

Continuing your child's musical journey

Over the last year, 2800 children across 22 local schools have learnt to play a guitar, woodwind, brass, string or percussion instrument as part of our 'First Access' Whole Class Ensemble Tuition (WCET) programme. We really hope that your child has enjoyed this experience and that they would like to continue learning to play a musical instrument. Learning to play a musical instrument can boost confidence and team working skills; improve listening, self-discipline and concentration; as well as inspiring a life-long love of music and performance.

In most schools, individual or small group lessons are available on a range of instruments, provided by self-employed Approved Instrumental Teachers. Costs vary depending on the duration of the lessons and how many pupils there are in a group. You can expect to pay between £50 and £100 for a term of ten lessons and will receive a bill directly from the instrumental teacher at the start of each term. Lessons take place during the normal school day but the times are usually rotated in order to avoid pupils missing the same topic in class.



Your child will need their own instrument so that they can practice at home between lessons. These can be hired on a subsidised basis from Sutton Music Service for just £32 per term. Please don't buy an instrument at this stage as the instrumental teacher can advise you on suitable makes, models, retailers, etc. You would also be expected to pay for books and graded exam fees from time to time. If the lessons you're interested in are not currently offered at your child's school, we can work with the school to provide a suitable teacher, if there's enough demand.

Sutton Music Service also offers lessons on some instruments at our Wednesday and Saturday Music Schools, based at Cheam Park Farm Primary. Spaces are limited because of the popularity of this provision and for some instruments there are waiting lists. When your child has been playing a little longer, they can join one of our range of bands and orchestras. Weekly rehearsals take place during term time where young musicians from different schools come together to have fun and make music in a safe environment, with the support of expert Sutton Music Service tutors and conductors. There are regular concerts and opportunities to take part in collaborative projects with professional musicians, weekend music courses and European concert tours.

My Journey with Sutton Music Service – Tom Thornton

‘You never know where your music might take you!’

I started playing the violin in Year 4, as part of a Sutton Music Service Whole Class Ensemble Tuition (WCET) programme at Barrow Hedges Primary School. I chose to continue learning but switched to viola, having lessons at school with David Brooker, before moving to Sutton Music Service’s Saturday Music School. 2012 became a pivotal year in my musical journey, as I began trumpet lessons with Roger Willey, again through a whole class initiative at Wilsons School. Under Roger’s expert tuition, I gained my Grade 8 with distinction in July last year, and since then I have gained places at the Junior Department of the Royal College of Music and in the National Youth Wind Orchestra.



This summer I will perform at the Royal Albert Hall as part of the BBC Proms Youth Ensemble. I have been a member of Sutton Music Service ensembles for many years, from beginner level groups through to Sutton Youth Wind Orchestra (SYWO) and Sutton Youth Symphony Orchestra (SYSO). Highlights of my time with Sutton Music Service have included performing alongside the Band of the Grenadier Guards; playing at the Royal Festival Hall as part of the Philharmonia Strings Project in 2015; and many enjoyable summer tours to locations across Europe. I would urge anyone enthusiastic about music to get involved in any way they can with the many opportunities that Sutton Music Service provides.

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Continuing instrumental music lessons

If you would like your child to continue learning a musical instrument at school, please return this form to the school office – this information will be passed to the relevant instrumental teacher that visits the school, who will contact you directly with more information. If the instrument that your child is interested in learning is not currently offered at your child’s school, Sutton Music Service can work with the school to provide a suitable teacher, if there’s enough demand, or we can advise you on alternative options.

Name of pupil Year/class

Name of parent/carer

Telephone email address

Which instrument is your child interested in learning?