

# NEWSLETTER



A termly newsletter from Walsall Music Education Hub

ISSUE 15

SEPT 2023

Hello,  
After a somewhat disappointing Summer (re the weather), I'm sat here preparing this issue in the sweltering heat of my new studio - that feels more like a greenhouse with temperatures over 30!

With a [new National Plan for Music Education](#) to develop – published last year but only now being implemented, the administrative and management pressures across the entire current Music Education Hub network are quite daunting. Whilst the plan itself is exciting and provides potential to develop new connections and programmes of activity, there are great changes afoot which we'll share with you over the next few issues.

To start the new year off, I'm presenting you with most of the events we have planned for this year, plus any other news stories of relevance. Something for everyone there.

## Music Mark Schools 2023/2024 is open for invitations

It's that time of year again! As part of the Music Mark Schools programme, we invite schools to a year of events, training, resources and more, for free.

The Music Mark Schools Programme is a fully subsidised member benefit and is available to all Music Hub/Service members including those in Northern Ireland, Wales and the Crown Dependencies so please do make use of this if you are able. To get started, please visit our [website](#) and complete the simple questionnaire.

*(Please note, even if you signed up last year, you will still need to follow the invitation process again as the school accounts on their site expire annually.)*

## A Common Approach

A [Common Approach](#) is an online resource to support music educators in their teaching practice and help develop a holistic approach to music education. Relevant to all vocal and instrumental teaching, music educators at all stages of their career can use the support and shared learning found in A Common Approach.

Having added sections for djembe, bass guitar, and Latin American percussion in Spring this year, there is a new instrumental addition – the Tabla! A Common Approach Editor Catherine Brentnall and contributor Harjit Singh highlight the importance of expanding the resource. [See video here](#)

## Christmas Cracker

Each year, hundreds of primary school children join in singing Christmas songs, both old and new, some known, others less so.

Themed a 'Christmas Cracker' for 2023, this years vocal event workshops/rehearsals & performances take place on November 28th, 29th and 30th in the Walsall Arena. Audience tickets always sell quickly, so as soon as they go on sale we'll let you know. *Please note that all school places are now taken.*

### Meet the Music

If you've already booked onto 'Christmas Cracker', we are holding a 'meet the music' session with director Ula Weber on Sept 13th and 14th at 4pm. This is the same event held twice (to help with timetabling and availability), you are not expected to come to both!

## Network groups

We are blessed with two music network support groups, both run brilliantly by Steph Dufty: [MinimusE](#) and [MusE](#).

These network groups support each other with CPD, generally peer led, sometimes externally and funded by the Hub. The groups develop and shape region wide events such as the World Music Days, Transition and Leadership Events like Music Mash Up, Orchestral Days such as Orchestra of the Swan, and vocal like The Big Sing or the Junior and Infant Singing Festivals.

These groups, generally set their own agendas and lead the Hub in the direction of the support and training they need. From this we have had sessions on Deep Dive training, bespoke Charanga training, moderation days for KS4 and 5, vocal workshop training, compositional techniques and SEND focussed support, among other things.

If you would like to be involved in either MusE or Mini MusE please contact [Steph Dufty](#)

Please see the dates for your diary at the end of the newsletter

## CPD

We are very proud of our CPD menu, with a range and depth that other larger music Hubs aspire to.

1st up this term is Charanga Training: Introduction to the Scheme. Hosted by Lower Farm Primary at 16:30 – 18:00 on 27th September. *Closely followed by How to Develop your Scheme – Intention and Purpose on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1-4pm at the Arts Centre.*

Contact [Steph Dufty](#) for more or check out the CPD list of workshops [here](#)

## Music Centre Concerts

Music centres run on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings throughout term time. All the pupils hard work is put on display at the end of each term.

Tuesday night caters for groups with Strings, Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion, covering all manner of music (Classical, Jazz, film, pop etc)

Wednesday nights covers the Rock and Pop musicians.

Lessons, as well as ensembles are available for all the above, and if you are interested in finding out more. Contact [Helen Miller](#) (Tuesdays) and [Steph Dufty](#) (Wednesdays). Or visit our website for [more](#)

## Share your Music Activities links

We would love to share your music activities links with the wider borough. Please let your social media admin keep us in the loop so we can promote all things musical in Walsall.

Have you got any recordings (video or audio) of music concerts/performance you can share? We'd love to feature them on our Website.

Contact [Glen Taylor](#) for more

## WYMS competition

Right now, you can enter the Walsall Young Music Star competition. The 'Up and Coming' category is for Junior Schools and the Senior category for the competition proper. Cash prizes, recordings, performance opportunities form part of the overall winners package.

Enter [here](#). More [here](#)

## Composing to Pictures

Open for applications now, this years project continues to develop our compositional offering to young composers. And now to music coordinators and music teachers alike, a tailored Inset prior to the project proper starting in January.

The project takes four paintings currently on display at the [New Art Gallery Walsall](#), and with insightful artistic comments from Rob Conway (resident art educationalist), and meaningful analysis from the Hubs resident composer Nick Dewhurst, students start to understand how images can be interpreted as musical compositions. The Staff Inset running upto the pupils engagement pre-empts the work covered at the Art Gallery, so that staff have a more full understanding of how to help their students develop well rounded pieces.

Find out more [here](#)

Book [here](#)

## Bandstand Bonanza

Our 'end of year' concert at the Walsall Arboretum in July, was marred only slightly by the light rain. The hundreds of members of the audience had a great day watching all our music centre ensembles perform. The sunshine frequently showed an appearance(!) and the food van was clearly a welcome addition to the proceedings.

To see some photos from the day, [click here](#)

## New resources from Collins Music!

If you're looking to bring breadth and depth to students' musical experience and understanding, discover the NEW 'Listen & Celebrate for Key Stage 3'. The resource introduces a selection of pieces from a range of time periods, countries and styles, offering an immersive experience through active listening and composing activities. It also includes guidance on differentiation and assessment.

[Find out more here.](#)

## Dates for diaries

### Autumn Term

12th/13th Sept	Music Centre restarts for all activities	Lessons and ensembles
13th/14th	Meet the Music sessions for school teachers involved in Christmas Cracker Christmas 2023 vocal event in A3 Arena with Ula Webber at 16:00	16:00 @ Arts Centre
18th/21st	Mini MusE (Walsall primary schools network) meetings	16:30-18:00 @ Hillary
27th	Charanga training: Intro to the scheme	16:30 – 18:00 @ Lower Farm Primary
5th Oct	CPD: How to develop your scheme - intention and purpose	13:00 - 16:00 @ Arts Centre
14th Nov	CDP: Singing - getting started. The Power of Starters and warm-ups	13:00 - 16:00 @ Arts Centre
28th/29th/30th Nov	Christmas Cracker Christmas 2023 vocal event workshops/rehearsals & performances in A3 Arena	14:00 - 18:50 Workshops 19:00 - 20:15 Concert
5th/12th Dec	Music Centre activities and Concerts	TBC
<b>Other</b>		
7th Dec	Jazz Combo at the WCEP Tea Party	New Art Gallery Walsall @ 16:30

Email addresses: [Scott Hollins](#) [Steph Dufty](#) [Monica Hollins](#) [Glen Taylor](#)

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