

03 October 2025

Composing to Pictures 2026

A project of musical creativity throughout the Spring Term

About the Project

'Composing to Pictures' is all about encouraging students to create music inspired by artworks. Participating schools visit the New Art Gallery Walsall (NAGW) where they learn from an expert about selected Artworks picked specifically for the project. Following this, students then receive a musical workshop on Composing from one of the Walsall Music Education Service (WMES) music educators.

In the following weeks, students and staff must then create pieces of music inspired by the artworks. During the process, schools will receive two visits from the WMES music educator involved. The first visit is to oversee, mentor and help craft the student compositions. The second visit is to record or video the student compositions.

The project is then concluded with a video presentation on the WMES YouTube channel, which is shared with all the participating schools. To view the full timeline of the project, please see the next page for a more detailed outline. All ages and abilities can be catered for as the teaching content will be differentiated accordingly, and as a result the project is suitable for KS2, 3, 4 and 5.

Whilst the project is primarily known as 'Composing to Pictures', last year we also incorporated a Rock'n'Pop element known as 'Picks to Pics', which may be more suitable for some schools.

The project is heavily subsidised by the NAGW and WMES. We kindly ask schools to pay a £75 contribution per class towards the project, which will then confirm the booking onto the project. Please also be aware, schools will need to arrange transport for the visit to the NAGW.

Key Project Aims

- Encourage students to be creative with music and compose
- Learn new musical terminology and processes to learn how to compose
- Visit the New Art Gallery Walsall for a rich cultural and artistic experience
- Breakdown the traditional perception of a composer
- Continue to build and develop links between participating schools, the WMES and NAGW
- Enjoy the process of creating new music
- Conclude the project with a final presentation which captures the new music created

Brief Overview & Timeline

Monday 12th January 2026: Staff CPD 'Composer's Toolbox'

(Free of charge to attend for participating staff)

Staff from participating schools are invited from 1-4pm to the Walsall Arena & Arts Centre for the 'Composer's Toolbox' CPD training. In this session, WMES Music Educator Nick Dewhurst explains the Spring Term composition project, shows staff how to compose, and which tools to use when helping the students with their own compositions. Resources will be given to staff to help students throughout the project.

Project week 1: School visits to the New Art Gallery Walsall

Tuesday 20th/Thursday 22nd January

On each of the given dates there is a 10am morning and 12.30pm afternoon visit available (with some flexibility for coach arrangements). The visit lasts two hours and comprises of a 1-hour tour of the New Art Gallery Walsall focusing on the selected artworks for the project this year, and a 1-hour composition workshop, educating students on what composition is, and how to compose. Students will meet the NAGW's Art Expert Rob Conway, plus the WMES's Music Educator Nick Dewhurst.

Project weeks 2,3,4: Composing in Schools

Students start to create their compositions in school using the tools and processes they've learnt during the composition workshop at the NAGW. Teaching staff will be able to support students using the resources and knowledge learnt at the staff CPD session.

Project week 5: WMES school visits to mentor student composition process

w/b 23/02/25

Nick Dewhurst will arrange to visit the participating schools in this week to see how the compositions are coming along. This session will last 1-hour and will be a chance for Nick to see how the compositions are progressing, as well as be able to give feedback and help guide the students on the next steps of their compositions.

Project weeks 6&7: Refining Compositions in Schools

Having now received extra support and guidance, students should now be able to refine the final details of their compositions and get ready to record or present them.

Project week 8: WMES school visits to record student compositions

w/b 16/03/26

Nick Dewhurst will arrange to visit the participating schools in this week to record the student compositions. Pieces can be presented either as video or audio, ideally with an accompanying score, and will then be used in the final YouTube video presentation of the project this year. Please see attached photo/video permissions form for the project this year.

Thursday 25th March: Final video presentation premieres on WMES YouTube Channel

A video will be published on the WMES YouTube channel which showcases the compositions from the project this year. A link will be sent to schools for all students and staff involved with the process to enjoy seeing their work from the project.

How to participate in the 25/26 project

Please complete the attached booking form, and return via email to elizabeth.sale@walsall.gov.uk

If you have any questions, please contact Nick Dewhurst via email at nick.dewhurst@walsall.gov.uk

Composing to Pictures 2026 Booking Form

School		
Name		
Job Title/Role		
Contact Email Address		
Contact Phone Number		
Number of Classes <small>(Max circa 30 children per class)</small>	E.g. 1 or 2	
Number of Students participating	E.g. 30 or 60	
Year group		
Composing to Pictures or Picks to Pics?		
<p align="center">Please specify your preferred date and session. The available dates are Tuesday 20th, Thursday 22nd January. The sessions are morning or afternoon.</p>		
My preferred date is		Morning or afternoon?
Please offer a 2 nd date in the event your preferred choice is already taken		
My 2 nd choice is		Morning or afternoon?

Cost

This project is heavily subsidised by the New Art Gallery Walsall and Walsall Music Education Service. We kindly ask schools to pay a £75 contribution **per class** towards the project, which will then confirm the booking onto the project. Payment is possible either card, or via Purchase Order (PO). To pay via card, please contact Lizzie Sale via email at elizabeth.sale@walsall.gov.uk or call 01922 652623. To pay via PO, please fill out your PO number below

Purchase Order Number.....

Travel Arrangements

Schools will need to arrange their own transport for the New Art Gallery Walsall Visit. Please make sure this is arranged well in advance of the day.

Deadline for Entry

The deadline for entering the project this year is **Friday 28th November 2025**. Once all entries have been received and processed, we'll be able to notify you of the session you've been allocated. We should be able to send you this information in the first two weeks of December, so you can make necessary travel arrangements for January's visit to the NAG.

Permissions Form

For Composing to Pictures Recordings Spring 2026

School Name.....

Lead Teacher Name.....

To capture and present the 2026 Composing to Pictures Project, photos, videos, and audio recording will need to take place in school. Walsall Music Education Service (WMES) Music Educator Nick Dewhurst will visit schools to complete these recordings, and will then process & edit the recordings, which will then be published publicly online on the WMES's YouTube channel. Please note, footage will be securely stored and may be kept indefinitely for both future promotions and archive purposes.

DECLARATION

I understand that photographs, videos & audio will be taken by WMES during the recording process, and that the final results of these photos/videos & audio will be publicly available to view on the WMES YouTube Channel.

☐

It is my responsibility to gain parental permission for pupils to be photographed or filmed.

☐

I hereby confirm that I have obtained permission from the parents/guardians of all the children who are being photographed/videoed/recorded via audio in Composing to Pictures/Picks to Pics.

☐

I confirm that the parents/guardians of the children involved understand that photographs or recordings may be used on the WMES YouTube channel and website, and possibly also on other WMES social media platforms such as X, Facebook and Instagram.

☐

I understand that once the final video presentation is online, WMES cannot prevent unauthorised downloading.

☐

In the rare circumstance that a pupil may not be able to be filmed, photographed or recorded, but wishes to take part, this information must be shared with WMES prior to recording, and for WMES to have given written understanding that they have received this information. In this case, the lead teacher must then work with WMES to mitigate occurrences of filming and photographing happening with that pupil.

☐

Should any school ask for retrospective withdrawal or amendment of photos or other media footage an administrative fee may apply, the amount of which will vary in accordance with the nature of the request.

Sign here

Date

Name.....

Job Role.....