Music Notes

Oldham Council
Music Service and Music Centre

Issue 14 – October 2025

Welcome to this latest edition of the Oldham Music Service and Music Centre's regular newsletter. We have had a great start to the academic year and there is lots of news to share. 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.

Staff News: Long Service Awards and New Staff

Congratulations to Mrs Thomas and Mr Webb who have both received their 15 Years Long Service Award from Oldham Council. Oldham Music Service is grateful to them both for their outstanding commitment and the work they both do in schools and at Music Centre. They were presented with their certificates by Tony Shepherd (Assistant Director of Education).

We are delighted to welcome new staff to the teaching team this year:

Mr Lam (Strings)
Mrs Lord (Curriculum & Voice)
Miss Mitson (Curriculum & Voice, Brass)
Mr Simms (Brass and Popular Music)
Mr Smith (Woodwind)
Miss Crichton (Woodwind)

Heidelberg Tour

The Youth Ensembles and Choir had an amazing time in Heidelberg, Germany on the overseas concert tour in July. 81 musicians and 10 staff performed in stunning venues in Bad Rappenau, Mannheim and Speyer. Aside from performing, the students had the opportunity to find out more about the history, culture and geography of the area. The itinerary included 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.

Videos and photos were posted on the Oldham Council Music Service Facebook group. We encourage you to take a look for yourself to see just how brilliant our students are!

As always, our students were fantastic ambassadors for Oldham. They performed to an exceptionally high standard and it was a privilege for the staff to be alongside them. Thank you to all the staff who gave up their own holiday time to ensure that our students had a memorable and fantastic experience. Watch this space for the 2028 Tour!

Many musicians... one harmony

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Facebook: Oldham Council Music Service Twitter: @OldhamMusic
Website: www.oldhammusicservice.co.uk

GMBD Hub 'Jazz Singing Workshop'

The Youth Choir and Intermediate Choir had an amazing opportunity to be involved in a one-day vocal workshop led by renowned jazz educator Pete Churchill. The event was hosted by the Greater Manchester & Blackburn with Darwen Music Hub of which OMS is a lead partner.

Head of Jazz Voice at Brussels Royal Conservatoire and Professor of Jazz Composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London, Pete has worked with legends like Bobby McFerrin and Mark Murphy, and his workshops are known for being inclusive, inspiring, and unforgettable. We were very fortunate to have this fantastic experience today.

The repertoire was taught aurally so we had to work hard to remember lyrics and harmonies. It was an unforgettable experience and one of the many benefits of being a member of an Oldham Music Service choir and the GMBD Hub.

Youth Sounds Connect

This exciting programme is being rolled out in two Oldham Primary Schools. Fourteen young string players at St Thomas Werneth and Broadfield Primary School are now receiving instrumental lessons paid for by Young Sounds Connect, with instruments and tutors provided by Oldham Music Service. The students also receive a bursary which pays for all the resources they need, and when the time comes they will also receive free membership of the Oldham Music Centre and entry to ABRSM exams as needed. This scheme has been funded by the DfE, The Arts Council, Youth Music and Signatur amongst others.

Starter Strings

This fabulous initiative funded by the Oldham Music Service is once again full for the year! Amazing news. Sixteen young string players meet every week, and have been learning to play the violin. Many members have graduated to the Strings' Workshop, and amazingly two of the original cohort Florence and Phoebe are now members of the Oldham Youth Orchestra. Whilst there are no spaces left for this year, we do hope to be able to run the group again next year. Please contact the music centre if you would like to be involved in the 2026 group.

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

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. Our CPD programme for 2025-26 is at the end of this newsletter.

Christmas Events 2025

The Christmas Events this year are as follows:

Friday 28th November
Mince Pie Gig (Pop Department) at the Lyceum

Monday 1st December (times tbc)
Christmas Festival Rehearsal at the QE Hall
Intermediate Choir, Youth Choir, Adult Choir, Youth Orchestra, Youth Wind Band

Tuesday 2nd December 7.30pm
Christmas Festival at the QE Hall
Intermediate Choir, Youth Choir, Adult Choir, Youth Orchestra, Youth Wind Band, Youth Brass Band

Wednesday 3rd December 7pm
Junior Christmas Festival
Junior Choir, Junior & Intermediate Wind Band, Junior & Intermediate Brass Band, Vocal Recall, Repercussions

Thursday 11th December 7.30pm
Adult Community Groups Christmas Concert at Royton Band Club
Adult Choir, Adult Wind Band, Late Start Wind Band

Saturday 13th December 3pm
George Street Chapel Christmas Carol Concert
Intermediate Choir, Vocal Recall, soloists

Tuesday 16th December eve
Manchester Cathedral Carols
Adult Choir

Please inform your group conductor immediately if you are not available for any of these events.

A full calendar of events for 2025-26 can be found at the end of this newsletter

Can you support FFOMC?

Make a donation:

https://bit.ly/FFOMCdonate

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

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.

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
Y3-Y5 Boys & Girls	*KS2 & KS3 Boys*	*Y6-Y9 Boys & Girls*	*KS4/5 Mixed Voices*	*Adults*
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

Autumn Term 2026

19/10/2025	GMBD Hub Youth Choirs Event	RNCM	Youth & Intermediate Choir
08/11/2025	Children in Need Concert	Trinity Methodist, Royton	Adult Wind, Adult Choir, Junior Choir
8/11/2025	Remembrance Concert	Uppermill Civic	Youth Brass Band
09/11/2025	Remembrance Sunday	Oldham Town Centre	Youth Brass Band
11/11/2025	Primary Network 2	Music Centre	CPD for Primary Teachers
28/11/2025	Mince Pie Gig: Pop Department Concert	Music Centre	Pop Dept Groups
01/12/2025	Christmas Festival Rehearsals time tbc	QEH	All choirs, Youth orchestra, Youth Wind
02 12/2025	Christmas Festival 7.30pm	QEH	All choirs, YOrch, YWB, YBB
03/12/2025	Junior Christmas Festival 7pm	QEH	All Junior & Intermediate groups & choir
11/12/2025	Adult Community Christmas Concert 7.30pm (set up 6.15pm)	Royton Band Club	Adult Choir, Adult Wind, Late Start Wind
13/12/2025	Christmas Carol Concert	George Street Chapel	Intermediate Choir & Vocal Recall
16/12/2025	Carol Service	Manchester Cathedral	Adult Choir
18/12/2025	Werneth Golf Club Carol Concert (Youth Brass Band)	Werneth Golf Club	OMC Performance/Event
19/12/2025	**Break up - Christmas Holidays**		
20/12/2025	Carolling at Tesco Featherstall Road	Tesco	Youth Brass Band

(Adult EGG/AGG groups will rehearse as usual at OMC on Tuesday 2nd December)
Rehearsals as usual w/c 8th December.
No rehearsals w/c 15th December except for Musical Theatre and Adult Choir

Spring Term 2026

05/01/2026	Spring Term Begins		
06/01/2026	CPD TRAINING DAY – all day NO TEACHING IN SCHOOLS	Music Centre	Training & CPD for Music Service Staff
10/01/2026	Musical Theatre Showcase	Gallery Oldham/Library	Musical Theatre
13/01/2026	Primary Network Meeting	Music Centre	CPD for Primary teachers
10/02/2026	Secondary Vocal Gala (all Oldham Sec. Schools & Intermediate Choir)	Crompton House	Intermediate Choir
13/02/2026	Youth Brass Band Concert	Tbc	OMC Performance/Event
13/02/2026	Break Up - Half Term		
12/03/2026	Oldham Primary Music Conference	Music Centre	Training for Primary staff
16/03/2026	Woodwind Departmental Concert	QEH	
17/03/2026	Strings Departmental Concert	QEH	
18/03/2026	Voice Departmental Concert	QEH	
18/03/2026	Biggest Band Day 2026	Music Centre / QEH	Invited children from schools
19/03/2026	Brass Departmental Concert	QEH	
20/03/2026	Adult Concert	TBC	
25/03/2025	CPD TRAINING 4pm-6.30pm – no choir rehearsals except Youth Choir	Music Centre	Training & CPD for OMS staff
27/03/2026	Break Up - Easter Holidays	Holidays	School Holidays
28/03/2026	National brass Band Champs YBB	Birmingham	Youth Brass Band

Summer Term 2026

13/04/2026	Summer Term Begins		
21/04/2026	Primary Network Meeting	Music Centre/EB Room	CPD for teachers in schools
19/05/2026	Primary Network Meeting	Music Centre/EB Room	CPD for teachers in schools
22/05/2026	Break Up – Half Term	Holidays	School Holidays
29/05/2026	Whit Friday - YBB	Saddleworth	Youth Brass band
11/06/2025	Come and Play with the Halle	Bridgewater Hall	Invited Schools
29/06/2026	Voice Assessments 4-7pm	Music Centre	Assessments
29/06/2026	School's Music Festival	QEH	Schools
30/06/2026	School's Music Festival	QEH	Schools
01/072026	School's Music Festival	QEH	Schools
04/07/2026	Summer Music Festival	TBC	All OMC groups and choirs
06/07/2026	LAMDA Exams	Music Centre	Assessments
07/07/2026	LAMDA Exams	Music Centre	Assessments
08/07/2026	LAMDA Exams	Music Centre	Assessments
09/07/2026	LAMDA Exams	Music Centre	Assessments
10/07/2026	LAMDA Exams	Music Centre	Assessments
16/07/2026	CPD TRAINING 4pm-6.30pm	Music Centre	Training& CPD – OMC staff
18/07/2026	YBB Tour to North Yorkshire 18th-20th July	Music Centre	OMC performance/event
20/07/2026	CPD – no teaching in schools	Music Centre	All OMS staff
20/07/2026	Break Up – Summer Hols		

No rehearsals w/c 6th July or 13th July, except YBB

Autumn Term Begins Tuesday 1st September 2026

Keep in touch

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

Oldham Council
Music Service and Music Centre

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	*Children in Year 3-Year 6*
Intermediate Choir	Wednesday 5.45pm-6.45pm	*Children in Year 6-9*
Vocal Recall	Wednesday 5.15pm-5.45pm	*Boys in Year 5-9*
Youth Choir	Wednesday 6.15pm-7.45pm	*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)
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)

SCAN ME

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

Oldham Council
Music Service and Music Centre

Primary Music Network

The Primary Music Network is for all teachers, trainees and TAs (not just Music co-ordinators).

Integrate composing, performing, listening and appraising into your music lessons and develop your confidence to deliver a high-quality and enriching music education which:

- enhances class topics
- develops children's confidence
- improves collaborative skills, literacy and communication
- meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is guided by the framework of the DfE Model Music Curriculum
- is underpinned by the principles of The National Plan for Music Education

Whether you are an experienced music co-ordinator or an ECT with no musical experience whatsoever, the Primary Music Network is your FREE opportunity to develop your knowledge, skills and expertise.

Book here: https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FCSH

2025-26 Network Dates

Tuesday 23rd September 4pm-5.30pm

The role of the Music Lead in Primary schools: Suitable for those new to the role and those who have already experienced being a Music Lead/co-ordinator. We will look at the requirements of the role and effective ways to lead and manage Music in your school.

Tuesday 11th November 4pm -5.30pm

Music in EYFS: Explore a range of resources for use in EYFS settings both in discrete "Music lessons", as part of Continuous Provision and to facilitate routines throughout the day.

Tuesday 13th January 2026 4pm-5.30pm

Singing Games and Rhymes for the playground: Develop aural, rhythm and singing skills through play. Ideas to introduce to your playground. This session may also be of interest and suitable for mid-day supervisors.

Tuesday 21st April 4pm-5.30pm

Progression in singing: Singing is key to developing musicianship and is at the heart of quality music provision. This practical workshop demonstrates how singing skills progress through primary school and provides songs, games and ideas for how to make your school a singing school.

Tuesday 19th May 4pm-5.30pm

Rhythmic Notation: How to read it and how to teach it well.

Oldham Primary Music Conference

Thursday 12th March 9am-3pm

An exciting day of composing, performing, listening, improvising and singing. Workshops, discussions and resources

£50 DMG-paying schools/£80 non-DMG
Free for trainee teachers in Oldham Schools/Manchester Nexus
Lunch included.
Booking details will be shared Jan 2026

Charanga Essentials: Getting Started

Monday 13th October 4pm-5.30pm
Mills Hill Primary School OL9 0NH

An overview of the Musical School programme, from Scheme lessons and detailed teacher support materials to the creative freedom of Freestyle, the dynamic Instruments section, uplifting Sing resources, and inclusive materials for learners with special needs. You'll leave feeling confident, inspired, and ready to make music with your pupils.

Book:
https://www.gmmusiconline.co.uk/training_events/5367

Special Offer: FREE one term of OMC Adult Choir membership for attendees of the Primary Music Network when signing up for 3 full terms of Adult Choir membership

Sign up here: Oldham Music Centre – Membership Registration Form - Oldham Council and then email musicservice@oldham.gov.uk to request the FREE term

SPARKYARD
Use code GMAN252630 to claim your 38% discount on an annual subscription

Many musicians... one harmony

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