



THE MUSIC PARTNERSHIP

Newsletter - Summer 2026

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



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A New Tune to TooT at Myddle Primary School

Thanks to the DfE's Capital Grant, Shropshire Music Service has invested in several class sets of TooTs.



Keeping it in the family

The Robinsons participated in a variety of categories at Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival on 21st March 2026.



Telford Sings

750 children from Primary, Secondary and Special Schools across the borough took part in this year's 'Telford Sings'.

Young Sounds

Young musicians recently took part in an exciting and creative event called Music Mystery Mayhem, part of the Young Sounds Programme.

Children in Care

We are celebrating record numbers of Children in Care in Staffordshire accessing musical instrument tuition thanks to our strong partnership with the Virtual School.

Morton Hall Big Sing

Moreton Hall was filled with music, movement and a wonderful sense of togetherness as around 90 children from local primary schools came together for a vibrant Big Sing event.

Supported using public funding by



Welcome to the Summer Term 2026 edition of The Music Partnership's newsletter

Dear colleagues,

As we move into the Summer Term, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the exceptional music-making we have seen across the region over recent months. The Spring Term was marked by a series of fantastic events, including Telford Sings, Recorder Festivals, Battle of the Bands, and the Staffordshire Wind Band Festival, to name just a few. All of which showcased the talent, commitment, and creativity of pupils and staff across our region. Thank you for all the time and effort that goes into promoting and preparing pupils for these activities.

Alongside this, it has been particularly encouraging to see growing support from our charity partners within the region, many of whom have content within this newsletter. This support is making a big difference, helping individual children to continue their musical journeys and enabling projects that broaden access, deepen inclusion, and strengthen progression pathways. This collective commitment across schools, music services, and the voluntary sector is vital if we are to ensure that opportunity in music education does not depend on family circumstance.

As I highlighted in the previous edition, the findings of the recent Curriculum Review speak to this point. Access to instrumental and vocal learning continues to be uneven, shaped too often by geography, family income, or local capacity. Music is not an optional extra; it is integral to whole-child development, supporting wellbeing, inclusion, cultural capital, and aspiration. High-quality curricular and co-curricular music play a crucial role in addressing these inequalities.

Giving children agency over their music-making, through quality ensembles, choirs, instrumental and vocal tuition, and creative workshops, is essential to a meaningful musical engagement. When provision is delivered well, it complements the curriculum and provides pathways that may otherwise be unavailable for some children and young people. Schools that invest in high-quality co-curricular music are making a strategic investment in personal development, engagement, and future opportunity.

As we look ahead to the summer term, when most schools and families are making their choices about provision, activity and teaching for the year ahead, I would like to reiterate the critical importance of school-level oversight of all music activity that takes place during the school day. This includes oversight of:

- Charging arrangements, ensuring charges are in line with government guidance and reflect only the true cost of provision and that remissions and support are in place for families who need them
- Quality and safeguarding, ensuring appropriate practitioner experience, training, adherence to good safeguarding practice and alignment with the school's expectations for quality and musical progression
- Ethical and legal practice, particularly that schools are not enabling repeated marketing or promotional activity which takes place directly and repeatedly with children

On the last point, it is essential that any communication about music tuition or enrichment activities is directed appropriately to parents and carers, rather than directly to pupils. Schools play a vital role in protecting pupils from inappropriate commercial influence and ensuring that participation in music remains rooted in educational benefit rather than commercial practice.

Within this newsletter you will find details of upcoming performance opportunities, festivals, and events, alongside CPD, resources, and guidance to support the continued development of music in school. There are also case studies and practical strategies to help ensure that music provision reaches every pupil and continues to grow in quality and impact.

Thank you, as ever, for your leadership, care, and commitment to music education. Together, with schools, music services, and our growing network of partners, we can continue to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive, belong, and discover their potential through music.

If you need any support with music in your school, then please contact your local music service.

Best wishes for the term ahead.

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

Events, workshops and CPD opportunities

Our upcoming events can be seen at
www.themusicpartnership.org.uk/events
and is updated regularly.

Remember to join the mailing list for up to date
event information www.themusicpartnership.org.uk



Help us to improve musical inclusion

- ✓ 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.

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

Contact us to find out more
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

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 visit our website: 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.

- 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 or call 01782 233796.

Shropshire

Our ensemble provision runs every week at various locations across the county: Shrewsbury, Wem, Ludlow. 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 SY1 4ND
- Ludlow Stompers Tuesday: 4-5pm, SY8 1TP
- Wem Stompers Wednesday: 4.45-5.45pm, SY4 5UB

- Youth Orchestra: Monday 6-7.30pm, Shrewsbury College, SY2 6PR (Grade 3+)
- World Folk Ensemble: Wednesday, 6-7.30pm, Shrewsbury College, SY2 6PR (Grade 3+)
- Riffs – Rock and Pop: First Saturday of every month, 10am-1pm, Music Centre SY1 4ND

Registration

Find out more and sign-up visit 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
- Ercall 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 or phone 01952 380981.

Shropshire Music Service

To find out more about who we are and what we do, visit
www.shropshiremusicservice.org.uk or call us on 01743 874145.

SMS

SHROPSHIRE MUSIC SERVICE
Teaching Music - Changing Lives

A New Tune to TooT at Myddle Primary School

Thanks to the DfE's Capital Grant, Shropshire Music Service has invested in several class sets of TooTs, starter woodwind instruments designed to prepare young musicians for playing the flute. We caught up with Karen White, peripatetic teacher with SMS who has been trialling the instruments in whole class instrumental provision and reflects on her experiences.

Karen became interested in the flute when she was at Primary school, when the classroom teacher invited a lady to come into the school to play a selection of pieces. Karen comments, 'I was hooked! Since that inspirational moment at the age of 8, I have been playing the flute ever since, and am always on the lookout for ways to encourage others to have a go at the instrument either in whole class lessons or by having individual lessons.' Karen teaches whole class woodwind at a village school, at Myddle Primary School, just outside Shrewsbury. Each key stage 2 class has one half hour weekly lesson. The Year 5 children at Myddle Primary school have been on a woodwind journey with Karen: they started by learning the folk whistle in year 3, then moved onto the recorder in year 4. This year for the first time at the school, they have taken on the challenge of the Toot, with a view to progressing to flute.

Karen observes:

"Having chatted to the children about their Toot experience, it has given me an insight into how they feel about the instrument. They found it exciting and challenging to try something new and many said that holding the Toot sideways was much easier than playing in the vertical recorder position. I was very particular about making sure the children held the recorder in the correct hand position when they were in year 4, so when they held a Toot for the first time, they could instantly transfer their skills easily!"



Karen White (featured far left) with her 'TooTing' class from Myddle Primary School.



Keeping it in the Family!

This term at Shropshire Music Service, we're celebrating the success of a very special family and wishing them well as they enter the Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival. Meet the Robinsons...



Samuel (aged 10), Zac (aged 10) and Joel (aged 12) all learn a variety of instruments with the music service and compliment their musical training by attending one (or more) of our free ensembles.

Zac is currently working towards grade 5 on the piano and in January of this year, started learning clarinet with the music service. He has also been a regular member of Ludlow Stompers since the ensemble was established three years ago. He finds Stompers great fun and enjoys 'getting together to make a lovely sound.' All three brothers started their journey at Stompers and have since joined additional ensembles.

Joel has drum lessons with Shropshire Music Service but is also a keen pianist. Also a former member of Ludlow Stompers, Joel has now joined Riffs – our monthly rock and pop workshop – where he enjoys the atmosphere and the positivity of all the bands who play together there.

Samuel is a keen cornet player, working towards grade 5 with the music service and playing every week in Ludlow Stompers. He particularly enjoys working with Mr Bennett who leads the group, saying he is an 'excellent teacher who is very good at explaining what's what!' Samuel has now progressed to the service's monthly Stage and Screen Orchestra which is open to any musician (adult or child) grade 3 and above and has the enormous pleasure of being joined by mum, Helen.

Helen considers herself to be a 'rusty' flute player but has – alongside Samuel - already made a fantastic contribution to the brilliant sound produced by Shropshire Stage and Screen Orchestra: 'I felt very welcome and accepted there, despite not having played in an orchestra for 30(!) years and it is lovely to be able to attend with Sam.' The orchestra is one of many opportunities where the family get to play together.

All three boys also play their instruments once a month in the band at Church Stretton church, alongside mum (on flute), dad (on piano) and other young musicians. They also perform every term at Shropshire Music Service concerts, with Helen set to join them at our Summer Bandstand event in July. Dad, Dan, particularly enjoys these performances and is always there in the audience, supporting his family. He remarks that 'the groups provide a great opportunity for young musicians to experience playing together and the concerts are a real highlight.'

Whilst Helen and Dan are grateful to the music service for all it does to support their children, particularly through its free ensemble offer, the service is equally grateful for the support of the Robinson family and is delighted to see how much they all enjoy the various activities on offer.

Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival - March 2026

All three boys participated and their skill and musicianship shined through resulting in:

- Zac - Primary Woodwind Solo - GOLD, Primary Piano Solo - GOLD
- Sam - Primary Brass Solo - GOLD, Primary Piano Solo - BRONZE
- Zac, Joel and Sam - Senior Instrumental Trio - GOLD

Recorder Festival 2026

Spring term saw 1500 recorder players from 42 schools from across the region perform in 3 different venues in Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Telford & Wrekin.

In Stoke-on-Trent pupils from Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent schools had the opportunity to perform in the Big Top Arena at Trentham Gardens rather than the usual venue at Victoria Hall which was very exciting and a real treat. Soloist Anna Davies led pupils in playing pieces in a variety of genres ranging from the traditional to Taylor Swift and the grand finale featured an appearance from 'Rumi' to lead the massed recorder ensemble in a K-Pop Medley. In addition to this a number of schools opted to play solos, and the workshop style performance also included several pieces performed by staff ensemble and a showcase all of the recorder family from the tiny Garklein right down to the Bass Recorder. By all accounts everyone had a fabulous time and are looking forward to Recorder Festival 2027.



Some of the feedback received is below:

"I just wanted to say thank you for yesterday. All of the children loved it!"

"Many thanks for the wonderful Recorder Festival this week. Both myself, the children and the parents thoroughly enjoyed it. It was a wonderful success, not to mention the K-pop surprise at the end! The children were buzzing about it on their return back to school!"

"They'll remember this always! I still remember my first recorder festival."

"Our recorder club had an amazing time performing and taking part in the recorder festival. It was wonderful to see young musicians coming together to share their love of music and celebrate all the hard work everyone has put in."

Telford & Wrekin Recorder Festival

Four hundred children from seven schools took part in the Recorder Festival over two days at The Anstice in Madeley.

The young musicians were a credit to their schools and parents, with excellent behaviour and great focus throughout the morning workshop and the lunchtime concert!

Big thanks to all the school staff who worked hard practicing the material before the day, and to our incredible TMW team, Miss Andrews, Miss Smith and Mrs Blakemore who ran the event brilliantly!





Stoke-on-Trent Young Musician of the Year 2026

The final of Stoke-on-Trent Young Musician of the Year took place on 24th April at The Bridge Centre in Birches Head.

The preliminary rounds were held back in January and from there 12 finalists were selected to perform again at the final where an overall Junior and Senior Winner was chosen by a panel of three adjudicators. The two winners were presented with an A Major Music Voucher, a trophy and a medal. They also get the opportunity to perform a solo at The Victoria Hall. The competition is open to anyone of school age who lives in Stoke-on-Trent, is educated in Stoke-on-Trent or is a member of one of the City Music Service ensembles. The 2027 event will be open for entries in the Autumn Term. Congratulations to everyone who took part, we loved hearing you perform. The Stoke-on-Trent Junior Young Musician of the Year 2026 was vocalist, Delphina. The Stoke-on-Trent Senior Young Musician of the Year 2026 was flautist, Leila. This competition is free to enter, and we would like to keep it that way. If anyone would be interested in offering sponsorship for this event please do get in touch with us citymusicservice@stoke.gov.uk

Foyer Performance at Stoke-on-Trent Classics Concert

On Friday 27th February, students from Thistley Hough Academy had the opportunity to play keyboard in the foyer at Victoria Hall, before watching The Hallé Orchestra and Israeli pianist Tom Borrow.

They each performed two pieces with confidence, and the audience were very appreciative. We received many positive comments and the students engaged with members of the public and talked about their love of music and how nervous they felt playing in front of so many people!

The concert was excellent, starting with Strauss Wind Serenade, followed by Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto no. 1 along with Brahms' final Symphony. Thank you to Mrs Braverman for arranging this and thanks also to Mrs Hollingshurst for supporting with this event.



Success!

Congratulations to the City Music Ensembles Blast Off, Flute Choir and City Youth Wind Orchestra who took part in the Newcastle under Lyme Festival for Music Speech and Drama on Saturday 21st March.

They all played superbly, achieving one commended performance and two outstanding performances. Well done to CYWO for winning the open Band/Orchestral class with a score of 92 marks. City Music Service ensembles meet weekly at the Bridge Centre during term time and new members are always welcome.



CASE STUDY SOUNDPOTS



PUPIL SUCCESS CASE STUDY

CONTEXT

The Project was taking place in an early years setting within a large inner city primary school, with high numbers of pupil premium, English as an additional language and low income families.

This pupil had additional needs and EAL. At the start of the project she was pre verbal and had very limited concentration. Staff were keen for her to engage in the project but were unsure how much she would be able to take from and how much she would be able to engage.

DEVELOPMENT

As the project took place the pupil began to watch from the side lines, whilst engaged in her own activity of choice. She then began to greet staff on their arrival with smiles and excitement but still little engagement in the session but purely observation.

"We cant believe how much engagement she now has, for a sustained period of time and as an activity of her choice." Class teacher

SUCCESS

After week 6 of the project the child came to the session and joined in the entire session. They sung the songs using pitch matched sounds and make shapes and sounds with their mouth trying to match the words of the songs. They knew actions and anticipated them in songs. They were able to take turns in games and play with instruments.

KEY POINTS

- Children's interaction does not always look like we expect or have seen before
- Observation is a key part of learning at all stages and in all areas of development
- It is important not to rush in as practitioners and 'help'
- Learning can now be built on when the child is ready





CASE STUDY SOUNDPOTS



PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT CASE STUDY

CONTEXT

The Soundpots project at the setting was coming to a close and parents and carers had been invited in to share in a learning together session.

Parents were supportive of the session, but had some viable apprehensions and concerns about the unknown and joining in.

Children were pleased to see their adults and keen for them to join in the session with them.

SUCCESS

By the end of the session all parents / carers and their children were involved in the session. This included some older people where adaptations of activities or sitting on chairs had allowed them to participate. Adults were able to see the full extent of what their children had been learning and what they were capable of. There were lots of fun moments and surprises in what the children were able to do.

DEVELOPMENT

adaptations were made for adults where needed such as chairs or movements made simpler eg jumping into knee bends. The children encouraged the grown ups and staff also modelled the songs and activities alongside the Soundpots leader. Apprehensive adults soon joined into the activities and saw how everyone was enjoying the activities.

KEY POINTS

- Children's apply skills that learn in one area to other areas of learning and in other environments
- Parents see their children learning new things and enjoy being part of this and celebrating together
- The role of parents and educators working together is important for a child's development.

"They had told us about Soundpots at home and been singing the songs. But we can't believe how confident they are to sing and in front of a group. It's amazing!" Parent

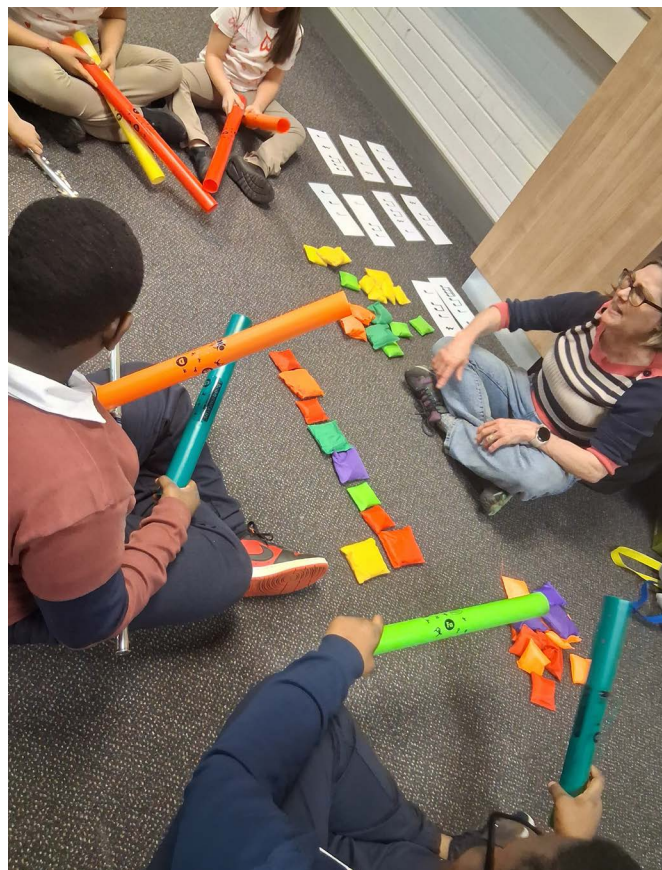




Young musicians in Stoke-on-Trent recently took part in an exciting and creative event called **Music Mystery Mayhem**, part of the Young Sounds Programme. The session encouraged pupils to explore different musical elements through teamwork, creativity and hands-on musical activities, and it proved to be a great success.

Throughout the event, pupils rotated around a series of themed activity stations, each focusing on a different element of music. These stations allowed the young musicians to experiment with ideas and develop their skills in a fun and engaging way. At the Lyric Crew station, pupils explored songwriting by creating words and phrases that helped tell the story behind the mystery. They worked together to develop rhymes and lines that would later form part of the final rap performance.

The Melody Crew used boomwhackers to create melodic ideas. Pupils followed different coloured beanbags which guided them to change notes and develop their melody, helping them explore pitch and patterns in a visual and interactive way. The Rhythm Crew focused on creating strong beats and rhythmic patterns, discovering how rhythm can drive and energise a piece of music. Meanwhile, the Sound Effects Crew explored how to use their instruments in unconventional ways, experimenting with different techniques to create interesting and unusual sounds.



At the Dynamics Crew station, pupils experimented with changes in volume and expression, discovering how loud and quiet moments can transform a performance and add excitement to the music.

The event culminated in an energetic rap performance, where each group showcased their improvisations at different points throughout the rap. Pupils proudly performed their finished piece to parents, bringing together everything they had explored during the session. It was wonderful to see their confidence, teamwork and creativity on display as they shared their work.

Music Mystery Mayhem was a memorable and inspiring experience for everyone involved, celebrating the creativity of the young musicians and the joy of making music together.

Anna Davies (Connector for Stoke-on-Trent)



Entrust Young Sounds Rocks!

Our Spring Term Student Get Together was held on Saturday March 14th at King Edwards VI School in Lichfield. The aim of this workshop was to introduce and develop our students' understanding of rock band instruments and contemporary repertoire.

Led by Entrust Music Service teacher Jon Walters, this Get Together started by exploring different rhythms and understanding the difference between onbeat and offbeat (syncopated) patterns. Students then learnt some rhythms patterns from Deep Purple's 'Smoke On The Water'. They learnt these rhythms through repetition and body percussion, before exploring the technical rudiments of different rock band instruments, such as electric lead and bass guitars, keyboards and drumkits, performing the piece together as a band.

With a new understanding of rock band instruments, students set about learning another song: 'Eye Of The Tiger' by Survivor. When learning this contemporary rock repertoire, students progressed from learning and playing solely by ear to reading tab notation for guitar or written notation for keyboard. Students explored a variety of different riffs and chord sequences from the piece, before piecing them all together as an ensemble.

Through these two pieces, students learnt key ensemble skills, such as listening, tempo, rhythm, playing multiple parts in unison, whilst also being given the opportunity to learn a new instrument and progressing these skills to different pieces and riffs. To conclude the workshop, students performed these two pieces to parents/carers (AKA roadies), showcasing their amazing ensemble skills.

We hope that this introduction to rock band instruments and contemporary repertoire has ignited a curious interest into these instruments, the genre and this style of ensemble playing. Our aim is for students to continue to explore rock music and gain confidence in performing alongside different musicians and their peers.

To help support our students, we have recently launched a Young Sounds Listening Club. This monthly publication is designed to introduce students to new genres of music and encourage conversations around music they wouldn't typically listen to, or play.

Using suggestions from both teachers and students, we hope this Listening Club will expand their musical experience and knowledge, keeping the flame of curiosity alight.





FRIENDS OF STAFFORDSHIRE'S YOUNG MUSICIANS (FOSYM) Charity Update 2026



FOSYM enables children and young people to experience the joy of making music...

How do we do this?

- By supporting young people financially where families cannot afford the additional cost of lessons
- By raising funds to ensure that pupils can continue their lessons year on year
- By advocating for Music in schools
- By spreading the word through our membership, at events and in schools

How can you help?

- By becoming a member of FOSYM
- By spreading the word about the work of FOSYM
- By donating to the charity as a one off or on a regular basis, through sponsorship and legacies
- By donating just £5 you are part funding a lesson for a young person

How does FOSYM help young people?

- By providing financial grants for individuals to learn an instrument or sing
- By providing financial grants for music, exam entry, or attending concerts
- By supporting quality musical activities and encouraging excellence

How many young people does FOSYM help?

- This year we are supporting over 230 young people from Staffordshire
- Dependent on funds available we aim to support 500 annually

How to apply for a grant

Visit our website fosym.org.uk or contact us at info@fosym.org



Children in Care Staffordshire

We are celebrating record numbers of Children in Care in Staffordshire accessing musical instrument tuition thanks to our strong partnership with the Virtual School.

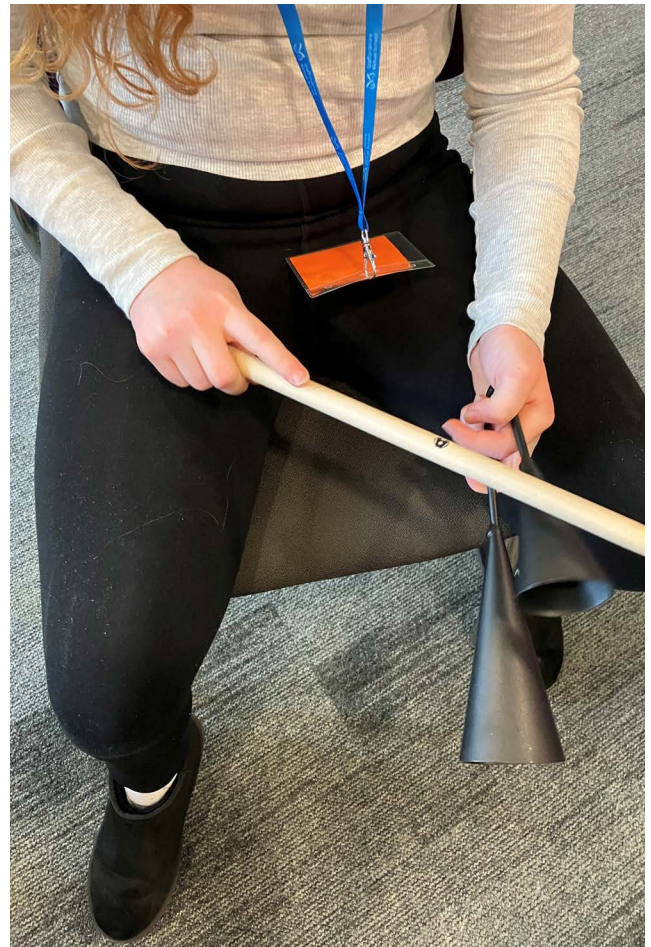
At the end of the Spring Term we had:

176 Children in Care learning to play **20** different instruments in **92** different Staffordshire schools with **54** Entrust Music teachers each week!



Record numbers of children attended our Come and Play event in Lichfield in the Autumn term; young CIC music ambassadors were chosen, and children tried string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments before choosing one to play altogether.

In the Spring term, awe inspired children were privileged to watch part of a rehearsal of the Staffordshire County Youth Wind Band in Stafford before taking part in a Samba workshop of their own alongside Music Service staff.



In the Summer term there will be a showcase of the musical achievements of our Children in Care as part of the Virtual School's presentation evening where we hope carers will be blown away by their children's music-making.

There is a wealth of research confirming the positive impact of engaging in music-making on the emotional well-being of Children in Care. At Entrust Music Service we believe it is a privilege to work with children in the care system.

Indeed one of our teachers recently wrote a song for one such child to mark their last ukulele lesson together. **View the video [here](#).**

Our target is to reach as many Children in Care as possible, so please get in touch if you would like to know more.

Caroline Williams

Children in Care Lead, Entrust Music Service
Staffordshire

Caroline.williams@entrust-ed.co.uk



Telford and Wrekin Music

Telford Sings

750 children from Primary, Secondary and Special Schools across the borough took part in this year's 'Telford Sings', run by Telford & Wrekin Music, in partnership with Cathy Lamb and Laura Collins from Music Share.

The children rehearsed a set of songs in their schools, then came together to perform with a live band, provided by TWM Tutors Miss Smith, Mr Woolley and Mr Walker, assisted by student Daniel Wright, with us on work experience.



Student Spotlight

Congratulations to Roha and Jiya from Lawley Primary. both pupils passed their Step 1 keyboard exam with distinction! Well done both of you!



Music Share

Invitation, Academic Year
2026-2027



MusicShare is a Singing Schools Programme delivered through the partnership between Lichfield Cathedral School & Lichfield Cathedral, with significant DfE funding currently distributed by the Arts' Council England via The Music Partnership.

Our exciting singing projects for schools are fully funded for 2026-27, (apart from transport to the final concert, which schools need to arrange and pay for themselves) and are now available to book.

Projects include the following:

- Four one-hour in-school rehearsals leading up to the concert (usually within the same term as the concert) delivered by a MusicShare animateur. All the songs will be taught in these sessions.
- Provision of all the songs and backing tracks, in a broad range of styles.
- A concert in Lichfield Cathedral accompanied by the MusicShare live professional band.

There are limited spaces available for each project/concert so apply soon to reserve your place and to co-ordinate your rehearsal visits.

To reserve a place for your school please [complete this form](#).

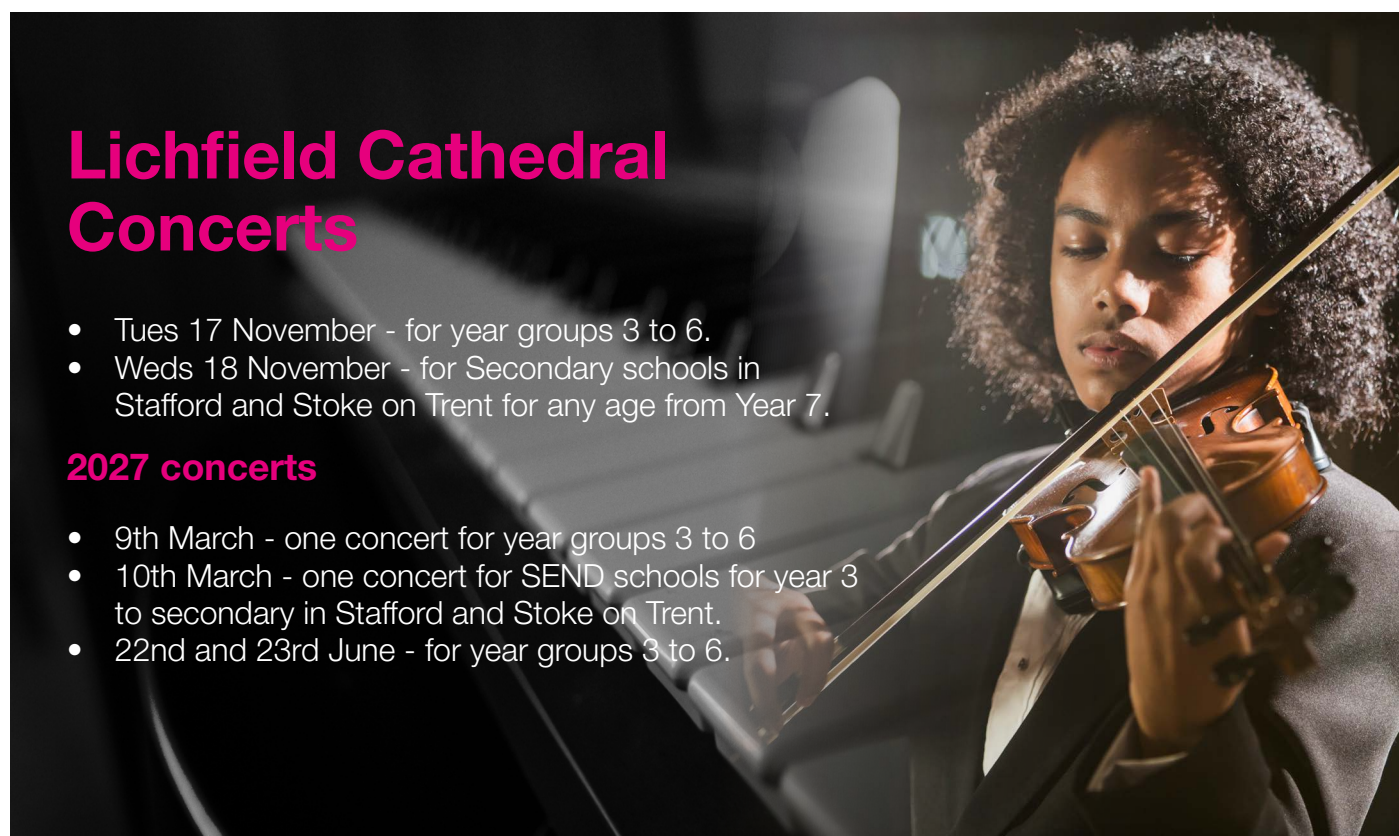
Please note that we had a waiting list of 30 schools in the academic year 2025/2026. It is important that you are as accurate as possible with your application numbers – several schools significantly dropped their numbers-this meant we could have offered more schools places.

Lichfield Cathedral Concerts

- Tues 17 November - for year groups 3 to 6.
- Weds 18 November - for Secondary schools in Stafford and Stoke on Trent for any age from Year 7.

2027 concerts

- 9th March - one concert for year groups 3 to 6
- 10th March - one concert for SEND schools for year 3 to secondary in Stafford and Stoke on Trent.
- 22nd and 23rd June - for year groups 3 to 6.



A **FREE**
website resource
exclusively for you!



EXCLUSIVE & FREE song and training resources for schools in Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford & Wrekin (funded by Arts' Council England, via The Music Partnership).

Are you looking for new songs for your school? Look no further!

We have a new and ever-growing song resource, with songs ranging from Early Years to KS5 - handily divided into the relevant sections. Each song includes a teaching video with the MusicShare band, full sheet music, lyric sheets, backing and performance tracks. It encompasses a wide range of styles including some songs that match topics – all carefully written for the voices in each key stage.

Also see our free resources, exclusive to schools in this area, which includes a full set of CPD videos for non-specialists related to The Music Partnership's music curriculum document; videos about vocal health and what to expect at the different stages of vocal development.

PLUS, a full list of recommend repertoire and a whole host of links to other excellent resources to help you with your singing in school!

Visit: www.lichfieldmusicshare.org.uk (Password for schools in The Music Partnership area is ShareMusic747!)

St Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

Watch Me Learn

Parents were invited to watch the children play their instruments and learn alongside them.

Feedback from parents is that every child looked like they were enjoying their lessons and that they wish they had lessons like this when they were at school. They were also amazed at how well our EYFS children could read music and play using percussion instruments.



Music Education Solutions®



New Training Programme for Lead Schools

Lead Schools play a pivotal role in shaping the quality and consistency of music education across their networks.

With increasing expectations around curriculum, progression, and impact, the challenge is no longer simply delivering support, it is ensuring that support leads to meaningful, sustainable change. This is exactly where the Music Education Support and Development Certificate from Music Education Solutions® can make a significant difference.

Designed specifically for Lead Schools and other advisors, this programme focuses on strengthening the expertise required to support other schools effectively. It recognises that working beyond your own setting requires a distinct skillset which combines credibility, strategic thinking, and an understanding of how to influence practice in diverse contexts.

Across three half-day sessions, participants explore how to build trust and professional relationships, develop and deliver effective support strategies, and lead sustainable change while measuring impact. Alongside live sessions, participants engage with online materials and create a personalised action plan, enabling them to apply learning directly to their own context. This means that the programme is not just about acquiring knowledge, but embedding it into practice. The final assignment provides an opportunity to consolidate this learning and gain formal recognition through certification.

For Lead Schools, the benefits extend beyond individual development. Strengthening your capacity to support others enhances your role within local and regional systems. It enables you to offer clearer guidance, build stronger partnerships, and contribute more effectively to raising standards in music education. In a landscape where schools are increasingly expected to collaborate and share expertise, this kind of capability is essential.

Book now

Places for upcoming cohorts are limited. If your school is serious about leading and supporting music education with clarity, confidence, and expertise, now is the time to book.

[Book your place here](#)

Could **YOU** write for Primary Music Magazine?



Primary music classrooms are full of creativity, innovation, and thoughtful practice yet too often, these ideas remain hidden within a single school. Writing for Primary Music Magazine offers an opportunity to share your work more widely, contribute to the profession, and develop your own voice as a reflective practitioner.

Every teacher has something valuable to say. Whether you have developed an engaging approach to composition, refined your curriculum planning, or found a practical solution to a common challenge, your experience can support others. By writing an article, you are not only showcasing your work, but helping to raise the standard of music education by making effective practice more visible and accessible.

Writing for Primary Music Magazine is not about being an academic writer. It is about being clear, practical, and honest. Articles that resonate most are those grounded in real classroom experience—ideas that other teachers can take and use. Your voice, your context, and your insights are exactly what make your contribution meaningful. If you have ever thought, “I’m not sure I have anything to share,” it is worth reconsidering. Your everyday practice may be exactly what another teacher needs.

Find out more

To find out more or submit an article for consideration email
[**admin@musiceducationsolutions.co.uk**](mailto:admin@musiceducationsolutions.co.uk)

New Professional Certification for Primary Music Specialists

For Primary Music Specialists, expertise in the classroom is only part of the professional picture. In an increasingly competitive and evolving education landscape, recognition, credibility, and clear evidence of specialist skills are essential.

The Primary Music Specialist Certificate from Music Education Solutions[®] offers a valuable opportunity to gain formal recognition of your expertise, alongside practical development that strengthens your professional profile.

Gaining a recognised certification signals a clear commitment to high standards in music education. It demonstrates not only that you have subject knowledge, but that you understand how to apply it effectively through curriculum design, progression, and assessment. For schools and employers, this provides reassurance, and in a context where schools are seeking to strengthen their foundation subjects, this distinction can set you apart.

The certificate also enhances your credibility as a leader of music within and beyond your own setting. Whether you are leading music across a school, supporting colleagues, or exploring opportunities to work across multiple settings, having a formal qualification reinforces your professional voice. It enables you to articulate your approach with clarity and authority, making it easier to influence decision-making and advocate for high-quality music education.



Importantly, this increased credibility translates directly into employability. Schools are increasingly looking for teachers who can take ownership of subject areas and contribute to whole-school improvement. A recognised certificate provides clear evidence of this capability. It can strengthen applications for subject leadership roles, support career progression, and open-up opportunities to work as a specialist across schools, trusts, or music hubs. For those building a portfolio career, it offers a strong foundation for consultancy, advisory, or training work.

Beyond external recognition, the process of gaining the certificate also sharpens your professional practice. Through structured sessions and guided reflection, you develop a clearer understanding of what high-quality music education looks like in practice. This includes designing coherent curricula, ensuring progression, and approaching assessment in a way that is both effective and manageable. The result is not just a qualification, but a more refined and confident approach to teaching and leadership.

For Primary Music Specialists looking to strengthen their profile, increase their employability, and gain recognition for their expertise, this certification offers a clear and practical next step. Places are limited, and early booking is recommended. [Book here.](#)

Dr Elizabeth Stafford
Director, Music Education Solutions



Moreton Hall Welcomes Local Schools for Big Sing

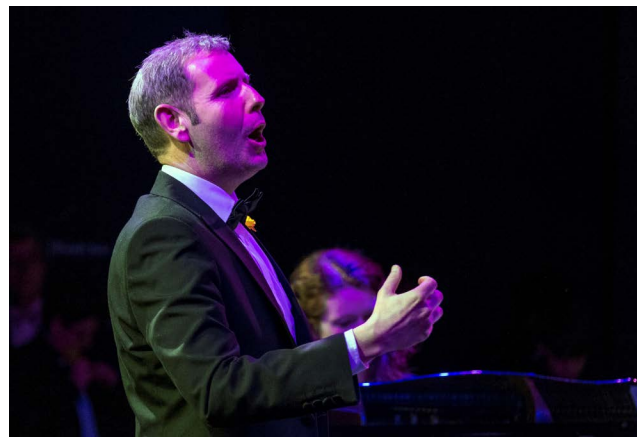
The Musgrave at Moreton Hall was filled with music, movement and a wonderful sense of togetherness as around 90 children from local primary schools came together for a vibrant Big Sing outreach event. Pupils from Moreton Prep Juniors, Holy Trinity Oswestry and St Martins joined forces for a memorable workshop that was as inspiring for staff as it was enjoyable for the children taking part.

Led by Moreton Hall's Music Outreach Coordinator, Helen Rayner, alongside guest Choral Director Aled Phillips, the session brought an infectious energy from the very start. Aled, Creative and Artistic Director of the acclaimed Johns' Boys Male Chorus, shared his expertise and enthusiasm in a way that immediately captured the room, helping young singers grow in confidence while showing just how joyful group singing can be. The workshop explored the value of movement within music-making, introducing brain breaks and kinaesthetic learning techniques that help children stay engaged, focused and energised. For the visiting music leads and primary staff, it was a valuable opportunity to gather fresh ideas and see practical approaches in action that they can take back into their own classrooms and choirs.

The response from schools reflected the success of the day. Carol Jones, Deputy Headteacher at St Martins, said: *"A fantastic day of collaborative music making. The sound produced was tremendous. Our pupils had a fantastic, enriching day. Thank you, Moreton."* Tom Barnes, Music Lead at Holy Trinity, described it as *"an exceptional day"*, adding that it was "highly rewarding for staff and pupils" and that everyone had thoroughly enjoyed the morning.

Helen Rayner also spoke warmly about the impact of the workshop. She said: *"The children thoroughly enjoyed every second. Despite directing choirs for over 20 years, I still came away with a notebook full of hints, tips and fresh ideas. Aled's ability to inspire children is undeniable."*

Events such as this are a powerful reminder of the role music can play in bringing schools and communities together. By opening its doors to local schools and creating opportunities for children to learn from experienced professionals, Moreton Hall continues to champion music as something inclusive, dynamic and full of joy.



Reflecting on the talent in the room, Aled Phillips shared his enthusiasm for the local talent:

"Monday's Outreach event was a real joy to be part of. The children did exceptionally well; I was genuinely impressed by their natural musicality, vocal quality, and enthusiasm for singing. It was clear they already had a strong foundation, which is a real credit to the fantastic work their teachers do in school choirs. Experiences like this remind us just how important and powerful singing can be for young people."



PIANO

DEBUT-GRADE 8



CLASSICAL *to* CLASSIC ROCK

The Rockschoool Piano syllabus is back... and it's bolder than ever. This latest edition of Rockschoool Piano offers a holistic approach to piano education, shaped around the needs of today's musicians. Exploring five centuries of music, from classical to classic rock, this genre-spanning syllabus features an expansive mix of popular Hit Tunes, bespoke Rockschoool Originals, and brand-new suites of technical exercises, all packed with class-leading technology.



RSL LEARN MORE
www.rslawards.com





In Harmony

The programme continues to run in the four main schools, delivering instrumental music sessions to over 1,000 children each week.

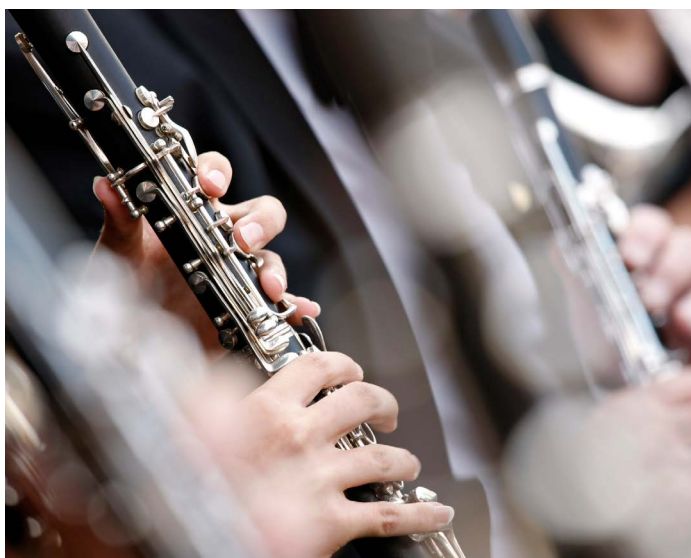
This term has seen children involved in the In Harmony programme in Stoke-on-Trent were involved in the fantastic City Music Recorder Festival and Songbirds event.

Telford In Harmony Youth Orchestra performed as part of the Telford & Wrekin Music 'Telford Sings' events at Charlton School. The orchestra continues to be a key part of the programme, providing an opportunity for young musicians across the area from Years 4-13 to work together as a musical community.

Across the schools, we have held 'open orchestra' and 'open lessons' for parents and carers to come and experience learning with the In Harmony team. Children were able to demonstrate what they have been learning and parents/carers came away with a greater understanding of what the children are learning in their sessions.

As a starting point for our end of year project, we were able to invite dance artist Itara from Rhythm Nation to perform and deliver workshops at the four schools. Children explored storytelling through dance and movement, inspired by traditional African dance moves.

Visit www.inharmonytelfordstoke.org for more information about the programme and how you could get involved.



Case Study

Nicole



Nicole started learning cello with the In Harmony programme when she was in Year 2. She is now 18 and has exciting prospects ahead of her as she heads for University of Chester in September, where she will be the first person in her family to attend university. She credits In Harmony with being a major factor in her success.

Here is her story in her own words:

"I started learning the cello from the age of 6 at Old Park Primary School through In Harmony, this was a unique part of my education that I am grateful to have been able to have experienced. From an early age music has always interested me and to be able to progress through the years with such amazing support has had a positive outcome for many aspects of my life. This is from learning to play the cello to now completing my work experience within my placement and In Harmony, inspiring pupils who have the same passion as me. I am now going to the University of Chester to study primary education and In Harmony has been a massive part of this decision for me, showing me that children can learn and grow in so many different ways that are not your typical subjects. I would love for music to be a part of my career as a primary school teacher as I believe every child deserves the same experience that I had with music."

Throughout the years I have been surrounded by the most passionate and encouraging teachers who made music more than just a subject in school. In Harmony has given me a space to express myself through music. Through tricky times during secondary school, I always found going back to music a great way to relieve stress and focus on myself. Being a part of this has improved my confidence in many aspects of my education and life in general. Within my cello lessons I have been able to continue to learn new skills and continue to improve in ways that are individual to me, In Harmony have listened to me and given me all the resources, time and patience to help me not only improve in my cello skills but also to help me be the best version of myself. To me, In Harmony is more than just a music programme, it is like a family who make you feel seen and heard. A team who appreciate the effort rather than skill. They make music fun and exciting helping to build on life skills such as social skills, communication and teamwork."



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.

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. Out of the Ark's 45-minute [Cup Of Tea & CPD](#) online workshop sessions to help you get the most out of this award-winning resource.

One discount code will work for any school right across the region. Enter TMP252630 when you check out if you're a new user, or if you're an existing subscriber, go to your [manage account area](#) and add the code today to ensure your discount ready for when you renew.

A full suite of 4 different **FREE** 45-minute twilight CPD sessions will be running during Autumn Term to help Sparkyard users learn new tricks to make the most out of their subscription, or to show you what's possible if you become a Sparkyard School.

Discover Sparkyard!

Full info here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/out-of-the-ark-music-workshops-18164632548>



SPARKYARD 
FROM
Out of the Ark Music

Music From the Movies

From *Indiana Jones* to *Psycho*, the CSSO presents
Hollywood's greatest scores live in concert!

Saturday 6 June 2026
7.30pm at the
King's Hall, Stoke

Tickets £22/ £29 / £34
Students and Children £10



www.csso.co.uk



[city_of_stoke_symphony](https://www.instagram.com/city_of_stoke_symphony)



[CityofStokeSymphony](https://www.facebook.com/CityofStokeSymphony)



[@TheCSSO](https://twitter.com/TheCSSO)



For more information please visit **www.csso.co.uk**.
To book tickets, scan the QR or call 01782 206000.

Who are we?

The CSSO is Stoke-on-Trent's professional symphony orchestra, bringing high-quality orchestral music to the city and beyond. Alongside our concerts, we're passionate about education and outreach, working with schools and young people to inspire the next generation of musicians and music lovers.



Programme

Williams: *Raiders March*

Williams: *Jurassic Park*

Elfman: *Batman*

Powell: *How to Train Your Dragon*

Williams: *War Horse*

Bernstein: *The Magnificent Seven*

Barry: *Dances With Wolves*

Williams: *Flight to Neverland*

Rózsa: *Ben-Hur*

Badelt: *Pirates of the Caribbean*

Williams: *Schindler's List*

Hermann: *Psycho Suite*

Coates: *Dambusters March*

Zimmer: *Gladiator*

Williams: *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*

For updates, behind-the-scenes content and
concert information, follow us:



CityofStokeSymphony



city_of_stoke_symphony



www.csso.co.uk





SING! West Midlands

Join **SING!** near you! Three **FREE** workshops led by expert vocal leaders from National Youth Choir. No experience needed! Come along to improve your singing, learn new songs together and make friends who love to sing.

For young people who are in Year 5 to 8 at state school or homeschooled
Free to take part • We can pay travel costs

Dates for your diary

Saturday 16 May 2026, 10am-4pm
Wolverhampton Music Service,
Graiseley Hill

Saturday 27 June 2026, 10am-4pm
Walsall Arena and Arts Centre

Saturday 3 October 2026, 10am-4pm
Cable Plaza, Brierley Hill
includes auditions for National Youth Choir

“Today made
me happy and
made me want
to sing more”

Sign up for SING!

www.nationalyouthchoir.org.uk/sing-west-mids



The Hive Launches New Support Programme for Young People in Shropshire!

The Hive is proud to announce the launch of a dynamic new Alternative Provision programme aimed at providing a safe, creative space for children and young people who face challenges with traditional education.



ALTERNATIVE PROVISION AT
THE HIVE

Designing your future,
Shropshire's leading
creative
Alternative Provision.



This initiative offers a flexible, non-academic environment designed to support those with complex needs, including attendance difficulties, SEMH (social, emotional, mental health) needs, anxiety, or care experience. These flexible sessions aim to help build confidence, resilience, and social skills outside traditional classrooms. Whether through 1:1 mentoring or small group activities, our supportive environment aims to ignite a love for learning and personal growth. Aimed at children of secondary school ages, but we will consider each application on an individual basis.

To learn more please visit: <https://www.hiveonline.org.uk/alternative-provision>

Contacts for the TMP team



Sarah Browne
Head of Service

Shropshire Music Service
E: sarah.browne@shropshire.gov.uk



John Callister
Head of Service

Entrust Music Service Staffordshire
E: john.callister@entrust-ed.co.uk



Ruth Steele
Lead

Stoke-on-Trent City Music Service
E: ruth.steele@stoke.gov.uk



Sam Newth
Team Leader

Telford & Wrekin Music
E: sam.newth@telford.gov.uk

Our Partners

Art Brasil
Arts Connect
Association of British Choral Directors
A Major Music
Charanga
Chuckle Productions
City Music Service Stoke-on-Trent
City of Stoke-on-Trent Symphony Orchestra
Entrust Music Service Staffordshire
Friends of Staffordshire's Young Musicians
Friends of Stoke-on-Trent City Music Service

In Harmony Telford & Stoke-on-Trent
Lichfield Cathedral MusicShare
Madula
Make Some Noise
Manchester Camerata
Music Mark
Music Education Solutions
Music for Youth
Music Therapy Works
My Inter Theatre Company
Normans Instruments

North Shropshire Music
Out of the Ark
OHMI
Partners in Creative Learning
Printed Music Licensing Limited (PMLL)
RSL Awards
Severn Teaching Alliance
Shropshire Music Service
Sing Up
SSPA Events
Stoke-on-Trent Festivals

Sympho
Telford & Wrekin Music
The Hallé Orchestra
The Hive
The National Youth Orchestra
Trinity College London
West Midlands Music
Young Sounds UK