

Hello,

With half term seemingly an age away already, we launch into the frenetic term that offers at the same time extra workload, but also much joy as we approach the Christmas season.

As I write this (at Tuesday night Music Centre), the rehearsal rooms are filled with Christmas tunes, and the occasional mince pie passes for what will be my tea!

This edition has lots to interest, not least with the Music Mark conference coming up (18th and 19th November). We cover jobs for the musicians of the future and what it's like to be a session musician, projects for budding composers, and ways to be thoughtful about the environment.

The lead story though features the subsidies available for Charanga licences.

With best wishes for the festive season to all.

Subsidised Charanga licences

Did you know that we subsidise the cost of a licence for Charanga?

The licence fee includes a free training programme in partnership with Walsall Music Education Service, for upto 3 members of your school each time. This year that will comprise:

27th January 2025 - Getting Started – initial training

31st March 2025 - Composition training

9th June 2025 - Yu Studio features

Click [here](#) for more

Why Music Education Matters: Curriculum Connections

Music education can positively benefit core curriculum subjects when taught both explicitly as a lesson, and embedded throughout all teaching. This article focuses on Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and breaks down how music can positively impact key curriculum concepts.

[Read more](#)

Xmas at the Arena - Christmas Past and Present

Tickets for the show are available via the Arena's website. Come and support this fantastic show of songs both past and present. Featuring a Live Band, WYMS winners, Walsall Jazz Combo, and of course singers from 20 Walsall schools

[Book here](#)

How can sports science research aid the sustainability of music education?

Michelle Robinson lead discussions at the annual Music Mark conference this year.

See who she is and how her research adapts established work on the coach-athlete relationship to the 1:1 music teacher–musician dynamic. It focusses on how this relationship impacts performance outcomes and wellbeing

[More here](#)

Music Mark Conference 2024

18th - 19th November

Join Music Mark at the East Midlands Conference Centre in Nottingham to learn, share expertise, network, and be inspired as they focus on sustainability in music education. Covering all aspects of sustainability this conference will provide insight, inspiration and tangible actions for all those working across the music education ecology.

[book your ticket now!](#)

Spotlight: Piano

Our first Spotlight concert took place last month, and focussed on the Piano. Gifted students from around Walsall played to an appreciative audience, including Associate Head of Key-board at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Daniel Browell.

As special guests, two students from the RBC concluded each half with dazzling displays of virtuosity and sensitivity, hopefully inspiring our pianists to continue their studies and reach for even higher standards of excellence.

Supported by the Forest Foundation offering interval refreshments, the evening was a huge success, and we look forward to another in the Spotlight series, showcasing developing talent on other instruments

The Young Composers Project (YCP)

Hosted by the composition department at [Royal Birmingham Conservatoire](#) it's a tailored programme for a small group of young music creators (aged 14-18) of all musical styles to come together to form a supportive community over 5 FREE workshops to develop new music, finishing in a showcase to celebrate everyone's progress.

At YCP you will get:

- A **safe space** to try out new musical ideas, with supportive feedback from like-minded people
- A one-to-one composing **mentor** to help you develop your individual style
- To work with **live musicians** to collaborate with, and perform your music
- To meet **professional music creators** (composers/songwriters/producers) and learn about different career paths in music

If you'd like to join the YCP community please visit their [website](#) and fill out our short online application form: <https://youngcomposersproject.com/join-us/> by **10th November**.

If you have any questions please email the team on: birminghamyoungcomposers@gmail.com

This Is Not A Rehearsal

Music Mark's newest campaign 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 we'd like you to join us!"

[Click](#) to find a collection of events, training, resources, and blogs on sustainability.

You can also [click here](#) to sign up to their monthly newsletter that will delve into a sustainable topic each month.

Role-modelling wellbeing as a busy leader

Emotionally healthy teachers and education staff make effective learning possible. If mental and emotional health becomes a cultural priority at your school, then everyone learns, works and grows together. The truth is that healthier, happier staff stay part of your school community for longer (that includes you too).

Read [more](#)

High Scorers Concert

Starring loads of students from the around the borough who scored high merits or distinctions in their examination results, our first ever *High Scorers concert* on Wednesday 16th October was a fantastic success.

The evening started with a cup of coffee (or tea!) for the waiting audience, with pupils and students availing themselves of the soft drinks, sweets and chocolates on offer too.

A first half, ending with a great vocal performance of an Adele song, led to a short interval (where refreshments were again available).

We were all done finished by 8:30, the audience applauding enthusiastically.

The range of instruments on display and the styles of music played was huge, and parents, friends and family were treated to a feast of quality music from these high flyers.

We're already planning next years *High Scorers Concert!*

Ever wondered what it's like to be a full-time session musician?

RSL's [#BehindtheSyllabus Episode 4](#) is here, and dives into life with pro session singer and songwriter Nikki Simmons!

In this episode, Nikki covers her daily life – from 6 AM warm-ups (seriously, before sunrise!) to recording sessions, delivering raw tracks, and even breaking out of her comfort zone to jam with other incredible musicians. Her take? Nothing beats the magic of collaborating with other artists!

Nikki's video is [here](#)

Choose from a range of other short videos [here](#)

[BIMM](#) also has blogs and videos on careers in the industry. [More](#)

Inclusive Music

Music Mark launches a bank of resources to accompany you on your Inclusive Music Practice journey.

These resources were developed as part of the Think22 programme that helped to bring inclusive practice to the fore in music education in England. The programme was funded by Youth Music, and they worked in collaboration with four core partners: Essex Music Education Hub, Newham Music, THAMES (Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service), and Coventry Music.

[Drake Music Inclusive resource](#)

[Inclusive Music Practice: A map to accompany you on your journey | Music Mark](#)

Tunes and Groove in Folk and Bhangra

With the Bhangra Ceilidh in mind, EFDSS spotlights this authentic, participatory introduction to folk and bhangra music, created by **Kuljit Bhamra** (tabla), **Grace Smith** (violin), and **Sam Partridge** (guitar). Enjoy the demonstration performances of the traditional Kentish jig *Mill in the Wood*, and *Teri Meri*, a modern bhangra tune composed by Kuljit, supported by a teachers' pack. This resource was developed through a partnership project with Kent Music.

Full resource [here](#)

Sound of Success

BIMMs [Sounds of Success](#) series highlights and focuses on the achievements of these wonderful students. This month, there have been lots of tours, students and alumni supporting the likes of David Gray and Nick Cave, a Grammy certificate and an exciting internship.

Read the article [here](#)

Sources for selected items in this Newsletter include:

[Walsall Music Education Service](#)

[Music Mark](#)

[RSL Birmingham Conservatoire](#)

[RSL Awards](#)

[Education Support](#)

[English Folk Dance and Song Society](#)

[BIMM Music Institute](#)

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

- **Walsall Young Music star** (WYMS) music competition now open
- **Tues 12th Nov** [Leading Your Department](#) CPD Session
- **Fri 15th Nov** Jazz Combo Christmas Lights Gig, Open Heaven Church, Wednesbury, 5pm
- **w/b Mon 25th Nov** [Christmas Past & Present](#), A3 Arena, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre
- **Tues 3rd Dec** [Music Centre Christmas Concerts](#)
- **Tues 10th Dec** [Music Centre Christmas Concerts](#)
- **Wed 11th Dec** Rock'n'Pop Festive Gig, Auditorium 1, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre, 7pm

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