



MUSIC AT UOB SCHOOL

Spring 2022 Bulletin

Welcome!

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm delighted to introduce and/or reintroduce myself - I'm Ms Ann-Marie Palmer and have just returned from maternity leave to the post of Subject Leader for Music. We are very pleased that Mr Fox (who was Acting Subject Leader in my absence) will remain as a member of UoB School staff, working alongside Ms Kalsi and myself to support your child's music learning.

Upcoming Performances (subject to change)

Event: Chamber Concert

17 February, 18:00, School Hall

Any pupils who would like to perform a solo

Event: Birmingham Schools Showcase

26 & 27 February, Bramall Music Building, UoB

Choir and Orchestra

Event: Spring Concert

07 April, 18:00, School Hall

Year 7, Choir, Orchestra, Jazz Band, Year 7 Samba & Steel Pans

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Instrumental & Vocal Lessons

Timetables have been distributed to families and pupils, and lessons have now started. If your child is in Key Stage 3, their lesson time rotates so that we minimise any potential curriculum disruption: exceptions are Key Stage 3 pupils with specific individual needs who are instead organised with a fixed lesson time. Pupils and students in Key Stage 4 & 5 are timetabled outside of curriculum time. There are a small number of pupils in Year 10 who are exceptions to this rule and families have been liaised with.

If there are any questions with timetabling, please contact me to address this. Thank you for your support and your efforts with reminding your child about their lessons, bringing their instrument and practice diaries.

Exam Entries

We will shortly be entering a number of pupils for ABRSM instrumental examinations. If you would like your child to be included either in the Spring or Summer Series, please contact your child's instrumental teacher.

Finance

A reminder that Term 2 payment was due by 10 January 2022 and Term 3 payment is due by 25 April 2022. The payment requests are available to view and settle via your School Gateway account. Thank you to parents and carers who have already paid this term: your prompt attention really helps us. Please contact Ms Potrebko or Mrs Gupta if you have any questions.

Friends of UoB School

As things within schools slowly move more towards 'normality' we are hopeful to be able to resume more enrichment activities and performances. If you would like to support the music department and be more involved, please consider joining the *Friends of UoBS Group* who, amongst other things, support us with refreshments and fundraising. Please email Ms Palmer for more information.

School Ensembles - Spring Term 2022

Ensemble participation is a really important part of a high-quality music education. We encourage all pupils and students, of all experience levels, to get involved in both School and Birmingham Music Service Ensembles. It is a great way to improve playing and make friends. Ensembles are open to all, and all pupils and students who have instrumental and vocal lessons are strongly encouraged to take part in at least one ensemble.

UoBS brass ensemble - Tuesdays, 08:10 - 08:45 with Ms Sohal

UoBS Choir - Wednesdays, 08:15 - 09:00 with Mr Fox & Ms Kalsi

UoBS Orchestra - Thursdays, 08:15 - 09:00 with Ms Palmer

Year 7 Samba - Thursday lunchtimes with Ms Palmer

UoBS Jazz Band - Thursdays, 16:15 - 17:00 with Mr Fleming



Term Focus: Supporting pupil progress in their instrumental and vocal learning

Much research and experience has shown the immense benefits to pupils of participation in instrumental and vocal lessons. However, pupils will gain the most from these lessons if they are able to follow a few good habits. Due to the pandemic, many 'normal' routines have been severely disrupted and this has impacted progress. My focus this term is on ensuring we have all the important routines re-established so that all learners can flourish in their instrumental and vocal lessons.

Attendance & Punctuality

100% attendance and good punctuality is important to ensuring pupils get the most from their lessons. Pupils will be given a paper copy of their timetable. We would ask parents/carers to support their children by reminding them the night before/morning of their lesson and to ensure they have their instrument and practice diaries with them.

Practice Diaries

All pupils should have a practice diary provided by their instrumental teacher. This diary provides a record of what the pupil should be practising at home each week to aid their memory. If your child does not have a practice diary, please email their instrumental teacher to request one.

The key to progress in instrumental/vocal lessons is to ensure pupils practise at home and regularly. We would strongly encourage pupils to select five days in the week and a dedicated time slot (for example 17:30) where they can practise for 10-20 minutes (depending on age and proficiency levels - older or more expert players will benefit from longer periods of practice). They should specifically focus on scales, technical studies, and pieces as set in their lesson.

Research in to habit forming

Establishing good routines is difficult even for adults - and we have the benefit of fully mature brains, which gives us the benefit of additional willpower for less immediately rewarding tasks! The following tips are recommended to help young people form good habits:

1. Although external rewards often will not be linked to increased motivation, linking a new habit or routine to something 'nice' often helps. For example, enjoying a tasty snack after rehearsal?
2. Limit your ambition - if your child doesn't practise at all at the moment, aim for five minutes every weekday. Although brief, it's better than nothing and more likely to seem achievable.
3. Create some (supportive) accountability - could working towards a recording of a piece, a concert performance, or an exam help keep them focused and motivated?
4. Make it social! An important evolutionary feature of young people is the importance of peer relationships. Involvement in ensembles - playing with others - can be a brilliant way to get pupils playing regularly, spend time with like-minded peers, and make new friends. Supporting them to join School and/or Music Service ensembles can be a great way to support their playing/singing.