

Musica News



Schools' Edition Autumn 2017



I have been contacted twice by journalists over recent weeks to comment on: 'the decline of music and the arts in schools...'. It's not an easy subject and, anecdotally, it is possible to both support and refute the statement depending on what examples you choose to examine. It is however difficult to argue with the national figures for pupils taking up at least one arts GCSE which stood at 55.6% in 2007, rose to a high of 57.1% in 2014 and has now fallen to a ten year low of 53.5% in 2016.

Drew Rowlands' recent article: **Yes, Progress 8 and the Ebacc are Hurting Arts GCSE Take Up** argues that: 'the Ebacc, along with Progress 8 and the constant mantra that an academic core is what is best for children *are* the root cause for why we are seeing the decimation of the arts in the curriculum...'. He explains that creative arts subjects are often deemed 'vocational' rather than 'academic' and that this inferred inferiority is compounded by not including arts subjects in the Ebacc. In my experience, the academic content of arts subjects is immense and surely every subject comprises a mixture of the academic and the vocational/practical.

Stating that the 'academic' subjects are more likely to lead to a place at university and therefore a better career is to ignore the £97.4bn that creative businesses bring into the economy. Rowlands also points out that employers are looking for exactly the kind of competencies in their new recruits that education in the arts can provide: confidence, thinking creatively, demonstrating initiative, having the capacity to work on your own and practical experience. You can read his full article here: <https://weareive.org/yes-progress-8-ebacc-hurting-arts-gcse-take/>

On a more positive note, two other articles are well worth a read. Both demonstrate the power of music to have a positive impact on both a school's ethos and its results. They give case studies about two schools where both the self-esteem and the achievements of the pupils they serve have been transformed by firmly integrating music into the curriculum and the fabric of the school.

Gallions Primary School is situated in a deprived area of London, but has successfully integrated music into the whole curriculum with amazing results both for the school and also the community. With every child in the school playing an instrument, the school provides a perfect example of the value of music in the curriculum and in children's lives. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jun/25/music-is-at-the-very-heart-of-one-east-end-school>

Closer to home, **Feversham Primary** in Bradford has embedded music into every part of the school day with the head teacher crediting music for a transformation in his school - taking it from 'special measures' 7 years ago to 'good' this year. It is an inspiring story, especially when you see the impact on reading, writing and maths which put the school in the top 10% in the country. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/oct/03/school-results-music-bradford>

If I could finally mention a BBC survey about arts tuition in secondary schools – if you are able to follow the link and answer the questions it will help to create a more accurate picture of just what developments are taking place in arts education across the country: http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/BBCSchoolsSurvey_CreativeArts/

Thank you for your continued efforts to give music and the arts an important role in the education of the young people in your care.

Thom Meredith - Principal, Musica Kirklees

www.musicakirklees.org

Registered charity 1013838 & lead organisation for the Kirklees Music Education Hub

New Staff at Musica Kirklees

Jules Wightman (pictured right), who has been working this term for Musica Kirklees as a brass teacher, has been appointed Area Manager - Colne Valley.

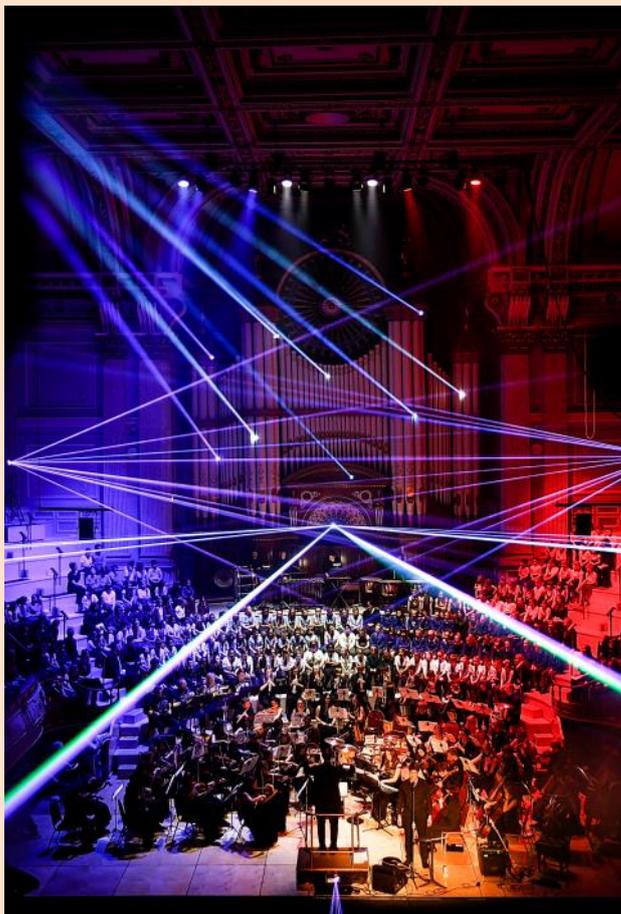
From January he will be liaising with schools in the Colne Valley and working with Musica Kirklees staff who teach in those schools. He will also take over the running of Musica Colne Valley, a centre open to all musicians, offering the opportunity to play in a wide range of ensembles. The centre operates on a Friday evening at Colne Valley High School. Details of all our centres and ensembles are available online at www.musicakirklees.org



Mr Wightman has extensive experience as a classroom teacher, and before joining Musica Kirklees led the music department of a large Greater Manchester Secondary School.

Also joining the Musica Kirklees team this term are Amy Cherryholme (Woodwind), Rob Crisp (Music Tech.), Joanne Worboys-Hodgson (Lower Strings) and Lucy Kimmings (Voice).

At the end of this term we will be saying farewell to Christine Green (Piano), we send our very best wishes.



The Mighty Sky Huddersfield Mrs Sunderland Festival Workshop, February 15

Children from 26 Kirklees primary schools have been promised an 'out of this world' experience next term when they take to the Huddersfield Town Hall stage in 'The Mighty Sky' workshop.

The workshop, followed by an evening performance, are part of the Huddersfield Mrs Sunderland Festival and are being led by Musica Kirklees Principal, Thom Meredith.

The Mighty Sky, composed by singer-songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman, is probably best described as a "science song project". Its aim is to inspire and teach about the mysteries and wonders of the universe. It was nominated for a Grammy as Best Children's Album in 2014.

Musica Youth Orchestra will accompany both the workshop and performance, giving those taking part an opportunity to see all the instrument groups, hear the sounds they make and experience singing with an orchestra. Both sessions - workshop and performance - will be supported by an amazing lighting show. The workshop will also provide some great opportunities to make cross-curricular links with creative writing, science and technology as well as music.

Secondary Network Meeting

Secondary Heads of Music will meet for this term's Network at Netherhall Learning Campus High School, Rawthorpe, HD5 9PG, on Wednesday, November 22.

Tea/coffee available from 4pm.

Meeting 4.30-6.00pm.



Schools in Batley will be coming together next term to celebrate the fifth anniversary of their 'Big Sing'.

To sign up, or for further information contact Jennifer Isaacs, Musica Kirklees Area Manager - Batley:

jennifer.isaacs@musicakirklees.org

The Dewsbury Big Sing and Cleckheaton Big Sing will take place in the Summer term. Schools from across Dewsbury and Batley will also be involved in the Musica Batley Christmas concert at Dewsbury Town Hall on December 7.

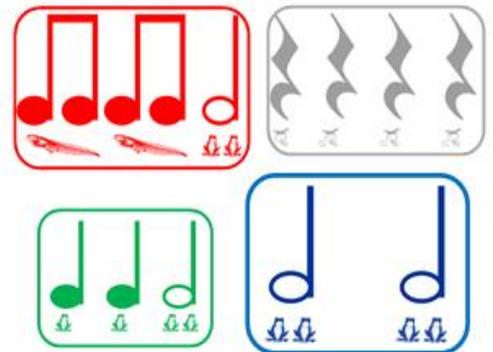
Schools in the Mirfield pyramid will perform in a Christmas Big Sing as part of the Musica Mirfield Christmas Concert on December 8 (Dewsbury Town Hall).

Primary Network Meeting

Places are still available for this term's Primary Music Network. Peter Simons, Music Co-ordinator at Thornhill J and I, will be leading a CPD hour focussing on what assessment looks like at his school. He will also run a hands-on session on using rhythm cards. And for those wanting to make the most out of their school's stock of instruments, he will demonstrate how to make-up compositions for different musical instruments.

Music Co-ordinators will also be brought up to speed with developments in music education and activities planned for the rest of the academic year.

The Network is at Thornhill J and I, WF12 0QT, **4.30 - 6.00pm (4pm arrival for tea/coffee)** on **Tuesday, November 28**. To book a place, or for more information, email gill.mcdowell@musicakirklees.org



Ukulele Christmas Singalong

Put some sparkle into your KS1 / 2 end of term celebrations with a Ukulele Christmas Singalong.

The Musica Kirklees ukulele team will bring live interactive music making to your pupils with a singalong full of their favourite Christmas songs. Words will be provided to display on your smartboard/projector and the session lasts 30-40 minutes. If you'd like a singalong packed with festive fun to take place during the last week of the Autumn term, please email natalie.brown@musicakirklees.org (£150).



Music for Youth (MfY) Local Festival

7pm, Thursday, February 8, 2018, Dewsbury Town Hall



We've a few spaces left for our MfY Local Festival - a celebratory concert of music from across the Kirklees region performed by Musica Kirklees ensembles and local schools.

Each group will perform for a maximum of 10 minutes and all performers must be age 21 years or younger. This event will be in partnership with MfY and although this is not a competition, each group will receive feedback on their performance and may qualify to take part in a larger music festival later in the year.

We are particularly looking for new performers, fresh ideas and a diverse programme. New compositions are most welcome and we would love to see pupils introducing their acts.

To apply to be part of this event, please email nick.dolling@musicakirklees.org by November 24.



BBC Ten Pieces III October Launch

www.bbc.co.uk/tenpieces

Lesson plans, arrangements of the pieces for classroom music-making and a wealth of resources are now available for the new BBC Ten Pieces III initiative at www.bbc.co.uk/tenpieces

Live Lesson Webcast - Monday, November 13, 2pm. Aimed at years 5 and 6. Dancers and musicians from the Royal Ballet School and Royal Opera House bring you one of this year's Ten Pieces - Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*. Visit the Ten Pieces website for details.

Coaching Scheme - school groups working with children age 10 to 18 can apply to be part of a scheme that gives them access to expert music providers and conductors via the BBC. Applications must be received by Thursday, November 16 (please visit the Ten Pieces website for details).



Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival 2017 Workshops

The Metal Playground

Sunday, November 19, Creative Arts Building Atrium, Huddersfield University - 1-3pm

For ages 7-12 (older siblings welcome)
Discover a hidden sound world, with a range of magical percussion instruments.

Pop-Up Art School

Saturday, November 25, Creative Arts Building Atrium, Huddersfield University - 12-3pm

A drop-in session doing art, crafts and music.

Music at Play:

Imaginary Communities

Sunday, November 26, Heritage Quay - 10-11.30am

For under 5s

Discover a world of imaginations, with sound, drama and stories.

FREE EVENTS - space limited

Please book via: alex@hcmf.co.uk
01484 471116

All children must be accompanied.
More details available at hcmf.co.uk