

This is a bumper edition of the newsletter. It has been a busy and successful half-term with lots of events and concerts! Dates for 2026-27 events are at the end of the newsletter.

Youth Choir: Music for Youth National Festival: Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Oldham Youth Choir were invited to perform at the **Music for Youth National Festival**. This was an incredible achievement for the choir. Symphony Hall is a world-class venue and it was a huge honour for the choir to be selected from the many hundreds of groups that entered the regional festivals. Their programme included: Vivaldi's 'Gloria', 'Speechless' from 'Aladdin', Eric Whitacre's 'Glow' and 'Can't Buy Me Love'. Special thanks to Mrs Nixon (musical director) and Mrs Brennan (accompanist). Once again, our Music Centre students have been fabulous ambassadors for our town and have performed with pride. You can watch a video of their performance on our Facebook group.



Oldham Schools Music Festival 2026

Over 1300 children from 31 Oldham primary schools showcased their musical talents in the annual Oldham Schools Music Festival. The adjudicator, Richard Milton, was impressed by the breadth and quality of the musical performances but he was amazed at the enthusiasm and engagement from all the children.



Ensembles included Wind Bands, Choirs, Class Music groups, Whole-Class Instrumental ensembles, Pop groups, Samba Bands and Musical Theatre to name just a few! The Mayor, Cllr Pam Byrnes, joined us for one of the sessions in one of her first public engagements.

The Awards were presented at a special event in the Lyceum. Congratulations to the prize winners:

Albert Mansell Harrison Award For the outstanding Primary School Orchestra - Thornham St James

Tindale Taylor Award For outstanding

contribution to the Festival by a primary school - Northmoor Academy

Jacques Stromberg Major Award For outstanding contribution to the Festival

by a secondary school - Crompton House

The Marilynne Davies Award For the most memorable performance given by a primary school - Beal Vale Musical Theatre

The Marilynne Davies Award - For the most memorable performance given by a secondary school - Crompton House Chapel Choir

The Eileen Bentley MBE Award For an outstanding performance given by a choir - St Paul's CE Choir

The Roger Meaden Award for Wind Band For an outstanding performance given by a Wind Band - St Mary's High Crompton Wind Band

The Martyn Evans Award for Brass Band For an outstanding performance given by a Brass Band - Diggle School Brass Band

The Peter Martin Award for Composition For the outstanding student composition of the festival - Alice (Crompton House)

The Gerard Booth Award 'New Horizons' Award - Westwood Academy: Class Music



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

Summer Festival: 4th July

All of our Music Centre ensembles entertained the crowds in a musical extravaganza in the grounds of **Oldham Parish Church**. The Summer Festival was a showcase of the musical talents of our young musicians and adult groups. We were proud to be promoting this event as part of the Oldham Town of Culture.



The indoor stage opened with 'Shrek the Musical', performed by our combined Musical Theatre groups. Later in the day, the church hosted choirs, string orchestras and guitar groups. Meanwhile, the outdoor stage featured Brass Bands and Wind Bands from

Junior through to Intermediate, Youth and Adults. The Pop Department finished the whole event with brilliant performances by the Electric Guitar groups.



Music Centre Awards 2026

Each year, the Music Centre makes two special awards.



The 2026 recipient of the **Gerald Pritchett Award for Outstanding Service to Music Centre Groups** is **Marianna**. Marianna has made a significant impact on the life of the Music Centre and was nominated by multiple members of staff. This is testament to the commitment that she has shown to the many ensembles and choirs of which she has been a member throughout her time as an Oldham Music Centre student. Most notable has been her involvement with the Youth Brass Band where she has held the role of Principal Cornet, won awards at Whit Friday and has had the honour of playing The Last Post on Remembrance Sunday. The Gerald Pritchett Award has a monetary value of £100 which Marianna will be able to put towards her studies at Birmingham Conservatoire.



The 2026 recipient of the **Lyceum Trophy** is **Alice**. This award is made to the student who gains the highest marks in Grade 8 examinations during the academic year. Alice has progressed through the Oldham Music Centre in the choirs and brass bands. She recently gained her grade 8 tuba and was taught by Mr Byers.

Liz Brocklehurst, Retirement

After 26 years of service to Oldham Music Service, the wonderful Liz Brocklehurst will be retiring at the end of this academic year. Liz has made a marvellous contribution to music education and choral work in Oldham and has taught thousands of children. She conducted the Oldham Youth Choir for many years and set up 'The Candy Men' which was an a capella/Barber Shop singing group. Liz is known for her excellence as a teacher and will be missed greatly by her schools and colleagues. The Music Service will, of course, be marking her retirement with a special celebration for staff at the end of term.

National Youth Choir: Sing! At Oasis Academy Leesbrook



Oldham Music Service worked in partnership with the National Youth Choir of Great Britain to bring a FREE Singing Workshop to Oldham. Hosted by Oasis Academy Leesbrook, the workshop was for children in Years 5-8. Thanks to Mr Cavanagh at Leesbrook for all his support. Don't worry if you couldn't make it – you can sign up for the next workshop in Salford on 18th October! Further info is available here: [SING! 2026 - Workshops in](#)

[Greater Manchester](#)

Singing Challenge

This year's Singing Challenge song was "Go to the Park". Primary schools across Greater Manchester united in song on 18th June and tuned-in to Oldham Community Radio for a special programme featuring children from Broadfield Primary School. We had a special event in Alexandra Park which included performances by Broadfield, Westwood, Greenhill, St Thomas's Leesfield, Medlock Valley, Holy Cross and Horton Mill. It was a wonderful celebration of singing!



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 Halle'. 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. It was wonderful to see the Bridgewater Hall packed with children from Oldham schools making music together and singing.

Junior Choir - GMH Celebration Concert - Bridgewater Hall

The Oldham Junior Choir performed as part of a massed chorus of over 600 children in the Greater Manchester Music Hub Celebration Concert at the Bridgewater Hall. It was a great experience for the children to be part of such an exciting event. They particularly enjoyed hearing the Greater Manchester Music Hub Youth ensembles and the GM Youth Show Choir.



Youth Brass Band: North Yorkshire Tour

The Youth Brass Band are looking forward to their North Yorkshire Bandstand Tour. They are performing in Whitby at 4pm on Saturday 18th July and at Filey Bandstand on Sunday 19th July. We will share highlights from the tour with you in the next edition of the newsletter!

Long Service Award: 25 years - Robert Dunning



Robert Dunning was recently presented with his Long Service Award in recognition of the 25 years he has devoted to his work at Oldham Music Centre. Behind every successful event and performance is the stalwart support of Robert. He ensures that all our equipment gets to where it needs to be. He's the person who repairs and maintains the instruments and makes sure that our young musicians have a fully-functioning instrument.

Robert attended a special Oldham Council ceremony and was presented with his award by our newly-elected Mayor Cllr Pam Byrne and the Chief Executive of Oldham Council, Shelley Kipling.

The Snowman - Carrot Productions

Our annual interactive performance of The Snowman will take place on **Monday 30th November**. There are two performances in 'The Loom'. Oldham schools that subscribe to the DMG are entitled to free tickets for a full class of children. Non-DMG and out of area schools will have the opportunity to buy tickets at £10 per pupil. Tickets will go on sale in September. Check your inbox for further details! Contact angela.preen@oldham.gov.uk for more details.

Alumni News

Former Oldham Music Service and Music Centre student, Freya Lyles, has recently scooped a prestigious award as part of her ongoing studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Freya started to play the bassoon with Mrs Hartnell Booth as part of a special initiative to promote double reed instruments (oboe and bassoon) at Crompton House School, when she was in year eight. During her six years of lessons she played with multiple school and Music Centre ensembles, including the Youth Wind Orchestra and Double Reed Ensemble.

Upon completing her studies at The Crompton House Sixth Form she was able to gain a place at the prestigious Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and has been able to continue her musical studies there. The prize that she has been awarded with this year at the conclusion of her third year of four at the college is the 'Scottish Symphony Club Orchestral Prize'. The prize is awarded each year to 'an undergraduate orchestral student on the basis of the recipient's talent, professionalism, all-round ability and attitude to their studies'.



Throughout her time at the Conservatoire, Freya has kept in touch with her former Oldham Music Service teacher, Tracey Hartnell-Booth, who retired in July 2025. As luck would have it, Tracey was recently in Glasgow, visiting her son, fellow former Music Centre pupil and professional clarinetist, Aaron Hartnell-Booth, and was able to catch up with Freya in person and congratulate her on her success.

Well done Freya from all of us at Oldham Music Service and very best wishes for your future career.



NEW

Oldham Music Service

BE PART OF

TECHIES CLUB

A relaxed space for learning Music and Sound Technology together

LAUNCH!
TUES 14 JULY
4-6PM

TEACHERS,
MUSIC LEADERS,
YOUNG PEOPLE
WELCOME

EILEEN BENTLEY
ROOM, OLDHAM
MUSIC CENTRE

THEN SECOND TUES OF THE MONTH
FROM 8 SEPT 2026, 4-6PM

Build your confidence and skills
Get support from electronic music/sound engineering expert Caro C

musicservice@oldham.gov.uk **SIGN UP!** oldhammusicservice.co.uk



In partnership presents

THE QAWWALI CONNECTION

Featuring

**Sat 15th
Aug 26**

**Start
1:00pm to
3:00pm**

Live
Concert

Free
Entry

M Zubair Shah-e-Mardan Qawwali	Razwan Musician in Residence	M Sarwar Saqibi Sufi Singer
Tom Southerton Base Guitar	Yinee Ka Keyboard	Mike Darocam Drums
Asif Sufi Singer	Rahman Flute	Ushiku Crisafulli Chorus Singer
Zaman Rubab	Umer Farooq Poet	Talha Pak Singer
Danish Irfan Qawwal	M. Qadeer Chorus Singer	Zameer Hussain Chorus Singer

Please contact for Free Guest Invitation - (Limited Capacity 90)
(arrive 12.15pm - refreshments)

Venue: Oldham Library Performance Space
35 Greaves St, Oldham OL1 1AL

General parking available at Southgate Street parking, OL1 1AL
Sainsbury's Car Park, 60 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DD



CONTACT:
M Sarwar (CEO)
07930 306933

Adam Reade (Admin)
07541 407415
admin@cw-tc.co.uk








In partnership presents

THE QAWWALI CONNECTION

ONLINE RECORDED PERFORMANCE
WITH LIVE AUDIENCE

Featuring

**Sat 8th
Aug 26**

**Start
7:00pm to
9:00pm**

M Zubair Shah-e-Mardan Qawwali	Razwan Musician in Residence	M Sarwar Saqibi Sufi Singer
Tom Southerton Base Guitar	Yinee Ka Keyboard	Mike Darocam Drums
Asif Sufi Singer	Rahman Flute	Ushiku Crisafulli Chorus Singer
Zaman Rubab	Umer Farooq Poet	Talha Pak Singer
Danish Irfan Qawwal	M. Qadeer Chorus Singer	Zameer Hussain Chorus Singer

Please contact for Free Guest Invitation
(arrive 6.15pm - refreshment)

Venue: CWTC, Media Chambers, 1st Floor, 5 Barn St. OL1 1LP

The performance available on the platforms on Monday 17th August 2026.



CONTACT:
M Sarwar (CEO)
07930 306933

Adam Reade (Admin)
07541 407415
admin@cw-tc.co.uk











FFOMC

Thank you to the volunteers from the Families and Friends of Oldham Music Service who have supported all of our recent events.

Recent projects supported by FFOMC include:

- The Christmas Parties for Junior & Intermediate groups
- Choral folders for the Youth Choir
- 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
- Pink Cowboy Hats for 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.

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 26GMAN2730

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 2026-27 will be shared very soon!

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

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)

Friday 11am (0-4 years)

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 Begins Tuesday 1st September 2026 – rehearsals w/c 7th September

2026-27 Events for Music Centre Groups

Event	Date	Venue	Groups
Christmas Festival 1	Tues 1 st Dec	The Loom	Starter Strings/Strings Workshop, Function Band, Intermediate Choir, Vocal Recall, Youth Brass Band
Christmas Festival 2	Weds 2 nd Dec	The Loom	Youth Wind Band, Youth Choir, Intermediate Brass Band, Repercussions
Christmas Festival 3	Thurs 3 rd Dec	The Loom	Youth Orchestra, Junior Choir, Intermediate Wind Band, Junior Wind/Junior Brass Band
Mince Pie Gig	Tues 8 th Dec	tbc	EGG 1, 2, 3 Gen Eggz Acoustic Guitar Orch, Adult Acoustic Guitars Uke 1, Uke Too
Adult Community Groups Christmas Concert	Thursday 10 th Dec 7.15pm-8.45pm	Royton Band Club	Adult Choir Adult Wind Band Late Start Wind Band
Musical Theatre Showcase	Saturday 16 th January	Library Theatre Oldham	Junior MT Senior MT Advanced MT
Departmental Concert Week	15 th – 18 th March	The Loom	Monday: Wind Tuesday: Strings Weds: Choirs Thurs: Brass & Percussion
Easter Eggstravanza	Friday 12 th March	Billingtons	Egg 1, 2, 3 Gen Eggz ???
Adult Groups Spring Concert	Fri 19 th March	St James Derker	Adult Choir Adult Wind band Adult Guitars Uke 1 Uke Too Late Start Wind Band
Leavers Event for Y13	Tues 13 th July	Music Centre	Y13 Leavers & Parents & carers
Induction Evening for new-starters	Mon 12 th July & Thurs 15 ^h July	Music Centre	Monday: Woodwind Thursday: Brass, Perc & Strings/gtrs
Summer Festival	Saturday 3 rd July	tbc	All OMC groups

2026-27 Events for Schools

Event	Date	Venue
Battle of the Bands Oldham	Sun 24 th Jan	Whittles
Battle of the Bands GM	tbc	Band on the Wall
Secondary Vocal Gala	w/c 8 th Feb	Newman RC
Snowman soloist audition	13 th October	Music Centre
Secondary Vocal Gala	Thursday 11 th Feb	Newman RC College
Oldham Sings 1	2 nd March	Secondary school
Oldham Sings 2	3 rd March	Secondary school
Oldham Sings 3	4 th March	Secondary school
Oldham Sounds on Tour	21 st April	Tbc
Oldham Sounds on Tour	22 nd April	Tbc
Oldham Sounds on Tour	23 rd April	Tbc
Schools Music Festival	28 th June-1 st July	Tbc
Singing Challenge	17 th June?	tbc
Come & Play	tbc	Bridgewater Hall
The Snowman	Mon 30 th Nov	The Loom
Princess & the Pea 1	Fri 12 th February	Secondary schools
Aardman in concert /Carrot Productions SEND Performance	Fri 23 rd October	Manchester Central Exchange Auditorium

Keep in touch

Facebook: Oldham Council Music Service
 Website: www.oldhammusic-service.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

- £61 per term for school-age children (join as many groups as you wish)
- £71 per term, per group for adults
- £68 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 £61 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-6.15pm 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 £71 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 £68 per term)

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 £61 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.