

Happy New Year.

I hope everyone had quality family time and come back somewhat refreshed.

In this edition there's a huge variety of information on offer. Our main event this term is the WYMS young music star competition. Now in its fifth year, entries are open until Feb 14th. The success of last years fully live event has led us to continue in this vein (although online entries can still be accommodated if necessary).

There are great articles on health and wellbeing, and values perception too.

Along with the usual variety of items to hopefully pique your interest, the very final entry asks the question "What would you like to see here?" Please do get in touch if you feel there's something we should be covering that music teachers in Walsall might be interested in.

With best wishes

How to advocate for Music

The secondary music teaching series

How can we ensure a rich programme of extra-curricular music-making amidst the backdrop of staff retention challenges in the UK? What stays and what goes in your programme? To what extent are you considering staff wellbeing and engaging the full support of your school leadership team to give all students the best experience?

Read more [here](#)

Leeds Futures

Their Music programme is designed to inspire and support Year 12 students interested in studying music courses at university. You can learn about courses like Music, Music Technology, Music, Multimedia & Electronics and Music Psychology. You will also find out about student life and meet current Music students.

Join them for their campus day on 26 March 2025!

[More](#)

Learn about the music industry

Creative Pathways, is a music directory.

- Search your interests
- Information on a wide range of jobs and careers
- What you need to do, what you can get paid
- Key terms in the Music Industry
- Industry Professionals explain their jobs, lifestyle and provide valuable advice
- University and course links

For lots of industry information, click [here](#)

Xmas at the Arena - Christmas Past and Present

It seems an age ago, but three nights of outstanding music, played to an excited audience of over 1000 keen and eager parents, family and friends. Twenty schools, 600 children and young people taking part in the choirs, one Jazz Combo and two WYMS winners combined to put us all into the Christmas spirit.

If you missed out this year, keep in touch via the MusE and Mini MusE networks to book early.

[Music Educators Network Group](#)

More Christmas [here](#)

WYMS competition now open

Calling all budding young musicians. Enter our music competition (junior or senior) with a chance to win cash prizes and opportunities to perform at a variety of venues throughout the coming year.

Applicants enter the heats with a piece of music in any style or genre. These will be judged by specialist adjudicators who give feedback and select the finalists. The Heats are held **live** at Walsall Arena and Arts Centre W/C 3rd March, likely the Tuesday or Wednesday evening.

Our live final will be held on Thursday 27th March 2025 at 7:00pm in the A1 auditorium at Walsall Arena and Arts Centre.

Read [more](#)

Live Music! - Booking forms out now

At the end of each year, our staff go on tour, visiting schools with a dazzling and interactive show. Aimed primarily at KS2, the show lasts under an hour and offers children a great insight into instrumental playing in a fun environment.

Always a popular show, you will need to book early to avoid disappointment

Book [here](#)

Understanding the Values Perception Gap

Whilst not being directly music related, values perception does impact on all our students.

This teacher education aims to help educators understand the 'values perception gap', how to close it and its impact on young people's wellbeing.

Read [more](#)

Short [YouTube](#) (3 mins)

RBC Brass Extravaganza

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is inviting any brass players under 18 to come and participate in their Brass Extravaganza day for FREE at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire on *Saturday 15th February*.

The day is a chance for young brass players to interact with fantastic professional brass players including James Fountain (trumpet) and Bones Apart Trombone Quartet, as well as RBC Brass Tutors and Students.

Tickets are free but must be booked in advance. [Click here to book](#). Full info [here](#)

This Is Not A Rehearsal

This is Music Mark's newest campaign, which aims to raise awareness and encourage action around the climate crisis within the music education sector, giving you the tools and knowledge to make climate-conscious changes that help protect our planet. We are at the start of our own sustainable journey, and Music Mark would like you to join in!

Sign up [here](#)

Music Mark

The range of (music) resources available for both the primary and secondary sectors is fantastic, just one great reason to sign up to Music Mark as a school member.

Did you know, that Walsall Music Education Service offers school membership *for free* to all our schools? The criteria can be found [here](#)

For more information please contact Glen Taylor [here](#)

Education Support - Health and Wellbeing

We've featured articles from this site in the past, but it's worthwhile highlighting the excellent support this site offers teachers with regard to their mental health and wellbeing.

For (much) more, click [here](#)

English Folk, Dance and Song Society

If you're interested in folk music, you'll be glad to hear we are working towards a major project in early 2026. Whilst it sounds a long way off, these things take a while to organise.

We'll be working in partnership with the EFDSS, the country's greatest folk asset, and to this end here's a link to their website; containing so much information and resources for you to freely use

For more information, click [here](#)

Teacher CPD

Did you know, we offer regular CPD opportunities throughout the year, covering a whole range of topics, from *What Is A Musical Classroom?* to *Writing Your Development Plan*, from *The Composers Toolbox* to *Getting The Best Out Of Your Classroom Instruments* and much more.

Take a look at what's on offer [here](#)

Something you want but it's not there? please get in touch and we'll see how we can help. Contact Steph Duffy [here](#)

Walmused.co.uk

At a glance, find out about What's On, the latest news from the Walsall Music Education Service, all things directly related to schools (including the teacher networks, government info, resources, Music Centres and of course the big events of the moment (currently the WYMS music competition - see [item 4](#)).

For much more, click [here](#)

Summer Singing Festival

Last years [Summer Singing Festival](#) week was a huge triumph. Working in partnership with Rock Choir-Ed Stars, leader Sonia Taylor offered great insights into schools' prepared performances and led the massed schools choir in an afternoons workshop, learning three new songs and performing them to an invited audience

For more information, click [here](#)

[Download booking form](#)

Bob Marley anniversary with Reggae Origins concert

[Birmingham Contemporary Music Group](#) (BCMG) is set to mark the 80th birthday of reggae legend Bob Marley with a concert celebrating the origins of reggae. [Reggae Origins: Bob Marley and Handsworth Reggae](#) will see string players from BCMG join forces with Steel Pulse founder, guitarist and vocalist Basil Gabbidon.

The concert, which will take place at Birmingham Town Hall on 6 February, aims to take audiences on a journey through the history of reggae. Gabbidon, his band and BCMG string musicians will perform brand new arrangements of familiar reggae hits including Gabbidon's *Rising Sun* and *Oh Jah Jah* for band and string quartet, as well as new works created for this concert by composer Benjamin Graves.

Full article and details [here](#)

What would YOU like to see here?

I often wonder what you think of the content in these newsletters. If there's something you'd like to see more (or less) of, please do get in touch and let me know. I try and give a good, broad balance of interests from the world of music education and the arts, but if there's an area of interest you'd like to see represented, contact me [here](#)

Sources for selected items in this Newsletter include:

[Walsall Music Education Service](#)

[Education Support](#)

[Music Mark](#)

[English Folk Dance and Song Society](#)

[Royal Birmingham Conservatoire](#)

[BIMM Music Institute](#)

[Creative Pathways](#)

[Classical Music](#)

Email addresses:

[Steph Dufty](#) [Monica Hollins](#) [Glen Taylor](#)

[Nick Dewhurst](#) [Helen Miller](#) [Matt Firkins](#) [Ruth Crowson](#) [Kathryn Hopson](#)

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Dates for your diaries

Full details and more: <https://walmused.co.uk/upcoming-dates/>

w/b Mon 20th Jan [Mini MusE Music Educators Meeting](#)

Thurs 30th Jan [MusE Music Educators Meeting](#)

Mon 3rd Feb Jazz Combo gig at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, 6.30pm

Mon 10th Feb [Getting the Best Out of Your Classroom Instruments](#) CPD Session

Tues 11th Feb [Music Companions Meetings](#) at Tuesday Music Centre, 5.30 & 7pm

Wed 12th Feb [Music Companions Meetings](#) at Wednesday Music Centre, 7:15pm

Fri 14th Feb WYMS closing date

Thurs 27th Mar [WYMS Live Final](#) - Auditorium 1, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre, 7pm

Tues 1st April Music Centres Spring Concert for Beginner & Junior Groups

Tues 8th April Music Centres Spring Concert for Intermediate Groups & Senior Strings