Music Notes

Oldham Council
Music Service and Music Centre

Issue 15 – December 2025

Welcome to this latest edition of the Oldham Music Service and Music Centre's regular newsletter.

Welcome: Strategic Lead – Kate Campbell-Green

I'm really excited to be joining the incredible team here as your Strategic Lead for Music from January.

Many years ago I joined my local music centre. Playing in those bands and ensembles, learning from talented, fun teachers and making lifelong friends has led me to where I am today. The last several decades I've spent happily - writing, teaching, researching, performing, singing, recording and conducting music - and I can't wait to do this with you.

I'm really looking forward to meeting you, hearing about the music you enjoy, celebrating the brilliant music already happening across Oldham, and helping create exciting new opportunities for you to learn, play and perform.

In my spare time I'm a trustee for learning with Band on the Wall, a keen researcher and writer for Music Teacher magazine and digital platforms, Chair of Governors for a local Primary School and I'm in the final year of my Masters in Music Education at the Royal Northern College of Music. Any time I have left is spent hiking, gaming or reading!

I care a lot about making sure music spaces feel safe and friendly so if you ever see me around, feel free to say hello — I'm always happy to talk about music and listen to your worries and ideas.

Until then, have a wonderful festive season and I look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Christmas Performances

We have had an incredibly busy December with a series of Christmas concerts featuring all of our Music Centre groups.

The annual **'Mince Pie Gig'** was fantastic start to our Christmas season. The Pop Department excelled with electric and acoustic performances from all genres and styles including ACDC, Black Sabbath, The Beatles and Buddy Holly, plus a Christmas selection from the Acoustic Guitar Orchestra.

The **Christmas Festival** and **Junior Christmas Festival** were a spectacular showcase of the high standards of musicianship and wide range of opportunities offered by Oldham Music Service. We were delighted to welcome the Mayor Cllr Eddie Moores to both of these events. For many children, the Junior Christmas Festival was their first performance with OMS and it was great to see the QE Hall stage filled with such talent! The Christmas Festival featured the Youth Choir, Wind Band, Brass Band and Orchestra, alongside the Adult Choir and Intermediate Choir. The standards of musicianship are incredibly high and the audience was treated to a wonderful performance of festive favourites.

Many musicians... one harmony

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

Our **Adult Community Groups** enjoyed performing in a festive concert at Royton Band Club. The programme included Christmas favourites performed by the Adult Wind Band, Late Start Wind Band and Adult Choir.

Intermediate Choir and Vocal Recall were, once again, invited to lead the **Age UK Oldham Christmas Carol Concert** at George Street Chapel. This historic venue in the heart of Oldham is perfect for choral groups and we are pleased to be able to share our musical talents to support local charities.

The Adult Choir were invited to perform at the annual **Home Instead Carol Concert at Manchester Cathedral**. It was a sparkling evening of carols in a stunning venue.

It has a been a busy term but we are pleased to see our Music Centre members enjoying their music-making and bringing joy to others as they do so. For more photographs and to keep up to date with our events, please join our **Oldham Council Music Service Facebook Group.**

The Snowman

We invited over 850 children from Oldham schools to a live, interactive performance of 'The Snowman' at the QE Hall. It's an incredible opportunity for children to experience live, orchestral music. The concert, presented by the Carrot Productions Orchestra, began with 'Once in Royald David's City' sung by Aurelia. The iconic 'Walking in the Air' was performed by Erin. Congratulations to them both on exceptional solo performances.

Delph Whitmas

Youth Brass Band had fun and laughter on a chilly but thankfully dry night in Delph. They played a lively Christmas programme outside 3 pubs in Delph to good crowds in a festive atmosphere. There were celebrity actors as judges and you could also vote online. It was a unique and new event and we were pleased to be part of it.

Children in Need Concert

The Junior Choir, Adult Choir and Adult Community Wind Band performed in the annual fundraising concert at Trinity Methodist Church in November. The concert raised over £1750 for Children in Need. The Mayor of Oldham, Cllr Eddie Moores, was also in attendance. It was a joyful celebration of music-making and we had a very warm welcome from the audience.

FFOMC

Thank you to the volunteers from the Families and Friends of Oldham Music Service who have supported all of our Christmas events. Through raffle ticket sales and refreshments, they have raised over £1400.

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

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.

Musical Theatre Performance

The annual Musical Theatre Showcase will take place on Saturday 10th January at the Library Performance Space. Tickets are now on sale. https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FTBG

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.

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 11am (0-4 years)

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

Monday 1pm (pre-school)

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

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		
07/03/2025	Music For Youth (YBB, YWB, YC)	Rochdale Town Hall	OMC performance/event
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

Oldham Music Service and Music Centre, Lyceum Buildings, Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1QG