

Head's Lines - Gerard Booth - Director of Music

I am very pleased to welcome you all to this, the latest edition of our Music Centre and Music Service Newsletter, Music Notes. As you know, this continues to be an incredibly challenging time for everyone in every walk of life and I am sure that many of us are looking forward to a well-deserved break.

Of course, this will be a Christmas like no other for many families, so we're delighted that despite all the challenges, the Music Centre groups have still been able to create a Virtual Christmas Festival. The concert goes live on Friday 18th December at 7.30pm and can be viewed for free on the Council's [YouTube Channel](#).



The show will feature orchestras, bands and choirs and will be available to view right through the Christmas period. Please share the link with as many people as possible and help us to spread some Yuletide cheer.

Like so many of you, the Music Service team are all greatly missing our regular Music Centre rehearsals and the fabulous music making that has been the hallmark of the work of the Lyceum for generations. With that in mind, we continue to work with the Public Health team to pursue ways in which we might safely resume rehearsals. Comprehensive risk assessments have been conducted around this issue and, whilst capacity of rooms presents a challenge, we hope to be permitted to offer a partial return on some sort of rota basis in the New Year. To that end, we will be sending out questionnaires to members of the various Music Centre groups in January asking them to confirm if they would be interested in taking part in OMC activities on that basis. The response that we get will influence how we structure the rota and how frequently members are able to attend in person. We are also looking at ways in which we can live stream the rehearsals, so that those that cannot be present in person on any particular occasion can take part virtually.

There is no question that this has been a truly terrible year and I know that even if you have been fortunate enough not to be personally affected by this awful pandemic, you will have friends and family members that have not been so lucky. I sincerely hope that you are able to enjoy a peaceful, joyful and healthy Christmas and New Year with your loved ones and that after the holiday we are able, together, to begin the work of restoring so much that we hold dear which has been compromised by the events of 2020.

Many musicians... one harmony

T: 0161 770 5660; F: 0161 770 5670; E: musicservice@oldham.gov.uk
Facebook: Oldham Council Music Service Twitter: @OldhamMusic
Website: www.oldhammusicservice.co.uk

Online “Wicked” Music Theatre Workshop

Our choral students have had another brilliant opportunity to work with a Music Theatre professional. The workshop was led by Amy Goodwin (Vice-Principal, YSBD Theatre Academy). Our students were put through their paces learning the dance routine for “Loathing”.



At the end of the workshop, we had a Q&A session with Amy who is a former cast member of the UK/Ireland tour of “Wicked”. She played the role of Glinda in the production. It was fascinating to hear about the role of the “Swing” in theatre. The Swing has to learn every dance routine and song for all of the roles in the musical. If there are 10 songs, each with 10 different choreography routines, that can be up to 100 different routines to learn!

We are very grateful to the Families and Friends of Oldham Music Service for funding these marvellous opportunities for our students. The online workshops have been instrumental in keeping our young musicians engaged with Music Centre activities and maintaining the sense of belonging and community that is such an important aspect of our work. We had some lovely feedback from our students:

“Thank you so much. It was AMAZING!”

“I just want to say thank you to Amy. It was brilliant. She said we were really good, but we are only really good because Mrs Huckfield and Miss Davis are such good teachers”

We are hoping it won't be too long before we can invite Amy back, in person, to do a workshop at the Lyceum with our Music Theatre students. Watch this space!

Hannah Penny: Junior RNCM & National Youth Concert Band



Music Centre flautist Hannah Penny has recently taken up a place at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music. JRNCM is a vibrant community of gifted young musicians aged 8 to 18 who come together to develop their talent within the Royal Northern College of Music.

Hannah started playing the flute in Year 3, having lessons with Subject Leader for Woodwind, Kath Thomas (then Dunning) and joining the training wind band. She has worked her way through to both the Youth Wind Band and the Youth Orchestra (where she also plays the piccolo) and has played



at many events including the tour to Lake Garda and the Music for Youth Proms at the Royal Albert Hall.

Her love of music has led her to set her sights on studying at a conservatoire after finishing her A Levels so, Mrs. Thomas suggested that she should audition for JRNCM who meet for a full day every Saturday. After a very strange COVID-safe process of video auditions she was accepted and started in September this year.

She has one-to-one flute and saxophone lessons, is part of a flute quartet and hopefully after the new year will be able to play in a scaled down COVID-secure orchestra, there are also academic lessons such as composition and musicianship.



Hannah's mum said, “JRNCM is definitely a great opportunity but one that would not have been possible without the nurturing from Kath and the Oldham Music Centre family as a whole.”

Hannah is currently preparing for her grade 8 flute exam and potential conservatoire auditions which will be held in December of 2021. As the newsletter went to press, Hannah received the exciting news that she has successfully auditioned for the National Youth Concert Band and will attend a week-long residential week in Birmingham over the Easter break.

Abbie Britain: Chetham's School of Music

Abbie Britain, a member of our Training Wind Band and Y7 pupil at North Chadderton, has been offered a wonderful opportunity to attend Chetham's School of Music. Chetham's is the largest specialist Music School in the UK and a thriving creative community involving over 300 students aged 8-18, whose common passion is music. Entry to the school is based solely on musical ability or potential, never on background or ability to pay, thanks to generous bursaries through the Government's "Music and Dance Scheme".

Abbie had small-group flute lessons at Thorp School with Mrs Meaden. In November 2019, Mrs Meaden invited Abbie to attend a flute workshop at Chet's. She was so inspired, she decided she wanted to attend Chet's in the future. In January of this year, Abbie had an "advice lesson" at Chet's. She was told she was good and they could see her potential, but she needed to be around grade 5 standard to gain a place. They advised her to audition 12 months later. Always a determined girl, Abbie set her mind to practising hard and she had 1-1 Zoom lessons with Mrs Meaden. Following this, Abbie submitted a video audition for Chet's in May and was offered a place for September 2021 because the school is currently full. Then, out of the blue, Tom Redmond (Joint Principal at Chet's) rang Abbie to share the exciting news that a place was available from this January.

Abbie is thrilled with the prospect of joining Chetham's School of Music and said, "I wouldn't be the flute player I am without Mrs Meaden's time, effort and encouragement. I can't wait for the next part of my flute journey and I hope I make Mrs Meaden proud."



NHS Online Staff Christmas Choir



Following the successful pilot project in the Spring, we are delighted that Rhiannon Ashley (Voice & Curriculum teacher) is leading the Pennine Care NHS Trust Online Choir. The sessions have been made possible due to the sterling fundraising efforts of NHS colleagues who have raised money for the staff charity and this is just one of the special projects that they have been able to fund.

Singing gives a great boost to mental health and well-being. The choir will be an opportunity for office-based colleagues who are working at home to connect with hospital-based medical and admin colleagues across the Trust. Rhiannon is looking forward to bringing some Christmas Cheer to our fantastic NHS!



Making Music at Christmas

Despite the Covid restrictions, children across Oldham have been making music and experiencing the great joy and sense of achievement that this brings.

The Year 3 children at Ss Aidan & Oswald's RC School have worked with Mr Wilson in their Whole Class Instrumental Tuition (WCIT) lessons to perform a virtual Christmas concert for the rest of the school. After only one term of tuition, they are already playing pieces together in an ensemble.



"Reindeer on the Roof" is always a hit with our young musicians and the audience. Some children sang solos in a very moving performance of "Child in a Manger Born".

The performance was filmed and will be shared with families too.



Our EYFS team have been busy bringing Christmas cheer to nursery and reception classes. Our Tune-in to Talking sessions support speech and language development through the use of Music. Have you ever seen such happy snowmen riding on the sledge?!

The children at Oldham Hulme Grammar Nursery & Infants have been working with Mrs Brocklehurst to make their own shakers and drums. They have explored countless ways to play the shakers:

shake, tap, rock (forwards, backwards, up and down) and roll. They also managed to make them into guiros by scraping the lids!



The children have decorated drum cardboard boxes with

pictures and musical instrument stickers. They have played along to *The Grand Old Duke of York*, "Liberty Bell" and, of course, some Christmas songs. The final flourish has been using the instruments in a Christmas song as rustling presents and reindeer hooves.



Greater Manchester Music Hub: Jack & the Beanstalk

In recent years, many schools in Oldham have taken part in one of the GMMH “Princess and the Pea” interactive performances. In Spring 2021, we are launching a new mini-musical for EYFS & Year 1 children which tells the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. This will be an online event and there will be supplementary curriculum resources and videos to support the teaching. This exciting project which will coincide with World Book Day on **Thursday 4th March**. Find out more [here](#) and book online [here](#).



CPD Programme

Our CPD programme develops and extends the musical skills of teachers and practitioners by supporting you in delivering a high-quality music curriculum. Practical, engaging and excellent value for money; our courses are guaranteed to provide a wealth of knowledge and expertise which will have a real impact upon pupils’ learning, engagement and progression.

The **Primary Music Network** will consist of pre-recorded training videos which can be accessed for 14 days prior to the Zoom Q&A session. Our first Network Meeting is **Monday 18th January 4pm**. Explore creative, budget-friendly ideas for creative music-making in a covid-secure music session. With a focus upon fine-motor strength (EYFS) and rhythm & rhyme.

The full details of our CPD programme are at the end of the newsletter.

Oldham Council’s Strategy for EYFS

Our Music Service EYFS team were part of the process to develop Oldham’s Early Years Strategy 2021-24.

The vision is that Oldham is a place where all children and families are valued and respected; a place where every child gets the best start in life so they are healthy, safe and secure, and successful learners. We want all of our babies and young children to:

- Be safe and supported
- Be as healthy and happy as they can
- Have opportunities and achieve their potential
- Have a voice and be part of a community
- Feel proud and be ready for life

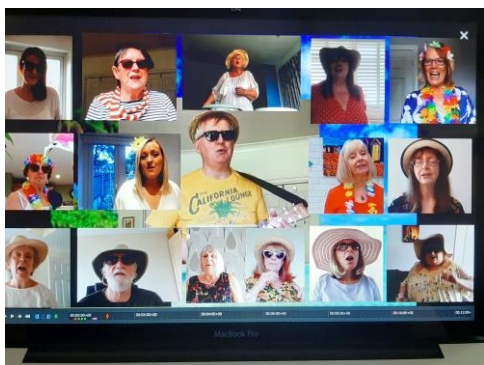
Exposure to music from early childhood onwards helps children to speak more clearly, develop a larger vocabulary, and strengthen social and emotional skills. Our Music Service EYFS programmes are carefully planned to support children’s wider development and to promote parent and child attachment.



Find out more about the Oldham Early Years Strategy [here](#).

Farewell to Martin Ashurst

We are sad to share the news that Martin Ashurst will be leaving us this Christmas. Since joining the team in 2006, he has become best known for the fantastic work he does with our Adult Community Pop Choir which he established in 2009.



Martin's sense of humour, welcoming and friendly personality and his expertise in working with community groups have ensured that the choir has gone from strength to strength and that its members have been able to form firm friendships.



Martin worked hard throughout the Lockdown in spring to keep the choir's spirits up and they created a fabulous online performance. More recently, the Pop Choir led the Virtual Christmas Festival performance of "Jackson: While Shepherds Watched".

A keen composer, Martin has composed music specially for various projects over the years. Most notably "The Olympics Suite" in 2012 and "Ubuntu" for a collaborative project involving schools and OMC ensembles.

Known to many schools in Oldham as a teacher of voice, choirs and keyboards, Martin will be sorely missed at the Music Centre. We wish him well for the future.

Keep in touch

Twitter: @Oldhammusic
Facebook: Oldham Council Music Service
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Email: musicservice@oldham.gov.uk

Oldham Primary Music Network

PRIMARY NETWORK ONE

Covid-secure ideas for Music Teaching (EYFS, KS1 & KS2)

Monday 18th January 4pm-4.45pm

Book: <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/WML>

Creative, budget-friendly ideas for creative music-making in a covid-secure music session. With a focus upon fine-motor strength (EYFS) and rhythm & rhyme.

The Zoom Q&A will be an opportunity to answer questions and to share ideas from your own school/setting.



PRIMARY NETWORK TWO

Music in Continuous Provision (EYFS & Y1)

Monday 22nd March 4pm-4.45pm

Book: <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/WNE>

This session will introduce a range of ideas including:

- *Encouraging children to re-tell and create their own stories using music*
- *Exploring musical contrasts*
- *Exploring and creating sounds and music*
- *Developing and supporting speech, language & communication through Music*
- *Counting songs*



PRIMARY NETWORK THREE

The Olympics (EYFS, KS1, KS2)

Monday 26th April 4pm-4.45pm

Book: <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/WNH>

The Tokyo Olympics will take place in July/August 2021. To celebrate this sporting event, the theme of GM Music Hub Singing Challenge Song is "Olympics".

In this CPD session you will:

- *Learn the song*
- *Explore Olympic-themed music resources for EYFS, KS1 & KS2*



Singing in the Classroom: GM Music Hub

Oldham Music Service is part of the Greater Manchester Music Hub (GMMH). We collaborate to bring you high-quality, great value CPD led by experts in the field.

Spring term – Wednesday 3 February 2021, 5.00 – 7.00 pm

Singing and Percussion

An interactive, fun-filled singing and percussion session

Delivered by members of the Vocal Vision Group for the GM Hub, this session will help you to:

- Learn new songs and warm up ideas.
- Explore percussion trolley instruments and discover creative and effective ways to include them in your regular classroom singing sessions.
- Repertoire suitable for each year group.

There will be something for everyone in this interactive session for non-specialist primary teachers and Music Subject Leaders alike.



Spring term – Tuesday 16 March 2021, 5.00 – 7.00 pm

A Singing School is a Successful School

For teachers across the whole primary school delivered by **Out of the Ark**

Grounded in solid research, this workshop is aimed at every teacher in every school. Out of the Ark Music will show you how you can use music to improve literacy and numeracy; promote well-being and team spirit through whole-school singing; and influence mood/attention in the classroom. With loads of fabulous free resources, the session has been designed to allow attendees to incorporate great new ideas into their teaching right away. You will receive clear guidance on:

- How you can use music to support curriculum areas from phonics and literacy to numeracy.
- How active engagement with singing can have an enormous impact on pupils' intellectual, social and personal development.
- How whole-school singing, especially in assemblies, can promote team spirit and create a collaborative learning environment.
- How to influence mood and attention in the classroom through the use of music.

Summer term – Tuesday 20 April 2021, 5.00 – 7.20 pm

Beatboxing and Body Percussion

Introducing beatboxing in Upper KS2 & KS3 with Faz Shah

Former Oldham Music Service student Faz Shah is an actor muso, composer, violinist and beatboxer. He has toured his original piece of theatre 'The Awakening' in 2019 to UK audiences and has been the Music Director for the New Vic Theatre for 'Astley's Astounding Adventures' in 2018 and 'The Prince and the Pauper' in 2019. He has delivered training courses to teachers internationally and across the UK, as well as leading projects in schools and colleges.

This course is for all Upper KS2 & KS3 teachers who are interested in developing techniques to get pupils started in beatboxing. Faz Shah will lead you through an engaging session exploring body percussion & beatboxing and how to layer sections, basic core rhythms and facilitation techniques to nurture creativity from a whole class.

Please note that this session will be divided into three 40-mins sessions with a short break in between.

Cost: Just £15 for one session, £25 for two and £30 for three.

Booking is via Eventbrite. To secure your place, visit www.gmmusichub.co.uk/training

A few days before the training date, you will receive an email invitation to join the course on Zoom, so please make sure that you book using the email address you want to receive this! Should the invitation not arrive, or if you have any other queries, please email music.service@bolton.gov.uk

