

LEARN, LEAD AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE



CITY OF LONDON  
FREEMEN'S SCHOOL

ASHTEAD, SURREY



# Music at Freemen's

2025-2026

# Welcome

This booklet will introduce you to the musical life and work of the School and explain the arrangements that we can make for your child to take lessons on a musical instrument.

At Freeman's, we firmly believe that music is for everyone. There is a wide range of activities on offer and students are warmly encouraged to participate in the musical life of the School, whether they are beginners or already at an advanced level.

All pupils receive one class music lesson a week until the age of 14. The lessons cover a huge range of topics and a myriad of musical styles and genres are explored. The aim of these lessons is to expand the musical horizons of the students whilst incorporating essential practical skills. From Lower 5 (Year 10) onwards, pupils may opt to take music for GCSE and, in the Sixth Form, students can study towards A Level Music.

Outside of the classroom, all pupils have the opportunity to learn one or more musical instruments. About one third of our pupils are currently learning an instrument and, in the Junior School, it is quite usual to find that 75% of the class has signed up for individual music tuition.

All students who sing or play an instrument have the opportunity to make music through participating in the many ensembles that run throughout the School. There are choirs, orchestras, brass ensembles, string ensembles, and jazz bands at beginner and more advanced levels. There is also an extensive Chamber Music programme for more advanced students.



# Music Department Staff

## DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mr Anthony Merryweather

[anthony.merryweather@freemens.org](mailto:anthony.merryweather@freemens.org)

## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mrs Natalka Eaglestone

[natalka.eaglestone@freemens.org](mailto:natalka.eaglestone@freemens.org)

## MUSIC DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATOR

Mrs Patricia Barrie

[patricia.barrie@freemens.org](mailto:patricia.barrie@freemens.org)

## KEY STAGE 2 MUSIC CO-ORDINATOR

Mrs Sarah Gillespie

## LOWER JUNIOR SCHOOL MUSIC

Mrs Anna Jansen and Mrs Smith

## CLARINET

Ms Jemma Love

## DRUM KIT AND PERCUSSION

Mr Joseph Sweeney and Mr Stuart Roberts

## FLUTE

Mrs Ruth Stockdale

## GUITAR AND UKULELE

Mr John Wallace

## OBOE, CLARINET, SAXOPHONE

AND JAZZ PIANO

Mr Paul Smith

## PIANO

Mrs Hilary Dilnot, Ms Elenlucia Pappalardo,

Miss Chrstiana Achim and Mr Ken-Ee Choong

## SINGING

Ms Nicola Berg, Mrs Alice Bishop and Mrs Marianna Suri

## TROMBONE, TUBA, EUPHONIUM AND FRENCH HORN

Mr David Eaglestone

## TRUMPET

Mr Simon Sturgeon-Clegg

## VIOLONCELLO AND DOUBLE BASS

Ms Jayne Spencer and Miss Rebecca McNaught

## VIOLIN AND VIOLA

Mrs Victoria Brockless and

Mr Christopher Beckett

## DOUBLE BASS

Ms Frances Preston

# The Music School

Our fully equipped Music School opened in the summer of 2014 and provides four classrooms, 12 instrumental teaching rooms, a recording studio and a magnificent Recital Hall which seats 250 people. Two of the classrooms include a suite of Apple Macs. Students are able to access composition software such as Sibelius, Logic Pro and Garageband on these computers. The software is explored in class music but students are also welcome to use the facilities outside of class time with a teacher's permission.

## THE MUSIC STAFF

The Music Department is headed by the Director of Music, who is supported by an Assistant Director of Music, two class Music teachers and 21 part-time specialist instrumental teachers. The day-to-day running of the instrumental teaching is managed by the Music Department Administrator, who is the first point of contact for any questions regarding lessons.

## USE OF PRACTICE ROOMS

The practice rooms in the Music School may be used for individual practice, provided that the simple rules posted in the rooms are followed. Permission should be sought from Mrs Barrie.

# Performance Opportunities

All students who sing or play an instrument have the opportunity to join one or more of the many ensembles on offer, including those pupils who have instrumental lessons with an external teacher. There are choirs, orchestras, brass ensembles, string ensembles, and jazz bands at both Junior and Senior levels. There is also an extensive Chamber Music programme for more advanced students. Pianists are encouraged to join chamber groups and take on the role of accompanists in one our choirs and for our soloists in lunchtime and evening concerts.

Freemen's runs a significant performance programme for students. In terms of solo and small ensemble performances, the Music Department runs an informal Friday Lunchtime Series which all students are invited to sign up to from week to week. Most peripatetic teachers run an informal evening concert of their own for their students too.

## AUTUMN TERM

In the Autumn and Spring Terms, a Choral and Orchestra Concert takes place involving all of the large instrumental ensembles from both the Junior and Senior Schools. The Music Department produces highly acclaimed, biennial musicals, in conjunction with the Drama Department.

## SPRING TERM

The Spring Term is a particularly busy time in the Department as the Junior and Senior House Music Competitions take place after the half term break. There is also an Invitation Concert which is for advanced instrumentalists and chamber ensembles and a joint Chamber Music concert with the City of London School for Girls which takes place at St. James's Church in Piccadilly. The term ends with large scale orchestral and choral concerts.

## SUMMER TERM

The main musical events in the Summer Term are a **Musical Soirée** and **Prize Day** which see lots of performances throughout the course of the day.



# Music Ensembles at Freeman's

There are many ensembles at Freeman's for students to be involved in. Some are led by full-time staff and others by one of our part-time specialist instrumental teachers. There really is something for everyone and getting involved is easy, often simply a question of turning up or approaching / contacting a member of the Music Department. Please see below a list of the choirs and ensembles available and timetables showing when and where they take place. Ensembles are generally organised in terms of musical ability rather than age.

## CHOIRS

### PHOENIX CHOIR (U2-L3)

A non-auditioned choir that welcomes any student in either Year 5 or Year 6. There is no need to be able to read music and the choir is led by Mrs Bishop. A mix of engaging repertoire is covered.

### FREEMEN'S VOICES (U3-U6)

Another non-auditioned choir that welcomes any student from Years 7-13. There is no need to be able to read music and the choir is led by Mrs Suri and Mr Merryweather. Once again, a mix of engaging repertoire is covered. Rehearsals take place before school on Fridays.

### CHAMBER CHOIR (U3-U6)

This is an auditioned four-part choir with an emphasis on challenging the singers with a rigorous church music repertoire. The ability to read music is essential. The choir is led by the Director of Music, Mr Merryweather. During the academic year 2025-2026 the choir will once again sing evensong at Southwark Cathedral.

### A CAPELLA (U4-U6)

Students are invited to join this small choir that looks to challenge them by engaging with sight-singing and tackling a mix of repertoire from Renaissance music to modern-day arrangements. This choir is pupil-led, offering the opportunity for some of our advanced singers to lead and make a difference.

**BOYS' CHOIR (L2-U6)** No auditions are necessary to join this recently- formed choir, just enthusiasm and commitment. The choir is pupil-led and offers boys the chance to sing their hearts out in a wide range of musical styles.



## BANDS

### CONCERTBAND (U3-U6) GRADE 1-4

On Wednesdays after school, the department fills with a huge cohort of musicians. Rehearsals sometimes involve sectionals and the band usually performs in termly concerts. Subject to the instrument, beginners up to Grade 4 are welcome to join.

### JAZZ BAND (U3-U6) GRADE 4+

Mr Smith is in full swing with the Senior Jazz Band. Students are invited to become familiar with some classics of the jazz repertoire and music beyond the jazz era too. Those who want to test out their improvisation skills are welcome to do so in this lively and entertaining experience.

### BUSKERS (U3-U6) GRADE 7+

This group was specifically designed to provide music for social functions and is deliberately kept as a small, transportable and versatile ensemble. As a result of this, the Buskers are the ensemble that is often called upon for trips outside of school to provide some jazz, swing or funk for the delectation of expecting audiences. By invitation.

### TRAINING BRASS (L2-U6) GRADE 2-4/5

Freemen's has a very strong tradition of fantastic brass playing. Mr Sturgeon-Clegg, the Department's trumpet teacher, is right at the heart of this and leads the Junior and Senior Brass ensembles. Much of the repertoire for these groups is specifically arranged for them and a terrific amount of fun is had in these rehearsals. More experienced musicians attend and support less experienced players.

### SENIOR BRASS (U3-U6) GRADE 4/5+

The Senior Brass continue the good work carried out by the Junior Brass and have the opportunity to perform more bespoke music. Mr Sturgeon-Clegg works this group hard and, as with the Senior Strings, a high standard of performance is achieved through dedicated, rewarding and fun rehearsals.

## ORCHESTRAS and ENSEMBLES

**SENIOR ORCHESTRA (U3-U6) Grade 5+ or by invitation** Mrs Eaglestone directs the Symphony Orchestra. Rehearsals are detailed and staff are on hand to take sectionals where required. All students gain a tremendous amount through this musical experience and, for more advanced instrumentalists, concerto opportunities are available.

### SENIOR STRINGS (U3-U6) Grade 5+

The Senior Strings is led by Ms Preston and looks at some of the finest works composed specifically for String ensemble. A high standard of performance is achieved by this ensemble who gain advanced skills through their involvement. In the past the group have performed works by Elgar, Dvořák and Grieg.

### TRAINING STRINGS (U3-U6) Grade 2-4/5

The Training Strings is led by Mr Beckett and is an opportunity to gain great experience of string ensemble playing. Training Strings have the opportunity to perform in the termly orchestral concert.

**PRIMA STRINGS (Form 1-U2)** This group is for younger string players, appropriate for those who have just started but really want to get stuck into some ensemble playing, as well as for those who have been playing for a few years. It is taken by our cello and double bass teacher, Ms Spencer, who has considerable experience with beginner instrumentalists. Some of our Music Scholars from the Senior School also help with the coaching.

## GUITAR ORCHESTRA (L2-L4)

This group is aimed at the younger pupils of the School who have started guitar or ukulele lessons or teach themselves. Under direction of Mr Wallace, pupils will learn the basics of ensemble playing on these instruments. The Department is fortunate to possess some small and medium sized guitars, as part of the Mark Cuthbert Guitar Bursary. These can be used by pupils, or pupils may bring their own instrument, if they have one.

**STRINGS ATTACHED (U3-U6)** This ensemble is aimed at musicians who are a little more experienced on the guitar and open to players who have reached a standard of Grade 3 or 4 or above.

**FLUTE CHOIR (L3-U6)** This group is for flute players who are Grade 1 and above. It is taken by our flute teacher, Mrs Stockdale. The music played is varied, ranging from Disney to Classical and there are opportunities to try out both the alto flute and the piccolo.

### AD HOC CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

A number of string trios, quartets and quintets and piano trios run on an ad hoc basis by Mrs Brockless, Mr Beckett and Ms Pappalardo for the more advanced performers to take part in concert performances and competitions.

# Co-Curricular Timetable

FROM SEPTEMBER 2025	BEFORE SCHOOL At 8.10am – 8.40am	LUNCH At 1pm – 1.30pm or 1.20pm – 1.55pm	AFTER SCHOOL 4.10pm – 5.10pm
MONDAY	<b>PRIMA STRINGS</b> 8.10am – 8.40am Music Foyer Miss Spencer	<b>SENIOR STRINGS</b> 1.20pm - 1.55pm Recital Hall, Ms Preston  <b>CLARINET ENSEMBLE</b> 1.30pm – 2.00pm MU111, Miss Love	
TUESDAY	<b>ABRSM AURAL</b> 8.10am - 8.40am MU101, Mr Smith	<b>TRAINING BRASS</b> 1.20pm - 1.55pm MU104, Mr Sturgeon-Clegg  <b>TRINITY AURAL</b> 1.00-2.00pm MU111 Mr Smith	<b>SENIOR ORCHESTRA</b> 4.10pm - 5.10pm Recital Hall Mrs Eaglestone
WEDNESDAY	<b>ABRSM THEORY</b> 8.10am - 8.40am MU101 Mr Smith  <b>BUSKERS</b> 8.10am -	<b>TRAINING STRINGS</b> 1.20pm - 1.55pm Foyer Mr Beckett	<b>CONCERT BAND</b> 4.10pm - 5.10pm Recital Hall Mr Smith
THURSDAY	8.40am Music Foyer Mr Smith  <b>BOYS' CHOIR</b> 8.10am - 8.40am Recital Hall Pupil-led  <b>FREEMEN'S VOICES</b> 8.10am – 8.40am	<b>GUITAR ORCHESTRA</b> 1pm - 1.30pm 1.30pm-2pm MU101, Mr Wallace  <b>FLUTE CHOIR</b> 1.20pm - 1.55pm MU104, Mrs Stockdale	<b>JAZZ BAND</b> 4.10pm - 5.10pm Recital Hall Mr Smith
FRIDAY	Music Foyer Mrs Suri and Mr Merryweather	<b>PHOENIX CHOIR</b> 1pm – 1.30pm MU104 Mrs Suri  <b>SENIOR BRASS</b> 1.20pm - 1.55pm Recital Hall  <b>CHAMBER CHOIR</b> 1.20pm - 1.55pm MU1, Mr Merryweather	

# Individual Instrumental Lessons

The ability to play a musical instrument is particularly encouraged within the School as it can be one of the most rewarding studies with which a child can enrich their school career. There is increasing evidence to suggest that children learning an instrument perform better in their academic subjects. Learning an instrument allows pupils to express themselves and grow in self-confidence whilst developing other skills such as hand and eye co-ordination, spatial and social skills, and self-reliance. Instruction in instrumental tuition is given on an individual basis by a group of 21 qualified, specialist teachers, who are all experts in their own particular field. Tuition is available on the following instruments:

- CELLO
- CLARINET
- CORNET
- DOUBLE BASS
- DRUM KIT
- EUPHONIUM
- FLUTE
- FRENCH HORN
- GUITAR
- MUSIC PRODUCTION AND DJ
- OBOE
- PIANO
- PERCUSSION
- RECORDER
- SAXOPHONE
- SINGING
- TROMBONE
- TRUMPET
- TUBA
- VIOLA
- VIOLIN

Individual lessons can also be arranged in Theory.

All Instrumental Lessons take place during academic lessons, lunch and break periods and Games lessons. They work on a system of rotation. Only Sixth Form may have lessons fixed in free periods. We are often asked to arrange lessons in two or more instruments for pupils. We would ask parents to consider carefully before making such a request. The decision to miss part of more than one lesson a week should be based on how comfortable a

given student is keeping on top of their academic workload. Pupils learning three instruments are advised to take at least one of their Instrumental Lessons outside of school. In order that visiting instrumental teachers can fulfil their obligation to teach ten lessons per term, pupils may have to be excused from other regular, co-curricular activities.

There are many opportunities to perform in our instrumental and vocal ensembles, from Junior Brass and Lower School Choirs, to Senior Orchestra and many more. This could be the start of something exciting!

If your child has already had experience of playing in an orchestra or singing in a choir at their previous school, please encourage them to join our own musical activities here, to prevent any lack of continuity. We find that these out-of-school activities are excellent vehicles for both new and current pupils to widen their circle of friends and interests, and to become fully involved in the life of the School community. Applications for lessons are usually processed upon receipt of the completed form. Please note that the Music Administration Office is closed during School holidays and applications received during this time will be processed as soon as possible once the new term starts.

## COST OF LESSONS

The cost covers 10 lessons of 30 minutes per term. For up-to-date costs, please visit our website, [www.freemens.org/fees](http://www.freemens.org/fees). Charges for Instrumental Lessons are added to your School invoice in the term after tuition has been given.

**Lesson times may not be changed or swapped without the permission of the instrumental teacher or the Director of Music.**

## WHAT TO DO NOW:

If you would like your child to take lessons on an instrument, a short trial on an instrument (or to hire an instrument), please complete the **Application for Instrumental/Aural Lessons'**

form. All pupils have the opportunity to attend the annual Instrumental Lesson Fair, in the first week of the Autumn Term.

Should you have any queries regarding applying for music lessons please contact our Music Administrator, Mrs Patricia Barrie at [patricia.barrie@freemens.org](mailto:patricia.barrie@freemens.org)

Applications for lessons are usually processed upon receipt of the completed form. Please note that the Music Administration Office is closed during School holidays and applications received during this time will be processed as soon as possible once the new term starts.

If you would like your child to learn more than one instrument, you can complete the attached application form as many times as required. We recommend that pupils in Form 1 only take up lessons in one instrument to enable them to settle in. Please note there are a limited number of vacancies in many instruments, (many of these will be filled before the Autumn Term begins). Parents of children who have already started learning an instrument and who wish to transfer to one of our teachers should complete an application form as soon as possible please.

Students will have an average of 10 lessons per term: many teachers give more than 10 lessons in the longer terms, and fewer than 10 in the shorter terms. Most pupils have their lessons at different times (and perhaps even different days) each week. It is therefore essential that students check their music book and the Music Lesson Notice Board carefully so that they arrive at the right time each week.

## STIPULATIONS FOR ATTENDANCE OF INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS:

- If a music lesson is in School time, students must go to their class period before or after the lesson to collect details of their work, prep, etc.
- If a student arrives for a music lesson and the teacher is not there, they should check the Music Lesson Notice Board for any special instructions and to see if they have the right day and time. If
- the student has the right place and time, they should begin some practising while they wait. If the teacher has not arrived after five minutes, the student should ask advice from one of the other Music Staff.
- Please make sure that the class teacher knows the student is at a music lesson.

## INSTRUMENTAL LESSON FAIR

**Tuesday 9 September - 3pm for F1, 4pm others**

Have you ever wanted to learn an instrument? Now is your chance. The Instrumental Lesson Fair is held at the start of the Autumn Term and is open to all pupils. The Fair will take place in the afternoon of the chosen date (from 3.00pm for Form 1 and from 4.00pm for all other students). It is hosted in the Music School.

This is an open and free event where all instrumental music staff will be available. No need to book, just turn up!

## MISSED LESSON POLICY

All scheduled lessons will be charged for. If a pupil misses a lesson because they are absent from School, forgets to attend, or chooses to attend another School activity instead (unless this is a publicised fixture), the cost of this lesson will be forfeited. However, if the teacher inadvertently timetables a lesson at a time when the pupil would not have been able

to attend because of a publicised fixed School event, this lesson will be rescheduled. It is the responsibility of the parent and/or the pupil to inform their instrumental teacher, at least a week in advance, of any future events which are not in the School calendar that may prevent a pupil from attending a lesson.

If a student is away because of illness, it would be helpful if parents were able to send a message to the Music Department Administrator, to be passed on to the instrumental teacher concerned.

If a student misses a lesson, they must try to see their instrumental teacher as soon as possible in order to apologise and to find out the time of the next lesson. Parents will also be informed in writing when a student misses a lesson, giving the date and time of the next lesson. However, students should still check on the music lesson notice board and/or with the teacher. If the teacher is absent, he or she will try to arrange an extra lesson at the earliest available time.

Pupils in Upper 5 (Year 11) and Upper 6 (Year 13) taking GCSE or A Level examinations are expected to come into School for their instrumental lessons during study leave. Pupils must honour their school commitments during exam periods, It is their responsibility to provide their instrumental teacher with their exam timetable so that suitable lesson times can be arranged.

#### TERMINATION OF LESSONS

If a student wishes to stop having lessons, they must first discuss the matter thoroughly with their parents and instrumental teacher. The City of London Freeman's School requires at least one term's notice in writing to the Music Department Administrator, by the advertised deadline date on the School website. As the School is committed by contract with the

music teacher to give notice of changes in their agreed teaching days and lessons, insufficient notice of withdrawals from individual instrumental music tuition necessitates the charging of music fees in lieu of notice. In the event that a pupil's instrumental or singing teacher leaves the School, the pupil will be automatically enrolled with another of our peripatetic teachers, unless half a term's notice is given by the parent.



# School Instruments

#### HIRING OF SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS

The School owns a large collection of all orchestral instruments. Instruments can be hired for £ per term. We also have small stocks of the more unusual instruments (piccolo, baritone saxophone, bass clarinet) which may be used by more advanced Senior pupils.

Pupils learning the piano must have an instrument available for daily practice. Guitar and recorder pupils are expected to own their own instruments from the outset. Our specialist staff will gladly give advice on the purchase of suitable instruments when the time comes.

#### BRINGING INSTRUMENTS TO SCHOOL

Instruments brought to school should be left in the instrumental store cupboard in the Music School by 8.35am and should be collected again at 4.00pm. Instruments should never be left in other parts of the School.

It is essential that the student's name is clearly marked on all instrument cases, sheet music and other property that they bring to School. It only takes a few seconds to do this, but it can take hours to find unnamed lost property. If a student's name should become detached from a School loan instrument, please return to the Music Office for re-labelling.

# Graded Music Examinations

We like as many of our pupils as possible to take the ABRSM graded Music Examinations, Trinity College of Music and Rock School Examinations. Generally, students find that they progress much faster if they have a goal like this to work towards. Also, given that practical work plays such an important part in the GCSE examination, it is a good thing to get used to taking practical exams at an early age. Associated Board and Trinity College Examinations are held in School every term. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority now accredit the examinations as having the equivalence in the levels of knowledge, skills and understanding as GCSE and A Level examinations. As an example, a pass at Grade 8 is worth 55 UCAS points. Pupils having lessons with teachers outside of Freeman's are welcome to apply to take their ABRSM or Trinity Examinations at the School, **subject to availability**,

Please note that we discourage pupils from setting out on a course that takes them as

rapidly as possible through the examinations. It is musically much better for pupils to develop self-confidence in performing a wide repertory and a broad range of skills. We look for high-grade marks and distinctions rather than long strings of bare passes. This is particularly important for pupils wishing to enter for Music Scholarships.

#### MUSICAL SUPPORT FOR ABRSM / TRINITY EXAMINATIONS

The Music Department runs a full range of musical support services, including aural and theory classes to help towards ABRSM and Trinity Examinations. The Music Department's official accompanists give much help and professional coaching to those pupils taking the higher grades. Aural training up to Grade 5 is provided at no charge to parents. Pupils may opt in for individual Aural training for Grades 6-8 charged at the same rate as individual music lessons.

# Application for Individual Music Lessons

Please complete the form online, which can be found on the Parent Portal. If you need any assistance, please contact our Music Department Administrator by email - [patricia.barrie@freemens.org](mailto:patricia.barrie@freemens.org).

## PLEASE NOTE

- Pupils in Form 1 and Lower 2 wishing to take singing lessons will have a short voice trial to assess whether they are ready to commence lessons.
- All instrumental lessons take place during academic lessons, lunch and break periods and games lessons, working on a system of rotation. Only Sixth Form may have lessons fixed in free periods. Music Scholars may request a fixed lesson time, subject to approval by the Director of Music.
- Charges for Instrumental Lessons are added to the School invoice in the term after tuition has been given. Please do not include a remittance with this form.
- Termination of lessons – The City of London Freemen's School requires at least one term's notice in writing to the Music Department Administrator. As the School is committed by contract with the music teacher to give notice of changes in their agreed teaching days and lessons, insufficient notice of withdrawals from individual instrumental music tuition necessitates the charging of music fees in lieu of notice. Please send written notification of your wish to terminate lessons to the Director of Music. Please note the school's charging policy for missed lessons.





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ASHTEAD, SURREY