



Consultation on the future of music education

Results of the Incorporated Society of Musicians' (ISM) surveys conducted over summer 2018

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Introduction

The Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) is the UK's professional body for all musicians and a subject association for music education. Since 1882, the ISM has been dedicated to promoting the importance of music, and music education and protecting the rights of those working in the music profession including teachers, performers and composers. We support over 9,000 members across the UK and Ireland as well as the wider music sector through our range of specialist services.

The ISM has been intensively involved in music education right from our founding in 1882. In 1912, the ISM supported a private members bill in the House of Lords regarding concerns about the quality of music education. Not much has changed since then in terms of our interest – today, over 100 years later, we lead high profile campaigns dedicated to ensuring the quality and provision of music education for all both in and outside our schools, irrespective of ability, age or background.

When schools teach music, the whole of our society and economy benefits. The music industry in Britain is worth £4.4bn a year to the economy. From an international perspective, it punches massively above its weight. Britain has less than 1% of the world population, but one in seven albums sold worldwide in 2014 was by a British act. This is a critical part of Britain's soft power.

In the age of increasing automation, we need an education system with creative subjects like music at its heart which expand minds and builds both problem-solving skills and creativity. Earlier this year the CBI President Paul Drechsler called on policy-makers to prioritise teaching that encourages creativity and team-working.¹ It is crucial the pipeline of talent supplying all aspects of the music industry including our orchestras, is not stifled.

Music has also been shown to impact mental health positively.² Not only does listening to music release dopamine – the 'feel good' hormone – but studying music and instrumental learning has therapeutic value shown to boost mental health, teach self-discipline and strengthen mental capacity. A survey of 12,000 girls between the ages of 9 and 18 conducted by the Girls' Day Schools Trust in 2016 showed that studying at least one creative subject acts as a 'pressure valve' to help teenagers deal with the stress of two years spent preparing for GCSEs, boosting self-confidence, independence, resilience and collaboration skills.³

Government and music education

The Government has played a key role in music education over many years, launching a number of initiatives designed to support music education and music making in England.

¹ Confederation of British Industry, 'Education is more than knowledge alone', 9 March 2018. Online at <http://www.cbi.org.uk/news/education-is-more-than-knowledge-alone/>

² Hallam, S. (2015) The power of music. International Music Education Research Centre, London. Online at <http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/735337/25902273/1422485417967/power+of+music.pdf>

³ 'Creativity eases GCSE stress', *The Times*, 14 June 2016.

Music Manifesto

In 2004 the Government launched the Music Manifesto, a joint campaign between the Department for Education and then-Department for Culture, Media and Sport (now Digital, Culture, Media and Sport).⁴ Its aim was to improve young people's music education in England, promoting a 'music for all' agenda.

The purpose of the Music Manifesto was to:

- act as a statement of common intent that helped align currently disparate activity.
- set out a shared agenda for planning across the sector.
- make it easier for more organisations and individuals to devise ways to contribute to music education.
- guide the Government's own commitment to music education.
- call on the wider community, including the public, private and community sectors, to join in enriching the lives of schoolchildren.

The campaign's Five Key Aims were to:

- provide every young person with first access to a range of music experiences
- provide more opportunities for young people to deepen and broaden their musical interests and skills
- identify and nurture the most talented young musicians
- develop a world-class workforce in music education
- improve the support structures for young people's music making.

The Henley Review

The report *Music Education in England*, otherwise known as the 'Henley Review' ("the Review"), was published in 2011.⁵ Darren Henley, the then-Managing Director of Classic FM (and now Chief Executive of Arts Council England) undertook the Review.

The parameters of the Review, set out by the then-Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove, once again highlighted that 'the Government priorities recognised music as an enriching and valuable subject...'⁶ and also reaffirmed the commitment that 'public funding should be used primarily to meet the Government priorities of every child having the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and to sing.' The Government also recognised that 'Secondary benefits of a quality music education are those of increased self-esteem and aspirations; improved behaviour and social skills; and improved academic attainment in areas such as numeracy, literacy and language.'

The Henley Review set out recommendations for the minimum expectations of what any child going through the English school system should receive in terms of music education. It highlighted high quality and sustained music education in the school curriculum as the cornerstone of every child's music education, hailing the importance of music in the curriculum in the first recommendation:

⁴ '[About the Manifesto](http://musicmanifesto.org.uk)', musicmanifesto.org.uk. Accessed 28 November 2018.

⁵ Henley, D. (2011), [Music Education in England: A Review by Darren Henley](#).

⁶ Letter from Rt Hon Michael Gove MP to Darren Henley, 24 September 2010. Published in Henley, p39.

'Schools should provide children with a broad Music Education, which includes performing, composing, listening, reviewing and evaluating.'

It also highlighted challenges and threats to music education, including:

- inappropriate accountability measures (EBacc) which worked against the Arts
- insecurity of funding
- patchy provision that led to inequality of access
- a lack of accountability for the quality of work delivered by Music Services and music education work funded by Arts Council England and Youth Music
- issues regarding training, recruiting and supporting the diverse workforce

A particularly prescient observation was made in the Review at 4.2:

'There is a strong sense that the statutory requirement of being included in the National curriculum provides a basis for all other music provision in and out of school. Without the obligation for music lessons to be a part of the school curriculum, there is a very real concern that the subject might well wither away in many schools – and in the worst case scenario, could all but disappear in others.'

The National Plan for Music Education

The National Plan for Music Education ("the Plan") was born out of the Review and is based on its recommendations.⁷ The Plan is an ambitious, aspirational document which sets out clear objectives with regards to delivery, access, progression and excellence in the music education sector. The Plan was launched in 2012 and continues to 2020.

The Plan's main aim was to ensure that access to music education was not impacted by a postcode lottery. The vision was to ensure that opportunities were equal and available. Notably, the Plan recognised the first opportunity that many pupils will have to study music will be at school and that this foundation should be nurtured to provide broader opportunities and progression routes.

The Plan said:

'Children from all backgrounds and every part of England should have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument; to make music with others; to learn to sing; and to have the opportunity to progress to the next level of excellence if they wish to.'

And:

'Teachers will have wide freedom in how they teach music in schools, but all schools should provide high quality music education as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.'

⁷ Department for Education (2011), [The Importance of Music: A National Plan for Music Education](#).

Music Education Hubs

The most important development brought by the Plan was the introduction of an infrastructure of music education hubs (“the Hubs”), which built on the work of local authority music services. The Hubs comprise groups of organisations – such as local authority music services, schools, other Hubs, Arts organisations, community or voluntary organisations. The Hubs were designed to augment and support music teaching in schools (a guaranteed statutory requirement to the end of Key Stage 3) so that more children could experience a combination of classroom teaching, instrumental and vocal tuition and input from professional musicians, as set out by the Plan. The structure of the various organisations also meant that Hubs would be able to deliver a music offer that drew on a wide range of expertise. The Plan stated that the Hubs in ‘every area will help drive the quality of service locally, with scope for improved partnership working, better value for money, local innovation and greater accountability’.

The Hubs were also promoted as having an important role in ‘first access’ to music through continuing to develop the whole-class instrumental and vocal programme for a minimum of a term in primary schools, as well as providing broader opportunities and progression routes inside and outside the classroom. The idea was that class teachers and specialist instrumental teachers working together could maximise opportunities for musical progression and provide for different needs and aspirations of pupils beyond the music curriculum.

The Plan also promoted the benefits of music to the wider life of the school, stating that schools should have a choir and aspire to having an orchestra or other large-scale ensemble. The focus on singing built upon the very successful work of Sing Up, the National Singing Programme. This was funded by the government between 2007 and 2012 and reached 98% of primary schools at its peak⁸.

The Plan asked the Hubs to develop singing strategies, in and beyond schools, to ensure that every child sings regularly and that choirs are available for them to join – with the view of widening singing opportunities for all pupils, improve quality and give routes for progression such as county choirs, chorister programmes and the National Youth Choir.

Although promoting partnership working and local innovation, the Plan set out **core roles** and **extended roles** for the Hubs to ensure national consistency and equality of opportunity.

Core roles

- a)** Ensure that every child aged 5-18 has the opportunity to learn a musical instrument (other than voice) through whole-class ensemble teaching programmes for ideally a year (but for a minimum of a term) of weekly tuition on the same instrument.
- b)** Provide opportunities to play in ensembles and to perform from an early stage.
- c)** Ensure that clear progression routes are available and affordable to all young people.
- d)** Develop a singing strategy to ensure that every pupil sings regularly and that choirs and other vocal ensembles are available in the area.

⁸ Centre for Use of Research and Evidence in Education (2011) Sing U 2007-2011 evaluation report: synthesis report. Online at: https://www.singup.org/fileadmin/singupfiles/previous_uploads/Sing_Up_Evaluation_synthesis_report.pdf

Extension roles

- a)** Offer CPD to school staff, particularly in supporting schools to deliver music in the curriculum.
- b)** Provide an instrument loan service, with discounts or free provision for those on low incomes.
- c)** Provide access to large scale and / or high-quality music experiences for pupils, working with professional musicians and / or venues. This may include undertaking work to publicise the opportunities available to schools, parents/carers and students.

The Plan also outlined the requirements of the Hubs to provide Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for their own workforce, as well as to schools.

Since their inception, the Hubs have striven in increasingly challenging circumstances to work towards providing the offer set out by the core and extension roles defined in the Plan. Their successes and the challenges they face have been reported by Arts Council England and Ofsted. This current report adds to the body of evidence on the reality of the situation as reported by those working in and for Hubs.

The results of the ISM's surveys on the National Plan for Music Education and primary school music education

The ISM is committed to working collaboratively to improve music education for all from early years to age 18, irrespective of age, ability and background. The ISM undertook two surveys over the summer of 2018 to better understand music education provision. Both surveys were open to both ISM members and non-members. We thank everyone who participated in the surveys.

The first survey focused on the implementation of the Plan. This survey received 583 responses from music education professionals undertaking a wide variety of roles working in and with schools, Hubs and associated organisations, music services, music centres and private instrumental teachers. These responses have helped the ISM understand the issues impacting music education and the delivery of the Plan in particular and what, if any, changes should be made to the Plan.

The second survey focused on music education provision in primary schools and explored the perceptions around how well-equipped primary schools are to deliver the statutory music curriculum as well as the strength of the curriculum offer in schools. This survey received 163 responses.

The changing context for music education - policy challenges

The EBacc & classroom music education

There have been significant changes in Government education policy since the Plan was launched in 2011. Some of these policies have had adverse consequences for the delivery of curriculum music in schools.

Accountability measures in particular are contributing to the declining uptake and availability of GCSE and A level qualifications, as evidenced through both historical trends⁹ and projected figures reported in recent research¹⁰. According to official figures, in 2018, 35,531 pupils completed GCSE music in England¹¹, compared to 46,045 pupils in 2010 - a 23% decline. Between 2011 and 2018, A-level entries dropped by 38%.

The decline of music in Key Stage 3 has been driven by the headline accountability measures of the EBacc and Progress 8. These measures mean that schools focus on EBacc subjects at Key Stage 3 and 4, at the expense of non-EBacc subjects such as music. It is evident that curriculum music is being squeezed out of the timetable. In many schools, children are now starting their GCSE subjects at Year 9.

Recent research by the University of Sussex¹² also showed an increasing number of secondary schools reducing or completely removing music in the curriculum for Year 7, 8 and 9 students, resulting in some schools now not offering music as a curriculum subject. In other schools, music is only offered on an 'enrichment day' once a year. In others, 'carousel learning' has been introduced (where music is taught for only part of the academic year on rotation with other subjects – possibly for only half year, one term or half a term). In some cases, schools are opting for a three-year Key Stage 4, even when they are supposed to deliver the National Curriculum as a statutory requirement up to the end of Year 9 (except in the case of academies). So, the headline accountability measures are entrenching a postcode lottery approach and excluding children from music education. This is quite contrary to the vision of the Plan.

The University of Sussex's research is not alone in these findings. Research from the NUT and King's College London,¹³ the Education Policy Institute¹⁴ and the National Society for Education in Art and Design¹⁵, all show a clear link between the EBacc and the decline in the uptake of creative subjects in our schools. If this continues, then in a matter of a few years, music will have disappeared from more of our schools and the creation of the pipeline of talent will have been further stifled.

The academisation of schools has also had unintended consequences. Schools which become academies have more freedom than other state schools over their finances, the curriculum, and teachers' pay and conditions. A key difference is that academies do not have to follow the statutory national curriculum – they can choose their own as long as it is 'broad and balanced'. In January 2018, 72% of secondary schools were academies, up from 28% in 2010. Academies are funded directly by central Government, instead of receiving their funds via a local authority.

With so few secondary schools required to follow the National Curriculum, how does the Government and the music education sector ensure that music does not disappear from Key Stage 3? This is a key policy issue for all who care about music education being available to all.

⁹ Compiled from data on GCSE and A level entries, published by the Joint Council for Qualifications, online at <https://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results>.

¹⁰ Daubney, A. & Mackrill, D. (2018) Changes over time in Secondary Music 2016-2018/19. Presentation to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education. London, 10th October 2018.

¹¹ Compiled from data on GCSE and A level entries, published by the Joint Council for Qualifications, online at <https://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results>

¹² Daubney & Mackrill (2018).

¹³ NUT and King's College London (2016), *A curriculum for all? The effects of recent Key Stage 4 curriculum*

¹⁴ Education Policy Institute (2017), *Entries to Arts Subjects at KS4*

¹⁵ NSEAD (2016), *The National Society for Education in Art and Design Survey Report 2015-16*

Primary Schools and music education

The potential value of music education in the primary school curriculum and the general life of the school was regularly noted in the survey responses. This included recognition of the contribution to musical learning *per se* and also transferable benefits such as promoting and supporting learning across the curriculum, as well as contributing significantly to social and emotional learning and being important for mental health.

In primary schools, the pressure of accountability measures for maths and English results (especially in Year 6) was noted to have a negative impact on curriculum music provision, and in primary schools where music was part of the curriculum, more than 50% of the responding schools did not sustain this right through to Year 6, citing the pressure of statutory tests as a significant reason for this.

Comments

'Some schools perceive [that] they have permission to either ignore the curriculum or justify one-off end of year shows or projects as acceptable forms of music provision. Only weekly progressive music lessons can develop pupils effectively in musicianship skills.' - **Inclusion manager**

In terms of access in primary schools, respondents from primary schools reported that cuts to budgets had left little or no money to buy in services or replace/repair instruments for whole class ensemble tuition (WCET). Another significant concern raised by respondents more generally was the need to ensure that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and primary school children had an adequate grounding in music and learnt that the subject was not an 'add on' but important.

Whilst a minority of schools reported and celebrated high quality and sustained curriculum provision, these same schools also highlighted the inequality of the offer in other local primary and secondary schools; further evidencing of the patchiness of music education provision in and out of schools and the threat this poses to continuity and progression.

This evidence demonstrates that the National Curriculum for Music, despite being a statutory requirement, is disappearing from our schools, and betrays Henley's recommendation¹⁶ that schools should provide children with a broad music education, which includes performing, composing, listening, reviewing and evaluating. Ofsted is also becoming increasingly concerned about the narrowing of the curriculum and the removal of Arts subjects, indicating that this is as a direct consequence of the accountability measures imposed upon primary and secondary schools¹⁷. The Department for Education also recognise the 'legitimate concern about narrowing the curriculum [because of the EBacc] especially for arts'¹⁸.

¹⁶ Henley p11.

¹⁷ Ofsted HMI Amanda Spielman: HMCI commentary: curriculum and the new education inspection framework. 18th September 2018. Online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmci-commentary-curriculum-and-the-new-education-inspection-framework>

¹⁸ Westminster Education Forum Keynote Seminar: *Developing the curriculum at secondary level - design, improving outcomes, and assessing the impact of the EBacc*. London, 9th November 2018

Comments

'Schools will drop arts subjects, which are not in the EBacc (including music) and will not recruit sufficient teachers.' - **Peripatetic music teacher**

'Of the secondary schools in this area, only half deliver a reasonable music offer. At the others, music and music staff are poorly supported with inadequate resources.' - **Hub leader**

'Secondary teachers are striving to do more with less funding. And the number of staff in school music departments is shrinking. This is having a detrimental effect on the quality of provision and the mental health of music teachers.' - **Head of Music in a secondary school**

'Secondary music has all but disappeared in this area thanks to the EBacc and Ofsted and academic league tables that don't value music or the arts. I have tried to make links with my main secondary without success to ensure the wealth of opportunities at primary school continue to be available to them at secondary. Sadly, they have gone through three music teachers in the year I have been at my primary. In one instance an SLT member of staff was acting as the Head of music. The job was advertised as a part time position and the person didn't have to be qualified. Who would take on music in a school of 1000 in a part time role. I can barely manage 420 in my 3 days. It is a scandal and it is very demoralising for people like me to think that our efforts are not going to be replicated at secondary. Children deserve better. Many secondary music teachers are also unaware of what primary schools do musically, so children start all over again when they shouldn't. It is a sorry mess and needs a comprehensive overhaul.' - **Specialist primary music educator employed by a school**

'My school provides a wide range of musical opportunities but I know that this is the exception rather than the rule.' - **Primary class teacher**

'I would like to be able to provide more specialist music provision in the EYFS but can't afford it at the moment.' - **Headteacher**

The Plan and Hub's core and extension roles – what the survey told us

Core roles

- a) Ensure that every child aged 5-18 has the opportunity to learn a musical instrument (other than voice) through whole-class ensemble teaching programmes for ideally a year (but for a minimum of a term) of weekly tuition on the same instrument.
- b) Provide opportunities to play in ensembles and to perform from an early stage.

The Plan clearly states that one of the core roles is to ensure that every child aged 5-18 has the opportunity to learn a musical instrument (other than voice) through whole-class ensemble teaching (WCET)/First Access programmes for **ideally a year (but for a minimum of a term)** of weekly tuition on the same instrument. This leads on to the provision of opportunities to play in ensembles and to perform from an early stage.

The research findings align with the findings from other studies¹⁹ in pointing out that delivery of these two core roles is patchy.

In terms of opportunities to perform in ensembles from an early age, respondents reported that provision to play in groups had declined. Over 35% of classroom teachers and head teachers reported the opportunity for every child to play in groups or ensembles was worse or much worse. Notably, 58% of respondents reported that opportunities for every child to make music, including learning an instrument, had worsened.

Respondents stated that the benefits of ensemble playing needed to be more widely promoted, stating that the best way to build teamwork is through participating in ensemble playing.

Comments

'Equitable ensemble access continues to be difficult, especially in more remote areas.' - **Hub manager**

'In order to ensure access is equitable, especially in a large rural county, Hubs need to provide financial support for small schools, low income families, children in care, disabled children. Plus the higher costs of travel for rural Hubs should be taken into account.' - **Hub manager**

'Benefits of ensemble music making should be emphasised in a big way.' – **Peripatetic music teacher**

'NOTHING beats playing in an ensemble for developing a sense of teamwork (whatever footballers say!).' - **Peripatetic music teacher**

Respondents also felt that the focus on the activity metrics by the Department for Education/Arts Council England in the data returns completed by Hubs, rather than quality of experience and a longitudinal and diverse view of progression and continuation, does not provide an accurate picture of the lived reality of many of the respondents working in schools and Hubs.

Recent data from the Arts Council England report *Key Data on Music Education Hubs 2017*²⁰ stated that the number of pupils receiving WCET for **less than one term** has increased significantly, from 24,892 to 35,340 - a change of 41.97% over four years. Respondents provided many examples that back up this data. Some respondents noted the reducing length of WCET programmes to 10 weeks and questioned the relationship of such programmes when considered alongside the expectations of music in the classroom curriculum.

¹⁹ Musicians Union (2017) 2017 Education Report, online at <https://www.musiciansunion.org.uk/Files/Reports/Industry/MU-2017-Education-Report-8pp-A4>; Savage. J. (2018) Fixing music education. Presentation at Music Education Expo, Manchester, 11th October 2018.

²⁰ Arts Council England (2018), [Key Data on Music Education Hubs 2017](#), p12.

Comments

'One year of 'whole class instrumental tuition (delivered usually by cash-strapped music service Hubs) is not enough, especially in schools where there is very little else going on musically.' – **Peripatetic music teacher**

'Funding for whole class, but not enough though in following years, standard has declined.' - **Peripatetic music teacher (employed by a music hub or service)**

'Our music service was recently in financial crisis due to mismanagement, and the repercussions are still affecting our area. New staff are inexperienced and cheaper, and therefore the teaching and services are not up to standard. But very few schools can afford to employ music teachers such as myself privately, and they have no choice but to take what the music service offers.' - **Visiting music teacher (engaged by a school)**

"First Access' schemes have a wide uptake and by Year 7 most of the children in the county have taken part in some form of whole-class instrumental learning. Quality is variable and depends both on the level of support and understanding from schools, and the skill of the Music teacher delivering it. Continuation rates after the initial period are low generally.' - **Classroom teacher**

We would like more freedom and flexibility to introduce programmes that inspire the next generation.' – **Senior manager of a music education hub**

Some schools from rural areas of the country also cited that the definition of First Access/WCET was too narrow, and that it was difficult to achieve a significant reach in large rural areas with many small schools and limited workforce.

Respondents also noted the confusion between schools and the Hubs in relation to roles and stated that reinforcement is required to reiterate the delineation of responsibilities of schools and Hubs regarding the delivery of the National Curriculum and the Plan. This is despite the National Curriculum being very clear that responsibility to deliver the curriculum lies with schools, and the core and extension roles of Hubs – as defined by the Plan - support musical learning in and out of school in other ways.

Taking all of these points, it suggests that Hubs need greater flexibility to determine how WCET is delivered, to whom and for how long, in order to deliver suitable bespoke programme aims within each setting.

Comments

'Reduced or no funding would mean the hub would be unable to provide all pupils the opportunity to learn through a first access programme. This would mean much greater levels of disparity within the sector. It would also mean that we wouldn't be able to subsidise the cost of lessons making it unaffordable to many families.' - **Music hub leader**

'The First Access definition is too narrow and difficult to achieve 100% reach in large rural areas with many small schools, limited workforce.' - **Hub manager**

'Only more consistent funding will end the postcode lottery that is music education.' -
Peripatetic music teacher employed by a hub

Core roles

- c)** Ensure that clear progression routes are available and affordable to all young people.
- d)** Develop a singing strategy to ensure that every pupil sings regularly and that choirs and other vocal ensembles are available in the area.

Lack of progression routes

The most significant concerns were in relation to the lack of opportunities to progress with learning after WCET had ended. The Plan states within its core roles that the Hubs must ensure that clear progression routes are available and affordable to all young people. Concerns were raised about the affordability of instrumental lessons with many respondents stated that the cost of lessons was prohibitive, and this impacts who learns.

Comments

'WCET should NOT mean a box ticking exercise where a class (for instance) of Y4s get a free term with a pair of excellent string teachers, and then when faced with the normal charge for lessons and instrument hire - no one takes it up... Why can't music services PLAN for a transition from 'free' to 'charged'?' - **Peripatetic music teacher employed by a hub**

'Some schools used to benefit from free First Access but were not willing to continue after payment required. Some schools don't have much music happening in classes where First Access is not taking place.' - **Peripatetic teacher**

'Many of the schools I work with are very small and have budgets that do not allow for the replacement of instruments or engagement with regional events due to transport costs.' - **Instrumental teacher employed by a hub**

'Continuation projects & instrumental lessons in schools are not funded & they need to be if we are to find the true future talent rather than just those who can afford it.' -
Peripatetic music teacher employed by a hub

Respondents also stated that the reduction and removal of funding for Hubs from local authorities has meant that the music education offer from Hubs has been negatively impacted. In examples given in this survey, this has resulted in more difficulty for some groups of children to access or sustain access to music education within and beyond the core roles of Hubs.

For context, local authority funding has been reduced, resulting in some local authorities no longer providing any financial support to their local Hub. Local authority contributions accounted for 3.45% of Hubs' funding in 2015/16 and has been decreasing as result of austerity measures. The total value of local authority grants and contributions to Hubs decreased by 37.41%, from £10,659,296 in 2013/14, to £6,671,602 in 2015/16.³ Local councils in England have seen an average reduction in their budgets of almost 26% since 2010, taking inflation into account.²¹ Although Hubs principally receive money from the

²¹ Institute for Fiscal Studies (2016), [A time of revolution? British local government finance in the 2010s](#), p1.

Department for Education via Arts Council England, a hit in their already tight budget will cause further issues in the delivery of the Plan.

Respondents also stated that even when part of funded programmes, some parents are being asked to contribute to essential 'extras' such as music, resulting in pupils being unable to partake, leading to a lack of inclusive experience. Concern was also raised by respondents regarding progression routes for children who were unable to pay for provision or instruments beyond introductory programmes.

An inclusive music education

Whilst the respondents noted the importance of music for everyone, considerable concern was also raised by respondents about initial and ongoing access to appropriate instrumental/musical learning for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), stating that SEND needs a higher priority in the next iteration of the Plan.

Comments

'Probably 15 - 20% of my pupils have Special Educational Needs and music is arguably more important to them than a lot of the other pupils.' **Peripatetic teacher**

'Music education should not be just for the privileged but for all. Including special needs children.' - **Music educator**

'Lots of children are being left behind because the resources to support their special needs are not available.' - **Musician working in a youth work setting**

'1.2 million / 14.4% of the student population have some form of special education need. It is important the national plan highlight how music making can be made more inclusive and accessible to all by utilising multimedia and music making softwares and technology.' - **Music researcher/ music educator**

Singing

When looking at the Hub's role in creating a singing strategy, it is encouraging that 14% of respondents reported that it had got better or much better. Nevertheless 46% of respondents noted that access to singing had got worse. Singing, respondents stated, is easily accessible to all and low cost so emphasis needed to be put on a singing strategy in any future iterations of the Plan.

Comments

'Singing is a very accessible way for pupils to make music with little cost for the parents. Singing develops a number of musical skills and concepts which makes learning an instrument easier.' - **Music hub leader**

'All music starts with singing. If we give children quality opportunities to sing throughout their school career this would be a positive first step in engaging all children in music.' - **Peripatetic music teacher (employed by a music hub or service)**

'Bring back funding for Sing Up type intervention in all schools - we used to go in to schools for a few weeks to help train staff and get children singing.' - **Music educator**

The workforce

The University of Sussex research also showed an increase in music teachers teaching outside their subject area – over 70% cited often doing so since 2016, and a potential rise in redundancies for music teachers in the next academic year, with some responses noting that music teachers were not being replaced when leaving or retiring. Squeezes on school budgets, in addition to accountability measures, were also cited as a cause of these issues.

There are 123 Hubs and there are many different workforce models across the Hubs. Many Hubs are looking after their workforce well both in terms of paying conditions and professional development. However this is not always the case.

An unintended consequence of Hubs cutting costs and dealing with the consequences of cuts to their income has been the 'uberisation' of the teacher workforce, namely the peripatetic teachers. According to the respondents taking part in our research, a growing number of teachers are delivering the work of the Hubs on hourly-paid self-employed contracts or working in schools under the same arrangement, sometimes paid directly by parents who can afford it. This 'Uber' model of music education works at odds with a drive for professionalism and high-quality music education, undermining the push for sustainable and high-quality provision as determined by the Plan.

Respondents were also concerned with the lack of regulation and the vulnerable and precarious position of their role, with no job security or access to holiday, a pension scheme, sick pay or maternity cover; a position which has significantly declined since 2012. Overall, 48% of teachers reported that their employment terms and conditions were 'worse or much worse' than in 2012 compared to only 7% stating their terms and conditions were better or much better. Respondents cited multiple examples of the lack of commitment from organisations and Hubs to provide what are considered by teachers to be fair and desirable terms and conditions; some respondents felt that this 'gig economy' leads to de-professionalisation of music teaching and a dropping of standards of music education. Within this, respondents expressed concerns about the quality of work being delivered by Hubs and questioned where the responsibility for this lies.

This decline in fair terms and conditions has also led to changing models for the delivery of music education. Ultimately, this means further potential fragmentation of music education as Hubs and private providers compete for the same work – in a framework where quality assurance is not currently a statutory consideration.

Comments

Working conditions are more stressful - fewer staff trying to fulfil the need.' - **Instrumental teacher employed by a school**

'We have seen the standard and quantity music education throughout the county decrease since all VMTs [visiting music teachers] were made redundant a few years ago.'

This is having, and will continue to have, a detrimental effect on music education overall. - **Visiting music teacher engaged by a school**

'Music has taken a battering in schools. By reducing its importance, SMT are less likely to pay for CPD opportunities and career progression opportunities will be favoured for EBacc subject leads. If music teachers are not valued, schools working on performance-related pay will not reward music departments. [There's] reduced timetabling for students to develop music skills, however there's still the same expectations of school concerts etc.' - **Secondary school music teacher**

'There is no inspection of services, so no priority given to maintaining standards, setting targets, monitoring progress. Good musicians do not have enough financial stability or contractual security to continue making this a viable career.' - **Music teacher and professional performing musician**

'Secondary teachers are striving to do more with less funding. And the number of staff in school music departments is shrinking. This is having a detrimental effect on the quality and reach of provision and the mental health of music teachers.' - **Initial Teacher Education lecturer**

'We need a level playing field. Instrumental teaching is employment and music services are constantly being undercut by private providers who treat teachers as freelancers in order to avoid paying on costs. I think there needs to be some sort of required standard of employment conditions across the sector.' - **Head of a music education hub**

'Many teachers have been made to become self-employed. Those of us left that still have a contract have been taken off QTS pay. Schools respect us much less than they used to with primaries refusing to let us teach in the mornings.' - **Peripatetic music teacher**

Some teachers in primary and secondary schools reported that their jobs had been either diminished or completely removed due to pressures schools are under from accountability measures that do not value the arts (such as the EBacc, progress 8 and Year 6 statutory tests). Further teachers in primary and secondary schools reported that a squeeze on funding in schools has meant that some schools have shrunk or removed their regular music curriculum offer, impacting staffing levels and having a knock-on impact to the musical opportunities offered within and beyond the curriculum.

Some respondents reported working for more than one provider to make ends meet. An extended role of the Hubs is to offer Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to school staff, particularly in supporting schools to deliver music in the curriculum. Whilst professional development was noted as important by respondents, it was pointed out that, when hourly paid, the role worked against them accessing professional development and that, over time, this potentially de-professionalises the workforce through lack of access to relevant, high quality CPD.

Respondents also reported having to pay for their own professional development or it was 'non-existent', and this was often not considered to be reflected in their salary or hourly pay. Other respondents also noted there was simply not enough funding provided for CPD. This also raised concern that there were many untrained teachers entering an increasingly unregulated workforce.

Comments

'Unfortunately, because this area is mostly unregulated, there are a lot of unqualified instrumental teachers. So many teachers never undertake any professional development. Doesn't do us any favours...' - **Visiting music teacher (engaged by a school)**

'As a visiting music teacher, I pay for my own professional development and I have no contracts to protect my work.' - **Visiting music teacher (engaged by a school)**

'As a peripatetic teacher I receive no professional development other than that which I purchase for myself.' - **Peripatetic teacher**

'While professional development opportunities seem to be more available the cost is frequently prohibitive, and/or it is impossible to get time off or claim for time spent on it.' - **Classroom music teacher**

'Very little is done to help teachers access professional development within the school timetable.' - **Visiting music teacher (engaged by a school)**

Ofsted

The role of Ofsted was also discussed within the survey responses as a challenge facing music education. Respondents reported that the current focus of Ofsted inspections on accountability measures does not encourage schools to deliver a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and music is often overlooked as the curriculum is squeezed. Concern was also expressed that Ofsted currently rarely look at the quality of provision of music education within the current inspection framework, particularly in primary schools.

Ofsted must take the responsibility to hold headteachers to account for the sustained delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum to include music across Key Stages 1-3, whatever the status of the school - academy or otherwise.

Comments

'Ofsted need to ensure that music is being delivered in schools. It's a struggle for many music teachers these days to keep music on the curriculum in spite of all the research available to argue for inclusion and the benefits to everyone. Unless schools are deemed to be failing by Ofsted by not meeting National plans and curriculum targets, I fear that music in schools will disappear and become the preserve of those who can pay or have musical interests.' - **Visiting music teacher**

Conclusion

Support for music education from the Government

Both the National Curriculum for Music²² and the Plan²³ are strong, visionary documents setting out a firm commitment from the Government in England to provide a high quality and sustained music education for all children with the curriculum. This curriculum provision is considered the foundation of music learning; the core and extension roles of the Hubs as defined in the Plan further enhance this commitment to a well-rounded music education. Aspects of music education for some young people are also supported in many other ways, for example through Youth Music funding, Music for Youth, In Harmony, the Music and Dance Scheme and the plethora of opportunities funded by charities, grants and families in wider school life, beyond schools and in communities.

Currently however, despite the best intentions and efforts of schools and Hubs, there are systemic challenges across music education which negatively impact the aspirations of both the National Curriculum and the Plan.

Without the obligation for music lessons to be a part of the school curriculum, there is a very real concern that the subject might well wither away in many schools – and in the worst-case scenario, could all but disappear in others.

Darren Henley, 2012²⁴:

The issues and challenges reported throughout this document have been on the radar for some time; indeed, in December 2011 a report by the Expert Panel²⁵ for the National Curriculum review noted:

Bearing in mind the influence that the EBacc is having on the provision of academic courses in Key Stage 4 for a larger proportion of pupils, we are concerned, as in primary education, that the role of art and music in a broad, balanced and effective education should not be lost²⁶.

These concerns are now very pressing, with both Ofsted and the Department for Education expressing their disquiet at the unintended consequences of current

²² Department for Education (DfE), 2013). *National Curriculum in England: Music programmes of study*. London: DfE.

²³ Department for Education (DfE) (2011) *The Importance of Music: A national plan for music education*. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-importance-of-music-a-national-plan-for-music-education

²⁴ Henley, D. (2011) *Music Education in England: A Review by Darren Henley for the Department of education and the Department for culture, media and sport*.

²⁵ The constitution of the DfE Expert Panel for reviewing the National Curriculum in 2011 was: Tim Oates (Expert Panel chair), Professor Mary James, Professor Andrew Pollard & Professor Dylan Wiliam

²⁶ Department for Education (2011) *A report by the Expert Panel for the National Curriculum review* https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175439/NCR-Expert_Panel_Report.pdf

educational policy, which threatens to undermine their often-quoted aspiration to place equity and quality at the heart of music education within and beyond the curriculum²⁷.

...funding should support all pupils, whatever their background, whatever their family's income, and whatever particular special needs or disabilities they may have. No child should be excluded from music because their parents cannot afford to pay for lessons or an instrument, or because they have physical disabilities or other special needs²⁸.

Recommendations

There is absolutely no question that music teachers in and out of schools are going above and beyond the call of duty to deliver music education in spite of the significant challenges they currently face. Music teachers in schools, Hubs and community settings up and down the country share the government's aspiration for a strong and sustained music education for all. The music education workforce supports the position of music in the curriculum for all children up to the end of Key Stage 3 to be at the heart of this, as cemented by music's place as a statutory subject within the National Curriculum. They are keen to find solutions to the issues, and highlight the vulnerable position of the workforce as a threat to this.

Our research clearly shows that, while there is good work being delivered in many Hubs and schools, there are challenges, including academisation, accountability measures such as the EBacc and Progress 8, the use of output metrics to measure performance of the Hubs and employment practices. However, there are issues across Government and within Hubs themselves which need addressing.

Meaningful collaboration, to which the ISM is totally committed, is key to the success of reversing the decline in music education. Following publication of multiple research reports showing the worrying decline in music education, the ISM recently issued a joint statement with Music Mark expressing our deep concern in relation to the decline of music education in schools. This affirmed the importance that both subject organisations place on sustained and high-quality access to music in the school curriculum as a core entitlement for all children up to the end of Key Stage 3 and the need for this commitment to be honoured in all schools. Within our joint statement we also called for all secondary schools to employ at least one full-time music teacher to work within their own subject and pedagogic expertise.

In light of the results of the research data gathered through these surveys, the following recommendations are given:

- We ask the Government to give clear guidance to all schools, whether they are academies or not, that a broad and balanced curriculum must be delivered and sustained across all schools at all key stages. Music and the Arts are at the heart of a broad and balanced curriculum.

²⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/nick-gibb-why-good-quality-music-education-matters>

²⁸ Nick Gibb "The importance of high-quality arts education. Music Education Expo, London, 9th Feb 2017 http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/28523/1/Nick%20Gibb_%20the%20importance%20of%20high-quality%20arts%20education%20-%20GOV.UK.pdf

- Give clear guidance to all schools that headline accountability measures must not erode the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3, and make it clear that a narrow curriculum will impact adversely on Ofsted inspections and evaluations.
- Provide clarity as to the roles and responsibilities of schools and Hubs when it comes to the delivery of a music education for all regardless of experience or background.
- Ensure that as per the Government policy directive in 2016, classroom teachers teach within their area of specialism and that this is respected. And ensure that all secondary schools have at least one full time music teacher who exclusively teaches music.
- Overhaul metrics for measuring Hubs' achievement and focus on the quality of provision and outcomes rather than levels of activity.
- Establish a rigorous and transparent framework for inspection of hub lead organisations and their partners, making them accountable for the quality and accessibility of their work.
- Maintain or increase the £75m ring-fenced funding for Hubs. Ensure the financial settlements for Hubs are on a three-year basis, to promote stability and a culture of outcomes rather than outputs.
- Restate the core and extension roles but with the proviso that in the next Plan there is greater flexibility in how the Hubs can deliver WCET to ensure access to musical learning and progression.
- Address early years, SEND and signposting for 18-25 education in the revised National Plan for Music Education.
- Embed a culture of singing in all schools via classroom teaching.
- Provide appropriate funding for replacing /repairing musical instruments to support the delivery of the next Plan.
- Ensure that all teachers are supported to access regular and relevant high-quality subject specific continuing professional development.
- Ensure that there is a sufficient number of properly qualified teachers coming through to support the delivery of music education in our schools and Hubs.
- We call on the Hubs to work with the ISM to tackle the growing job insecurity of music teachers without proper meaningful contracts of employment.

Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM)

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