

Welcome to this latest edition of the Oldham Music Service and Music Centre's regular newsletter. What a fantastic term it has been and there are many achievements to celebrate. At the end of the newsletter, you can find dates for some of the Christmas events, along with details of all our Music Centre groups.

Summer Festival 2025

The Summer Festival featured all of our vast array of choirs, bands and ensembles from every level. It was truly a celebration of the musical talent and dedication of our Oldham Music Centre members. Our youngest performers were age 7 and our eldest are in their 80s. The standard of music-making was astounding from all groups.



We were pleased to work in partnership with the council events team to include our performances as part of Festival Oldham. Performances took place in the Parish Church, Billingtons and an outdoor stage on the Town Hall steps. Oldham Community Radio were in attendance and broadcast the event throughout the day. We had

a wonderfully supportive audience throughout the day.

As is tradition, we marked the commitment and dedication that our Year 13 Leavers have shown to the Music Centre. Each were presented with a certificate. We wish all of our leavers the very best and hope that they will keep in touch and will continue to pursue their enjoyment of Music.



2025 Oldham Music Centre Awards

Each year, we present two special awards to Music Centre students. This year's recipients are:

The Gerald Pritchett Award for Commitment to Music Centre Groups: Bee and Hannah

The Lyceum Trophy for gaining the highest marks in Grade 8 ABRSM/Trinity exams: Sam

They were presented with their awards at the Summer Festival during the Youth Brass Band's performance.

Come and Play with the Hallé

1300 children from Oldham schools spent a spectacular afternoon at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester for our annual 'Come and Play with The Hallé'.

The Come and Play concerts present a variety of music which enables collaboration between the world-class musicians of the Hallé and young instrumentalists at the start of their musical journey.

The children practised for their performance with their Oldham Music Service teachers. It was a unique and memorable occasion for everybody.



We were delighted to welcome the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Brian Hobin, to the event. It was wonderful to see the Bridgewater Hall packed with children from Oldham schools making music together and singing.

Many musicians... one harmony

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Facebook: Oldham Council Music Service Twitter: @OldhamMusic

Website: www.oldhammusicservice.co.uk

Youth Brass Band: Bold as Brass and Whit Friday

Congratulations to the Youth Brass Band who, under the baton of their MD Jonathan Leedale, have had an extremely successful term.

They had one of their best Whit Fridays ever! Of seven contests they won five 1st places and two 2nds, plus two best soloist prizes for their principal cornet, the most Entertaining Band prize and a best deportment prize. A whopping eleven prizes in total! What a fantastic achievement for them all!

They also competed in the Bold as Brass contest at the National Coal Mining Museum in early June and did themselves (and Oldham) proud. They wowed the crowd with an impressive formation marching display and then went on to the stage to perform their programme entitled "How the West Riding Was Won". The first thing the adjudicator wrote on his



comment

sheet was "WOW!!! Well done for an amazing show" and he was not wrong! Of the six prizes on offer, they won three: Most Entertaining March, People's Choice (audience votes) and Most Entertaining Performance.



This is what Oldham Music Service and Music Centre is all about, taking children from beginner level all the way through to excellence and giving them some fantastic opportunities and experiences along the way. Congratulations Youth Brass Band!

Oldham Schools' Music Festival

The Oldham Schools' Music Festival has been an annual feature of the musical life of the borough and educational community for generations and has a special place within the Music Centre's calendar of events. Many generations of young musicians have taken part in this celebration of Oldham's musical talent over more than four decades. The scope of its inclusivity, both in terms of the level of experience and ability of performers and the range and diversity of the musical genres on display, is exceptional and unique.



Over 1600 children from Oldham schools participated in this year's 3-day musical extravaganza at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. The adjudicator, Richard Milton, was amazed and enthralled by the talent of the children. We were honoured to welcome The Mayor of Oldham, Cllr Eddie Moores, to the performance and also the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Brian Hobin.

Performances included Wind Bands, Choirs, Brass bands, orchestras, Class Music and much more! The Reception children from St Luke's were our youngest performers. Crompton House School almost filled the stage with their massed choirs and were worthy recipients of the "Most Memorable Performance" award.

Alt Academy Y2 performed a short version of the opera "Hansel and Gretel" using the Royal Opera House 'Create and Sing' resource. We think it may have been the very first time opera has been performed in the SMF!

The Awards were presented at a special ceremony, kindly hosted by the Mayor and Mayoress in the Mayor's Parlour. The children had a wonderful experience and were particularly interested to see the Council Chambers.

The awards were presented by the Mayor and by Matt Bulmer (Director of Education) as follows:

The Albert Mansell Harrison Award for outstanding primary school orchestra:
Knowsley Juniors

The Tindale-Taylor Award for the Outstanding Primary School contribution to the Festival: St Mary's High Crompton

The Jacques Stromberg Major Award for the Outstanding Secondary School contribution to the Festival: Crompton House



The Marilynne Davies Award – for the Most Memorable Performance of the Festival (primary):
Alt Academy Y2

The Marilynne Davies Award – for the Most Memorable Performance of the Festival (secondary):
Crompton House Massed Choirs

The Eileen Bentley MBE Shield for the Outstanding Choral Performance of the Festival:
St Mary's High Crompton

The Martyn Evans Shield for the Outstanding Brass Band Performance of the Festival:
Delph Primary

The Roger Meaden Shield for the Outstanding Wind Band Performance of the Festival:
St Mary's High Crompton

The Gerard Booth Shield 'New Horizons' Award for the ensemble/choir that shows the most promise: St Thomas' Werneth

(The Peter Martin Award for an outstanding student composition was not presented this year - maybe next year's festival will feature a student composition!)



Adult Choir: Britfest

The Adult choir had a fabulous day at BritFest in Altrincham. Under their musical director, Clare Morel, they performed in a combined choir with The Music Place. Their programme included popular 'British Bangers' and they had the amazing experience of singing alongside professional soloists. Their set was sandwiched between Incognito and Go West. What a brilliant opportunity!

Retirement: Tracey Hartnell-Booth and Anne Butterworth

Mrs Hartnell-Booth is taking early retirement this summer. She has worked for the Music Service for 30 years (with a couple of breaks here and there to raise her family) and has been an inspirational and well-respected teacher. As a double-reed specialist, Mrs Hartnell-Booth has taught and nurtured many young musicians on their journey. She has made a wonderful contribution to Music in Oldham schools and at the Music Centre. In recent years, having been a founding member with her own children 25 years ago, she led the Musical Beginnings classes for young children. Her final contribution will be as a member of staff on the Heidelberg Tour. It is difficult to summarise the deep impact that Tracey has had on both staff and students. We wish her every happiness and health in this next phase of her life and we know that she has many exciting plans for the future.

We also say goodbye to Anne Butterworth who will be taking retirement this year. Anne has been one of our keyboard teachers for a number of years. We wish her a long and fulfilling retirement. Nina Semertzidou will be leaving Oldham Music Service to teach elsewhere in the GMBD Hub. We thank her for her contribution to the String Department and wish her well.

Oldham Schools' Singing Challenge

All Oldham schools were invited to participate in the 2025 Singing Challenge event. The song, 'Music Matters' was broadcast by Oldham Community Radio. It was great to hear how different schools organised their own events to celebrate singing!

Northmoor Academy held a fabulous Singing Showcase for the whole school and the event culminated in a massed sing of 'Music Matters'. St Luke's and Christ Chadderton came together for a special event too. Thanks to Mrs Huckfield for organising this.

Pupils from St Patrick's, Broadfield, Greenhill and Holy Cross participated in the Singing Challenge event which was kindly hosted by The Brian Clarke Academy. Music Service staff led the children in vocal warm-ups and taught everybody a news song. Then each school performed their own songs for the audience. We finished with a performance of 'Music Matters'. You can hear highlights of the event here:

<https://www.mixcloud.com/OldhamCommunityRadio/oldham-schools-singing-challenge-2025/>

Thank you to Sparkyard/Out of the Ark Music for their support with the project and to Oldham Community Radio for broadcasting the song so that all schools in Oldham could participate.

New Event Space: The Loom

Some of the staff were fortunate to make a site visit to the soon-to-be-completed new event space in the town centre. It is situated above the new market and will hold up to 1000 people standing, 700 seated and 500 people for dancing. It can be sub-divided as needed to host smaller and larger events. We are looking forward to making use of the new space in 2026!



Heidelberg Tour

As this newsletter goes to press, we are only a few days away from the Heidelberg Tour. We are very excited to be taking 81 musicians and 10 staff on an overseas Concert Tour. The Youth Wind Band, Youth Orchestra, Youth Choir and Youth Brass Band will be performing in three spectacular concert venues (Bad Rappenau outdoor Concert Shell, Johanniskirche in Mannheim and Gedachtnitskirche in Speyer). Aside from performing, the student will have the opportunity to find out more about the history, culture and geography of the area. Our itinerary includes a visit to Speyer Imax Technik Museum, Luisenpark in Mannheim, Heidelberg Castle, a boat trip on the River Neckar, the Salt Mines in Bad Friedrichshall, a tour of Speyer Cathedral Dom and, of course, a day at Europapark Theme Park. Follow us on Social Media for updates when we are there!

Heidelberg
Oldham Music Centre
2025

Can you support FFOMC?

Recent projects supported by FFOMC include:

- The Christmas Parties for Junior & Intermediate groups
- Excursions on the Heidelberg Tour
- The Monday Music Group for children with SEND
- Bursaries for Music Centre Membership Fees for families who face financial barriers
- £2000 of equipment for the Pop Department
- Bucket hats for the Youth Brass Band

Make a donation:



<https://bit.ly/FFOMCdonate>

If you are able to support FFOMC by making a donation, sponsoring an event or providing match-funding for an event, please get in touch info@ffomc.co.uk or you can donate using the link.

CPD for School Staff

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. Dates for 2025-26 will be published soon.

Sparkyard Music Curriculum: special offer

We have teamed up with Out of the Ark Music to offer a 30% discount on a Sparkyard Subscription for all Oldham schools. Find out more here: [Start Your Free Trial Now! | Sparkyard](#)

Don't forget to use the discount code GMAN252630



SPARKYARD

Use code GMAN252630 to claim your 30% discount on an annual subscription

Music Group for children with SEND (8-13 years old)

Mondays 5.30pm-6.30pm *Free to attend – funded by the Families & Friends of Oldham Music Centre*

Come along to

- explore and learn to play a musical instrument, find your singing voice
- create music with other young people in a group
- have fun
- develop your self-confidence



SCAN ME

Venue: Oldham Music Centre, Lyceum Building, Union Street, Oldham OL1 1QG

Register: www.oldham.gov.uk/music_centre_application Or scan the QR code

Join a Music Centre Choir



Recruitment is ongoing for all our Music Centre choirs. We cater for singers of all ages. No previous experience necessary, just lots of enthusiasm!

For children, the period from their first attendance until the end of that same term is a **free trial period** so there has never been a better time to join us!

Junior Choir	Vocal Recall*	Intermediate Choir	Oldham Youth Choir	Adult Choir
<i>Y3-Y5 Boys & Girls</i>	<i>KS2 & KS3 Boys</i>	<i>Y6-Y9 Boys & Girls</i>	<i>KS4/5 Mixed Voices</i>	<i>Adults</i>
Wednesday 4.15pm-5.15pm	Wednesday 5.15pm-5.45pm	Wednesday 5.45pm-6.45pm	Wednesday 6.15pm-7.45pm	Monday 7.15pm-8.45pm

*Members of Vocal Recall must also join either Junior Choir or Intermediate Choir

To join one of our choirs, complete the online registration here:
www.oldham.gov.uk/music_centre_application or scan the QR code



SCAN ME

Musical Beginnings

If you have a child 0-4 years old, you may be interested in our Musical Beginnings sessions at the Lyceum. Currently only £66 per term, they are excellent value for money and very high quality.



We have various sessions throughout the week.

Monday 10am (0-4 years)

Monday 11am (0-4 years with SEND) **FREE of CHARGE**

Monday 1pm (pre-school)

Friday 10am (babies)

Friday 11am (toddlers)

Contact musicservice@oldham.gov.uk to find out more about

any of our Musical Beginnings sessions.

Register online for these classes here www.oldham.gov.uk/music_centre_application or scan the QR code

Calendar of events

Saturday 19th July	Heidelberg Tour
Wednesday 3rd September	OMS teaching in schools begins
Monday 8th September	Music Centre rehearsals begin
Tuesday 7th October	The Snowman soloist auditions
Saturday 8th November	Children in Need concert (Adult Choir, Adult Wind Band, Junior Choir)
Monday 1st December 1.30pm	The Snowman performance for invited primary schools
Monday 1st December eve	Christmas Festival rehearsal (all choirs & youth ensembles)
Tuesday 2nd December 7.30pm	Christmas Festival (all choirs, Youth Brass, Wind & Orch)
Wednesday 3rd December 7pm	Junior Christmas Festival (all Junior ensembles)
Saturday 13th December 3pm	George Street Chapel (Intermediate Choir & Vocal Recall)
Tbc	Adult Community Groups Christmas Concert
Tbc	Mince Pie Gig (Pop Department)
Saturday 10th January	Musical Theatre Showcase

Keep in touch

Twitter: @Oldhammusic
Facebook: Oldham Council Music Service
Website: www.oldhammusicservice.co.uk
Email: musicservice@oldham.gov.uk



Who we are and what we do

The Oldham Council Music Service is committed to supporting and fulfilling the musical aspirations of **all** young people living in the borough (in and out of school), and engaging people of all ages in a variety of exciting musical activities.

- award winning groups for all abilities and all ages – bands, orchestras, choirs, musical theatre, rock and pop, folk music and more!
- Classes for babies right through to senior citizens
- Specialised groups for children and young people with SEND

Membership

- £59 per term for school-age children (join as many groups as you wish)
- £69 per term, per group for adults
- £66 per term for Musical Beginnings
- Sibling discount, bursaries and financial assistance available for 5-18 year olds

It's our ambition to ensure that every resident in Oldham who wants to make music has an opportunity to do so with us or one of our partners, so get in touch today to see how you can become part of our musical community.

Get in touch

E: musicservice@oldham.gov.uk

T: 0161 770 5660

W: www.oldhammusicservice.co.uk

Try us for free!

First term of
membership is free
for 5-18 year olds

Music Centre Choirs

Junior Choir Wednesday 4.15pm-5.15pm
Intermediate Choir Wednesday 5.45pm-6.45pm
Vocal Recall Wednesday 5.15pm-5.45pm
Youth Choir Wednesday 6.15pm-7.45pm

Children in Year 3-Year 6
Children in Year 6-9
Boys in Year 5-9
Year 9-13

We also have various **Musical Theatre groups**. Please get in touch for details!

Music Centre Groups: Brass, Wind, Strings, Guitar, Percussion

We offer pathways from Junior through Intermediate to our award-winning Youth bands.

As soon as a child can read/play 5 notes on their instrument, they are able to join one of our Junior ensembles. We have Wind Bands, Brass Bands, Orchestras and guitar groups for all abilities.

If your child plays brass, wind, string, guitar or percussion and isn't currently in one of our ensembles, please do get in touch. Free membership for the first term.

Music Centre membership for school-age children is £59 per term and you can be in as many groups/choirs as you want to. Plus, your first full term is free!

Starter Strings

Wednesday 5.15pm-6.16pm for beginner string players. Contact musicservice@oldham.gov.uk to find out more about this FREE opportunity and how you can loan a violin/cello for free.

Adult Community Groups

Adult Choir Monday 7.15pm-8.45pm
Adult Wind Band Thursday 7pm-8.30pm
Late Start Wind Wednesday evenings (suitable for beginners/lapsed players to build confidence)
Uke 1 Tuesday 7-8pm (For beginners - no experience necessary)
Uke Too Tuesday 7.15pm-8.45pm (for more experienced ukulele players)
Acoustic Guitar Tuesday 5.55pm-6.55pm
Electric Guitar Tuesday 7.15pm-8.45pm
(Adult Community Groups are £69 per term, per group)

Musical Opportunities for 0-7 year olds

Musical Beginnings provides young children with excellent musical opportunities including singing, rhymes, action songs, dancing, stories, musical appreciation and exploring instruments.

Monday 10am (0-4 years)
Monday 1pm (pre-school 3 & 4 year olds)
Wednesday 10am (0-4 years)
Friday 10am (babies)
Friday 11am (toddlers)
(Musical Beginnings is £66 per term)

Musical Beginnings Extra

Monday 11am 0-4 year olds with SEND (does not need to be diagnosed)
(Tuesday classes are FREE OF CHARGE due to grant funding)

Musical Explorers

Tuesday 4.15pm-5.15pm children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Thursday 4.15pm-5.15pm children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
(Musical Explorers is £59 per term, first term free)

To book your place for any of our groups, visit www.oldham.gov.uk/music_centre_application or scan the QR code.

