



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM
SCHOOL

2020 - 2021

MUSIC

AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL



**Information Booklet for
Parents and Carers**



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OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe **high quality music education should not be a privilege for a lucky few, but every child's right and every child's experience.**

Throughout history, in each country and across every culture, there exists music.

Whether for ceremonial or religious purposes, as community practice, as an art form, or simply for pleasure, music is used to enhance, to reflect, to communicate, to record, to reframe and to comment on human experiences, interactions, events, thoughts and feelings.

An important aspect of any holistic education is to empower and enable students to engage meaningfully with this important form of human expression.

This means we must ensure all students develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to become confident and articulate musicians.

This requires music education to be high quality, valued and for all.

High quality music education is also an economic imperative. With UK creative industries a vital and expanding sector, and creativity cited by business as one of the most desirable employee qualities, we have a duty to ensure our students are fully equipped for their futures.

We believe that the University of Birmingham School is uniquely placed to become a model of best practice in music education in the United Kingdom. With a very supportive governing body and working closely with the Birmingham Music Service we are excited to push boundaries, innovate and learn. Our aim is to ensure every child experiences the highest quality music education, ultimately giving all students the necessary grounding and confidence to ensure they can flourish musically at key stage 4, 5, in Higher Education, in professional musical careers or in adult amateur, community music groups.

Parental support is crucial to ensuring all students can flourish musically while at UoBS and we look forward to getting to know you.



OUR CORE CURRICULUM

At the heart of our provision lies our core curriculum. This is the music education that all pupils will engage with in lesson times and for home learning during Key Stage 3. The music curriculum at the University of Birmingham School is research-informed and designed to integrate and continually develop the three key strands of musical learning – performance, composition and listening. These are embedded in every year of study and form the prism through which pupils will explore Western and non-Western styles of music, develop their individual instrumental and music technology skills, their confidence and skills composing, and their ability to perform individually and as part of an ensemble.

Pupils will receive two hours of music lessons per fortnight in Years 7 and 9, and three per fortnight in year 8. Details regarding the work taking place in each term can be found on the schools website. Students are set regular home learning using the specialist music Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) called *MusicFirst*, accessed via uobschool.musicfirstclassroom.com

In Year 7 learning covers a wide range of fundamental bases including:

- Developing a **secure rhythmic sense**, including skills such as accurately dictating increasingly complex rhythmic patterns in 4/4.
- Developing pupils' **understanding of pitch**, including learning to read pitch notation in treble and bass clefs, and introducing sight-singing.
- All pupils will learn, or will continue learning, basic instrumental technique, including on an **orchestral instrument and keyboard**. Pupils will also perform individually, as part of an ensemble and using their voice.
- All pupils will also explore fundamental **composition techniques** and will learn to use specialist music technology programmes such as Logic Pro to support their composition.

Our curriculum is designed to enable all pupils to progress to a level of expertise which would allow them to access both GCSE and A Level music courses. A number of our alumni have gone on to study music in Higher Education, and we are committed to ensuring we prepare all our students to experience success at the highest levels, should they wish to do so.

MUSIC AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

A distinct feature of the University of Birmingham School is our focus on Character Education, supported by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham. Their research shows the significant positive impact music education can play in the positive development of pupil character and virtues.

OUR ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

Around our core curriculum sits our enrichment programme. This unique programme is integral to life at the University of Birmingham School and we believe it is vital to pupils' education. A full range of musical activities are offered as part of this programme; many of these activities will involve all pupils, many others are optional.

- **All pupils** actively participate in the musical life of the school. We engage in communal singing and regularly enjoy choral and instrumental performances and projects involving the community, professional and University musicians. All pupils have access to industry-standard music technology and open-access workshops, trips and tours are organised regularly.
- In addition, all pupils can choose to access additional instrumental tuition, musicianship and theory classes. Students can also choose to participate in specialist musical ensembles including vocal and instrumental ensembles. Our ensembles regularly participate in national festivals and competitions, including performing at Birmingham Town Hall and Symphony Hall. We also work closely with the Birmingham Music Service, Birmingham City University and The University of Birmingham to ensure high-performing pupils have the opportunity to extend their learning beyond our School.

Please see the music calendar and enrichment timetable on the school website for full and up-to-date details of opportunities available and upcoming concert dates.



INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

While all pupils will have the opportunity to develop basic instrumental skills during music lessons, a core strand of our enrichment programme involves offering additional group, paired and individual instrumental tuition on a full range of instruments. This provision enables pupils to develop **high levels of skill on specific instruments** and we are pleased to be working in partnership with the Birmingham Music Service to provide this.

Birmingham Music Service provide specialist, highly qualified, experienced and well supported staff, who in turn deliver our specialist instrumental tuition during the school year. **The quality of teaching is consistently excellent** and senior teachers at the Music Service work alongside our Subject Leader for Music to ensure every child at UoBS enjoys high-quality instrumental teaching and learning. The Music Service also **provide and maintain instruments for pupils free of charge**. Parents/carers are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning, to help maximise progress. Parents/carers will receive information of pupil progress through annual reports, half-termly performance opportunities, internal and external examination opportunities and audio recordings. Parents/carers are encouraged to support their children by helping them to remember when their next lesson is, to practise regularly and by taking an interest in how their lessons are going.

Government funding for instrumental lessons covers students in receipt of Free School Meals; **all lessons are free of charge for these students**. However, unfortunately government funding does not extend any further. This means that **for all other students we have to ask parents and carers to cover the cost**. Our ambition is to secure funding to enable all students to receive free or subsidised instrumental lessons, and we continue to actively seeking funding to support this goal. All charges will be reviewed in advance of next academic year and all opportunities to reduce or eliminate cost for parents will be taken. Instrumental lessons are provided at cost; neither the school nor the Music Service make a profit from providing this service (The Music Service is a part of S4E, Services for Education. Registered Charity in England and Wales: 1148848). Any parents/carers unable to access this provision due to the cost are asked to email the Subject Leader for Music or Mr. Arthur Reeves, SLT in charge of inclusion (a.reeves@uobschool.org.uk). Your email will be treated in confidence and we will look to help ensure access for your child.

If you feel able to support us in fundraising to subsidise such aspects of our wider provision, please consider joining the UoBSchool Friends. They can be contacted at uobschoolfriends@gmail.com. UoBSchool Friends are currently chaired by Mrs. Claudia Favero (a parent).

Rates for 2020-2021

Category	Approx. standard	Typical lesson length and group size	Cost per student per lesson	Cost per term (11 lessons)
Steel pan	All	12 students for 60 mins	£3.92	£43.10
Dhol drumming	All	6 students for 30 mins	£3.92	£43.10
Novice	Beginner – grade 1	4 students for 30 mins	£5.88	£64.68
Intermediate	Grades 2 – 4	2 students for 30 mins	£11.75	£129.25
Advanced	Grade 5+	1 student for 30 mins	£23.50	£258.50

Please note: If there are not enough students of a similar standard enrolling on the same instrument, alternative suitable groupings/lesson time arrangements will be made, to best suit the needs of the children. Please contact the Subject Leader for Music with any concerns or questions.

INSTRUMENTAL TUITION: ENROLMENT

If you would like to enrol / re-enrol your child for instrumental lessons with the Birmingham Music Service, please complete the relevant google form, which can be accessed from the music department pages on the school's website or via:

Enrolment for new students: <https://forms.gle/VXE59NQgbrA8v3RH7>

Re-enrolment for students who had instrumental lessons in the academic year 2019-2020:
<https://forms.gle/BpKThybHJKuuvuiz5>

Instrumental lessons are incredibly popular. We strongly encourage parents to complete the enrolment / re-enrolment forms promptly to enable us to arrange sufficient provision for all students. When demand outstrips teaching hours, we operate a waiting list system, with places awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

For the academic year 2020-2021, lessons will be starting in the week commencing Monday 7th Sept. We would therefore kindly ask that you **enrol your child no later than 31st August 2020.**

COVID-19 contingency planning

In the case of any continued disruption due to COVID-19, lessons will be provided instead via video calling using Microsoft Teams. This has been incredibly successful during school closures this year, with improved communication between parents, teachers and students often resulting in improved progress for students. We are ready and able to accommodate online video lessons for students both within school or at home if required at any point.

For any students learning in larger groups, for example steel pan players, arrangements will be kept under strict review, following governmental health and safety advice. If there are times that lessons will not be possible, we will contact parents with detailed information about what will happen.

We are asking all parents to enrol for lessons 'as normal', so that we are able to plan provision.

TERMS, CONDITIONS AND FAQ'S

How many lessons will my child receive?

This year there will be **33 lessons** in the academic year.

When will instrumental lessons take place?

If your child is in Year 7, 8 or 9 their instrumental lessons will take place on a rotating timetable during the school day. This means they will come out of a curriculum lesson to attend their instrumental lesson, but that the instrumental lesson will be during a different time each week to ensure minimal disruption to other activities. Where lessons are missed, pupils are expected to catch up on any work, asking for help where required. Having instrumental lessons on a floating, rotating timetable is a system which works well and ensures pupils benefit from the opportunity to attend additional educational opportunities as part of their school day. If, however, at any point you develop concerns that your child is falling behind in lessons due to attending their instrumental lesson, please contact Ms Argyropulo-Palmer, Subject Leader Music on **a.argyropulo-palmer@uobschool.org.uk**

If your daughter or son is in Years 10 or 11 or attends the Sixth Form they will not miss any curriculum lessons to attend their instrumental lessons. Instead these will be scheduled during enrichment times, free study periods, before or after school.

How can we check when instrumental lessons are?

Instrumental lesson timetables will be placed on Music First, sent out to you via Schools Buddy and on the noticeboards in the department.

Can I pay for my child's instrumental lessons in installments/full?

You are welcome to pay in one lump sum for the full year, or in termly installments.

We are not eligible for Free School Meals and cannot afford for our child to have instrumental lessons; can we apply for any financial support?

Yes you may be, please contact Mr Reeves at **a.reeves@uobschool.org.uk** to discuss this.

	Option 1	Option 2		
	Single payment	3 instalments, paid termly		
	Due by	Term 1 due by	Term 2 due by	Term 3 due by
	21.09.20	14.09.20	11.01.21	26.04.21
Steel pan	£129.25	£43.10	£43.10	£43.10
Dhol drumming	£129.25	£43.10	£43.10	£43.10
Novice	£194.10	£64.70	£64.30	£64.70
Intermediate	£387.75	£129.25	£129.25	£129.25
Advanced	£775.50	£258.50	£258.50	£258.50

TERMS, CONDITIONS AND FAQ'S

How do I pay?

All payments should be made through School Gateway (as with school lunch payments) on <https://login.schoolgateway.com>.

Schoolgateway

Please contact Mrs Proudman in the finance department with any queries concerning payments (finance@uobschool.org.uk). Please contact reception for any queries relating to School Gateway (reception@uobschool.org.uk).

What happens if my child misses an instrumental lesson?

If your child misses a lesson due to teacher absence this lesson will be made up at a later point in the term/academic year. If, however, your child misses a lesson due to an absence from school, the lesson will not be made up at a later date. Please take an active role in supporting your child to remember the day and time of their instrumental lesson each week. Printing the timetable from Schools Buddy and sticking it on the fridge often helps.

Will my child get an instrument?

The Birmingham Music Service provide free instrument hire for pupils; please indicate on your application form if you would like to take advantage of this.

How will I know how my child is progressing in their instrumental lessons?

Teachers and pupils will complete a practice diary each week, documenting work done in the lesson and set for practice; parents are encouraged to look at this with their child regularly. Pupils are also encouraged to participate in regular recitals and concerts where parents and carers are warmly invited to hear students perform. In addition, pupils are encouraged to prepare for examinations. Instrumental teachers will also provide an annual written report on pupil progress and can be available via email or phone to discuss your child's progress if you have any concerns. All parents and carers are encouraged to contact Subject Leader for Music via email with any queries or concerns (a.argyropulo-palmer@uobschool.org.uk).

If my child decides to stop attending their instrumental lessons during the year, can I have a refund?

Signing up for instrumental tuition represents a commitment on the part of the pupil, the school and the Birmingham Music Service. As such, refunds will **not** be given and full payment for the year will still be owing. Exceptions will be made only in special circumstances, for example, students experiencing serious and prolonged illness; in such instances, individual situations will be considered by Mr Townsend, Principal.

Please note that it is also not possible to switch to learning a different instrument during the year.

**For further information please see the school website
or email Ms Argyropulo-Palmer on
a.argyropulo-palmer@uobschool.org.uk**

GETTING IN TOUCH

We really appreciate and value your contributions, comments and communication; we know that only by working together and sharing our expertise can we achieve the very best for our pupils and your children.

The most effective way to contact us is by email.

If your communication regards **lessons, provision, teaching or music**, please contact Ms Argyropulo-Palmer.

If your communication is about **finance**, please contact Mrs. Proudman or Ms. Cosimetti, as they will be best placed to manage any queries, questions or comments. Many thanks for your cooperation with this.

Key email addresses are:

- Ms Argyropulo-Palmer, Music Subject Leader – a.argyropulo-palmer@uobschool.org.uk
- Mrs. Proudman, Finance team – finance@uobschool.org.uk
- Ms. Cosimetti, PA to the Principal – a.cosimetti@uobschool.org.uk
- Mr. Reeves, SLT in charge of inclusion - a.reeves@uobschool.org.uk

Once instrumental lessons are up and running we will communicate information relating to lesson timetables, attendance and concerts with you through Schools Buddy. We recommend you check that these emails come through to your inbox, not your junk folder. For any questions about Schools Buddy, please contact Ms. Cosimetti.

We can also be found on twitter (when we get a chance to use social media!)



@UoBSchool_Music

Thank you for your support