

Bolton Music Service

01204 333533
November 2024

Dear Young Musician and Parent / Carer,

Following the very successful launch last year of a new GM hub ensemble, the Greater Manchester Youth Folk Ensemble (GMYFE) we are making plans for this year and would like to invite you to join this exciting ensemble!

The GM Youth Folk Ensemble brings together **talented young musicians from across Greater Manchester** to work with leading tutors from the world of Folk Music.

This year we are thrilled to have booked Sam Partridge and Grace Smith once again to be the musical directors. Sam was musical director of National Youth Folk Ensemble 2018-2022 and Grace is currently musical director of Folkworks summer school at The Glasshouses, Gateshead. Both are in several active bands and their lively, fun and inclusive approach won the hearts of last year's GMYFE cohort.



"I super enjoyed the freedom and opportunity to interject our own ideas and creativity into the process of arranging the pieces," "Sam and Grace were so funny and kind, I am really excited to be part of this ensemble!" (quotes from previous GMYFE members)

You can see some video footage of GMYFE 2024 performances on BMS twitter/X [GM Youth Folk Ensemble Bridgewater](#)



Sheet music is not used for this ensemble, as all music is learnt by ear and explored and arranged creatively by the ensemble themselves under the guidance of Sam and Grace. The intrinsic elements of pulse, groove and lift being fundamental during all parts of the process!

Participants must have a good fluency on their instrument – any instrument is welcome. Past experience of playing folk music or learning by ear is not required.

Commitment to the Ensemble:

There will be three weekend courses during this academic year, (Saturday and Sunday 10am-4/5pm) with three additional performance opportunities, all details below. Participants must commit to all dates!

Course Venues:

Courses will all take place at Mere Hall, Bolton, BL1 2QT (Free parking).
Performance venues detailed below

Greater Manchester and Blackburn with Darwen Music Hub c/o Bolton Music Service, Mere Hall,
Merehall Street. Bolton, BL1 2QT
Phone: 01204 333533
www.gmmusichub.co.uk

Supported using public funding by

Course 1

Saturday 18th January (10am– 4pm)

Sunday 19th January (10am – 5pm, including a sharing for parents/family)

Course 2

Saturday 15th March (10am – 4pm)

Sunday 16th March (10am – 4pm)

Performance 1

Saturday 22nd March Manchester Folk Festival 1pm Halle at St Michaels

Course 3

Friday 20th June 5-8pm Mere Hall

Saturday 21st June 10am-4pm Mere Hall

Performance 2 - Sunday 22nd June 10am-5pm GM Celebration concert and rehearsal, RNCM Concert Hall,

Performance 3 - Saturday 5th July Folk Connection (venue and time tbc)

Cost

The standard **cost** of the whole 2024-25 GM Youth Folk Ensemble series will be **£120 (plus booking fee)** which equates to approx. £15 per day, including all weekend courses and performances.

Enrolment and payment will be via TryBooking (see below). Where a student is a member of multiple GM (regional) ensembles, the first ensemble will be full price and any others will be charged at 50%.

Financial Assistance.

Cost should not be a barrier to any talented young musician taking part in the GM Ensembles programme. Individual Music Services are sometimes able to offer free place bursaries for those students / families in hardship circumstances. You should contact your local music service (e.g. Bolton Music Service, Salford Music and Performing Arts Service etc.) to request this help and details of how to enrol.

In addition, a local music education organisation Music For All NW can offer up to four 50% bursaries for those who need support. Please contact musicforall@hotmail.co.uk for application form.

What Next?

To register for the GM Youth Folk Ensemble please go to <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DZKX>

Sorrel Harty from Bolton Music Service will manage the GM Folk Ensemble on behalf of the GM Music Services and any questions should be directed to sorrel.harty@bolton.gov.uk We will contact you in the weeks leading up to each course to confirm the full details. In the meantime, please secure the dates in your diaries and if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me at the email address above.

Yours sincerely,

Carolyn Baxendale

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Head of Bolton Music Service

On Behalf of the Greater Manchester and Blackburn with Darwen Music Hub