

The Association of British Orchestras Launches #AnOrchestralInEverySchool at Annual Conference

- On 5th February 2025, the ABO launches a new #AnOrchestralInEverySchool initiative at its annual conference
 - #AnOrchestralInEverySchool highlights the transformative power and value of a high quality music education for all young people
- The initiative is part of the ABO's #MusicThatMovesYou public campaign, which celebrates the impact of UK orchestras in our everyday lives, cultural heritage, communities and economy

5th February 2025 - The Association of British Orchestras (ABO) launches a new #AnOrchestralInEverySchool initiative at its annual conference, accompanied by a photocall of Conference delegates who lead some of the world's most renown orchestras and make the UK classical music sector a global success.

#AnOrchestralInEverySchool is a national call to ensure access to high-quality music education and creative subjects for all children and young people, investing in music education and skills development.

The Conference, which takes place at The Glasshouse International Centre for Music in Gateshead, will also hear from Sir Chris Bryant MP, Minister of State for Creative Industries, Arts and Tourism on how Labour will deliver on its missions and the value the new Government places on access to the arts as part of every child's education.

In the lead up to the UK Government's Spring Spending Review, the #AnOrchestralInEverySchool initiative urges UK Government to invest in music education. Investment and reforms such as increasing the minimum arts entitlement within the school week, improvements to teacher training and recruitment, addressing shortages in different instruments being learnt and taught as well as enabling access to flexible apprenticeships for the creative industries, will create more equitable access to the arts for all young people.

Judith Webster, ABO CEO said: *"Our aspiration is for every school in the UK to either have an orchestra of its own - however they define that - or access to an orchestra. #AnOrchestralInEverySchool celebrates the work of the whole music education ecosystem – schools, teachers, Music Hubs, the plethora of music education providers who offer quality music education to young people, and the substantial existing contribution of UK orchestras working in partnership with them. We need to work together to achieve this ambition – in the belief that active music making changes lives."*

UK orchestras are already working with hundreds of thousands of children and young people, and providing opportunities to access world class orchestral musicians and classical music – both on the concert platform and beyond, in partnership in schools and local communities.

Recent sector statistics, which will be launched by the ABO in March 2025, show a steady increase in the number of children and young people attending and taking part in education and outreach

performances, workshops and school concerts. The data also shows a significant increase in the number of events dedicated to giving children and young people unique opportunities to listen to or perform music, being delivered by UK orchestras across the country.

Live music making enhances young people's learning, their emotional development, their relationship building, their creative and critical thinking and their friendships. #AnOrchestraInEverySchool highlights the transformative power and value of a high quality music education for all young people.

A photocall of Conference delegates launching the initiative will take place on Wednesday 5th February – this image will be shared with media on Wednesday after 6pm.

For more information please contact Hanna Madalska-Gayer, ABO Head of Policy and Communications:

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- ENDS -

NOTES TO EDITORS:

UK WIDE CASE STUDIES

Open Up Music, a charity dedicated to opening up music to young disabled people, created Open Orchestras in 2013 to address a lack of ensemble musical provision in Special schools. It's an award-winning, game-changing programme that provides everything needed – instruments, repertoire and training, to empower Music Hubs and Special schools across the UK to set up and run their own orchestra sustainably, just like mainstreams schools do. <https://www.openorchestras.org/about/>

England

London Symphony Orchestra's (LSO) fun, participatory Family Concerts and Key Stage Concerts at the Barbican introduce children to music and the instruments of the orchestra. LSO also have an ever-growing range of digital resources available for use in the classroom or at home, and our Continuing Professional Development programme supports teachers in delivering a creative music curriculum. Young people can get actively involved in music-making through LSO On Track, a programme of performing projects in partnership with East London Music Education Hubs, which includes the LSO East London Academy and Next Generation. LSO Discovery Choirs encourage young people of all abilities to find their voice and experience the joys of singing. <https://www.lso.co.uk/about-us/lso-discovery/>



ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

Orchestra of The Age of Enlightenment's residency at Acland Burghley School in north London is the first of its kind in the United Kingdom. <https://oae.co.uk/mission/our-home/>

The Hallé works in partnership with a large number of schools and music education hubs across Greater Manchester and beyond, supporting the national curriculum and creative learning through a range of concerts specially designed for school children at each key stage, and creative projects and workshops in schools and SEND settings. For more information please visit <https://halle.co.uk/connect/for-teachers/>

The **Shireland CBSO Academy**, set up in partnership with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra is the first school in Britain to be established in collaboration with an orchestra, marking a radical new approach to music education. <https://shirelandcbsso.org.uk/>

Northern Ireland

Ulster Orchestra reaches over 4000 pupils through primary school concerts across Northern Ireland, delivers Inspiration Schools' Workshops to over 7000 children, an 'Endangered Instruments' project with the NI Education Authority Music Service and Crescendo, the flagship, community-led music intervention project in four schools, whose vision is to improve outcomes for children through music. <https://www.ulsterorchestra.org.uk/learning-community-engagement/learning/>

Scotland

Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) supports and develops the musical education of children and young people through their school and nursery programmes: <http://www.rsno.org.uk/join-in/school-and-nursery-programmes/>

Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO) has a residency in Craigmillar, part of which is a schools workshop programme giving pupils from nursery, primary and secondary school the space and tools to express themselves creatively. <https://www.sco.org.uk/join-in/communities/schools-programme>

Drake Music Scotland's Digital Orchestra: Youth creates and nurtures new musical communities of disabled young people to explore their musical potential, learn digital instruments, form new friendships and achieve musical and personal goals. Digital Orchestra: Youth creates a pathway for disabled young people as they leave school across the whole of Scotland. <https://drakemusicscotland.org/what-we-do/digital-orchestra-youth/>

DDigital Orchestra: Youth takes place in 4 areas of Scotland: North East in Aberdeenshire, Central in Dundee, Edinburgh, and West in Glasgow.

Digital Orchestra - the world's first disabled youth orchestra - is a group of talented young musicians with disabilities who meet up at Drake Music Scotland's studios every week to rehearse, develop their musical skills and create new music using inclusive music technologies. <https://drakemusicscotland.org/what-we-do/digital-orchestra/>



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Wales

BBC National Orchestra of Wales (BBC NOW) runs 'Come and Meet the Music!' live schools concerts, digital resources from the classroom and digital workshops. Linked closely to the Welsh Curriculum, this is an annual programme of schools events.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/qNbyfxGCf5wkBfn3xB8k6y/meet-the-music>

BBC NOW and Welsh National Opera and music services work in partnership on a series of CPD opportunities for teachers across the academic year, focussing on creativity and exploring ways of embedding music in the classroom and how this links into the new Welsh Curriculum:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/28H0qpGsKYHZpnfTB9pPqKW/creative-classrooms-teacher-cpd-series-2024-25>

ABOUT #AnOrchestralInEverySchool

The #AnOrchestralInEverySchool initiative is part of the ABO's #MusicThatMovesYou public campaign, which was launched in May 2024 and highlights the value of UK orchestras in our everyday lives, cultural heritage, communities and economy.

The ABO launches the #AnOrchestralInEverySchool initiative on behalf of their over 200 members ranging from youth and non-professional ensembles to some of the world's most recognised national orchestras, celebrating the incredible work that UK orchestras do on and off the stage.

ABOUT THE ABO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The ABO Annual Conference, which takes place in Gateshead, hosted by The Glasshouse International Centre for Music, from 5-7 February 2025, is the major classical music industry forum in the UK, with over 300 delegates from orchestras from within the UK and abroad.

ABOUT THE ABO

The ABO is one of the most important and diverse member organisations for the classical music sector. Founded in 1948, the ABO is the national body representing the collective interest of professional orchestras, youth ensembles and the wider classical music industry throughout the UK. Their mission is to enable and support an innovative, collaborative and sustainable orchestral sector by providing advice, support, intelligence and information to the people who make British orchestras a global success.