



# THE MUSIC PARTNERSHIP

Newsletter - Spring 2025

*“Ensuring all young people have the opportunity to sing, learn an instrument and perform as part of an ensemble or choir.”*



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### Wow moments with SEND

Through The Music Partnership's Catalyser programme, funded by Youth Music, staff at the City Music Service recently completed a new music project in a SEND setting.



### Young Sounds UK

Young Sounds UK Connect programme is designed to help musical young people from low-income families from the moment the first sparks of potential appear.



### Gregynog Young Musician Competition

Find out more about the prestigious Gregynog Young Musician Competition held at Morton Hall.

### Recorder Festival 2025

Complimentary tickets for schools available for the 2025 Recorder Festival held at Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent.

### FOSYM Roundup

Friends of Staffordshire's Young Musicians enables children to experience and participate in the joy of music, and provides inspiration for their futures.

### Sparkyard

Out of the Ark Music offer a 30% discount on Sparkyard, their primary school song streaming service and music curriculum (and much more!) to every school across our region.

Supported using public funding by



# Welcome to the Spring Term 2025 edition of The Music Partnership's newsletter

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2025. Thank you all for the hard work and dedication at the end of last term to give so many children the opportunity to perform. Whether this was through events organised in school, by our music hub partners, or by joining our virtual Christmas sing-along, we know that children can't access performances without the support of their schools so for this we are really grateful.

From previous newsletters, you may be aware that our Music Hub covers the region of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Telford & Wrekin. This includes over 720 school settings, and we are committed to providing support and guidance to any school or family that needs it.

All Music Hubs have been asked to identify a group of 'lead schools' to provide additional support, capacity and thought leadership for music in the region. We will initially be looking for at least one secondary school and one primary school from each local authority area in the partnership. DfE have provided a set of criteria for leads schools, which will be available from your local music service later this half term along with details of how to register interest.

In September, we set out our Programme of Activity for 2024-25 and this can be summarised across three key areas: "Delivery, Support and Performances". Activity by our partner organisations will be based across these areas to respond to the aims and functions set out in the [Power of Music to Change Lives, A National Plan for Music Education](#).

Most schools have some delivery from one of our partner organisations but please get in contact at any time for any help with music in school. You can read more about our partnership activities and keep updated with CPD, events, and opportunities by visiting our website [www.themusicpartnership.org.uk](http://www.themusicpartnership.org.uk). Within this newsletter you will also find a range of information, updates, and activities to engage with but please also get in touch if there is something you need to support your pupils that you feel isn't currently available.

The Music Partnership (TMP) comprises many partner organisations that have a commitment to supporting our programme of activity. For schools and families, the easiest way to access our provision is to contact your local music service who are best placed to support locally. You can also contact TMP directly, through the website - [Contact Us - The Music Partnership](#)

This year we will continue to send a fortnightly email to all schools, which summarises the latest developments in music education and the upcoming opportunities across our region. Please lookout for this email, it will come from your local music service, or you can sign up to receive communications directly, via the website.

Best wishes from all of us across The Music Partnership for a successful year of music in 2025. As always, please don't hesitate to get in contact for any advice, guidance or support.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Callister'.

**John Callister**

**Head of Service**

Entrust Music Service Staffordshire  
on behalf of The Music Partnership  
Email: [john.callister@entrust-ed.co.uk](mailto:john.callister@entrust-ed.co.uk)

# Events, workshops and CPD opportunities

To view all of our upcoming events please visit:  
[www.themusicpartnership.org.uk/events](http://www.themusicpartnership.org.uk/events)

Remember to join the mailing list for up to date event information [www.themusicpartnership.org.uk](http://www.themusicpartnership.org.uk)



City **MUSIC** Service  
STOKE - ON - TRENT

telford&wrekin  
**MUSIC**

**SMS**  
SHROPSHIRE MUSIC SERVICE  
Teaching Music - Changing Lives

## Help us to improve musical inclusion

The Music Partnership works across Shropshire, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford and Wrekin.

- ✓ Help us to find and work with school children that could benefit from music education but whose circumstances mean they might miss out.
- ✓ Help our visiting practitioners adapt lessons to achieve the best outcomes by sharing information (eg SEND details).
- ✓ Get in touch with your local music service if you're unsure how to support a child's musical needs.



Contact us to find out more [www.themusicpartnership.org.uk](http://www.themusicpartnership.org.uk)



## The Music Partnership

**The Music Partnership is a group of the region's leading music education providers, committed to working together to ensure all young people have the opportunity to sing, learn an instrument and perform as part of an ensemble or choir.**

We receive funding from the Department of Education via Arts Council England to deliver the 'National Plan for Music Education'. We also depend on the continued financial contribution, and investment of time, made by our education partners, including schools, parents, pupils and charitable supporters. We cover the local authority areas of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Telford & Wrekin and work with the three music services in these regions alongside around thirty other music partners.

**Our Music Services are:** Shropshire Music Service, Entrust Music Service Staffordshire, The City Music Service Stoke-on-Trent and Telford & Wrekin Music.

By working collaboratively and pooling our resources we are able to stage large scale events throughout the year giving students the chance to perform with world-class musicians, orchestras, and ensembles. We deliver quality CPD opportunities, conferences and create resources that are available for teachers to enhance the delivery of their work.

**There are a number of ways we can work to bring music and singing into education settings:**

**Teaching, resources, support, CPD and training:**

- Funded and part-funded Teaching and Wider School Projects
- Subsidised Whole Class Ensemble Teaching (WCET)
- Subsidised 'Progression' Teaching
- Fully funded School Transition and Open Evening support
- Part-funded 'In Harmony' Programme
- Fully funded Music Share Workshops and Concerts
- Subsidised Charanga licenses (online music resource to support teaching and learning)
- Subsidised Sparkyard Subscription
- Funded lessons for Children in Care (CiC) via partnership with local Virtual Schools
- Bursary support for individual families (upon application) please [contact us](#) for more information
- Bursary support for children from low income families with identified musical talent - Young Sounds Connect - [youngsounds.org.uk](http://youngsounds.org.uk)

**Concerts and events:**

- A huge range of local events throughout the year:
- Annual Recorder Festival
- MusicShare Concerts
- Christmas and Summer Livestream massed events.
- Festival of Christmas
- WCET Celebration

**CPD, support and resources:**

- Musical Progression Maps (Key Stages 1-5)
- Assessing Musical Progress Framework (Instrumental and Vocal work)
- What a Good One Looks Like (WAGOLL) guides for senior leaders
- Music Network sessions
- A Music and SEND network
- A programme of annual Musical Training
- Fully funded support visits for Music Leads
- Fully funded Music Audits and the opportunity to access Excellence in Music Provision Awards
- Subsidised Early Years 'Soundpots' Music Conference
- Fully-funded membership of Music Mark – The National Association for Music Education (following audit).

# Ensembles and Groups

Do you play an instrument or sing at school and want to join an established group to further develop your playing? Do you want to learn to play an instrument or sing?



## Staffordshire

Our Music Centres run on weekdays or Saturday mornings at venues across Staffordshire: Burton, Cannock, Lichfield, Moorlands, Newcastle, Stafford, and Tamworth. We also run a group 'Blast Off' which runs online every Tuesday for all beginner instrumentalists. All ages are welcome, from KS1 to adult helpers. We have something for everyone, from fun beginner groups to advanced ensembles, covering all styles and levels of experience. Our Music Centres are all **FREE** of charge to musicians living or studying in Staffordshire. Want to try out a new instrument? We can provide a free-of-charge instrument for all members (subject to availability).

### Registration

To register for our Music Centre groups, please scan the QR code or click [here](#). Alternatively, please email us on [musicservice@entrust-ed.co.uk](mailto:musicservice@entrust-ed.co.uk) visit our website: [www.entrustmusic.co.uk](http://www.entrustmusic.co.uk) for details of times, or call 0333 300 1900.



## Stoke-on-Trent

Get expert tuition and friendly support at our Music Centre in Stoke-on-Trent.

- Monday - Choir
- Tuesday - Strings and Recorders
- Wednesday - Wind and Brass
- Thursday - Rock and Pop / Contemporary

Our Music Centres run on weekdays Monday to Thursday from 5.45-7.15pm at The Bridge Centre in Birches Head. All ages are welcome. We have something for everyone, from fun beginner groups to advanced ensembles, covering all styles and levels of experience.

### Registration

Our Music Centres are all FREE of charge to musicians living or studying in Stoke-on-Trent. To register for our Music Centre groups email [citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk) or call 01782 233796.

## Shropshire

Our ensemble provision runs every week at various locations across the county: Shrewsbury, Wem, Ludlow, Cleobury Mortimer, and Bridgnorth. Our Riffs rock and pop ensemble runs on the first Saturday of every month at our centre in Shrewsbury. Our beginners group, Stompers is suitable for instrumentalists who can confidently play three or more notes. All ages are welcome and all our ensembles are completely free of charge!

### Stompers

Beginner ensembles open to all instruments: participants need to play three notes confidently.

- Shrewsbury Stompers: Monday: 4.30-5.30pm, Music Centre SY3 0NU
  - Ludlow Stompers Tuesday: 4-5pm, SY8 1TP
  - Cleobury Mortimer Stompers: Tuesday: 4.15-5.15pm, DY14 8PE
  - Wem Stompers Wednesday: 4.45-5.45pm, SY4 5UB
  - Bridgnorth Stompers Thursday: 4-5pm, WV16 4ER
- 
- Youth Orchestra: Monday 6-7.30pm, Music Centre SY3 0NU (Grade 3+)
  - World Folk Ensemble: Wednesday, 6-7.30pm, Music Centre SY3 0NU (Grade 3+)
  - Youth Choir: Monday, 4.30-5.30pm, SY1 4QN
  - Riffs – Rock and Pop: First Saturday of every month, 10am-1pm, Music Centre SY3 0NU

### Registration

Find out more and sign-up visit [shropshiremusicservice.org.uk/ensembles](http://shropshiremusicservice.org.uk/ensembles) or call 01743 874145.

## Telford & Wrekin

### Rock / Pop

Our Rock Clubs run weekly during term time at a number of our secondary schools . They are free and open to all.

- Charlton School - Tuesdays 4-6pm
- Telford Park School – Tuesdays 4-6pm
- Erccall wood school (NEW) – Wednesdays 3:15-4:15

### Our Orchestral Ensembles are as follows:

#### Telford In Harmony Youth Orchestra

Thursdays, 3.30-5.30pm, Old Park Primary School, Malinslee

Telford In Harmony Youth Orchestra (TIHYO) is open to any young musician from Years 4-13 who plays a standard orchestral instrument. The orchestra plays a range of different musical styles and genres in a supportive and friendly environment and is free of charge.

#### Telford In Harmony Youth Ensemble

Thursdays, 5.30pm – 6.30pm, Old Park Primary School, Malinslee

In Harmony Youth Ensemble runs on a Thursday evening in Telford from 5.30 - 6.30pm and is for anyone from Years 6 – 13 playing at Grade 2 standard or above on a standard orchestral instrument. Youth Ensemble members need to be able to read music to a reasonable level. TIHYE is free of charge.

### Registration

For more information on any of the above contact us at [Telford.music@telford.gov.uk](mailto:Telford.music@telford.gov.uk) or phone 01952 380981.

# Wow moments with SEND

Through The Music Partnership's Catalyser programme, funded by Youth Music, staff at the City Music Service recently completed a new music project in a SEND setting.

During the project, the team worked with children with severe learning difficulties and various additional needs. There are often many 'wow moments' from this type of music work but some of the highlights have included, children who have limited verbality singing to songs, one child taking interest in a tongue drum and trying it out where participation had previously been limited, 'making potions' on the timpani for Halloween, one child developing musical skills to play loud, quiet, fast and slow; and children who do not usually speak copying key phrases and expressing their choices verbally.

The team commented that: *"I do not think either of us will forget the brilliant session we had using spray bottles and ice to create winter, and the two children who gave us all a shower! Staff in school were thrilled with how the children took part, showing skills they had not yet seen."*



# Trinity Music Awards

Through the same funding programme, the Hub is now able to assess Trinity Music Awards, providing an inclusive option for children where traditional music exams may not be appropriate.

Trinity Music Awards are completed in the children's own setting by recording evidence and submitting to the award centre. There are currently two centres within our hub, in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, which can be accessed from across the full hub region to process the qualifications.

Free online training and further information can be found [here](#). Or contact the hub moderators: [Karen.sproston@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.sproston@stoke.gov.uk) or [lislamwilson@entrust-ed.co.uk](mailto:lislamwilson@entrust-ed.co.uk)



# City Music Service

## Stoke-on-Trent Young Musician of the Year Final

The 12 winners of the Preliminary Rounds held in January will take to the stage to perform for the Junior and Senior Young Musician Titles.

**Date:** Friday 28 March

**Time:** 6pm

**Venue:** The Bridge Centre, Birches Head Road, Birches Head, Stoke-on-Trent ST2 8DD

For more details email [citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk)



## Stoke 100

The year 2025 marks 100 years since Stoke-on-Trent was granted city status by His Majesty King George V in 1925. Stoke-on-Trent first obtained city status on 5 June 1925, following a direct approach to King George V, to recognise the city's considerable contributions to the pottery industry.

The City Council will be encouraging businesses and the community and voluntary sector to come together in a year-long programme to celebrate the rich heritage of the city and tell the story of how Stoke-on-Trent became a city. City Music Service will be organising concerts and events for schools in the City as part of these celebrations.



## Big Sing and Big Play

Save the dates: 4, 10 and 11 June 2025

City Music Service have been asked to organise several exciting musical events for schools in the City as part of these celebrations and you can now sign up to take part.

The Big Sing events are aimed at pupils in KS1 and KS2 and the Big Play events for pupils in KS2 – KS5. We hope that you'll be able to join us in celebrating together. We will also be performing new songs written especially for the event by local schools!

Find out more

Please contact [citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk) to find out more and to book a place.



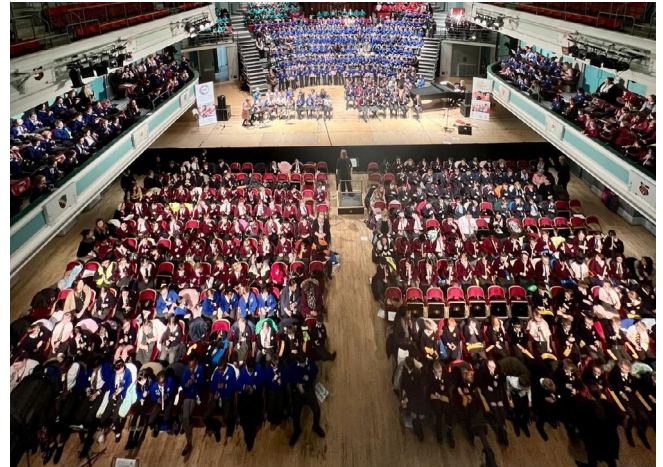


# Recorder Festival 2025

## Victoria Hall

### Complimentary Tickets for Schools

The Music Partnership are delighted to offer your pupils complimentary tickets to watch the 2025 Recorder Festival at the Victoria Hall in Hanley. This will take place on Tuesday 18 March, 12.30pm and Wednesday 19 March, 12.30pm.



This year there will be a limited number of complimentary tickets available so please reply to [Helen.Booth@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.Booth@stoke.gov.uk) by Friday 31 January stating: how many tickets you require, how many children and how many accompanying staff, for which concert (Tuesday lunchtime or Wednesday lunchtime) and contact email address for lead staff member.

*Please note that transport is not provided.*

Schools do not need to reserve any tickets for pupils taking part in the Recorder Festival. Tickets for parents and friends of pupils taking part in the Festival will be available to purchase directly from the Victoria Hall / Regent Theatre. Flyers will be sent out shortly. There will also be two complimentary tickets for Headteachers/Governors of the schools taking part, again information regarding these will follow.

## Soundpots

### Soundpots Early Years Music Network

Come and join us for the next Early Years network meeting taking place on Wednesday 21 May at 4pm at the Bridge Centre or via Teams. The session is aimed at colleagues working in Early Years settings as well as those leading Music. Attendance is free of charge. To reserve your place please email [citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk)

### Soundpots Early Years Music Conference - 4th April 2025, The Bridge Centre, Birches Head, Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 8DD

- Practical skill-sharing workshops with experienced Early Years Music Practitioners
- Networking opportunities
- Discussions around the links between music-making, communication and wellbeing

Guest Speaker- Rosie Rushton, Specialist Lecturer at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, and Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham. In 2024 Rosie was awarded honorary membership of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire for her significant contributions to the field of music, disability and education.



To book or for more information contact [citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk) or scan the QR code.

# Shropshire Music Service

To find out more about who we are and what we do, visit [www.shropshiremusicservice.org.uk](http://www.shropshiremusicservice.org.uk) or call us on 01743 874145.

# SMS

SHROPSHIRE MUSIC SERVICE  
Teaching Music - Changing Lives

## Singing for Wellbeing

Throughout 2023, Shropshire Music Service ran a series of workshops in primary and secondary schools across the county which focused on singing for lung health and wellbeing. Co-funded by NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, the workshops focused on basic vocal exercises to help improve symptoms exacerbated by asthma and associated anxiety.

Over 90% of participants experienced improvement in their lung health over the period of ten weeks. The workshops were so well-received that parents and carers wanted to continue with these exercises in the home. Based on this fantastic feedback, our vocal teacher, Beatrice Floyer-Acland spent a day in the studio with our friends at Opus Media Productions to produce a series of videos sharing safe and effective exercises that can be used in any setting.

### Start your Singing for Wellbeing journey today!

We're delighted that our Singing for Wellbeing programme was able to help a number of children in Shropshire and hope that our videos can help many more. Click [here](#) to start your Singing for Wellbeing journey today!

## Riffs Rock Christmas in Shifnal

Shropshire Music Service welcomed in the festive season with a fantastic performance from their rock and pop ensemble, Riffs. The band took to the stage in the town centre of Shifnal to entertain the crowds for the Christmas light switch on.

Despite some brutal weather, the band performed brilliantly, delivering a set featuring the work of Stevie Wonder, The Eagles, Paramore, and Muse, under the expert leadership of Andrew Jones. Karen Kirkland, lead teacher for performance and events at Shropshire Music Service, who organised the event with Shropshire Festivals, is really proud of the students who performed: 'they sounded amazing, and it was a fantastic opportunity for them to perform on a public stage with a professional sound crew.' Sound was provided by Jack Berry Productions who also commented 'we loved working with you and the band, the students did an awesome job, and you should be so proud of them.' We certainly are!



### Join in with similar performance opportunities

Find out how your children and young people can join in with similar performance opportunities by signing up to our Riffs workshops (by [clicking here](#)), held on the first Saturday of every month at Shropshire Music Centre: it's free of charge and suitable for popular musicians and songwriters of any standard.

# SMS

Shropshire Music Service  
TEACHING MUSIC - CHANGING LIVES

## SHROPSHIRE STAGE & SCREEN ORCHESTRA

**OPEN TO  
ALL AGES  
(ADULTS &  
CHILDREN)**

**ALL  
ORCHESTRAL  
INSTRUMENTS  
(GRADE 3+)**

### REHEARSALS

**(SMS Centre, Shrewsbury):**

Saturday 8th Feb (10am to 1pm)

Saturday 15th March (10am to 1pm)

Saturday 5th April (1-30pm to 4-30pm)

Saturday 10th May (1-30pm to 4-30pm)

Saturday 21st June (10am to 1pm)

**Performance in the Quarry Bandstand Saturday 5th July**



**SCAN QR  
TO SIGN UP!**





## Connect programme

Young Sounds UK Connect programme is designed to help musical young people from low-income families from the moment the first sparks of potential appear. We support their instrumental learning beyond initial state-funded lessons, so they can keep on playing music well into their teens and beyond.

The key strands for students of the Connect programme consist of:

- Individual weekly instrumental tuition.
- A termly Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The Charanga Online ILP supports young musicians who are learning an instrument by giving them ownership of what they want to achieve musically.
- An annual personal progressions bursary of £50 per student to support their ILP learning goals.
- Termly Student Get Together events. These are collective opportunities for our young people and their families to come together, share new musical experiences, and enables family members to become more involved in their child's musical journey.

- Free ensemble membership. Taking part in programmes and projects run by national music organisations in their area.
- Access to a Young Sounds Alumni Mentor.
- Contributing to Young Sounds events, films and publications.

The key strands for teachers of the Connect programme consist of:

- Termly Teachers' Forums in each area for those music teachers working with Connect programme students. Teachers are paid to attend, and their input plays a vital part in the development of the programme.
- Support young musicians who are learning an instrument by giving them ownership of what they want to achieve musically through termly Individual Learning Plans (ILP's).

These elements, with continuing support from the Local Connectors, aim to deliver high-quality support for participants, developing an excellent musical progression model.

*continued>*

The programme targets young people from lower income families who may not be able to continue music tuition without support. For this reason, we set the following eligibility criteria:

- They demonstrate potential on their instrument and a keenness to progress.
- For the 2024/25 academic year we are only able to consider young musicians whose total gross family income is £34,037.12 or less (once £2,335.00 has been deducted for each dependent in the family, including the young person being funded).

## Find out more

You can read more about Furthering Talent here: [Young Sounds Connect - Young Sounds](#)

If you have a student that meets the Young Sounds UK Connect programme criteria and you wish to nominate them, please email:  
Staffordshire - [chris.stringer@entrust-ed.co.uk](mailto:chris.stringer@entrust-ed.co.uk)  
Stoke-on-Trent – [jenny.mawdsley@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.mawdsley@stoke.gov.uk)



In September 2024 Young Sounds UK, launched a new phase of the Connect programme, which supports young people from low-income households to develop their musical talents. The expanded programme will support up to 1,000 young musicians over the next four years across 12 regions.

The development builds on the success of Young Sounds UK's Connect initiative, which has been running for 15 years, and will now broaden its reach. We are delighted that pupils from Stoke-on-Trent will now be benefitting from being part of the programme. Children with identified musical potential will receive support, including free weekly instrumental or singing lessons in small groups and personal bursaries to spend. Those participating in the programme will also be able to attend termly Get Together events, to meet other aspiring musicians, be inspired by professional musicians and develop their skills. So far, in Stoke-on-Trent, we have focussed attention on the notoriously difficult transition from Year 6 to Year 7 and have identified a number of children that shone in their Whole Class Music lessons in Year 6 and have offered them the opportunity to continue with their instrument at Secondary School. Lessons got underway earlier this term and we are delighted with the progress made so far and we are looking forward to creating an exciting programme of events to further inspire pupils.

City Music Service teacher Hal Walker said: *"I've been really pleased to teach children that I've taught previously in primary school, that wouldn't have necessarily had the opportunity to carry on with their instrument."*



Tis the season for sleigh rides, silent nights and saxophones! What could be more festive than a stage packed with musicians and choirs at Christmas? How about adding some sparkling saxophone from the brilliant Jess Gillam? Young Sounds Connect students travelled to Symphony Hall on 20 December for a festive musical treat. A concert performed by CBSO, CBSO Children's Chorus and special guest Jess Gillam MBE entertained everyone with a feast of festive music, a wonderful way to start the Christmas holiday!

An inspirational concert for our young students to see and hear professional musicians, young voices and a previous student of Young Sounds UK who is now an international musician. As a special treat, our Connect programme students got to meet with Jess after the concert. Young Sounds UK supported Jess from the ages of 13 to 17, helping with the cost of her Saturday studies at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music and enabling her to access a host of musical opportunities, including performing at prestigious venues on the charity's behalf. In 2016, at the age of 17, Jess made history as the first saxophonist to win the Woodwind Final of BBC Young Musician of the Year. In 2017 she made her BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall, where she performed as a soloist with both the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the BBC Concert Orchestra. Since becoming an Alumna of the Awards Programme at age 18, Jess has continued her connection with the charity by becoming a mentor to younger musicians on the Arts Council England-funded peer-mentoring programme, Talent to Talent; now she is the youngest patron.

# FOSYM 2023-25 Roundup

Friends of Staffordshire's Young Musicians enables children to experience and participate in the joy of music, and provides inspiration for their futures. From helping an individual child in need of financial aid to learn an instrument, to providing additional income for underfunded music provision in schools, FOSYM provides financial support to enable access to musical learning for children and young people in Staffordshire.

In November and December FOSYM helped support Entrust Music Service with Christmas concerts at Litchfield Cathedral, Tamworth Music Centre, Stafford Music Centre, and Victoria Hall, Hanley. At the Festival of Christmas Music 2024 this December at Victoria Hall in Stoke there were two soloist performances from two of this year's winners of Staffordshire Young Musician Competition - Joel Tennant, who won the Intermediate Singer Competition, and Zongze Li who won the Junior Instrumentalist Competition (both pictured). It was a great opportunity to showcase their talent at the Christmas Festival and they performed brilliantly in front of such a large audience.

Our presence at these events really helps to raise awareness of the work we do and provide fundraising opportunities. We hope that many of the students who benefit from our funding take part in these opportunities to showcase their musical talent. During 2023-24 FOSYM has supported 110 pupils through pupil progress grants (applications through the Music Service) and 9 pupils through financial grants (applications direct from parents where children are taught by non-music service teachers). By the end of 2024-2025 we hope to have increased our support to 200 pupils.

We chatted to the participants of Staffordshire Young Musicians Competition 2024, which was supported by FOSYM, and asked them about the experience and how having support from the charity made them feel:



Joel Tennant



Zongze Li

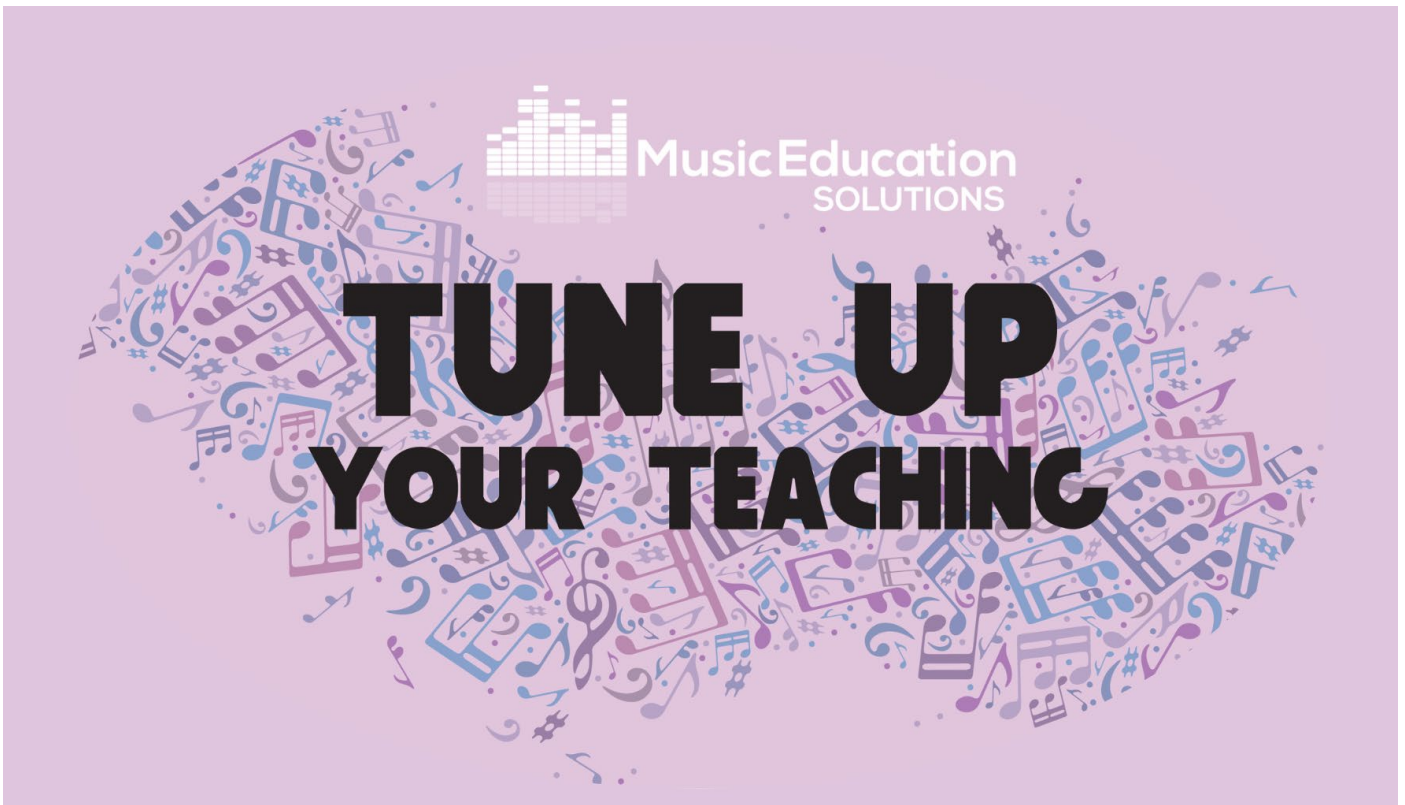
*"I had lots of different instruments when I was younger, ukulele, small drum kit, recorder. I chose the drums because I enjoyed it more than the other instruments. Taking part in Staffordshire Young Musician has helped me build confidence." - Isaac, 13*

*"I wanted to do music like my mum and dad. I thought playing the trumpet would be fun and it is. Being in the Young Musician competition made me feel very happy." - Oscar, 11*

*"I feel more confident and have gained stage experience by being in the Young Musician Competition. I'm very proud and would like to experience more stage shows and competitions." - Zongze, 10*

*"I love the piano and you can do a lot of great things with it. The competition has given me more confidence and performing opportunities. I feel quite proud of myself and it makes me more confident." - Savva, 12*

*"I was first engaged in music by going to concerts with my family. I chose to play the drums because it's loud! Taking part in the competition has increased my practice and performance opportunities. Receiving a prize from FOSYM has made me feel proud of myself." - Ryan, 13*



## Tune Up your Teaching with Music Education Solutions®

This academic year, Music Education Solutions is offering a varied programme of CPD webinars and certificates that will help to develop your teaching and subject leadership skills.



### Webinars and subject leadership certificates

Whether you're looking for help with creating a music development plan, wanting to understand how to develop core musical skills across a primary school, or looking for subject leadership training, we have an option that will suit you! To find out more about our webinars and subject leadership certificates visit <https://musiceducationsolutions.co.uk/ourwebinars/>



### Self-guided courses

For those teachers who find it difficult to get release time to attend CPD, Music Education Solutions also offers a programme of online self-guided courses that you can complete in your own time. Each course includes a range of video, audio, and text-based resources, and interactive elements. You can find a course to suit you here: <https://musiceducationsolutions.co.uk/ourcourses/>



### Music certification

If, on the other hand, you're ready to really lean in to your professional development this year, perhaps you might consider registering for the Level 4 Certificate for Music Educators. This flexible, online distance-learning programme is open to music educators working in any context, regardless of previous qualifications or experience, and can be completed over the course of 1-2 years. On completion you will receive a qualification is the equivalent to the first year of an undergraduate degree, and be entitled to use the post-nominals CMETCL. Find out more here: <https://musiceducationsolutions.co.uk/level-4-certificate-for-music-educators/>

# Morton Hall

## Gregynog Young Musician Competition

WINNER ANNOUNCED



Pictured from right to left: Prof. Iuean Jones (Patron) Finalists: Erin - Harp, Una - Violin, Joel Pianist and Overall Winner of the Gregynog Young Musician 2024, Hassan - Recorder, Zhengyuan - Violin, David Davies, President

**For some twenty years, Gregynog Hall, a treasured historic house in the heart of rural Montgomeryshire, famed as the former home of art collectors and benefactors Gwendoline and Margaret Davies, has hosted the annual Gregynog Competition for Young Musicians.**

The competition is now recognised as one of the major competitions of its kind in the UK. And the association with the Davies family has remained strong through the years. The current president is Daniel Davies, whose parents Lord and Lady Davies, were long associated with the competition as well. The competition's Patron, and Chairman of its judging panel, Harpist Iuean Jones is well known as a native of mid-Wales, as well as being a Professor of Harp at the Royal College of Music and much in demand as a recitalist both here and abroad. Iuean ensures that each year the panel of judges chosen to adjudicate the competition are of the highest calibre, and are also both great performers and teachers in their own right. It is the competition's mission to provide the best musical experience for the young competitors, and for them to get the fairest and positive experience possible from taking part. The competition is run by a hard-working committee of volunteers, drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds, but all passionate about music, music education and providing opportunities for young musicians. Their dedication and drive has seen the competition grow over twenty years into what it is now, but they are always looking for further help and support, whether practically, as a sponsor or by becoming a friend of the competition.

### A musical past

Gregynog Hall has a long and illustrious musical past, with an organ chosen for the Music Room by the Welsh composer Sir Walford Davies, and in which room for many years the Annual Gregynog Festival was largely based, formerly under the artistic direction of Anthony Rolfe Johnston. Famous musicians such as the composer Benjamin Britten and tenor Peter Pears, amongst others, have also given recitals in the wonderful surroundings at Gregynog. The artistic history of the hall is immediately apparent to anyone visiting, with still so much tangible evidence of its heyday of printing, pictures and much more besides.

The annual Gregynog Young Musician Competition is open to musicians aged 18 and under, who are selected from an initial listening round to compete in a semi-final competition at Gregynog Hall. From the twenty or so successful semi-finalists, up to five are then chosen as category winners to compete further on the same day in an evening final, after which an overall winner for the day is chosen by the panel of judges.

### Past winners

The list of past winners and finalists reads like a Who's Who of present-day stars. Amongst them are the cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason, who played at Harry and Meghan's wedding, the violinist Charlie Lovell-Jones, who leads the John Wilson's Orchestra which made such an impression at this year's Proms, Oboist Tom Blomfield and French Horn virtuoso Ben Goldscheider.

There are many other former competitors too who have achieved so much after competing at Gregynog, and it is wonderful to follow their successes as their careers develop, and to know the competition has played at least some part in that journey. It is a truly national competition but intensely proud of the Welsh roots from which it has sprung, and it is also supported so well by local businesses and people on whom it really does rely.

*continued>*



## 2024 competition

2024's competition was held on Saturday 16th November, and welcomed up to 20 talented young musicians from all over the UK and abroad to compete for this year's trophy and £3000.00 first prize. All category winners won £500.00 for coming first in their instrumental class, a level of prize money that is so useful to our young competitors in helping fund their studies and the costs involved.

At a time when there is such a need to support young musicians in their studies, and to encourage young musicians of the future, the Gregynog Young Musician Competition has a vital role to play.

The competition itself is a day of high emotion, musical thrills and spills, and this year's competition was exciting as ever, and did not disappoint! After a day of astonishing performances the finalists performed again in the evening concert.

The winner of GYM 2024 will be invited to return to perform in the annual Gregynog Competition Summer Concert, which has also given a platform to young local performers.

### Find out more

If you feel you would like to know more about the competition, please visit their website: <https://gregynogymc.co.uk/> or contact the secretary by emailing: [sec@gregynogymc.co.uk](mailto:sec@gregynogymc.co.uk)



*At a time when there is such a need to support young musicians in their studies, and to encourage young musicians of the future, the Gregynog Young Musician Competition has a vital role to play.*



# SPARKYARD

FROM  
Out of the Ark Music

Out of the Ark Music offer a **30% discount** on Sparkyard, their primary school song streaming service and music curriculum (and much more!) to every school across our region. Many of you will know about Sparkyard already, but many more may well have been singing Out of the Ark songs for well over 30 years in school Nativities, musicals and assemblies.

## Sparkyard or Out of the Ark? What's the story?

Founded by Mark and Helen Johnson, Out of the Ark Music began over 30 years ago with a mission to bring the life and joy of songs and singing into every school. For more than three decades, through their much-loved nativities and inspiring assembly and classroom songs, they have become a trusted name in classrooms across the world. More recently their innovative subscription service, Sparkyard, has made it even easier for schools to access the entire Out of the Ark catalogue of fabulous songs and resources, as well as introducing a comprehensive and flexible primary school music curriculum designed to empower every teacher to teach great music lessons.

Within a year of Sparkyard's launch it was named **"Outstanding Music Education Resource"** at the Music and Drama Awards (2023). Since then Out of the Ark have been working away to ensure that Sparkyard continues to support teachers to feel confident to use songs and musical learning in all parts of school life.



## Supporting teachers at every stage

Another exciting area of Out of the Ark's work is how they work closely with SCITT and university providers across the country to enable trainee teachers to harness the power of music in their classrooms. Their training is embedded in SCITT programmes and shows trainees how music and singing can **strengthen classroom practice**, support **children's curriculum learning** and **promote pupil wellbeing**.

Over the past 6 years OOTA have worked with over 1000 trainees, and whether helping them **get to grips with the National Curriculum** for Music or teaching them how to use songs to support **behaviour management**, they are always bowled over by trainees' enthusiasm, energy and capacity to take on new ideas – particularly if the prospect of teaching music terrifies them!

*"Sparkyard is a fantastic resource. It's really easy to navigate, and the range of ready-to-use resources makes it simple for trainees to integrate music into their lessons. There's a strong evidence base behind the material, which means trainees can trust it's going to have a positive impact on their teaching."*

- Renuka Sivakumaran, Curriculum Lead at SCITTELS in East London



Read the full blog here

<https://www.sparkyard.com/post/inspiring-trainee-teachers-through-music>

*continued>*

## Sparkyard and The Music Partnership

Anyone can take out a free 30-day trial of Sparkyard at [www.sparkyard.com](http://www.sparkyard.com), and because of our partnership with Out of the Ark, EVERY school in our region can save 30% on the subscription cost (just enter the discount code 30TMP24 when you check out).

But there's much more going on! Jenny Mawdsley from Stoke City Music Service is a Sparkyard Music Hub Ambassador, which means she really knows how Sparkyard works, as well as really knowing the music education landscape in The Music Partnership. Jenny will be leading training during the year, and you can also contact her at [jenny.mawdsley@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.mawdsley@stoke.gov.uk) if you need any help or advice in the meantime.

There are also regular free online twilight CPD sessions run by Out of the Ark to help you find out more about Sparkyard in general, to dig a little deeper into the Sparkyard Music Curriculum, and to discover ways to embed singing into every part of the school day. These are always advertised within Sparkyard itself, and also at [www.sparkyard.com/workshops](http://www.sparkyard.com/workshops).





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# MusicShare Concerts 2025



MusicShare is a Singing Schools Programme which is a partnership between Lichfield Cathedral School & Lichfield Cathedral, with significant funding from Arts' Council England via The Music Partnership.

## Concert dates at Lichfield Cathedral in 2025:

- 18 March 2025 – aimed at SEND Schools, any age from Year 3 to secondary, in Stafford and Stoke on Trent.
- 20 March 2025 – aimed at Secondary Schools, any age from Year 7, in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent.
- 24 June 2025 – for year groups 3 to 6 in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent.
- 25 June 2025 – for year groups 3 to 6 in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent.

To book please email: [c.lamb@lichfieldcathedralschool.com](mailto:c.lamb@lichfieldcathedralschool.com)



## Secondary Song Book

I have been privileged to lead MusicShare for 18 years and it has, and continues to be, a joy to work with children and teachers across The Music Partnership in their singing journeys. MusicShare celebrated its 20th anniversary year last year as it was founded in 2003 and I am thrilled that we have been asked to create this Secondary Song Book to partner the Primary School Songbook, which was released a couple of years ago.

This new book, commissioned by The Music Partnership offers songs for KS3 to KS5, most of which you will not find anywhere else! The Music Partnership is exactly that, a brilliant partnership, and we all learn from each other all the time. This is by no means an exhaustive resource which is why the book also contains an inventory of recommended songs and links to other organisations with great ideas for secondary singing.

Singing is, in my opinion, the birthright of every child – whether they are naturally tuneful or otherwise! It is a natural human expression and can open so many doors academically and mentally. However, singing with your students in a secondary setting can often prove daunting as there is so much to contend with in terms of changing voices, puberty and competition with so many other pressures in young lives. We do hope you find the resource helpful – watch this space as it will be sent free to all secondaries within The Music Partnership soon!

**Cathy Lamb**  
Director of MusicShare





# Save The Hive Campaign!

The Hive, a much-loved young people’s creative arts and wellbeing charity faces closure ahead of mounting pressures to attract funding.

Based in the heart of Shrewsbury, The Hive operates across both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and it’s ‘Save The Hive’ campaign aims to raise £50k to keep its Belmont base open. Operating as a specialist creative arts and wellbeing charity for over 19 years supporting almost 50,000 children and young people; many facing complex challenges in their lives, to achieve their potential through over 200 different projects.

## Contacts for the TMP team



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