

Spring Minutes for the Music Educators Group for Secondary Schools in Walsall

Venue: Queen Mary's High School

Date: 28th January 2026

1. Apologies & Welcomes
2. Minutes
3. Matters Arising
4. Lead Schools – What are they and how can schools benefit? (Hannah Watson)
5. Instrument Demo – Warwick Music
6. Music Service Update
7. AoB

1. Acceptances and Apologies

Present:	
Stephanie Dufty (SD) – Chair	Walsall Music Education Service (WMES)
Jess Harvey (JH)	St Thomas More
Charlotte Okunlola (CO)	The Studio School
Stewart Gardner (SG) - host	Blue Coat Academy
Catharine Boden	Queen Mary's Grammar
Apologies:	
Kaite SurrIDGE	Grace Academy
Lis Fitzpatrick	St Thomas More

2. Minutes

- 2.1. The minutes were accepted from the Autumn meeting – October 2025.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 Welcome to Catherine from QMGS & Hannah from QMHS

4. Lead Schools

- 4.1 Steph & Hannah outlined the Lead School Programme, and that QMHS are the lead secondary school for Walsall for the next 3 years: Sept 2025 – Aug 2028.
- 4.2 Explained the mandate is loose but that the Lead Schools as a collective across the Black Country (12 schools, 1 for each phase of primary, secondary and special for each Music Service area) have decided to focus on case studies this year, process of contacting, visibility on BCMH website and creating networks.
- 4.3 Discussion about MusE network already present in Walsall. Suggestions made for creating own CPD in MusE for own needs which Lead School could facilitate: ideas shared –

secondary singing in the classroom, secondary curriculum development, how to lead a department, how to manage a peri program, Ofsted experience, moderating composition

4.4 Hannah said she has an open door at QMHS for anyone who may like to get in touch.

4.5 Jess offered for her school to be part of a case study on moving music of the KS3 rota.

4.6 Action – any CPD wants or training/support please contact either Hannah or Steph and we can either feed through MusE group or create something more bespoke.

5. Instrument Demo – Warwick Music

5.1. Warwick Music bought a van full for instruments to demo and staff to browse. Catalogues were given out and opportunity for follow up discussion and visits shared. All staff found very useful for awareness for when funds are available.

5.2. Steph confirmed Focus Rite's were ordered from Capital Grant last phase as a result and asked for schools who wish to loan free of charge. STM and Blue Coat confirmed.

5.3. Action – should any other schools wish to loan a Focus Rite let Steph know. Phase 3 Capital spend will be submitted in February so thoughts to be shared asap; last spend at end of Academic year.

6. Music Service Update

6.1. WYMS applications now live – see website. Live Final March 27th

6.2. Live Music forms out today for July

6.3. Xmas dates – last week of Nov. Booking forms out later in term – usually March time (EDIT – bookings out now. Limited availability left)

6.4. Singing Festival Secondary date – 25th June.

6.5. CPD Sessions – see website. June 26th focus on leading a music department. See website.

6.6. Hoping to start tabla and dohl sessions on Weds Music Centre from late summer – recruitment in place and using some of the Capital Spend to resource – let Steph know if you have interested pupils.

6.7. Glen retired at the end of last term from management with the Service. Still doing some teaching hours for us. Replacement will be full time and recruitment is underway.

6.8. SLAs will be out to schools to renew around Feb half term. Thoughts on reducing number of weeks to 36 to help mitigate inevitable increase as costs rise. All in agreement.

7. AoB

7.1. None

**Next meeting : May 20th St Thomas More Catholic School
Focus – Composing & Orchestral Event Planning**

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