

To: All WSYM members, and their parents/carers

West Suffolk Youth Music Newsletter

Welcome back and spring term dates

Welcome back to the new Suffolk Youth Music (SYM) year. We wish any new members joining our programme of activities for the first time a particularly warm welcome.

There will be nine sessions this term. You are reminded that there will be no Friday Music School on Friday 9 and 16 February (half-term week).

The final rehearsal sessions this term for WSYJ and WSYGE are on Tuesday 20 March, and on Friday 16 March for WSYO and WSYWB.

Details of our end of term performances are below and further information will be available later in the term. Please put these dates in your diaries now!

Attendance, absence, and emergency arrangements

Members unexpectedly unable to attend any session are asked to let us know, in advance if possible, by leaving a message on the West Suffolk Music Centre answerphone: 01284 723105 or by emailing county.musicsservice@suffolk.gov.uk (emails are accessed Monday-Friday until 5.30pm).

Punctuality is very important for our SYM group activities and we would like to be able to start all sessions at their advertised times and with all members present. There is always lots to do and whilst it is understandable that there will be some absences from week to week, we do ask to be informed of these in advance where possible. Please see the SYM Conditions of Membership for further details.

In the event of an unexpected closure of any of our activities, for example due to inclement weather, we will do our best to get this information to you. Where possible, announcements will be made on the Suffolk School Closures website (<http://schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk>), on BBC Radio Suffolk (103.9, 104.6, 95.5 or 95.9 FM, or BBC iPlayer), and our social media channels (see overleaf).

Membership

Please note that it is a requirement of membership that a completed, signed form for each member is returned to us at the start of each term, whether or not a fee is to be paid. This forms an essential part of our Safeguarding Children and Young People procedures and ensures that our records are accurate and up to date. This is particularly important should we need to contact you in the event of an emergency, for example.

Returning members: don't forget that if you have not already returned your membership form we must receive this from you within the next week.

New members should speak to a member of staff to ensure they have the correct membership form and ask their parent/carer to complete and sign both sides and return it to the address shown within two weeks of joining the activity.

All membership forms should be sent to Northgate Arts Centre at our address below.

Suffolk County Music Service exams: spring term 2018

Our Suffolk County Music Service (SCMS) spring examination session will take place on Friday 23 March and Saturday 24 March. Receipt of examination entry forms at Northgate Arts Centre should be by no later than Monday 22 January. Your child's SCMS tutor will have already spoken with your child if they would like them to take an instrumental music exam and should have already handed them an entry form. Only if the Saturday sessions are oversubscribed will we look to hold additional sessions on Friday 23 March. To guarantee an examination during this session please make sure that your child is available on Saturday 24 March.

Upcoming performances/sharings

WSYO, WSYWB and WSYJ will perform a formal concert on Friday 16 March at County Upper School, beginning at 7.30pm.

Concert tickets: £7.00 (Student/Child £5.00) will be available from Northgate Arts Centre and will be allocated upon receipt of a ticket booking form. Please note that in the first instance tickets will be limited to four per family.

Final arrangements for the concert will be sent out shortly with Parental Consent and Ticket Booking forms, both of which will require returning within the specified timescale.

All members of West Suffolk Youth Guitar Ensemble (WSYGE) will perform a sharing to friends and family in the normal rehearsal time on Tuesday 13 March at our usual venue, West Suffolk Music Centre.

Progression and transition

SYM members who are of the required standard (usually around grade three standard when moving from CMS to Area activities) to move either from a County Music School to an Area Ensemble, or those who are ready to join another / an additional Area Ensemble will be personally invited by the Senior Tutor / Senior Manager in charge of the SYM Area activity.

Distinct paths of progression are in place between each SYM ensemble and we are happy to discuss with parents/carers the interests and needs of their child/ren so that musicians are placed in the ensemble that best meets their next stage of progress. This can often mean a change to your youngster's rehearsal day and time, certainly if they move from a weekend activity to a week night activity, as they progress onto the next level of ensemble playing.

KS2 Beginner Ensemble members of WSYGE will be invited to join the next level ensemble as they become ready.

Registration and fire drills

It is essential that all members and parents/carers sign in **and** out if leaving before the activity ends, so that we know exactly who needs to be accounted for in the event of an emergency. It has come to our attention that some members and their parents/carers have been unsure about, or have not followed, the correct process. Please remember that members are not permitted to sign anyone other than themselves in and out on the register.

Members are registered in their ensemble rehearsal rooms with their member of SCMS staff. Any parents/carers wishing to stay in the building for all or part of the sessions must sign in **and** out using the visitors book, located in the main entrance. If you are waiting for your youngster on a Friday evening, please do grab a drink just before the members' break time at 6.15pm. We remind parents/carers that visitors are required to wait for their youngsters only in designated areas and are not permitted into other areas of the building.

A Fire Drill will be held at some point this term. Please familiarise yourself with the emergency evacuation procedures and make sure you know which member of staff you need to register with in the event of an emergency. If you are unsure about how the registration or Fire Drill process works, please speak to a member of staff who will be happy to explain.

Safeguarding, housekeeping and practical arrangements

Parents/carers waiting for youngsters attending rehearsals must only wait in the designated area as agreed with ensemble leaders (see registration and fire drill section). Visitors are not permitted to be in rehearsals (without prior permission) or in other areas of County Upper School. Of course, parents/carers do not need to stay in the building during the sessions – members can be left and collected at the end of their rehearsal.

Medical information

Parents/carers are asked to ensure we are in receipt of any important medical information about your child. Please ensure that we receive this information in writing as soon as possible.

Friends information

The *Friends of Bury St Edmunds County Music School* continue to work hard to support our activities, both on Friday evenings and Saturdays by providing tuck and refreshments, and by providing support and catering for Suffolk Youth Music activities. All profits are used towards providing 'extras' for us, such as workshops, outings and, occasionally, equipment. We are very grateful for the help the Friends provide and we welcome any more volunteers who are able to give up the occasional Friday or Saturday for tuck shop duty. We urgently need to add to our list of volunteers as increasingly there may be occasions where we will be unable to run the Tuck Shop on a Saturday morning.

The Friends website www.friendsofbcms.org.uk provides additional information about their activities.

Contacts

If you require further information about any of the above matters, please speak with the Tutor in Charge of your activity:

Mrs Seeley, Tutor in Charge, Friday evening West Suffolk Youth Music activities

Mr Sewell, Tutor in Charge, West Suffolk Youth Jazz

Mr Watson or Mr Morley, Tutors in Charge, West Suffolk Youth Guitar Ensemble

Alternatively, contact Mrs Simms, Senior Manager by email to county.music@service.suffolk.gov.uk

Copies of SYM newsletters are available on our website: www.suffolkmusic.org.uk/newsletters

Information regarding the full programme of SYM activities and events can be found on our website www.suffolkmusic.org.uk, where you will also find news and updates about the work of the Suffolk Music Education Hub and the Suffolk County Music Service.

You may also consider following us on social media, where we share photographs, news and updates about music-making in Suffolk and beyond.

www.suffolkmusic.org.uk



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