

Summer news from Berkshire Maestros

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*...teaching music, changing lives!*

## Summer term news from Berkshire Maestros

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### Message from our CEO:

Dear parents/carers

As we reach the end of another incredibly busy year, I want to thank you all for your continued support to the work we do at Berkshire Maestros. I recognise that the work we do would not be possible without the encouragement and practical assistance that our pupils receive from their parents/carers and schools.

This has been an exceptionally busy year with a full calendar of events and I feel truly privileged to have been able to attend so many high quality concerts, and see first-hand how our young musicians have developed during their time with Maestros.

Our county choirs have enjoyed national recognition this year - being chosen to perform a selection of Repertoire for *Ten Pieces 3*, and to record at Maida Vale with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Our thanks must go to Chris Hann, their MD, for his inspirational work which has ensured this unique opportunity. We now eagerly await the choirs' performance at the Proms

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Many more of our pupils have had the opportunity to participate in prestigious events around the county this year; from an inspirational choral performance at Eton for Future Talent, BYSO's stunning performance at Taplow Court with guest conductor Peter Stark, several hugely successful Junior Music Festivals, including the inaugural RBWM festivals, as well as numerous local concerts showcasing the talent coming up through our music centre ensembles.

These performances time after time highlight the passion and pleasure our pupils gain from making music.

Our Early Years programme for children aged 1-5 continues to gain momentum and the Max Maestro Roadshow was a new and highly successful adventure for the team. Audiences in children's centres, museums and libraries were enthralled by Max and his adventures and we look forward to offering much more of this next year.

[Soundstage](#), which offers lessons for those interested in more contemporary music, has also gone from strength to strength and we have seen some wonderful sound production and contemporary singing courses developing this year.

Our Academy programme continues to thrive with some exceptional masterclasses and specialist courses offered to our most gifted and talented students. The ongoing success of our 'Learn it Live' initiative is a tribute to the creativity and hard work of the Academy team. Changing the focus every year to respond to the needs and requirements of our school colleagues has been very well received. Next year we hope to demonstrate the 'Birth of the Orchestra' – a very exciting project.

### **Widening our reach**

This year has seen us branch out in the very west of West Berkshire, with the development of a new [satellite music centre](#) at John O'Gaunt School in Hungerford. This is enabling pupils from the very edges of the county and beyond to participate in ensembles for the first time which is very exciting - an embryonic centre at the moment but with real potential for growth. We are currently working on developing a satellite site at Caversham and we are also working hard to extend our reach and provision around Ascot.

### **Staffing**

As some of you will know, difficulties in recruiting good staff has led to waiting lists for lessons in some curricular areas. Our aim is to provide music education to any child who wants to learn, therefore we are always keen to keep waiting lists to a minimum. I am pleased to report that we have invested heavily in recruitment and have managed to appoint a number of experienced specialist teachers to join Maestros in September. These new recruits will reinforce an already

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### **Stoneham Court**

Our HQ has required a good deal of TLC this year. We have seen redecoration, removal of old/broken equipment, new carpets, murals, pictures and paintings being done. The instrument team have also worked extremely hard all year to move instruments into external storage to clear the corridors and rooms so that teaching can take place in a clean and tidy environment.

### **Website**

The arrival of our new Marketing and Communications Manager has enabled us to begin investing in improving and developing our website to make it easier and more relevant for our customers. This will improve access to information about lessons, concerts and courses, as well as improving contact and payment arrangements. We hope that the new site will be fully operational by Christmas.

### **Fees for 2017-18**

I am pleased to be able to announce that the planned rise in tuition and ensemble membership fees for the academic year 2017-18 has been kept as low as possible in line with the RPI. This small increase is necessary to enable us to continue delivering our full range of services, activities and events.

I can also confirm that, for the forthcoming academic year, we have been able to retain the 25% loyalty discounts on all music centre memberships and in fact, first time ensemble members will continue to receive a 50% discount on the full rate for the first term. We have also been able to keep the large discount for Academy memberships (as per the terms and conditions on our website). This means the cost of a whole term of standard group lessons will increase by only £3.30. Overall, this is still excellent value for our customers. You can also find our fees for 2017-18 on our website under Register Here or click [here](#).

### **Preparation for Royal Albert Hall 2019**

Some of you may have already heard the exciting news that we are booked to perform at the Royal Albert Hall in March 2019. Preparations have already begun to ensure that this is a very exciting event for us all and a once in a lifetime opportunity for many of our pupils. I know you will all offer your support. Please watch for further details in our newsletters and on our website.

### **Summer Courses**

As we head towards the summer holidays, look out for our summer courses in [Ukulele \(24/25 July\)](#), [Musicals \(21-24 August\)](#) and Music Production (24-26 July). These are great opportunities to learn while having fun and all are very reasonably priced – so if the youngsters are complaining about being ‘bored’, get them registered onto one of our courses. You can register for our courses

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### End of Year Concerts

At this time of year, most of our bands, choirs and groups are preparing for or taking part in their various end-of-year concerts. These opportunities to perform are an important part of what we do at Maestros. They have a key role in teaching young people about team working and in helping to build their confidence. I am sure that you have seen how these activities contribute to the personal development of our pupils. It is wonderful to see so many of you turning up to support these activities.

### Let us know what you think!

We are always pleased to hear from members of our wider network of supporters including parents, carers and teachers. Your feedback and good ideas help us to keep our services fresh, up-to-date and, most importantly, meeting the needs of our audience. If you have any thoughts or ideas you want to share, please drop us a line at [marketing@berkshiremaestros.org.uk](mailto:marketing@berkshiremaestros.org.uk), or use the [feedback form](#) on the homepage of our website. Thank you.

We trust that colleagues and students who are departing on Music Centre tours later this month will enjoy a safe and wonderful experience and I would like to wish everyone the most restful and enjoyable of summer holidays and I look forward to seeing all our pupils again in September.

Best wishes

Lynne Ellis

CEO, Berkshire Maestros

*Apologies to those of you who receive this e-mail more than once; due to the nature of our customer database, we are unable to prevent duplicate e-mails being sent where children are involved in more than one type of activity.*



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