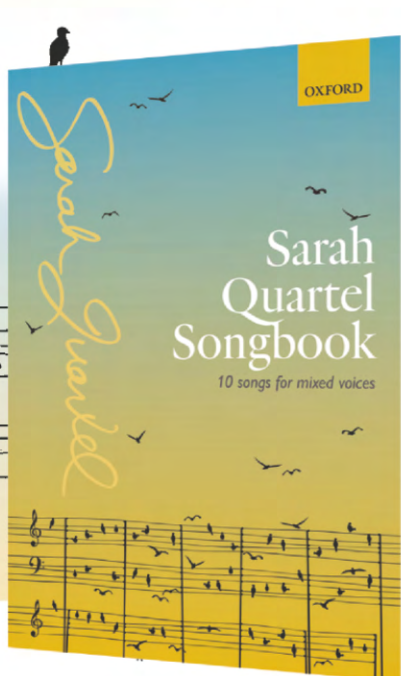
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# Discover the music of Sarah Quartel

## Two brand new collections of her best-loved pieces

*The Sarah Quartel Songbook* (upper voices) and *The Sarah Quartel Songbook* (mixed voices) are set to become a staple resource for any choirs who already know and love the music of this fine choral composer, or are yet to discover her music.

Each book contains 10 of Sarah's best-loved songs, and feature a wide range of secular texts by writers ranging from William Shakespeare and Emily Dickinson to Julian of Norwich, Langston Hughes, and Sara Teasdale, with a number of settings that use original words by Sarah Quartel herself. Published June 2021.



### CONTENTS

Wide Open Spaces ● Sing, my Child ● All the way home  
How can I keep from singing? ● 'Hope' is the thing with  
feathers ● Swept Away ● Voice on the Wind  
I know a bank where the wild thyme grows  
One of these Days ● The Parting Glass

### CONTENTS

Songbird ● Remember ● The Birds' Lullaby  
All the way home ● In time of silver rain  
As you sing ● All shall be well ● Sing, my Child  
Refuge ● Voice on the Wind

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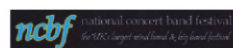
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# NEW MEMBERS

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



Alastair Hodgson	Director of Music	Notre Dame School
Helen Turner	Music Teacher	Notre Dame
Sarah Ward	Director of Learning for Performing Arts	Marsh Academy
Malcolm Wilson	Head of Music	Harper Green High School
Corrina Wilson	Secondary Trainee Teacher of Music	Thurston Community College
Katie Walker	Subject Leader of Music	Brigshaw High School
Heather Pennwood	Director of Music	Fulneck School
Katie Dobson	Teacher of Music	Wildern School
Sharon Whittaker	Music Lead and EYFS teacher	The Roebuck School
Nicholas Sermom	Teacher	Brenzett Primary School
Lisa Wilson	Subject leader for performing arts	Plantsbrook
Beth Roberts	PGCE Student	
Natalie Davies	Student Teacher	Bath Spa University
Zoe Barber	Music Teacher	Chelmer Valley High School
Sarah Holbrook	Trainee Teacher	St Bede's Catholic Middle School
Liz Clark	Teacher	George Pindar School
Richard Sleight	Head of Performing Arts	Archbishop Sentamu Academy
Shaun Bowie	Trainee Music Teacher	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy
Gary Tebbutt	Teacher	Victoria Park Junior School
Chloe Hart	Trainee Music Teacher (PGCE)	
Jennifer Cambridge	Head of Performing Arts	West Coventry Academy
Georgie Robertson	Head of Expressive Arts Faculty and Head of Music	St Bartholomew's School
David Kelly	Music Coordinator	Byron Court Primary
Rachel Selleck	Director of Music	Brambletye
Nasia Karagiannaki	Teacher of Music and mfl	Graham School
Tim Carpenter	Teacher of Music	Ardingly College
Andrew Kennedy	Director of Music	Uppingham School
Jane Silva	Subject Leader for Music	Lavington School
Chris Ricketts	Music Teacher / Head of House	Priory Southsea
Antony Beere	PGCE Trainee - Secondary Music	
Naomi Fearon	Music Teacher	Ark King Solomon Academy
Rachael Kennedy	PGCE student	
Victoria Pingree	PGCE Student	
Justine Saville	Specialist Subject Teacher (trainee)	Edge Grove
Kimberley Salmons	Head of Music and Head of Co-Curricular	Eaton Square Senior School
Josephine Lloyd-Wilson	Music Teacher, Composer, Performer, Sound Engineer	
Matt Davies	Assistant Director of Music	Exeter School
Emily Phenix	Teacher of Music	Queen Elizabeths
Ross Stevenson	Teacher of Music	Wirral Grammar School for Boys
Sally Shiells	PYP, GCSE, IB Music Teacher and Clarinet, Saxophone and Recorder	St Leonards School
Deborah Bideau	Head of Performing Arts	Guernsey Grammar School & Sixth Form Centre

## NEW MEMBERS

Shona Addison	Student Teacher	Elveden Church of England Primary Academy
Jane Powell	Director of Music	Cranford House School
Fayruz Megdiche	Music Teacher	Alderwood Senior School
Mike Durnell	Head of Music	Trinity Catholic School
Melissa Heggie	Music Teacher EYFS - Year 6	Manchester High School for Girls
Harry Castle	Assistant Director of Music	The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School
Samuel Lom	Head of Music	Ripley Court School
Karl Leutfeld	Director of Music	Edge Grove School
Yvette Robinson	Head of Performing Arts	Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre
Rebecca Crawford	Teacher	Angel Road Junior School
David Windsor	Music Teacher	Biddulph High School
Jessica Akins	Music Teacher	Blundell's School
Philippa Brady	Curriculum Leader for Music	Vale of York Academy
Elizabeth Burgess	Music Teacher	Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn
Alison Wood	Head of Music	Ormskirk School
Antitsa Undzhiyan	Music Lead	Mere Green Primary School, ATLP
Emily Baker	Assistant Director of Music	Cheltenham College Prep
Francesca Jones	Head of Music	Pleckgate High School
Zoe Millest	Music Teacher - Head of Year	Pleckgate High School
Tom Barber	Trainee Teacher	

# Music Teachers' Association CONFERENCE

St Edward's Oxford | 13th – 15th May 2022

Early Bird Discount closes on 14th March 2022

# OUR OFFICERS, STAFF & COMMITTEE



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



President / Don Gillthorpe  
president@musicteachers.org

Don is Assistant Principal and Director of Music at Ripley St Thomas CE Academy in Lancaster, Head of Publications for the choral charity Sing for Pleasure, and Director of Music at Lancaster Priory. Don's specialisms are in choral music, with a particular focus on establishing a singing culture in a secondary school, and boys' changing voices.



President-Elect / Catherine Barker  
Catherine.Barker@unitedlearning.org.uk

Catherine Barker is the Head of Music and Performing Arts in United Learning, the largest national schools' group. She also leads national performance events and the Singing Champions programme.

### CURRICULUM LEAD



Honorary Secretary / Caroline Robinson  
honsec@musicteachers.org

Caroline believes that everyone should feel comfortable to take part in music-making in a vibrant, friendly and inclusive environment. She strives for all concerts to be as glamorous as possible, with quality rather than quantity always being a main feature.



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 Toyne  
stoyne1@dret.co.uk

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.



Keith Ayling  
Media & Publications  
01926 512005  
keith@musicteachers.org

Keith is a Senior Lecturer at Leeds Conservatoire and has a Masters degree in Songwriting. He speaks nationwide on songwriting and is passionate about encouraging creativity in young people, whatever their background. He was a finalist in the National Association Awards for his work on Ensemble Magazine.



Gill Davies  
Conference Administrator  
gill@musicteachers.org

As a first study French Horn player, Gill went to Chetham's School of Music and studied music in Cambridge, before forging a career within the travel industry as part of the senior management team for a Marketing and PR agency. For over five years she has also been Secretary of a tourism association.



Sophie Kirk  
Administrator & Membership  
01223 312655  
sophie@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 Education and music administrator at St John's College, Cambridge.

## Help strengthen our voice

Committee members serve a term of three years. Positions are advertised when vacant and if necessary, voted on by the membership. In the first instance, please contact either the President or a member of staff for more information.

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.





Mark Aitchison

Mark is Head of Music at Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre.



Dr Steven Berryman (Co-opted)  
Sberryman@odysseytrust.org.uk

Dr Steven Berryman is Director (Arts & Culture) at the Odyssey Trust for Education, and a Visiting Research Fellow at King's College London and Guildhall School.



Emily Crowhurst

Emily is Head of 4-18 Music & Performing Arts at School 21: a pioneering school in Stratford, East London, for children from all backgrounds.



Liz Dunbar (Co-opted)

Liz is the York Secondary Music Pathfinder lead.

**CURRICULUM LEAD**



Lewis Edney (2024)

Lewis is Director of Music at Bishop Wordsworth's Grammar School, Salisbury. Before teaching he spent 15 years as a professional trombonist and now looks to promote the participation and benefits of performance throughout his work, including building partnerships and relationships.



Margaret Edwards

Margaret is currently concluding her PGCE and is about to undergo her NQT years at Bradfield College as a Teacher of Music. Prior to this, Margaret earned a BA and MA in musicology from Durham University. She is a huge advocate for developing choral traditions for young adults in schools.



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

Tim is the Director of Music at Westminster School and a trustee of Musical Boroughs Trust, (Tri-borough Music Hub). He is a huge advocate of sustained partnership, linking together teachers, pupils, music departments from both the state and independent sectors.



Patrick Johns (Co-opted)  
p.johns@tiffingirls.org

Patrick is a teacher at The Tiffin Girls' School, Kingston, a professional trombone player and a radio producer for BBC Radio 2 (Top Brass, Country Christmas, Jazz Junctions).

**PARTNERSHIPS LEAD**

**PODCAST HOST**



James Manwaring (2023)  
JManwaring@twbs.co.uk

James is Director of Music for Windsor Learning Partnership, a multi-academy trust in Windsor. He teaches students from Years 1-13 and writes at manwaringmusic.blog. He has been nominated 5 times for Music Department of the Year.

**TEACHER SUPPORT LEAD**



Luis Pares (2024)  
ParesLA@dulwich.org.uk

Luis is Head of Keyboard & Music Partnerships Lead at Dulwich College. He has enjoyed a career as a concert pianist and chamber musician. He is also an examiner, and an adjudicator in many music festivals and competitions.



Mark Penrose (2022)  
performingarts@biltongrange.co.uk

Mark is Director of Music at Bilton Grange Prep School, which has recently merged with Rugby School as of 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 (2022)  
csherring@harrowschool.hk

Caitlin is the Head of Lower School Music and Assistant House Mistress (Prep) at Harrow International School Hong Kong. She previously worked for nine years as the Music and Arts Lead at Woodcroft Primary School (Winner: Outstanding Music Department) in London.



Oliver Walker (2022)  
omw@repton.org.uk

Fascinated and motivated by music's ability to draw people together positively, Oliver is committed to strengthening music education networks and building better resources for everyone.



James Wilkinson (2024)

James Wilkinson is Director of Music at St George's School Windsor Castle. Here he teaches class lessons, oversees the Visiting Music Staff and takes part in the wider strategic development of the school, as well as running a comprehensive choral programme.

# THE FINAL WORD

## DIVERTIMENTO

### Op.55



A sideways look at music education from Jonathan Varcoe

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Take time out from chasing the syllabus and give this (The Symphony of Physics) as food to the curiosity we hope resides in every pupil and needs to have nurtured and stimulated.

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Two issues ago I wrote some words about music and health and you may remember the significance of Mozart's two piano sonata K448 helping to curb epileptic seizures, reducing abnormal brainwaves by almost a third. Further research from the Czech Republic presented to the 7th Congress of the European Academy of Neurology showed such waves reduced by thirty-two per cent. However Haydn's Symphony No 94 resulted in a forty-five per cent increase in these brain waves.

Uh-Oh! Sounds strange. Even many of us can find differences between Mozart and Haydn tricky to analyse. Yes, of course they are different but within a common idiom. To find an overall seventy-seven per cent difference in this instance is pretty extraordinary. What exactly is Mozart's magic?

A further report says that playing the first movement once a day for three months had a notable effect on epileptic patients. Researchers then switched to a shuffled version (?) that lost the original rhythmic qualities of Mozart, and with it the healing qualities. (Ref: Epilepsia Open 2020 5:285-94).

What would luminaries such as Hans Keller and Charles Rosen et al have had to say about this?

It is easy to despair of the state of so much in our lives today.  
Unemployment, Government

indecision, bankruptcies, pollution of all kinds. Yet there are silver linings which give us back a small feeling of optimism. One such was reading of Rugby School's setting up of a choir school in conjunction with Bilston Grange with which it has amalgamated. Regular services will be sung in the chapels of both schools. It would be good to have the story of how this came about. Well done, those people.

Way back in May/June 2021 you may have come across a two-part programme on BBC4 called Sound Waves: The Symphony of Physics fronted by scientist Dr Helen Czerski. She is a first-rate presenter full of bubbling enthusiasm, and she made the story of what sound really is a very exciting journey sufficient to capture the minds and imaginations of the young (and the old). If you missed this, catch it on iPlayer before it is taken off. Record it for future classes if you can. Take time out from chasing the syllabus and give this as food to the curiosity we hope resides in every pupil and needs to have nurtured and stimulated.

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