

# Making more of music

An evaluation of music in schools 2005/08

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This report is based principally on evidence from inspections of music in a range of maintained schools in England between 2005 and 2008. Part A focuses on the inspection findings. They show that there is some outstanding provision and pupils enjoy music, although they do not always make as much musical progress as they could. Music can have a considerable impact on pupils' personal development and on the whole school. Part B considers the essential components of effective teaching in music.

Age group: 4–19

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# Contents

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<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Key findings</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Part A. Inspection findings for music</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Primary schools</b>	<b>9</b>
Inspection evidence	9
Achievement and standards	9
Impact of music on pupils' personal development	12
Teaching and learning	13
The curriculum and other activities	18
Leadership and management	21
<b>Secondary schools</b>	<b>22</b>
Achievement and standards	22
The impact of music on students' personal development	24
Teaching and learning	25
The curriculum and other activities	32
Leadership and management	36
<b>Part B. Moving music on</b>	<b>40</b>
Awaking musical intelligence – the language of music	40
Developing musical creativity – releasing musical imagination	44
Increasing musical progress – seeing the wood for the trees	46
Ensuring continuity – achieving longer-term impact	50
Building coherence – increasing effectiveness	55
Conclusion	60
<b>Notes</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Further information</b>	<b>62</b>
Publications	62
Websites	62
Glossary of musical terms used in this report	63
<b>Annex A. Schools visited for this survey</b>	<b>64</b>
Primary schools	64
Secondary schools	67
<b>Annex B. Judging music provision</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Annex C. Characteristics of good and outstanding instrumental/vocal programmes</b>	<b>75</b>
Achievement and standards	75

Teaching and learning	75
Curriculum	76
Leadership and management	76
<b>Annex D. Characteristics of good provision for singing</b>	<b>78</b>

## Executive summary

The report is based on evidence from inspections of music between September 2005 and July 2008 in 84 primary and 95 secondary schools in England. They were selected to provide a sample of those in differing contexts and geographical locations across England. Between 2005/06 and 2006/07, the sample included 37 primary schools selected because of their involvement in whole-class instrumental/vocal programmes at Key Stage 2.

Part A presents the evidence from these inspections and highlights the main strengths and weaknesses. Part B provides a commentary on the evidence and draws attention to the areas which need to be tackled if music education is to be more effective.

Although provision for music was good or outstanding in around half the schools visited, the quality and range of provision were inconsistent and too much of the provision was inadequate, particularly in the secondary schools. The schools where the provision was outstanding showed how music education could contribute very successfully to pupils' personal as well as musical development. In these schools, every pupil benefited from music. There was a clear sense of why music was important and the schools made considerable efforts to ensure all were involved. As a result, the whole school benefited from the way in which music could both engage and re-engage pupils, increasing their self-esteem and maximising their progress across all their learning and not just in music. However, not all the schools were realising the potential of music. Schools did little active selection of pupils who would benefit most, personally and musically. Simply offering opportunities to all did not necessarily ensure that provision included all pupils sufficiently.

The teachers observed were generally committed to teaching music and had developed good relationships with pupils. Pupils enjoyed practical lessons and the range of music they experienced. Not all schools understood the difference between progress in separate components of music and musical progress, when all aspects come together. Consequently, pupils did not always make as much musical progress as they might have done, especially during Years 5 and 6 and in Key Stage 3. Few pupils continued with music into Key Stage 4. The main weaknesses were the lack of emphasis on increasing the quality and depth of pupils' musical responses, inconsistency of musical experiences within and across key stages, and ineffective assessment.

The extremes in the quality of provision and teachers' lack of understanding about what 'making musical progress' looks like were frequently the result of the isolation that many music teachers and subject leaders were experiencing. Helpful continuing professional development and challenge were rare. Developments in music education had gone unnoticed or been disregarded and, in the primary schools visited, the subject leaders were frequently not given enough time to monitor and support the work of their colleagues. Overall, there has been insufficient improvement over the last three years.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) by the music profession continues to expand the range of music available to all pupils. Music technology encourages more boys to take a music A level and provides the means to enable all pupils to achieve at the highest standards, but it is underused at present, particularly in Key Stage 3.

Headteachers in the schools surveyed valued music and appreciated its contribution. Their self-evaluation was generally accurate but senior staff were usually unable to give the help that was needed to improve provision. Generally, local authority music services were also not in a position to provide the required support; however, they were helping to extend pupils' musical experiences. Across all the schools visited, no other partnership was having a similar impact.

This is a very positive time for music education, with the Government providing considerable funding. The recognition of need is well founded, but the survey showed that increased activity was not necessarily leading to improved provision. Too much was being developed in isolation and initiatives were not always reaching the schools and teachers that needed them most. The providers surveyed had generally not given enough thought to how to ensure pupils built upon these experiences. For example, while the best instrumental/vocal programmes in the primary schools visited had provided outstanding benefits to pupils, teachers and their schools, not all the programmes were of sufficient duration or quality to have a lasting impact.

## Key findings

- The provision for music was good or outstanding in around half the schools visited. However, the quality and range of the provision for music varied too much. While many pupils were benefiting considerably, others were missing out.
- Music made a difference to pupils' development, personally as well as musically. However, most of the schools visited did not capitalise on its potential. There was a tendency for schools simply to offer opportunities rather than to use them actively to engage or re-engage pupils.
- Pupils enjoyed music, but did not always make as much progress as they might have done. Lack of musical progress was the main weakness in primary and secondary schools. Inconsistency of musical opportunities within and across key stages, teachers' lack of understanding of musical progress, and weak assessment were all significant factors. Music technology was also underused.
- Many music teachers were professionally isolated. They lacked professional development, opportunities to discuss music and support to develop their teaching. Many of them were unaware of recent initiatives. For example, the Key Stage 3 Strategy for music was often ignored by those who, wrongly, felt it covered ground with which they were already familiar.

- In the primary schools visited, the quality of subject leadership, and the extent of the support, challenge and professional development that leaders were able to provide, was a vital factor in improving provision. Leadership was far more important than whether classes were taught by music specialists or class teachers.
- Music services in local authorities contributed significantly to broadening provision, especially through providing instrumental tuition and providing opportunities for pupils to perform in regional ensembles and at national and international musical events. No other partnerships had a similar impact across all the schools visited. The best instrumental/vocal programmes were making a real difference to pupils' musical education, but not all the programmes were of sufficient duration or quality.
- Substantial government funding has been allocated to a wide range of initiatives in music. The recognition of need is well founded but the schools, music services and agencies involved have not always thought sufficiently about how such provision links to the music curriculum as a whole, how to ensure longer-term impact or how to make sure that initiatives reach those most in need of help.

## Recommendations

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), should:

- increase the effectiveness and value for money of initiatives and the work of funded music bodies through:
  - linking funding to agreed shared priorities and to outcomes that demonstrate the longer-term impact on pupils
  - ensuring the Sing Up programme reaches the primary schools that need the most help<sup>1</sup>
  - providing support for developing singing in secondary schools
- maintain and develop the Teaching Music website with clear editorial guidance and control so that it contributes effectively to teachers' up-to-date knowledge of developments in music education<sup>2</sup>
- increase teachers' understanding of musical progression through:
  - refining and extending the Key Stage 3 Strategy for music
  - developing a music strategy for primary subject leaders.

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<sup>1</sup> Sing Up is the Music Manifesto's national singing programme: [www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org).

<sup>2</sup> [www.teachingmusic.org.uk](http://www.teachingmusic.org.uk).

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority should:

- provide clear guidance on musical progression that develops teachers' understanding about how to plan for, teach and assess music, with an emphasis on increasing musical quality and depth.

The Training and Development Agency for Schools should:

- provide continuing professional development for music teachers in secondary schools and subject leaders for music in primary schools.

Becta should:

- provide support materials to illustrate how music technology might be used effectively, particularly in Key Stage 3, to increase pupils' musical progress and enable them to reach the highest levels.

Local authorities and music services should:

- ensure instrumental/vocal programmes are of sufficient duration and quality to enable all pupils to benefit fully and make an informed decision about whether they wish to continue
- collect information about continued participation and ensure more children and young people from different groups benefit from playing a musical instrument
- develop their programmes in partnership with schools, so they match pupils' particular needs and link effectively to other music provision.

Schools should:

- review their provision for music regularly as part of whole-school improvement and provide good support and professional development for subject leaders in primary schools and music staff in secondary schools, including giving sufficient time for subject leaders to monitor and work with other teachers
- ensure all pupils benefit from music by exploring how it can help specific pupils and by monitoring the extent to which different groups are involved in music.



## Part A. Inspection findings for music

### Primary schools

#### Inspection evidence

1. The evidence here is based on the whole sample of 84 primary schools surveyed for the report. Overall, the schools selected for the survey because they were involved in instrumental/vocal programmes were more often judged to be good or outstanding than the schools that were not involved in such programmes. Around two thirds of the schools in the sample involved in instrumental programmes were judged to be good or better compared to about half of the schools in the whole sample.

#### Achievement and standards

2. Achievement and standards were good or outstanding in 46 out of the 84 primary schools surveyed; they were inadequate in only five.
3. Overall, standards in about one third of the 264 lessons seen were generally above average.<sup>3</sup> Standards in 25 lessons seen were substantially below expectations. In just over half the lessons seen, however, pupils made good or better progress.<sup>4</sup>
4. Standards were highest in the first two years of Key Stage 2: in 41 out of the 91 lessons seen, standards were generally above average, although this figure was positively affected by the sample of schools involved in the instrumental/vocal programmes. Standards in the Foundation Stage and the upper years of Key Stage 2 reflected the overall proportions, with standards generally above average in one third of the lessons seen. In Key Stage 1, standards were generally above average in about one fifth of the lessons.
5. Singing was a strength in about half the schools where it was evaluated. The repertoire was matched well to pupils' voices, their ages and interests. Pupils knew how to find and use their singing voices and, from the very earliest stage,

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<sup>3</sup> Because no national data are available on pupils' musical attainment in primary schools, inspectors judged standards to be 'generally above average' where pupils' responses were at least in line with national expectations, securely and consistently: that is, at Level 2 for the end of Key Stage 1 and at Level 4 for the end of Key Stage 2. Inspectors judged standards to be 'generally in line to below average' where some of pupils' responses were in line with expectations but where consistency across the group and the range of activities was less consistent.

<sup>4</sup> In considering these data, it is important to recognise that the lessons observed were selected largely by the schools in the light of inspectors' requests to see some teaching in each key stage. This explains, to some extent, why inspectors' judgements about progress and the quality of teaching are more positive than judgements about standards. Schools explained to inspectors that the lessons they were observing were taught by teachers who were more confident and that the progress made by pupils through the school was not always consistent.

understood the need for correct posture and breathing. Head notes were developed well and they all enjoyed singing. They progressed from singing unison songs to simple two-part songs, where one part was a simple repeated melodic phrase, and then to more complex two-part songs. The following examples illustrate good practice in two schools:

Rounds are used musically so that pupils are encouraged to listen to the other parts rather than closing their ears to keep their own part going. Only when two parts are secure is a third part added. In outstanding work, pupils perform with understanding of the musical style. Slow, plaintive worship songs are sung with great expression and meaning, a good tone and musical shape to the melodic line. Up-tempo worship songs create a tangible sense of uplift.

An African farewell song was unaccompanied in two parts and included one pupil who confidently 'called' each of the call and response sections during the performance. The rest of the pupils added dynamics as they followed the teacher's direction to improve and develop the overall effect of the song. All pupils were utterly focused and very supportive of the pupil who took the solo part.

6. The best schools visited were giving attention to the progress made by boys. In one school, for example, there were many more girls than boys in the school choir, so the school formed an all-boys choir and timetabled this to rehearse in curriculum time each week. As a result, about a third of the boys in the school are now involved, gaining much enjoyment and showing more positive attitudes towards singing and music.

### **Foundation Stage**

7. Attainment on entry varied considerably in the schools visited but, overall, the children joined the Reception class with skills and knowledge below those expected. An experienced Foundation Stage teacher in a small primary school commented that, over the previous few years, she had noticed a clear decline in the proportion of children starting school who knew traditional nursery rhymes, songs and games. However, teachers helped children to make good progress so that they achieved broadly in line with expectations by the end of this stage.
8. Where achievement and standards were good, children enjoyed responding physically to sound, demonstrating awareness of contrasted and changing pitch, volume and speed. They accurately copied rhythmic and melodic patterns made by the teacher and added their own sound effects to stories. They controlled different sounds on instruments and watched visual instructions closely so they knew when to start and stop playing their instrument. They also waited while others were playing – a considerable achievement, especially for those children who showed particular aptitude towards music as they often

found it the hardest to stop making sounds and to put the instruments away. They sang confidently and listened closely so that, increasingly, they could match the pitch of their voice to the pitch of the song.

### **Key Stage 1**

9. Progress was satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1. Pupils generally achieved broadly in line with the expected standards. Progress was good or outstanding in about half the lessons seen.
10. Where achievement and standards were good, pupils used musical vocabulary confidently and made subtle changes to sounds, taking considerable care to get exactly the sounds they wanted. They made many suggestions for the sound stories and added their own sounds without direction, listening carefully to the words and playing their sounds sensitively at the right time. They sang songs tunefully together with clear diction and awareness of when and how to breathe. They added and created simple accompaniments to their songs, keeping in time with the singing.

### **Key Stage 2**

11. In the schools visited, there was a clear difference in the progress made and the standards achieved between the first and second half of the key stage. Overall, the progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2 was good or outstanding in just over half the lessons seen. While standards were generally above average in about half of the schools in Years 3 and 4, this dropped to about a third of the schools in Years 5 and 6. Often, pupils were helped to make good progress in the first half of the key stage, but overall progress slowed in the second half because of insufficient challenge. Pupils were not given the opportunity to reach the standards of which they were capable.
12. Where achievement and standards were good in Years 3 and 4, pupils listened carefully and matched the sounds they made to the sounds they heard. For example, they sang musically and were able to sing in tune. They selected appropriate instruments, going beyond simply which instrument they wanted to play, and made subtle adjustments to the sounds they used to describe stories. They combined different sounds together to increase the effect and began to structure their sounds into short pieces of music. They performed rhythmic patterns with a strong sense of the pulse and played melodies fluently. They worked well together in groups and as a whole class.
13. The best instrumental/vocal programmes increased the progress pupils made through developing their instrumental/vocal techniques. These enabled pupils to participate in quality music-making and to learn from watching and listening to an expert.
14. Where achievement and standards were good in Years 5 and 6, pupils listened with considerable discrimination so they were able to identify, create and

perform different lines of music. By focused listening and watching closely, they made sure that the line they were playing or singing kept in time with other parts and added to the quality of the overall performance. They made suggestions enthusiastically about how the overall effect of the music could be improved and enjoyed exploring different musical styles.

## **Impact of music on pupils' personal development**

15. In approximately three-quarters of the primary schools visited, music had a good or outstanding impact on pupils' personal development.
16. The pupils enjoyed music, even when the provision was no better than satisfactory. They welcomed the opportunity to work practically and to make music with their friends and peers.
17. All the schools visited used music effectively in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to help pupils learn how to listen and concentrate. In Key Stage 2, music provided many opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and work with others. One teacher said, 'In music, it is immediately obvious if a child is not listening or contributing and, if they are not, it affects everyone else. Equally, every child can be part of something bigger; if the end result is good, everyone feels the same success.' Several headteachers commented on the impact of instrumental programmes, noting specifically the benefits for boys and, more generally, for raising pupils' expectations as they rose to challenges.
18. In the very best practice, the schools identified individual pupils or groups of pupils that would benefit from extra music.

A pupil with serious learning difficulties was transferred to a different school midway during Key Stage 2. The school wanted to find something that would help the pupil settle and become engaged in learning. Guitar lessons were identified as a way forward and the pupil was encouraged and supported to take these. The pupil really benefited from this experience and spoke openly about how it had helped him enjoy school more. The headteacher was clear that the guitar had helped the pupil focus on other aspects of school life and make much improved progress across all his work.

Another school identified that several boys in Years 5 and 6 were underachieving, particularly in English and mathematics. They were also not involved in any musical activities. Visits to a music centre were set up and pupils borrowed laptops with a range of information technology programs. They were also involved in a singing day followed by a concert. As a result of these activities, these boys agreed that it was cool to be involved in musical activities and more became members of the choir. Their interest and progress in English and mathematics had also improved.

19. More generally, however, actively selecting pupils for extra musical opportunities was very underdeveloped. Those who would benefit most were not always the ones included in additional musical opportunities, so the powerful contribution of music to pupils' personal development was not maximised.

## Teaching and learning

20. The overall quality of teaching was good or outstanding in 46 of the primary schools visited. Teaching was inadequate overall in only five schools. Analysis of the 264 lessons seen indicates that teaching was slightly more effective in the Foundation Stage and in the early part of Key Stage 2.
21. In the schools that had been selected because they were involved in instrumental/vocal programmes, teaching in about six in 10 of these schools was good or outstanding. The best of these programmes had a markedly positive impact on the confidence and subject knowledge of class teachers.

## The features of effective teaching

22. The most effective teaching often included:
- good teaching strategies
  - a clear focus for the learning
  - clear steps of progression
  - high expectations for all.
23. The class teachers seen generally used the effective teaching strategies that they also used in other subjects. However, good and outstanding teaching also showed in the way in which teachers' subject knowledge enabled them to identify inaccuracies, provide a high level of challenge and ensure that pupils made musical progress.
24. In discussion with inspectors, the best subject leaders identified two essential aspects that needed to be developed for teaching to be effective:
- a simple clear focus for each lesson, developed through all activities
  - clear steps of progression within the lesson.
25. The following example comes from a Reception class:

The practitioners gave children a wide range of opportunities: exploring sounds, adding sound effects to stories, singing to a backing track. Most effective was the way the practitioners applied the underlying principle that their children need constant re-stimulation, consolidation and reinforcement to make progress. In music, the practitioners agreed a single specific focus for learning and then used every activity to develop

this focus. For example, clever use was made of hand puppets to re-engage pupils and reinforce learning, such as asking pupils to show the puppet what they could do or say if the puppet was doing it right.

26. In the best provision, teachers were aware of the need to 'do more of less', to focus on small steps and constantly reinforce the learning of these steps through progressive and accumulative tasks.

A teacher of a Year 4 class supported the instrumental programme by taking a group of her class during the session. She focused completely on helping her pupils keep a steady pulse while playing simple rhythms set by the instrumental specialist. She gave real attention to the musical detail, set high expectations and kept returning to it until it had improved. As a result, the pupils made excellent musical progress, even though the teacher said she was not a music specialist.

27. In the best lessons seen, teachers ensured every pupil was challenged, enabled to make progress and helped to recognise that they had, indeed, made such progress.

The lesson was full of music with very effective demonstration by the teacher and minimal time spent talking. The teacher had built up good relationships with the pupils: they were confident in joining in and dropping out of the warm-up activities. During the lesson, pupils learnt a sequence of subtly different patterns and new techniques. These were performed accurately and incorporated into a piece learnt previously. Pupils devised mnemonics to help them remember complex rhythms and the sequence of patterns and successfully maintained these in four-part playing. Some pupils who found the complex rhythms too difficult reverted to a skeletal beat until they could join in again and were praised for doing so. Everyone's contribution was valued. Concentration, listening and watching were excellent. The pupils obviously enjoyed the challenge of this work and were delighted with their own achievements. One pupil summed this up at the end with 'Phew, we made it!' The class eagerly looked forward to performing the piece in public.

### Less effective teaching

28. The less effective teaching seen often included:
- lack of musical expectation from the teacher – accepting the first response or wrongly assuming that only a few pupils would be good at music
  - insufficient consolidation of learning – being too busy with too many tasks
  - work aimed only at the middle, failing to match work to the full range of pupils' needs and abilities

- too much talk, not enough demonstration, and inappropriate use of notation
- over-simplification of profound steps of learning.

29. The biggest challenge for class teachers was to know what would make a better response – how pupils could make progress within the ‘big idea’. Too many of the teachers accepted pupils’ first responses, praising their efforts indiscriminately with no correction of musical errors, or merely repeated the task without any emphasis on improvement, as in these examples.

The staff divided pupils into groups and gave them the task of working out their own rhythmic pattern. The pupils worked together and then, at the end of the session, played what they had created. The teacher said, ‘Well done,’ and that is where it ended. The teacher did not know how to develop the ideas further, so the pupils’ responses were not improved.

In a singing assembly, worship songs were sung through with a backing track – with some enthusiasm, mostly in the lower years – but no corrections or improvements were made. The children learnt the song by listening to the backing track (with guide vocals) and then repeatedly sang the song through with the track. The progress they made was only through their increasing familiarity. It was not better than satisfactory because the teacher did not challenge the children to improve the quality of their work through questioning, explaining or demonstrating what was needed.

30. One reason for the lack of correction was that some of the teachers did not listen enough to the pupils’ music making and therefore missed opportunities to identify what might have been improved through more focused input.

The class sang through a song but found one interval very difficult. As a result they missed the highest note. The phrasing of the song was also weak because they took breaths in the wrong place. Neither of these points were noticed by the teacher and so the pupils made little progress.

31. In those instrumental/vocal programmes which inspectors judged were ineffective, the same provision was offered to all pupils with the expectation that those with talent would emerge and others would not do as well. Problems were ignored, as in this example:

The whole-class performance was a cacophony of sound where nobody felt any sense of achievement. Pupils were not engaged, became tired and felt no sense of satisfaction. Pupils played the instruments for only a short while, since every task was interrupted with analysis from the teacher and more instructions. There was too much talking and not enough demonstration and learning. All mistakes were glossed over.

32. The less effective programmes also tried to cover too much. For example, in one lesson, pupils used their violins for only about 10 minutes in a 40 minute session, the rest of the time being used for singing and clapping exercises. Teachers wrongly thought they had to include all the National Curriculum requirements in a single lesson. The special skills that the peripatetic instrumental teachers brought to the school were not used enough and pupils' experience was impoverished. While care needs to be taken that the physical demands are not too much, teachers often missed opportunities to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding by using the instruments.
33. The schools visited were reticent about challenging weaker instrumental/vocal work as they felt they did not have the expertise of the specialists. One school commented, 'We were taking advice rather than taking control'. However, schools can contribute as much to developing the instrumental teachers' teaching skills as the instrumental teachers can bring to a school's overall music provision.
34. Lessons that skipped from one activity to the next without any links being made between them also meant that opportunities were missed to consolidate and extend learning.

The lesson began with clapping exercises where pupils repeated short rhythmic patterns. The teacher also sang some short melodic patterns and the pupils repeated these with varying degrees of confidence and accuracy. The class then learned a new song line by line and talked about the words and what the song was about. They sang two other songs through that they had learned previously and the class was then divided into groups. They were asked to compose sounds to a story they had read in class in an earlier lesson. Because the activities were unrelated, pupils found it very difficult to see what they had learned. Opportunities were missed to consolidate learning through, for example, using melodic and rhythmic patterns from the new song at the beginning of the lesson and making stronger links between the story and the songs chosen so that pupils had a richer sound vocabulary to draw on when creating their own pieces.

35. One of the most common indicators of a teacher's lack of understanding about progression was when all the work was aimed at the middle-ability pupils in the class.

Pupils made good progress in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2 progress was satisfactory rather than good: there was insufficient challenge for the more able and too little support for those finding the work more demanding. Singing was generally good with opportunities to sing in two parts, but no focused help was given to the few pupils who had not yet found their singing voice and no opportunities to take the lead were given to those who were singing very well. A heavy emphasis on notation on a



stave also prevented some pupils from making as much progress as they might have done: they could not interpret the notation quickly enough and so were left behind.

36. In the less effective lessons, teachers talked too much. Often, when they explained in great detail what pupils needed to do, relatively little time was left for them to work independently or together. Talk by the teacher constituted a substantial proportion of pupils' time for making music. Most importantly, the emphasis on spoken language did not enable pupils whose musical ability was in advance of their linguistic development to make the progress they might have done. For example, a teacher began a Year 2 lesson by going through a list of complex learning objectives on the whiteboard – which the pupils recited, in unison – before explaining, again without any reference to musical sounds, what activities the pupils would be doing. It was a good ten minutes before any music was played or heard and, by this time, many pupils were bored or distracted.
37. The less confident teachers also found it difficult to demonstrate what was needed and so resorted to more spoken instructions. The best subject leaders encouraged class teachers to use the more able pupils in the class to demonstrate to others and to provide a lead throughout the lesson.
38. The inappropriate use of musical notation, as mentioned earlier, was a frequent barrier to progress. In the weakest lessons seen, pupils were expected to use notation before they had sufficiently linked the musical symbol and the sound.
39. In the less effective practice, the insensitive use of musical vocabulary also confused rather than developed pupils' musical understanding. Terms used for musical elements, such as high/low and fast/slow, can oversimplify important conceptual steps in learning.

### Using assessment

40. Assessment was the weakest aspect of teaching in the primary schools visited. Of the 47 schools where assessment was evaluated in detail, it was good or outstanding in only 10 of these, and was inadequate in 16. Generally, assessment was weak because teachers did not clarify the focus for the teaching or identify what needed to be improved. Subject leaders rarely used the simple definition of progression in the National Curriculum levels to help identify the focus for the lessons. However, when these were discussed, teachers found the steps set out in the first sentence of each level very helpful: they reinforce the concept of a single 'big idea' to be developed through all activities.
41. In the best practice seen, the teachers had a clear learning objective that provided the main focus for the lesson. This led to the specific intended outcomes that were defined in terms of what every pupil was expected to

achieve, what some would achieve beyond this and what a few, who would do particularly well, could achieve.

A teacher explained to her colleagues that there was no need to record when pupils had achieved what was expected, but only when they had not achieved it or had exceeded it. Pupils achieving the highest expectation were also recorded. This record provided clear data on the extent to which all were achieving what was expected. The analysis of these records highlighted the pupils that needed more support in specific areas and those that needed further opportunities to extend their abilities.

42. Across all the schools visited, audio recording was not used enough as a means of ongoing assessment but tended to be used only at the end of a unit of work. As one pupil said, 'It is good we record our work, but it would be better if we could listen to it more and find out how we could improve it'.

The subject leader in an outstanding primary school ensured that every teacher was able to use the class computer to record pupils' work as a regular part of lessons. She was then able to access all the records and, through careful selection, created a portfolio for each year that she used to develop a shared understanding of expectations about progress for each year group.

## The curriculum and other activities

43. The curriculum as a whole was good or outstanding in about half the primary schools in the sample. The proportion was higher in the sample of schools involved in the instrumental/vocal programmes: the curriculum was good or outstanding in about two thirds of them.
44. The main curricular strengths were:
- the overall coverage of statutory requirements
  - opportunities to extend musical skills and interests through extra-curricular activities
  - for some pupils, opportunities to learn an instrument as a whole class.
45. However, not all the schools visited were benefiting from the instrumental/vocal programmes and extra-curricular provision varied widely. Frequently, there were schools where the range of the curriculum did not match pupils' interests and abilities. Inspectors often identified extra-curricular activities as an area for improvement.
46. The schools made extensive use of published schemes for music. These generally provided a thorough structure and models of lesson planning that helped to provide consistent content. However, to meet pupils' needs, they required much more adaptation than the schools acknowledged.

47. The schemes of work rarely gave sufficient detail of musical progress through the key stage; it was not clear how the expectations for a unit of work in one year differed from those for a later year. In the best practice, teachers had developed clear expectations for each year and these provided the scaffolding for developing the curriculum. While the same content could be used for different year groups, the expectations ensured that the way the content was taught matched the different needs of pupils in each year group.
48. Primary teachers' generic teaching skills and understanding of how to plan lessons have moved on considerably since some of the music schemes were first published. As a result, the learning objectives and the differentiation of expected progress shown in the published units were not always as precise as those for other subjects which the teacher was also teaching. In the best lessons seen, the teachers had identified this shortfall and had refined the focus for the learning so that it met the needs of their class better. This then made it easier for the teacher to see what had to be taught and developed.
49. Using published materials without adapting them led to weak planning. For instance, an off-the-shelf scheme of work produced by one music service was used by all the schools in the instrumental/vocal programme, week by week. The result was that too little consideration was given to pupils' needs or the progress they were making.

After nine months of being involved in an instrumental programme, the pupils had made satisfactory progress and were able to play simple note patterns on a limited number of notes and were developing confidence in reading basic notation. However, their progress was limited because the teachers took a given model and did not tailor it to the needs of the class. They had identified that the programme did not contain enough ensemble pieces, but did nothing about it.

50. In contrast, one primary school had taken great care to ensure that the instruments chosen for the instrumental/vocal programme complemented the provision the school already had.

The school had excellent opportunities for instruments from the western orchestral tradition: all symphonic instruments were represented in the orchestra of over 50. The school therefore decided to go for a 'wider opportunities' project with rock and pop instruments – keyboards, bass and guitar. The impact was not only in the involvement of more pupils in music, but also a broadened experience for those learning the orchestral instruments.

51. The best schools visited also ensured that they used ICT to help pupils explore music in different ways and access different kinds of music. However, the software did not always require pupils to make any musical decisions.

Year 5 pupils had created their own films. The software provided excerpts of music to be used to enhance the effect of the film. However, these were very limited and the pupils quickly became frustrated with the software. Their understanding of how music enhances visual images was much more sophisticated than that implied by the materials provided in the software.

52. Some links were made between singing, developing literacy and other subjects of the curriculum, but the emphasis given to literacy and other subjects often overshadowed the musical learning that might have taken place.

The teacher had a good lesson plan and an appropriate emphasis on practical work. A crisp start to the lesson with rhythm games engaged all the pupils. The main part of the lesson focused on songwriting. Pupils listened to a song, but the teacher's questioning was focused on the words of the song rather than its musical structure. The task placed too much emphasis on pupils' ability in literacy and some struggled. Pupils learnt basic information about musical structure by the end of the lesson, but did not make as much musical progress as they might have done.

53. A major concern was the amount of time given to music. There were examples of music ceasing during Year 6 to provide more time for English and mathematics. While there is no statutory requirement for subjects to be taught in every year, stopping music severely curtailed pupils' progress. They need continued development to make the most of their opportunities when they join the secondary school. Pupils in these primary schools were also very disappointed that they did not have music lessons in Year 6.
54. The time allocated to music from one class to the next also varied. During the survey, pupils frequently commented to inspectors on the uneven amount of time for music over their years in the primary school. This was summed up by a pupil who remarked to inspectors:

'It depends on the teacher. My teacher this year really likes music and we do a lot but last year we hardly did any; there was always something else we had to do first.'

55. Across the survey schools, there were extreme differences in the numbers of pupils involved in extra-curricular activities. This ranged from no involvement at all to most pupils being involved in at least one extra-curricular music activity. Overall, the information schools provided for inspectors indicated that about one in 10 pupils in Key Stage 1 was involved in extra-curricular activities, with about one in 20 having instrumental lessons. In Key Stage 2, about a quarter of the pupils were involved in extra-curricular activities and instrumental lessons.

## Leadership and management

56. Leadership and management were good or outstanding in 47 of the primary schools visited. The proportion was slightly higher in those involved in the instrumental/vocal programmes.
57. The headteachers of all the schools visited expressed strong support for music and wanted the provision to be as good as it could be. They saw it as an essential part of a broad and balanced curriculum and providing different ways for pupils to show what they could do. They commented frequently on its impact on pupils' confidence, concentration and social skills.
58. The schools involved in the instrumental/vocal programmes, funded by the Government and developed by music services, wanted them to continue, albeit with improvements. These schools often provided additional funds from their own budgets to maintain and extend the provision. However, the third of schools in the sample as a whole that were not involved in instrumental/vocal programmes did not know enough about the programmes to access or use the Standards Fund allocation.
59. The headteachers generally had a clear overview and gave an honest evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of their music provision, although many of them acknowledged that they did not have the depth of understanding they needed to help improve provision and that other priorities made it difficult for the school to give music the necessary attention. This explains why the need for continuing professional development is either not recognised or is accorded a low priority. Less than a third of all the schools in the survey were able to provide good opportunities for training.
60. At its best, schools' involvement in instrumental/vocal programmes provided excellent professional development for primary teachers. More generally, however, there was insufficient dialogue between specialist instrumental teachers and classroom teachers and their involvement in programmes was too short to have any lasting impact. The very best practice recognised that the programmes were a partnership between the specialist music teacher and the specialist class teacher. Both bring expert skills and knowledge, planning together to ensure that pupils enjoy good progress in their learning.
61. The two most important factors in the quality of the provision were the quality of the subject leader and the time she or he was given for the role. In the best music provision seen, the headteacher ensured that the subject leader had sufficient time to monitor and prepare work across the school. However, this did not occur often enough and so provision remained no better than satisfactory in about half the schools in the survey.
62. Overall, teaching and learning were better in the primary schools that deployed a specialist teacher to teach music to all or most of the classes than where music was taught by all class teachers. However, inspectors also saw good and

outstanding work where all class teachers were teaching music, invariably supported well by a good subject leader. Good subject leadership also showed itself in the range of extra-curricular opportunities the school provided, so that pupils extended their skills and enjoyed making music with those of different ages.

## Secondary schools

### Achievement and standards

63. Achievement and standards were good or outstanding in slightly less than half of the 95 secondary schools visited; they were inadequate in 13. In nine of the 11 secondary schools in the survey that had music as a specialism, achievement and standards were good or outstanding. Schools with specialist arts status reflected the same proportions as seen in the whole sample, although surprisingly there was a slightly higher proportion of schools where achievement and standards were judged inadequate.
64. Standards in about one third of the 354 lessons seen were above average. In 91 lessons they were substantially below average. The highest standards were in the sixth form and Key Stage 4: standards were generally above average in 26 out of the 36 sixth form lessons and in 30 of the 87 Key Stage 4 lessons. Standards were below average in only three sixth form lessons and in 18 lessons at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 3, standards were above average<sup>5</sup> in only 67 out of the 231 lessons seen and were substantially below average in 70.
65. In just under half of all the lessons seen, students' progress was good or outstanding.<sup>6</sup>
66. Singing was an area of relative weakness. It was good or outstanding in only two in 10 schools and was inadequate in over three in 10. In the latter, it was not that the quality of the students' singing was poor but, rather, that no singing took place at all.

Teachers in the music department of an otherwise effective school highlighted the problem seen elsewhere. They did not know how to engage boys in vocal work when their voices changed (they wrongly

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<sup>5</sup> Because there is limited national data on students' musical attainment in Key Stage 3, inspectors judged standards to be 'generally above average' where students' responses were at least in line with national expectations, securely and consistently, that is, at Levels 5/6 for the end of Key Stage 3. Inspectors judged standards to be 'generally in line to below average' where some of the students' responses were in line with expectations but there was less consistency across the group and the range of activities.

<sup>6</sup> These overall proportions reflect those seen in the primary schools visited. The lack of consistent prior progress means that inspectors' judgements about students' progress and the quality of teaching were more positive than the judgements inspectors made about students' standards.

referred to them as breaking). They thought the boys would not be motivated by singing activities and shied away from building more vocal work into the curriculum.

67. The best schools visited, however, were giving attention to involving boys in singing and were having considerable success. This was having a marked impact on musical standards and on the whole school through the increasingly positive role models the boys provided.

### Key Stage 3

68. Even though all the lessons seen in the secondary schools visited were taught by specialist music teachers, the students in these lessons made less progress overall in Key Stage 3 than in any of the other key stages. Progress was good or outstanding in only just over four in 10 sessions seen. The work tended to focus on developing the students' technical competence without enough consideration of the quality of their musical response and the depth of musical understanding. For example, students rarely developed or demonstrated their understanding of different musical processes or influences on music.
69. Where achievement and standards were good, students responded musically to the tasks set. Their understanding of different musical processes was secure. They showed this in creating different kinds of music in the way that they would be created in the real world and by performing musically in groups and as a whole class. They made sure that their part, whether easy or demanding, fitted well with the other parts. They listened and watched carefully, so they could help to improve the overall effect. They took different roles in group performances, taking the lead and providing support where appropriate. They engaged positively with music from different traditions, often using ICT effectively to explore and create music in different musical styles.

### Key Stage 4

70. Students made good or outstanding progress in about six in 10 lessons at Key Stage 4.
71. Attainment in music at GCSE level is above average when compared to all GCSE subjects. In 2008, some 29% of candidates attained A\*/A grades and over 73% of candidates achieved a grade C or above in music. However, attainment in the listening component continues to be weaker than in the performing and composing components and this is reflected in the lower grade boundaries set by the examination boards.
72. Entries for GCSE music remain relatively low compared to other GCSE subjects. In 2008, only 8% of students took GCSE music, compared to, for example, art and design, with over three times as many candidates. Since 2005, the trend for more girls than boys to take music has been reversed: in 2008, slightly more boys took GCSE music. However, in common with overall results, girls

continue to attain higher standards than boys with 77% of girls in 2008 achieving a grade C or above in music compared to 70% of boys.

73. There is limited evidence so far about achievement and standards in vocational courses, such as the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) courses. In one of the schools visited, the standards were clearly comparable with GCSE expectations and students were benefiting considerably from the different approaches in the BTEC course. In another, however, the standards in the BTEC course were considerably lower. It was difficult to see any comparability in terms of expectations at the same level in the qualifications framework.

### **Post-16**

74. In about seven in 10 of the lessons seen, students' progress was good or outstanding. However, overall standards in A-level music in 2008 were similar to those in 2005 and remain below the national average. The proportion of A–C grades attained in music was 9% below the national average for A–C grades in 2008. However, attainment in AS-level music was broadly in line with the national average.
75. There are stark differences in the grades being achieved in music and in music technology. In 2008, 23% of students entered gained an A grade overall in music, but only around 9% gained this grade in music technology.<sup>7</sup>
76. The number of students entered for an A-level qualification in music has continued to increase since 2004/05. However, the proportion of entries has remained small at around 1.3% of all A-level entries in 2007/08. Over four times as many students take an A level in art and design than take an A level in music. While more boys than girls were entered for a music qualification at A level in 2007/08, broadly similar numbers of boys were entered for the general music course. However, almost five times as many male students as female are entered for the music technology course.

### **The impact of music on students' personal development**

77. In approximately three quarters of the secondary schools visited, the impact of music on students' personal development was good or outstanding. Students enjoyed music even where the school's provision was no better than satisfactory. They welcomed the opportunity to work practically and make music with their friends and peers. The students often described how music had increased their self-esteem, particularly through performing to others.

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<sup>7</sup> The 17% figure in the provisional statistical first release combines the data for music and music technology.



'I'm more confident in talking to and meeting people through music.'

'Our social life revolves around music.'

78. Headteachers and teachers also frequently highlighted the impact of music.

A school furnished a number of examples of students at risk of being disaffected who had benefited from music. One student had joined the school in Year 9, having been excluded from his previous school for behavioural problems. He was motivated by the music lessons and studied the subject at GCSE. He has since returned to the school as a guest to work with current students on musical projects.

In a special school, a Year 9 student could not cope with making mistakes. Through skilful use of performing music she developed more confidence and now deals with mistakes not only in music,, but in other lessons as well. At a concert at the local theatre at Christmas she made a mistake in her solo performance, stopped and said, 'Oops! A mistake. Try again,' and re-started her piece with no prompting from staff.

79. The schools that had started to use music deliberately to help individual students spoke positively about its contribution.

Students who lacked confidence in Year 7 were given additional music sessions with the music teacher and older students. The development of relationships with older students and the self-esteem generated through success in music contributed much to their confidence, with benefits across all subjects.

80. However, using music to help individual students was generally underdeveloped. Those who might have benefited most, and who might not have been involved through generally open access, were not always the ones who were included in additional musical opportunities. As a result, the powerful contribution music can make to students' personal development was not being maximised.

## Teaching and learning

81. The overall quality of teaching in the schools visited reflected broadly the judgements made on students' achievement and standards. In 11 of the schools visited, the quality of teaching was outstanding; it was good in 39. However, about half of all the teaching seen was no better than satisfactory and, in these lessons, students did not learn as quickly as they might have done.
82. The lessons in Key Stage 3 were generally practical and included a range of different experiences. However, progress was often limited by a lack of challenge and focused support. Teachers did not make sufficient links between

different musical activities and students were not given enough opportunities to deepen their understanding of music. Four of the six most common areas for improvement which inspectors identified in the visits related to helping students make more musical progress, in particular to making sure they knew what they needed to do to improve their work, and to the need for teachers to make the objectives for learning clearer.

83. Analysis of around 400 sessions revealed that the most effective teaching occurred in extra-curricular activities and instrumental lessons. No inadequate sessions were seen in any of this provision during the survey and about three quarters of extra-curricular sessions and instrumental lessons were good or outstanding.

### **The features of effective teaching**

84. The good and outstanding lessons observed featured a mix of different characteristics, some seen frequently, others less so. All the less frequently seen characteristics related to those aspects of teaching that enable deeper learning about and through music.

85. Typically, in the good and outstanding lessons:

- the teaching had a clear musical learning focus
- teachers had high expectations: there was an emphasis on musical quality and students were clear how to improve their work
- practical music-making activity was at the heart of the work
- teachers made excellent use of demonstration
- the work was related to real life musical tasks
- questioning was effective.

In the very best lessons, where students made rapid musical progress, there was an emphasis on increasing the depth of their musical response.

86. In judging students' progress, inspectors consider what the teacher intends to achieve. In the good or outstanding lessons, students enjoyed the work and made progress that was at least good. The teacher's intention was immediately clear to students and inspectors; for example, it may have been widening students' experiences and deepening their musical understanding, although it was more often about increasing specific skills, knowledge and understanding. There was a clear focus on increasing the quality of the musical response – a focus arising out of the high expectations that the teacher had for all students.
87. Students in these schools often commented on how everyone was treated as a musician. The following illustrates this focus on quality, as well as another

frequent feature in the good and outstanding lessons – namely, the placing of performance at the heart of the work:

The Year 7 students arrived promptly and with obvious anticipation. The teacher had prepared a variety of pieces for performance by the whole class using a wide range of instruments. He skilfully directed individual students to different instruments, for example suggesting to one girl that she might like to play the bass guitar for this piece. All the students made good progress during the lesson. This was achieved through quiet, calm instruction and challenge, which showed the teacher's detailed knowledge of the students and his constant emphasis on the quality of the performance. Particularly worth noting was that his language and approach, and his high expectations, were the same in this lesson as when he led the extra-curricular rehearsal of the school's senior orchestra.

88. In the good lessons, teachers showed their subject expertise and were able to demonstrate work, so that students could see what was expected.

The students were performing together as a class. The music had been arranged by the teacher in a blues style. They learnt different melodic, harmonic and rhythmic lines by copying them, played first by the teacher. The lesson came alive when the teacher joined in, adding his own high-quality part on an electric piano. Students' own levels of performance immediately improved. The result was impressive as all members of the class showed real understanding about the way the music needed to be played.

89. Work was also made relevant so that students learned about music in the real world. This included considering important aspects such as copyright.

The teacher began the lesson by playing two pieces of music and asking the students what the second piece had borrowed from the first piece. She then played her own dance mix and the class briefly discussed what features would be good if it were played at their end-of-year disco. They also suggested ways it could be even better. Students were set the task of composing their own dance mix for sale at the end-of-year disco. Discussion included considering what would make their mix the best, as well as cleverly linking in aspects of copyright and the extent to which they could copy other people's ideas.

90. Students were helped to develop a depth of musical response through skilfully exploring how music reflects its cultural context. The next example illustrates a focus on depth of understanding, as well as another feature of good and outstanding work: well-targeted questioning.

In a Year 10 lesson, the teacher selected four pictures of buildings and then played four pieces of music, asking the students which pieces and buildings fitted together and why. He skilfully drew out key features in the

discussion and recorded these on a flip chart. The group had to work very hard to find ways of describing the differences: answers were challenged and interrogated, and no superficial responses were accepted. When clear differences between the four had been established, the teacher cleverly related these to different musical periods. Students' progress was excellent and they left the lesson with an unusually developed depth of understanding about the different periods. For homework, they were asked to find a picture of a building as a stimulus for their next composition.

91. The best work ensured musical depth and quality. The following example also illustrates the effective use of the principles of the Key Stage 3 Strategy for music, such as the way the class was helped to perform with musical understanding, giving appropriate emphasis to the laid-back feel of the music that reflected the mood and feelings of the composer and the culture in which it was created.

Year 9 students were learning about reggae. Reggae music was playing as they entered. They were quickly set the challenge of playing air-guitar to a backing track which used reggae off-beat rhythmic patterns. The teacher watched students carefully as they responded, mentally noting those who did this well and those who found it more difficult. The class discussed what it felt like to play the rhythm and what role the guitar player had in a reggae group. They listened to other examples. As they explored the way of life and background to the evolution of reggae, the teacher referred frequently to a student who had been to Jamaica. The laid-back feel of the music became a central thread of all the discussion. This was skilfully used to improve the quality of a class performance of the reggae piece played at the end of the lesson (the same piece heard at the start). The teacher matched students to different instrument parts, using her knowledge of them, reinforced through observing the air-guitar task.

### Less effective teaching

92. Typically, in the less effective lessons seen:
- learning objectives were unclear, unmusical or both
  - expectations were too low – illustrated, for example, by praise that was unwarranted
  - work was not matched to the needs of students of different abilities or, if it was, this was achieved only by increasing the difficulty of the task rather than giving attention to increasing the depth or quality of students' responses
  - no links were made between different activities and there was insufficient integration.

93. The less effective teaching seen generally resulted from unclear or unmusical objectives. Too many lesson objectives or those which were too broad resulted in a lack of purpose. An objective in a Year 7 lesson, for example, was to 'learn how to improve your work'. The result of a lack of clarity was often a series of unrelated tasks that kept students busy, but did not help them to develop musically. When inspectors asked students what they had learnt, they were unable to say.
94. Low expectations were evident in praise that was unwarranted. Students knew if their work was good and often showed disbelief when work that was at best ordinary was described as 'excellent'. Students always responded well to challenge and respected being told, 'That is not good enough; you can do better'.
95. The most common feature of the less effective work seen was insufficient matching of the work to the different needs and abilities of students, so that they were not given the support or the challenge they needed.

A boy with a statement of special educational needs had in-class support but the member of staff acted as a general assistant rather than focusing on his specific needs. As a result he had to rely on a more able boy who gave him positive support but, clearly, did not have the pedagogical skills to help him sufficiently. At the same time, the more able student was not challenged sufficiently and did not make appropriate progress.

96. The teachers seen often used tasks of increasing difficulty to match work to students' needs but this alone did not help the students to develop musically. They knew what they had to do but not what would make their response more musical. Their only understanding about what to improve was to do something that was more difficult.

A Year 7 class was set a performance task. The work was planned carefully and all the students understood what to do. Work was differentiated, so that they worked through three tasks of increasing difficulty. All of them were expected to be able to play short sections of a given melody by the end of the lesson: some would play the whole melody and a few would play the melody with an accompaniment. While the teacher helped students during the session, they were given just one opportunity to present their work at the end of the lesson. The students' levels of engagement with the task varied; their progress also varied.

In discussing the lesson with the inspector afterwards, the teacher recognised that not all the students had made progress but thought that this was because they did not have the necessary skills. He began to question the way the task had been set; if improving students' performing skills was the aim, there might have been a better way of doing this so that, for example, they learned together as a class or group with different

lines that could be played simultaneously. The teacher thought that this would make it more interesting and enjoyable for the students: they would be learning how to improve their own part so that the overall piece sounded better.

97. Over-emphasising the increasing difficulty of a task meant that there was not enough emphasis on increasing the depth of musical understanding. Students were given very little opportunity to think more widely about the music – not just ‘what’ is done but ‘how’ and ‘why’.

Students in a Year 9 class were asked to create variations on a given sequence of notes. The teacher played a few short examples, but there was little discussion other than reinforcement of the technical devices that the students could use. They worked well and provided the required responses but were not engaged, beyond finishing the task as directed. The results showed correct use of the devices but were unimaginative.

Afterwards, the teacher was keen to discuss with the inspector some ways in which the lesson could have been improved. She became excited about exploring with the students why composers might want to use variations, as well as how they were used. She thought this would prompt interesting exploration and encourage students to think more deeply about which devices to use and how to use them differently to achieve a variety of outcomes. The result might then be not simply the students’ knowledge of devices, but exercising this musically to create imaginative compositions.

The issue of ‘increasing difficulty’ with regard to progression in music is discussed further in Part B.

98. Missed opportunities to link different activities were also a common feature of the weaker lessons. Unhelpfully separating performing, composing and appraising continues and so students do not learn how these are inter-related.

Students spent the first part of an A-level lesson analysing a set work. Questions challenged them well and they increased their understanding of the music. The teacher briefly reminded the group about the deadline for their composition and checked if anyone needed help. Finally, selected students performed to the rest of the group. The teacher encouraged them to think about how they were interpreting the music, but they did not find this easy. While each of the separate activities in the lesson was led well, the lack of any explicit link between them meant that opportunities were missed to reinforce learning and deepen students’ understanding.

In discussing the lesson later, the teacher quickly identified how he could have made interpretation the focus of all the tasks, which might then have helped the students to consider this when performing.

## Using assessment

99. Assessment was good or outstanding in approximately one third of the 89 secondary schools where inspectors made an overall judgement on it; it was inadequate in 22. It remains one of the weakest aspects of teaching and the weaknesses result directly from a lack of understanding about progression. This was highlighted in the Annual Report for 2006/07:<sup>8</sup>

'Assessment remains, overall, the weakest aspect of teaching. Where assessment is ineffective, teachers do not routinely check students' understanding as the lesson progresses. Many teachers still struggle to use the information from assessment to plan work that is well matched to the students' needs, and to involve the students in assessing their own work.'

100. Good assessment requires a clear learning objective and a close focus on the progress of individuals in the class. The learning objective provides the main direction for the lesson, leading to specific outcomes that are expected for all the class, some of whom will achieve more than this and a few of whom will achieve the highest levels in that lesson. Recording the outcomes should enable work to be adapted so that all students have sufficient challenge and support.
101. The National Curriculum level descriptions are intended to describe a broad picture of attainment. However, in the weakest work seen, they were being misused to assess isolated activities. In one lesson seen, for example, students were told: 'Level 3: clap a 3 beat ostinato; Level 4: maintain a 4 bar ostinato; Level 5: compose an ostinato.' This demonstrated a significant misunderstanding of the expectations inherent in the level descriptions.
102. As in the primary schools visited, audio recording tended to be used only at the end of a unit of work rather than as a means of continuing assessment. However, teachers used regular assessment effectively in the best lessons.

In one of the schools visited, a music teacher was quickly able to provide extensive examples of students' work, recorded and filed in the school's music database. Work was recorded as a natural part of lessons and students used it to see what they had improved and what they needed to improve further. The school also used the resource for departmental meetings to develop greater understanding of standards and expectations.

103. Music teachers during the survey were struggling to find workable ways to collect assessment information and to meet whole-school requirements for data, especially where these were excessive. For example, in the most extreme cases, the music department was expected to provide assessments every

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<sup>8</sup> *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector 2006/07 (20070035)*, Ofsted, 2007; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/20070035](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/20070035).

half-term in relation to sub-divided National Curriculum levels. However, such sub-divisions did not take account of the National Curriculum guidance about progress within levels being seen in terms of increasing confidence, ownership and independence and so they ended up being based on arbitrary degrees of competence in separate and specific components of music.

104. In the schools visited, periodic assessment generally took place two or three times a year. The quality of this data reflected the current weaknesses in the quality of assessment described earlier. Most of the assessments did not relate to the National Curriculum levels appropriately and the basis on which the levels were given was not secure. In one school, for instance, the levels were awarded according to how hard the teacher thought the students had worked. In another, the levels related to the average in the class: those that were average were given Level 5, those above were given Level 6 and those below Level 4. Even where the levels were based on musical attainment, they were nearly always over-generous. As a result, considerable caution should be exercised when attempting to use the national Key Stage 3 data to compare or comment on attainment.
105. In good assessment practice, teachers develop criteria with the students so that they can judge the extent to which they have been successful.

In an outstanding secondary school the teacher explained clearly what the students needed to do and gave them a draft of possible assessment criteria. The students discussed and refined these throughout the work so that everyone understood not only what was expected but also what had been achieved.

A teacher in a secondary school had developed a system of recording the written comments of students' peers and collating them in students' books. She recognised that 'Just saying it is good has little value' and she was committed to building further on this good practice. She was looking more closely at the assessment criteria to ensure they included progression in the deeper aspects of musical understanding, as well as in the development of musical skills.

## The curriculum and other activities

106. Judgements on the quality of the curriculum were the most critical of all the main judgements made in the survey visits. The quality of the curriculum was good or outstanding in only 39 of the 95 secondary schools visited and was inadequate in 16. Inspectors frequently identified the need for the music curriculum to be improved.
107. Only very few of the schemes of work seen gave sufficient detail of musical progress through a key stage, so it was not clear how the expectations set out in a unit of work for one year differed from those in a subsequent or preceding



year. Effective schemes showed clear expectations for each year and these provided teachers with scaffolding for developing the curriculum. Although the same content might be used in different years, the expectations ensured that the way the content was taught matched students' different learning needs.

108. The curriculum in Key Stage 3 generally included opportunities for students to perform and compose in a variety of different musical styles, although their own compositions were rarely related to the work of established composers and performers. Too much creative work focused on students' demonstration of their knowledge of musical devices and structures without enough listening to how composers and performers use these devices musically.
109. Teachers rarely made links with other subjects. Effective links were even harder to find.

One of the schools visited was beginning to appreciate the benefits and potential drawbacks of linked work. Links were being developed between English and music through exploring poetry: students composed music to poems exploring metre, phrase and rhythms. However, in other examples, the links being made were not of sufficient depth to enable the students to make musical progress.

Year 9 students were played music and asked to draw shapes. While the music provided a stimulus for art and design, little musical learning took place. Similarly, in Years 7 and 8, in a project-based approach linking music to other subjects, including the arts and humanities, the standard of composing was below expectations. The students' compositions were short and the students lacked the necessary knowledge to create and develop their musical ideas.

110. Few of the schools visited had a scheme of work for Key Stage 4 or post-16 music. Teachers wrongly saw the examination specification as the scheme of work, which meant that work was not always planned across the key stage to build on earlier learning and to enable students to make progress in all aspects.
111. The numbers continuing to study music at Key Stage 4 remain low. The best schools were fully aware of the different needs and interests of students and were developing new courses such as the BTEC music course. However, too few of the survey schools were exploring different courses to enable and encourage more students to get involved.
112. The recently introduced BTEC national courses in music and music technology are beginning to be offered as an alternative Level 3 qualification for sixth-form students. All the schools visited continued to offer A-level music or music technology, with the vocational qualifications being offered mainly by further education colleges.

113. Extra-curricular provision varied widely. Frequently, the range of extra-curricular provision did not match the interests and abilities of the students. During the visits, inspectors often identified the need for schools to increase the range of, and students' access to, extra-curricular activities.
114. The extent to which students were involved in extra-curricular activities varied very widely; their involvement diminished as they got older. About one in seven was involved in Key Stage 3 and about one in 12 in Key Stage 4 and sixth forms. The highest proportion was in Year 7 where about one in six was involved. Involvement in school-provided instrumental lessons was similar.
115. The schools visited found it more difficult to provide information about the students who had instrumental lessons outside school but the data collected indicated that about one in 14 students took such lessons in Key Stage 3, and about one in 20 in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.
116. The schools visited generally had a set of keyboards and a range of percussion instruments. In the better provision, bass and rhythm guitars, drum kits and/or electronic drum pads were also common. However, the schools did not always make the best use of all the instruments, especially those purchased for senior ensembles. In one of the schools visited, a Year 9 class was performing together using classroom glockenspiels and small xylophones despite there being, in the room next to the classroom, an orchestral marimba that was used only for the school orchestra.
117. There was generally at least one specialist classroom and some practice rooms. A space was usually available for rehearsals. However, practice rooms tended to be too small to enable students to work in medium-size groups and the sound-proofing was poor. These poor features were also seen in recently built music accommodation. The best provision had a range of impressive facilities, including recording studios and extensive rehearsal and performance spaces.

### **Use of information and communication technology**

118. There was insufficient use of ICT in music, even though it is a statutory requirement in Key Stage 3. A detailed focus on 22 schools in the survey showed the use of ICT to be inadequate in more than half of these; only four were good or outstanding in this respect.
119. Music technology is changing rapidly and the schools found it difficult to develop their own resources in line with the quality of equipment which students were seeing – and sometimes using themselves – outside school. Consequently, ICT in school could appear dated to them.
120. Even the schools which had appropriate resources did not use them musically. Students completed the tasks set, which generally required them to build and manipulate blocks of sounds, but very little emphasis was given to refining the

sounds created through repeated listening and a consideration of intended effect. Students had too few opportunities to listen to other music and so their work was rarely extended through exploring different compositions. Only in the very best examples were teachers relating the work to how ICT was used in the real world so that students could explore and follow similar processes to those used professionally.

121. In Key Stage 4, ICT was often used mainly as a notational tool, for example, writing for acoustic instruments. One consequence was that the particular timbre and characteristics of each instrument were not exploited and the music produced was extremely difficult to play on the instrument chosen.
122. In the best work, however, ICT enabled students to achieve high-quality composition.

In a lesson on minimalism, the teacher began by playing his own composition which used minimalist techniques. He made skilful use of ICT, so that the students could see how the work was constructed. Repeated playing enabled the students to hear how the sequence of sounds created an overall effect. The class discussed how some composers had used ICT to generate new music. The resources also enabled them to produce work of professional quality.

123. Where provision for music technology was strong, it was not unusual to find that a specialist had been appointed to the support staff to work in and with the music department.

### **Planning for cultural development**

124. The secondary schools visited generally ensured appropriate breadth to their music curriculum, often by including gamelan, Indian music and samba, for example, in the scheme of work, in addition to examples of western classical music. While students benefited from this breadth, there was very little detailed exploration of the music in its cultural context. Teachers referred to the time and place of the music's origins but rarely explored the social and cultural context or related this directly to the music. For example, students learnt about the musical devices but not about how – and, most importantly, why – these devices might have evolved. This lack of depth of contextual investigation resulted in superficial cultural development.
125. The Key Stage 3 Strategy for music has helped to enhance this aspect. While inspectors saw examples of its positive impact on content and approaches, it was clear that other teachers either were unaware of the materials or wrongly thought they were superfluous as they were 'doing it already'. The amount of material also sometimes made it difficult for teachers to identify the key messages.

126. Many opportunities were being missed to use students' expertise and experiences, illustrated by the student who told an inspector that she played in a marching band. Since the music department did not know this, it missed an opportunity to draw on her experience. In an example of very good practice, however, a school welcomed the richness of experiences that students brought.

In one lesson, the teacher had asked a boy to demonstrate a raga on a harmonium. The boy did this while singing in Hindi in unison. He was a competent player and clearly explained the working of a harmonium. Another boy then played a bamboo flute to an even higher standard. The class was spellbound by the quality and technical ability.

### Leadership and management

127. Leadership and management were good or outstanding in 52 of the 95 secondary schools surveyed. Headteachers saw music as an important part of the curriculum and provided evidence of its positive impact on students and the whole school. Generally, they had an accurate view of their provision and the quality of teaching and learning. However, their awareness of strengths and weaknesses across all the work of the music department varied. In one school, for example, a positive impression was gained through observing the high-level extra-curricular activities of the music department, yet the senior leadership team was unaware of the inadequate teaching in Key Stage 3.
128. The weakest provision often reflected a lack of any self-evaluation. Even where members of a senior leadership team were aware of weaknesses, they did not have the necessary specialist knowledge to identify why work was not as good as it should be or to help provision improve. In these schools there was a lack of any challenge to the music department. One inspector recorded during a visit:

The head of department is not held to account with rigour by the school's senior staff, and this has allowed weaknesses to go unnoticed. Senior staff are influenced in their positive view of the department by the reasonable success of the public productions and the generally positive results at GCSE. They have found it hard to compare standards and achievement at their school with benchmarks or criteria. The school is not well enough informed about how to improve provision and is not using the Key Stage 3 Strategy for music, or any other available support to help, not seeing the need for this. In the autumn term for example, the head of department did not attend the local authority's seminar on the Strategy because it was considered more important to be at a lunchtime production rehearsal in school. Since then, no attempt has been made to catch up with what was missed at the seminar.

129. While the schools gave appropriate attention to including music in whole-school developments, such as assessment for learning, subject leaders for music and

music teachers often found it difficult to use such developments effectively. The teachers commented on the pressures on them to manage large numbers of extra-curricular lessons and activities and to maintain high-profile musical events for the school. They also found it difficult to translate the materials and training easily into musical contexts.

130. However, there were good examples of schools that recognised the significant pressures on their music teachers and found innovative ways to support music provision.

One school appointed a peripatetic guitar teacher to manage the Saturday morning rock school and provide ICT/rock support during the school day. Another appointed music teachers with part of their time allocated to teach instrumental lessons. This enabled the school to increase the size of the music department.

131. The best schools visited also sought to extend the range of opportunities available. While the quality of extra-curricular activities was good in most of the schools, the range tended to reflect the interests and experiences of the subject leader. A department's reputation in one of the schools visited was built around the interests and strengths of the subject leader: there was a good orchestra but very little opportunity for students with other musical interests. In another school, the subject leader was an excellent manager and empowered others to ensure diversity and inclusion; as a result, a wide range of styles and interests was represented.
132. Overall, the teachers in the survey received little continuing professional development in music. The strongest signs of improvement in the depth of thinking and increasing challenge for students were seen in the teachers who were directly involved in supporting the dissemination of the Key Stage 3 Strategy for music. The greatest impact of the Strategy for music has been in the way it has provided opportunities for teachers to meet and share practice. During the survey, the teachers often commented that these opportunities were invaluable as they enabled them to see what others were doing. The survey also found evidence of subject leaders benefiting from their involvement in Musical Futures.<sup>9</sup>
133. Teachers were generally either unaware of national initiatives or had given limited thought to their impact on practice. For example, across all the schools in the survey, little consideration had been given to how the instrumental and vocal programmes in Key Stage 2 could be built on in Key Stage 3.

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<sup>9</sup> The Musical Futures Project is funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation: [www.musicalfutures.org.uk](http://www.musicalfutures.org.uk). It explores different approaches to music provision at Key Stage 3. Ofsted published a report on Musical Futures in 2006: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/2682](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/2682).

134. About two thirds of the secondary schools had good partnerships with their local authority's music service. The main contribution of music services was in providing instrumental teachers and regional ensembles that enriched the curriculum for many students and extended their learning. Opportunities were also provided for students to perform in national and international venues. These experiences contributed importantly to success in music at GCSE and at A level. Music services also provided a range of musical support, including opportunities for students to hear high-quality live performances.

### Collecting and using data

135. Collecting and using Key Stage 3 data in music were very weak in the schools visited. The tracking of students' musical progress varied considerably and rarely provided evidence of the effectiveness of departments. The only hard data in most of the schools referred to the examination groups in Key Stage 4. However, schools often set targets for music at Key Stage 4 on the basis of previous success in English and mathematics. In the best practice, music departments adjusted school-based targets in the light of clear records of past work in music.
136. Schools were generally able to provide data on the numbers of students involved in extra-curricular activities, but there was rarely any analysis of their involvement. The schools commented on the value of music to students and the school, but additional opportunities remained on offer and the schools did little to identify those who would benefit most – musically and personally. The schools rarely set targets for involving students in extra-curricular activities or, even more importantly, for involving specific groups of students in musical activities. Only four of the schools visited provided data on take-up in relation to different groups.
137. The schools often said their provision was inclusive because the extra-curricular activities were open to all. Those which were the most inclusive had identified aspects of provision where groups were not involved equally and had taken steps to include them. The clearest example was including more boys in singing. Such involvement not only made the music provision more inclusive, but also had a marked impact on the whole school through the boys' improved attitudes and the positive role models they created for younger students.
138. Schools had little information about students' prior musical experiences and learning. Even when the schools collected good information, it was not always used well.

A secondary school received helpful information about pupils from the primary schools, such as: 'Pupil A sings well, good sense of rhythm, little self-conscious, uses ICT confidently to compose tunes and invent lyrics, effort good, attainment in line with age expectation'; 'Pupil B contributes well to projects, exploring how sounds can be used abstractly, suggest

improvements to own and others' work'. However, the school admitted to not making enough structured use of the information it had been sent.

139. Using students' prior musical experiences tended to be exemplified most by secondary schools ensuring that students continued to learn to play a musical instrument.

A 'Play Day' was held every July. Year 6 pupils who learnt instruments or had vocal tuition in their primary schools were invited to attend a day of making music at the secondary school. This was organised mainly by the music service but the subject leader was actively involved and regularly visited the contributing primary schools. The retention of instrumental tuition from Year 6 to Year 7 was very high as a result of this approach.

140. During the survey, the schools often included information about Artsmark when providing evidence of their provision. As the Arts Council explains, the Artsmark award relates to the amount rather than the quality of planned provision and provides an excellent starting point for schools' analysis.<sup>10</sup> However, the schools visited tended to see the award, wrongly, as evidence of quality rather than simply of the amount of provision. For example, of the 12 schools that held Artsmark and Artsmark Silver, inspectors judged the music provision to be good or outstanding in only four; it was satisfactory in four and inadequate in the remaining four. Schools need to undertake further evaluation to ensure their provision is effective.

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<sup>10</sup> For further information on Artsmark, see [www.artscouncil.org.uk/artsmark](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/artsmark).

## Part B. Moving music on

141. Part B analyses the evidence from the survey visits in relation to five areas. The findings are inter-related: success in one area depends on success in another. At the heart of them all is the awakening of musical intelligence, the distinctive contribution of music to pupils' education. Musical intelligence is engaged through involvement in musical experiences and enables the development of musical understanding.

### Awaking musical intelligence – the language of music

142. Music is a language with its own syntax and structure, yet in the music education observed, most of the teaching was based on oral instructions. Teachers did not give enough attention to enabling pupils to learn and respond musically. The pupils made more musical progress in practical activities when they learnt from what they saw and heard rather than just from what they were told. This is particularly important for pupils who may have more aptitude for music than linguistic ability.

143. The need for a greater emphasis on music as its own language may be compared directly to developments in teaching a modern language where very effective teachers now teach almost entirely through the target language, using English only when essential to clarify and extend learning. Progress in music was rapid where teachers took a similar approach, with music as the 'target language'.

In a steel pan session, pupils copied patterns from the instructor and progressively built a complete piece with almost no spoken instructions. The teacher skilfully improved the performance by playing with each group as they performed. The same approach was seen in a samba class lesson where, again, the teacher kept the performance going, adding different layers of sound cumulatively.

144. The most effective work seen engaged pupils' musical intelligence through:

- playing music as pupils entered the classroom
- a constant emphasis on listening – hearing their own music and making connections to the music of others, including that of established performers and composers
- helping pupils learn from demonstration and modelling
- letting pupils learn while playing and exploring sounds
- giving pupils opportunities to use their musical imagination
- careful use of musical vocabulary, especially at the earliest stages.



145. The teachers who played music as pupils entered the classroom were more likely to engage them in the lesson from the beginning. This reinforced one of the differences between music and other subjects.
146. There was very little use of audio recording, the one easy way of keeping the focus on listening. Even though audio recording is straightforward, it was rarely an integral part of a teacher's tool kit. It is as if art or English could be taught without looking at the pupils' artwork or reading what they had written. When teachers used recording, it tended to be for assessment and only at the end of the work. Because of the absence of audio recording in the schools visited, the pupils were generally unaware of how much progress they had made. The lack of positive feedback may also have contributed to the decline in their involvement in instrumental lessons as they got older and possibly also to the low numbers of those continuing to study music at Key Stage 4.
147. The good and outstanding lessons made excellent use of demonstration – by the teacher and by pupils. Rather than explaining, teachers showed pupils what to do or selected pupils to show the rest of the class what was needed. For example, in the best teaching in the Foundation Stage, teachers frequently asked pupils to show what they meant rather than struggle with finding words. Every time pupils were asked to show rather than tell, they relaxed and provided an immediate response that illustrated clearly how much they had understood.
148. The best lessons also enabled pupils to learn while playing, as in many of the illustrations in Part A. Teachers found that by keeping the music going, for example through the use of a repeated backing track, pupils could constantly repeat and improve their own part.
149. In the schools visited, the use of musical imagination was the least developed of the ways teachers engaged pupils' musical intelligence. However, in one outstanding school, the whole emphasis of the teaching and learning in all musical activities was on insisting on internalising sound – that is, helping and expecting pupils constantly to hear the sounds in their heads first.

A teacher in the Foundation Stage showed children different instruments. Before she played them, she asked them to imagine what they thought each instrument would sound like. Then they closed their eyes as she made the sound. Many of the children giggled as, clearly, what they had imagined sounded nothing like what they heard. Others were delighted and said 'Yes!' All the children were utterly engaged and kept asking for more.

Another teacher asked pupils to imagine their own rhythmic part as she played the backing on the piano. There was much nodding of heads and physical movement as she played. When they finally added their parts, the result was outstanding as all the parts fitted together excellently.

150. Pupils' aural imagination was rarely developed, however, and they were not given enough opportunities first to hear and imagine sounds before they completed a task.
151. In the Foundation Stage, teachers rightly spend much time on helping children to understand how sound can be changed. This understanding relates directly to the terms used to describe the musical elements. In the schools visited, some children found these terms easy to assimilate; others found them more difficult — and continued to find them difficult throughout their music education. While the immediate response might be to see the difficulty as an indicator of their lower ability, this may not be the case. An inspector commented:

Pupils find some of the musical elements much harder than others. One of the hardest to understand is pitch (high/low) as it is confused by the language associated with volume, for example, turn the volume up. It is also confused by using sounds that include many different pitches. For example, a teacher played a note on a glockenspiel and asked the class if it sounded high or low. On the surface this seemed straightforward but the children were confused because they heard different sounds including the high ringing sound of the note and the low dull thud of the hard beater on metal. Pupils find it easier to respond when asked to compare different sounds but, again, pupils will need to make a sophisticated decision about which pitch is dominant.

The problems pupils experience with their understanding of pitch are more to do with language, and the oversimplification of the profound steps of learning, than hearing. For example, a boy in Year 2 who was able to distinguish that F sounded wrong when played simultaneously with G, A, B — 'It sounds better when I don't play my note' — found it hard to identify high/low sounds when asked.

The same is true for tempo (fast/slow). Most music is made of different layers so that, for example, a slow melody may have fast-moving parts played underneath. A class was asked if the theme tune from the television programme, 'The Vicar of Dibley', was fast or slow without any recognition that, while the piece has three fast beats in a bar, it also has a much slower underlying pulse of the first beat in each bar. So, answers of 'slow' or 'fast' were both right, but the teacher accepted only 'fast' as the correct answer.

152. The oversimplification of profound musical concepts was seen in all key stages, including Key Stage 4, especially when classes did listening tests. Pupils who showed a high level of aural discrimination when listening to music of their own choice, almost immediately identifying different styles and performers, found it difficult to provide expected answers to unhelpful narrow questions such as 'Is

this music fast?'. These types of questions do not engage, develop or assess students' musical intelligence.

153. The other most common inhibitor in engaging musical intelligence was inappropriate use of notation. Notation is an essential part of musical learning. However, it is not music but, rather, a visual code developed only in some musical traditions. In other traditions, aural codes are more closely related to the music produced, such as mnemonics used in African drumming. Notation, therefore, can prevent the engagement of musical intelligence when it is unrelated to the sound it represents. Used effectively, it provides good support, as a visual code, for learning but more care is needed to ensure pupils have established clear links between the sound and the symbol before it is used as the starting point. In the weaker work seen during the survey, notation was used inappropriately.

Primary-aged pupils were asked to compose descriptive, atmospheric soundscapes using crotchets and minims. Their natural response to this creative task stimulated combinations of sounds not easily represented in traditional rhythmic notation. As a result, they either constrained their ideas to fit the patterns of crotchets and minims or found it very hard to get beyond their difficulties with this form of notation to think creatively about their musical response.

154. It is important to stress that this section of the report highlights the need for music education to give more emphasis to engagement of musical intelligence as a starting point for the development of musical understanding. It is not suggesting that talk is not an essential part of musical development. One local authority's work rightly highlighted the need for more talking about music in context. This is critical if all pupils are to be given the opportunity to increase their cultural understanding and respect for different musical traditions – essential aspects of an effective music education. Talk is also needed because some pupils find this the easiest way to develop and demonstrate their musical understanding.
155. In summary, the survey visits identified that there was not enough emphasis on stimulating and developing musical intelligence in music lessons. For provision to improve, attention needs to be given to:
- ensuring more emphasis is given to listening and learning from and through music
  - ensuring that audio recording is an integral part of musical experiences
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their musical imagination
  - using musical vocabulary and notation sensitively so they reinforce the development of aural perception.

## Developing musical creativity – releasing musical imagination

156. The distinctiveness of creativity in music is that pupils use sound as the medium for creative thinking. In the schools in the survey, the headteachers and teachers frequently referred to the importance of creativity, but found it difficult to explain what it meant in practice. So, as noted earlier, musical imagination, where pupils 'hear' and create the music in their heads, was largely underdeveloped.
157. While all the curriculum programmes in the schools visited included some opportunities for pupils to be creative, there was considerable difference in the amount and effectiveness of provision. Planning for creative development tended to be in composing activities, even though all activities provide opportunities for a creative response. Generally, the schools missed opportunities to develop pupils' creativity in performing activities and in extra-curricular ensembles through, for example, improvising and considering questions of interpretation.
158. The most creative work in the primary schools was based on creating sound effects and simple rhythmic compositions. Using sounds creatively to illustrate and enrich a story was generally done well in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Class teachers at Key Stage 2 with less confidence in teaching music tended to continue with adding sounds to stories. In the least effective work, the quality of the response which teachers expected from pupils was no different from that at Key Stage 1.
159. In the best work seen, pupils were helped to progress:
- from selecting the instruments they wanted to play to choosing the one most appropriate for the sounds they wanted to make (this required pupils first to imagine the sound)
  - from making a linear sequence of sounds to combining sounds together – first to create more interesting sounds and then to experience the effect of simultaneous lines of sound
  - from producing literal sounds, for example sound effects such as a creaking door, to inventing more abstract sounds, for example describing an atmosphere or image such as a winter scene.

160. The following illustrates these dimensions of progression:

In a composition task set by a teacher about describing winter weather, most pupils produced a linear sequence of literal sounds, such as the crunching of footsteps and the sound of the wind. The pupils tended to use the instruments they wanted to play rather than the one that would give the most appropriate sound. However, through the teacher's encouragement and challenge, some pupils discovered that adding thin metal sounds on a cymbal played with a triangle beater to the sounds made by high notes on a glockenspiel played with hard wooden beaters created exactly the sound they wanted in order to describe ice freezing. The teacher then skilfully added the different ideas the groups had created into a class composition. This enabled the pupils to see how combining sounds and different ideas at the same time could make their music more interesting.

161. The best work in the primary schools visited also helped pupils to experience how different rhythmic and melodic patterns combine through, for example, singing songs with different parts and creating rhythmic compositions with several layers. Pupils also had opportunities to invent their own rhythmic and melodic patterns during performance activities.

162. The best work seen in the secondary schools built on the three dimensions described and helped students to progress:

- from inventing sound images to making musical use of structures to achieve the intended outcome or effect
- from exploring their own ideas and those produced by the rest of the class to making links to the work of established composers/performers
- from always working in the same way to using processes which were appropriate to the musical style being explored, making the experience a real one
- from inventing short melodic and rhythmic patterns to improvising longer phrases.

163. The requirement for students to complete their own brief for composing tasks was introduced at GCSE level to help students to consider broader issues such as purpose and intended effect, intended audience and occasion, the choice of and reasons for structures and resources, and what composition process to use. It was also introduced to help examiners understand what the student had wanted to create. However, the brief was not being used as intended: rather than using it to help plan work and track how it changed, students often completed it after they had finished their composition.

164. In the best practice, teachers helped pupils to broaden their understanding by going beyond asking 'what' and 'how' and exploring 'why'. Better questions required a greater depth of musical thinking, for example working with a stem such as 'We are using ground bass because...'; rather than 'Our group is going to compose a ground bass that...'. Composing tasks were related to real situations, so that pupils had to deal with the challenges faced by creative people. Composing in groups occurred only where there were distinct roles for each member of the group – roles that reflected musical practice.

One of the schools visited helped pupils to make rapid progress in composing through:

- providing regular opportunities for them to listen to and appraise music from a wide range of times and places, helped by focused questions or prompts from teachers
- a well-developed strategy for pupils to undertake regular written evaluation of their composing, with linked target-setting to identify what they need to do next to improve their work
- encouraging pupils to draw consciously on the ideas and influences that arose in their musical experiences outside the classroom, within and beyond school
- enabling them to work collaboratively, often involving musicians from outside school, so that the pupils developed their compositions through the experience of hearing their work performed live by musicians.

### **Increasing musical progress – seeing the wood for the trees**

165. The major weakness in the provision observed was the lack of musical progress. In half the schools visited, provision was no better than satisfactory and pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable. Even where provision was good, the schools recognised the need to provide further challenge and support. A lack of understanding of musical progression frequently showed itself in vague schemes of work, poorly defined learning objectives, an insufficient match of work to pupils' needs and abilities, and weak assessment. It also placed a ceiling on pupils' attainment, particularly at Key Stage 3.

#### **What is meant by musical progression?**

166. The 'importance of music statement' in the previous and revised versions of the National Curriculum provides the big picture of why music should be part of every child's education. In practice, however, the big picture is often lost. Work in the secondary schools visited tended to focus on the means to the end, such as instrumental competencies, without sufficient emphasis on why these means were being developed and whether they were the right ones for all pupils. In the primary schools, the big picture was much stronger; the schools recognised music as an essential part of a broad education for every child. However, they

did not give enough attention to the progressive development of musical skills, knowledge and understanding.

167. The big picture is realised when teachers focus on increasing the depth and quality of the musical response.

Through the constant emphasis on the quality of musical response, a cello session for six pupils in a primary school was a delight. The teacher demonstrated throughout the session and the pupils copied not only his hand positions but also his tone. There was excellent repetition of a melodic pattern until it had been achieved. Those that were able to copy the pattern quickly then focused on matching the way they played it to the very musical example given by the teacher. The teacher provided musical backing by playing a simple rhythmic sequence of chords on the piano. This maintained the energy of the lesson and created a musical performance which all recognised, rightly, as being good.

A guitar lesson in the same school used similar techniques and skilfully built up individual lines (all learned together) into a group performance. The teacher, again, modelled every part, so the pupils listened, watched and copied. The teacher then added a high-quality broken chord accompaniment on his guitar and all achieved a very musical performance – which gave all the pupils a sense of tremendous satisfaction.

168. However, the teachers tended to consider only increasing the difficulty of the task rather than helping pupils to improve the quality of their response. While quality was occasionally developed, it occurred implicitly and thus the musicality of the response was rarely seen as the main goal. The over-emphasis on difficulty in the secondary schools showed itself in atomistic teaching and assessment that focused on technical mastery rather than musical quality. It was also seen in the way pupils selected music for performance at GCSE that was more about its difficulty than about achieving quality in its performance.
169. Increasing the depth of pupils' musical response received insufficient emphasis. Teachers rarely helped pupils to enhance their understanding of the nature of music and apply this in all their music making. Understanding the nature of music underpins the National Curriculum levels, but the teachers in the survey often missed this. Pupils in Key Stage 3 were rarely enabled to achieve the highest levels because there was insufficient exploration of music as a living personal, social and cultural experience. Instead, the lessons seen focused on the nuts and bolts, such as which musical devices had been used but without exploring why. Formulaic rather than musical responses were the result.
170. The difference here is between progress in music and musical progress in a broader sense, particularly the quality and depth of the musical response. This distinction has been widely recognised in music literature. Pupils can make

progress in aspects of musical development, but musical progress is when all the aspects come together so that pupils can respond with 'musicality'.

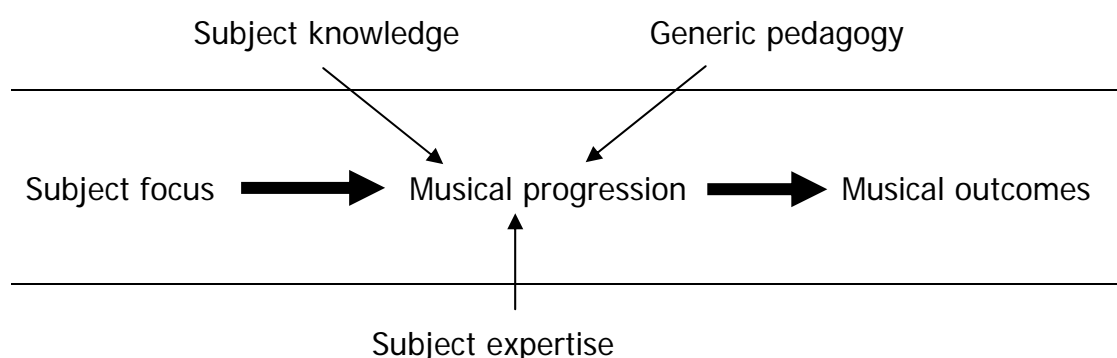
In a lesson on musical structure focusing on phrase, the teacher started by asking why music needed phrases. Pupils suggested that they were needed for music to 'make sense' and to 'sound right'. Drawing on the work of individuals, pairs and the whole class, the teacher used pupils to demonstrate their own musical use of 'phrase' and sensitively challenged them to improve their performances even further. The differences between the performances by each pupil and throughout the whole lesson resulted in impressive musical progress. Pupils were clearly developing understanding of the subtle adjustments needed to play music musically.

### **What will enable greater musical progress?**

171. Where inspectors saw pupils making good progress, they saw the following strengths in the teaching:
- subject expertise – the ability to sing, play a musical instrument or both
  - generic pedagogy – effective teaching strategies
  - subject knowledge – including knowing how pupils make musical progress
  - subject focus – knowing what is important and what outcomes to aim for.
172. Subject expertise enabled the teacher to increase pupils' understanding and raise expectations through demonstration. Pedagogy helped to ensure that strategies such as good questioning were used to help all pupils make progress. Subject knowledge provided the detail about what pupils should learn and how they could be helped to make musical progress. Subject focus identified what was important for each pupil and groups of pupils and defined what outcomes were expected.
173. The aspects of teaching needed to enable musical progress are shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Aspects of teaching needed to enable musical progress**



174. In general, the teachers in the secondary schools visited had well-developed subject expertise and used appropriate teaching strategies; they were able to perform at a high standard and used this skill well, particularly in extra-curricular activities. The primary teachers had well-developed pedagogy, but less subject expertise.
175. The weakest aspects in the primary and secondary schools were teachers' subject knowledge and subject focus. As these are critical to ensuring that pupils make musical progress, much more attention needs to be given to improving them. Teachers need help in identifying what is important for their pupils and how to help them make musical progress.
176. Initial teacher education for secondary teachers ensures subject expertise through entry requirements and provides support through developing pedagogy, but subject knowledge and subject focus are developed largely by the schools in which the trainees are placed. Even in the schools in the sample with good provision, there were often weaknesses in subject knowledge and subject focus. This meant that newly qualified teachers were rarely being taken beyond the practice which was current in their schools.
177. The work of Musical Futures presents a very different model. In this approach, the focus and outcomes are defined in the recorded material on the CD given to the pupils. The expertise and expectations of pupils within the group are the driving factors rather than the expertise and subject knowledge of the teacher. This reflects the way young people often create music together outside school. However, for musical progress to occur, the teacher still needs subject knowledge to ensure the recorded material is appropriate, that all pupils are benefiting fully from the learning and that they are being challenged. Pupils also need help to deepen their understanding of different kinds of music.

## How is it possible to show musical progress has been achieved?

178. When pupils make musical progress, it is seen not only in their work but also in their attitudes to and involvement in music. When inspectors judge pupils' achievement and standards, they evaluate the following.
- **The quality of their responses across increasingly challenging tasks**  
Is the result a musical performance, a composition with musical integrity?
  - **The depth of their responses**  
Do they show understanding about how and why different kinds of music are created? Do they engage positively with different kinds of music and show respect for different musical traditions?
  - **The progress they make in the lesson and the progress made over time**  
What has improved and by how much?
  - **Attitudes towards music lessons**  
Are they enjoying the work? Are they fully engaged? How do pupils arrive at the start of the lesson? How many are late? How many want to talk about the lesson after it ends?
  - **Involvement outside the lesson**  
How many are involved in extra-curricular activities? How many want to lead activities?
  - **Continued study**  
What is the extent of their continued involvement in activities/instrumental lessons? How many continue to study music in Key Stage 4/post-16?
179. In summary, for provision to improve, more attention needs to be given to:
- developing a greater shared understanding about what is meant by progression in music
  - improving teachers' subject knowledge
  - collecting and using information about pupils' musical progress to improve practice.

## Ensuring continuity – achieving longer-term impact

180. Weak continuity in all aspects of the music provision observed in the survey affected the progress pupils were making and seriously diminished the impact of additional opportunities.
181. Based on the evidence from the schools visited, better continuity is needed:

- within primary schools, so that pupils have consistent quality and quantity of music; pupils in the primary schools frequently commented on how music was better or worse 'this year' because of a change of teacher
- across Key Stages 1 to 3, so that teachers have sufficient knowledge to ensure expectations are high enough and pupils can build on previous work; continuity across the primary and secondary schools was virtually non-existent
- across Key Stage 3 to post-16: too few students continue to study music
- in additional musical opportunities; progress was slow and too few pupils continued where additional programmes were too short and insufficient thought had been given to what would happen at the end of the programme.

### **What will increase continuity within and across key stages?**

182. The most effective primary schools visited ensured continuity in one of two ways. Either they had appointed a specialist teacher to teach all classes or they ensured that the subject leader for music had the subject knowledge and time to support all class teachers. Both approaches were effective and each had different strengths.
183. Specialist teaching for all classes made it easier for class teachers but meant that they missed out on experiencing and enjoying teaching a very different subject and exploring possible links between music and the other subjects they taught. Music taught by all-class teachers enabled music to be experienced as a normal part of lessons, but required more time for the subject leader to monitor and support teachers, especially those with less confidence.

The music curriculum in one of the schools visited was part of a cross-curricular approach to learning. The scheme of work for music provided units of work and also suggested appropriate units of work for each year group taken from commercial schemes. Teachers chose the units that fitted their class teaching plans. Planning for music was discussed and shared between all staff. The headteacher, who was also the music subject leader, checked planning and reviewed the teachers' annotated plans once the units had been taught, so that she had an overview of 'what went well'. Good assessment identified weaker areas clearly and so teachers knew which skills needed more work when they planned subsequent lessons.

184. When subject leaders had insufficient time to monitor and support colleagues, provision was at best satisfactory, even when the subject leader was strong. Subject leaders need enough time to work alongside every member of staff during the year and to plan a music curriculum that ensures progress over the key stage. They require time to help teachers to identify the pupils that need help and those that need extending and, then, to organise what is needed.

185. Effective partnerships between primary and secondary schools were extremely rare in those visited. Only two in 10 of the primary schools had partnerships that were good or outstanding. Six in 10 were inadequate – the most negative aspect of all the inspection undertaken during the survey. Virtually no information was being shared at the point at which pupils transferred to other schools except, at most, some information about which pupils learnt musical instruments.
186. There were, however, examples of outstanding partnerships being developed.

In setting up partnerships with the secondary school (with an arts specialism), the primary schools were clear they did not want 'single events'. The partnerships were therefore developed with the main principle of sustainability: building the skills of pupils and the confidence of primary school teachers to provide music. The head of department at the secondary school called this 'sowing seeds for the future'. The samba project was a good example.

The secondary school planned and resourced a term's lessons with lesson ideas, a handbook for teachers, visual aids and recordings. The lead teacher from the secondary school, aided by a sixth-form student, taught the first one or two sessions and provided training for the primary teachers. The primary teacher led the rest of the sessions, adapting the lesson plans to suit the needs of her pupils. Support was provided where necessary – often by the sixth-form student.

187. The best secondary schools visited recognise the need for better continuity at transition. The most effective option was to develop continuing links between the schools, so that teachers got to know the pupils through sharing work. This is best done over time, but a single project at the end of Year 6 also gives helpful information, provided the work is planned jointly and discussed fully. The alternative is to use the first unit of work in Year 7 to establish baseline information. This unit needs careful planning to ensure no unfair advantage is given to pupils who have been lucky enough to have had instrumental lessons. At no time should the impression be given that the only pupils who are of interest are those having lessons. This impression, however, was frequently given, for example, when a class teacher said to an inspector, 'Those are the musicians in this class', referring to those who played instruments, or when teachers collected data only on the pupils who learnt instruments.
188. An over-emphasis on instrumental skills also contributed to lack of continuity in Key Stage 4. Music GCSE is not always seen as a natural extension to work in Key Stage 3 and the schools surveyed discouraged pupils, explicitly or implicitly, from taking GCSE if they did not have additional instrumental lessons or were not already an accomplished performer. This raises questions about the extent to which there is sufficient continuity between the broader musical expectations of Key Stage 3 and examination specifications, particularly as performance skills

assessed through graded examinations are now recognised in the examination framework.

189. Paradoxically, pupils who have well-developed instrumental skills often feel they can continue music through extra-curricular activities and do not need to take music GCSE. More attention needs to be given to increasing the value of studying music as a complement to continuing to perform music with others. During the survey, pupils often commented that their parents did not see why they should continue with music if they were not going to follow a career in music. Perceptions about the value of music post-14 need to be changed so that it is not seen just as a narrow route to a musical career.
190. Ofsted will evaluate progression from Key Stage 3 to post-16 in future surveys of music. Inspections will investigate the relative differences in standards in music which are well above the average for all subjects at GCSE but, at best, in line with other subjects at A level.

### **What will increase continuity in additional opportunities?**

191. Local authority music services are playing a key part in taking forward the Government's commitment to enabling every pupil to have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument in Key Stage 2. At best, they were having a considerable impact in the schools visited. They were raising expectations and standards, encouraging those who would never have had this experience to enjoy and benefit from learning an instrument, and increasing classroom teachers' confidence and subject knowledge.
192. However, extending the programmes to more schools has raised difficulties for schools and music services. Survey evidence showed that resources had been stretched with a negative effect on both innovation and the continuity of pupils' experience. For instance, one of the schools received five-week taster sessions; another had a 10-week project but no follow-up. Two of the schools had been involved in the previous year but the involvement had now ceased. Many of the instrumental and vocal teachers with whom discussions were held during the survey needed support and training to teach larger groups effectively. Music services were rightly concerned that they did not have enough trained staff to provide an effective programme for all schools. Of the programmes offered, too many were too short for all pupils to make sufficient progress to know if learning an instrument was something they would like to do.
193. The most effective music services visited provided instrumental/vocal programmes that lasted at least a year. The best recognised that some pupils needed even longer to reach the point at which they would continue for themselves. One headteacher found that, after the first year, only a few pupils wanted to continue but, after a second year, this rose to over 60%. Too many programmes, however, were too short and were therefore not effective.

In discussion during the survey, a visiting artist said, 'You know, in our djembe workshop, some of the pupils showed some hidden talents'. In response to the question, 'And so what did you do to follow this up?' the answer was, 'It was difficult, because it was a short-term project'.

194. The most effective services were also considering appropriately what happens when the programme ends and were exploring larger-group tuition as an alternative to smaller-group teaching. They were also finding ways to give pupils access to different musical styles so they could learn as part of an ensemble.
195. The effectiveness of programmes was easy to see in the numbers of pupils that continued with instrumental or vocal work and the duration of this. About a quarter of the pupils in the schools visited had already had lessons in their primary school. An effective programme for all pupils should be achieving a proportion considerably higher than this. Pupils who continued with instrumental or vocal work after the shorter programmes tended to be those who would have done so anyway.
196. The schools visited, primary and secondary, did not give enough consideration to the implications for the curriculum of these programmes after they ended. The main response was pleasure that the programmes would provide more instrumentalists, but the schools gave little thought to the different ways in which all the pupils had enjoyed and experienced learning together as a whole class. In the best primary schools, subject leaders had thought about this and had started to provide opportunities for whole-class performance, such as playing the recorder or forming a samba band. The best schools, primary and secondary, also ensured pupils had regular opportunities to use instruments in class lessons and perform to others.
197. Musical Futures is a good example of the long-term development of an initiative. While the progress of pupils is not always linear or obvious in every lesson, the real musical experience and the focus on the quality of re-creation enable pupils to make musical progress. However, not all the schools involved in this initiative understood the need to use all the materials developed. For example, the unit on exploring more classically based music is an essential part of the programme. In one of the schools visited, the pupils showed considerable depth of understanding of different kinds of music, saying how much harder they had found the work which used classical music: 'There were so many more layers and lots to think about.' The teacher in another of the schools, however, had simply let pupils work together in friendship groups to recreate music given on a CD. No thought had been given to how this would be developed or how it would fit in with the rest of the music curriculum.

198. In summary, for provision to improve, more attention needs to be given to:
- ensuring subject leaders in the primary schools are able to monitor and support the work of colleagues
  - developing better links between schools so that pupils are enabled to make more consistent progress
  - improving continuity from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 so that more pupils benefit from the continued study of music
  - building on the best instrumental/vocal programmes to ensure more consistent provision
  - enabling more pupils to continue learning a musical instrument at the end of a programme
  - providing regular opportunities for pupils to use instruments in class lessons and perform to others.

### **Building coherence – increasing effectiveness**

199. Musical experiences were least effective when they were developed in isolation. Teachers frequently missed opportunities to enable pupils to make connections between different musical experiences and activities. As a result, it was difficult for them to make progress that was any better than satisfactory.

200. Better coherence is needed:

- between different musical activities so that integration is a reality
- between pupils' own musical experiences and those the school provides so that pupils' interests can be developed
- between additional experiences and statutory provision so the distinctive contribution of each can be maximised, reinforcing and consolidating learning
- across the range of additional experiences so that, by contributing to the same agreed priorities, the effectiveness of initiatives is increased.

### **Achieving integrated practice**

201. The lack of coherence across different musical activities, especially in the secondary schools visited, was a major concern. The narrower the teacher's view of performing, composing and appraising, the less likely it was that any integration of these activities took place. Teachers therefore missed opportunities to reinforce and consolidate musical learning. In the best practice, they defined simple, clear learning objectives that were used as the cement to bind together all the different activities. The same musical understanding was developed through experimenting with instruments and voices, making music with others, and learning from listening to music.

202. The schools often ignored the fundamental principle that pupils demonstrate musical progression in many different ways. Music education should help each pupil discover the way that he or she finds easiest and then, increasingly, help pupils to apply their musical understanding across all the different musical experiences. In the secondary schools visited, overemphasising instrumental competence acted as a ceiling on achievement for many students who, in fact, could achieve the highest levels through demonstrating their understanding in other ways. One of the schools visited realised that some tasks made it impossible for pupils whose instrumental skills were less well developed to achieve as well as they could. As a result, more attention was given to developing ICT resources, thus enabling them to produce high-quality music.
203. The principle of the same musical understanding being shown in different ways lies at the heart of the National Curriculum levels. Each level begins by stating the musical understanding expected and the rest of the text illustrates how this is demonstrated. However, very few teachers in the schools visited had understood this sufficiently and therefore continued to separate performing, composing and appraising. The new Key Stage 3 programme of study highlights the importance of integrating performing, composing and listening, but unless teachers plan from the underlying understanding and then, increasingly, develop it through inter-related activities, this concept of integration will remain unrealised.
204. During the survey, when the single 'big idea' in each level was explained to teachers in primary schools, they found this extremely liberating. They saw immediately how they could reinforce and consolidate this understanding through all activities.

Year 3 pupils were taught to play a simple three-note melody on the recorder by progressing through, and building on, a sequence of activities. They went from rhythm games, which included the rhythms in the melody, to echo singing activities, which included the melodic patterns, and finally to copying the melody on the recorder. All the pupils managed this excellently because they had already internalised the rhythm and melody through the earlier tasks. The teacher could therefore challenge them to make it sound more musical by asking them to copy her playing and listen more closely to each other. At the end of the lesson, the teacher was absolutely correct when she told the class: 'Your listening ears are coming on a treat.'

### **Increasing coherence across different musical experiences**

205. During the visits to schools, they were asked about the percentage of pupils learning instruments outside school. They rarely already had this information and had to find it out. They often missed opportunities to encourage pupils to use their instruments in lessons and to talk about their own musical



experiences. Schools should find out more about pupils' other musical interests, so that the curriculum and provision meet their needs.

206. An excellent example of coherence across different activities was seen in one of the primary schools visited.

The Year 5 class was following a unit of work on songwriting. One pupil was inspired to extend his song at home using his newly acquired guitar skills. In collaboration with his guitar teacher, the resulting composition was outstanding. The boy used his voice in a vernacular style across a wide pitch range, including the use of his changed and falsetto voice. The genre of the song was clearly influenced by James Morrison, whose music he liked to listen to at home. His teachers handled his reluctance to perform in public sensitively so that his confidence was enhanced rather than eroded. The school helped him to record his song, enabling it to be shared with a wider audience.

207. Overall, the schools visited were not developing additional instrumental/vocal programmes as part of a coherent music curriculum. Discussion between instrumental teachers and class teachers was limited and unproductive because insufficient time and emphasis were being given to developing an effective partnership; the additional experiences remained only a bolt-on.

208. In the best practice seen, classroom teachers were fully involved at all stages; they also provided additional learning opportunities between sessions.

The music coordinator in one of the schools arranged a second full-hour session for the 40 string players during the week between sessions. This provided tremendous support for pupils and ensured they made rapid progress. After nine months of the scheme, the pupils were able to play open strings and use their first, second and third fingers.

209. There was also confusion about the extent to which additional programmes should cover the statutory requirements. Some programmes wrongly felt they had to cover everything. As a result, the time given to the distinctive contribution of the programme, either playing an instrument or singing, was reduced through unnecessary breadth. There needs to be much more thought about how these programme are developed as an integral part of the whole music provision.

210. As yet, the primary schools visited were generally unaware of Sing Up.<sup>11</sup> Those that were aware of it were enthusiastic and looking forward to more information. They tended to be those schools where there were positive features already on which to build and they wanted to use Sing Up to develop

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<sup>11</sup> Sing Up is the Music Manifesto's national singing programme: [www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org).

choirs, singing, or both. Generally, all the primary schools visited were very keen to develop music, but the schools in which music was weaker were not the ones making contact. The challenge for Sing Up is to make contact with the schools that most need help, since responding only to those who initiate contact will not make the difference where it is most needed.

211. The visits made to four of the schools first selected by Sing Up as leading schools showed a wide range of singing provision. While singing in extra-curricular provision was good, and was outstanding in one of the schools (which had strong links to the music service), not all of the schools had developed singing across the curriculum for all classes. The extent to which boys were involved and progression in singing across the key stage were also concerns. Provision for singing in the best primary schools in the sample was stronger than in three of the leading schools selected by Sing Up.

212. The survey found that effective actions to involve more boys in singing included:

- removing any conflicts between music and sport – rehearsals happened at times when sport was not available, such as first thing in the morning
- having a boys only choir
- selecting an appropriate repertoire for boys
- rehearsing only for specific events
- making the boys feel special – for example, a boys' choir tie
- developing positive male role models, so that boys were encouraged to involve themselves in singing.

213. In summary, for provision to improve, more attention needs to be given to:

- developing teachers' understanding of how to integrate learning across all musical activities and experiences, so that learning is consolidated and extended
- ensuring that schools, especially those that need help most, are aware of initiatives and are fully involved in their development
- recognising the distinctive contribution of additional opportunities, but also developing them as part of the wider provision for coherent music education.

### **Adding value – making more of music**

214. Music provides pupils with a different way of learning and extensive opportunities to respond independently, to think creatively and increase their cultural understanding. The process of making music requires high levels of social skills and empathy, concentration and self-confidence. Performing to

others, in particular, can be risky for pupils but considerable self-esteem is gained through success. All pupils can make a significant contribution to shared performances and benefit equally, whatever their level of musical attainment – for example, through being involved in activities such as DJ-ing or using music technology.

### **Increasing confidence**

In one school visited, less confident Year 7 students are given additional music sessions with the music teacher and older students. The development of relationships with the older students and the self-esteem generated through success in the work have contributed much to their confidence. This is starting to have benefits across all subjects.

### **Engaging boys and developing positive male role models**

In an outstanding school visited, around 125 boys now sing regularly in a choir and singing is an integral part of all music lessons. Involving a very mixed group of boys has increased their confidence and status, so that they are often the ones contributing most strongly in other lessons. The school had identified the factors that were preventing boys from being involved. Over time, it had established a strong tradition so that boys saw it as 'cool' to be in the choir. The choir performs regularly to local junior schools; the headteachers commented on how the positive male role models had had a marked impact on the younger boys.

### **Developing leadership skills**

An older boy with excellent guitar skills started a club for students wanting to learn to play the guitar. There are now two groups, organised by the boy, to match different learning needs. He led the sessions excellently without any need for support from the staff, although the work was monitored sensitively and effectively. Impressively, he had developed a sense of a shared ownership of the guitar sessions so that, when he was a few minutes late, another boy started the session without any prompting. When he arrived, he fitted smoothly into the work and gradually took control.

215. The high quality of music events and the strong sense of group identity developed through performances have a very positive impact on the overall ethos of a school. Music can provide a tangible demonstration of high expectations and success through shared endeavour. In addition, it is often highlighted as one of the most effective ways in which schools can build links with parents and the community, such as through performances.
216. The schools visited were generally unaware of the potential contribution of music to school improvement and were not making enough of it. Excellent examples, however, clearly demonstrated how music can make a major

difference to pupils, schools and communities. Evidence from youth work told a similar story.

217. Increasingly, youth services and organisations are using music and sound technology to good effect. Often aimed at young people who may be disengaged from education, training or employment, such projects range from those which simply provide space for young people to practise and perform to those which enable them, through music, to explore such themes as identity or sub-cultures or to develop their technical skills of mixing, recording and producing. In many instances, the young people to whom such projects are directed have not fared well in mainstream education and the informal nature of youth work suits their needs.
218. Their achievement is often skills-based. As a result, the young people are better placed to pursue a music-related college course or employment. In other instances their success derives from the self-worth they gain from creating music and performing publicly. They are boosted by the recognition they gain from their peers and, often for the first time, acquire a greater sense of responsibility towards themselves and their community. The most effective youth workers capitalise well on the motivation young people display, for example, by using their music as a vehicle to explore social issues or by directing young people towards appropriate accreditation.
219. While much of the music seen in the context of youth work was good or outstanding, many youth services were not able to provide the resources or forge the necessary partnerships with schools, colleges or providers to provide young people with access to music and sound recording. This was particularly the case in rural areas.
220. For schools to benefit more from the contribution of music, attention needs to be given to:
  - ensuring music staff and senior staff are aware of the potential contribution of music to pupils, the school and the community
  - identifying pupils in need and using music, where relevant, to help them succeed
  - using assessment and data to make sure that all pupils who would benefit from more music – personally, musically or both – are included in extra-curricular activities and opportunities.

## Conclusion

221. Many of the weaknesses this report identifies have been raised previously. Assessment, for example, has been a weakness for many years. The section on music in the Annual Report for 2004/05 said: 'Too many pupils still do not reach the standards expected of them by the end of Key Stage 3 and make too little

progress across the three years of curriculum provision. Schools need to plan units of work that demonstrate how progress is provided for, and this should be clear to pupils as they move through the course.<sup>12</sup>

222. Although music has recently received increased government funding and support, there is a danger that the funds will not have been used effectively because, as the schools in the survey identified, initiatives are being developed in isolation and without enough shared consideration of the more serious challenges facing music education. Not enough emphasis is being given to longer-term impact; simply increasing the numbers involved in one-off events is a hollow achievement. Those involved in music education need to do more of less: to identify and agree on what is important and to work together systematically to make a difference.
223. The appointment in February 2008 of the Music Participation Director acknowledges the need for closer monitoring by the DCSF and funded music bodies of the development of the national initiatives.<sup>13</sup> Good actions have already been taken to collect data systematically from local authorities on the impact of their instrumental and vocal programmes and to identify aspects that require further support. This close analysis is equally needed for the other initiatives.
224. Ofsted will continue to investigate the extent to which music is for all and will monitor the impact of the national initiatives and funded music bodies on musical outcomes for pupils. It will also investigate the extent to which the issues raised in Part B of this report are being tackled, including exploring progression and continuity from Key Stage 3 to post-16.

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<sup>12</sup> *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools 2004/05*, Ofsted, 2005; <http://live.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/annualreport0405/>.

<sup>13</sup> [www.musicmanifesto.co.uk/news/details/adonis-announces-new-music-participation-director/21654](http://www.musicmanifesto.co.uk/news/details/adonis-announces-new-music-participation-director/21654).

## Notes

This report is based on evidence from inspections of music between September 2005 and July 2008 in 84 primary schools and 95 secondary schools. The primary schools included 37 schools selected because of their involvement in whole-class instrumental/vocal programmes. The secondary schools included 11 schools with music as the main specialism and six schools selected because of their involvement in the Key Stage 3 Strategy for music which was developed and disseminated during the period of this survey. The remaining schools were selected to provide a sample of those in differing contexts and geographical locations across England.

An additional four primary schools were visited to provide evidence of good practice in the Platinum Singing Award and a good practice visit was also made to a secondary school where the singing of boys was particularly strong.

Inspectors observed lessons, assemblies, extra-curricular activities and instrumental lessons; held discussions with headteachers, teachers, students and pupils, and others involved in partnerships; and scrutinised documentation, as well as pupils' and students' work.

Evidence was also drawn from Ofsted's programme of youth service inspections during the period 2005/07.

## Further information

### Publications

*An evaluation of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Musical Futures Project* (HMI 2682), Ofsted, 2006; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/2682](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/2682).

### Websites

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority website includes information about the revised curriculum and examples of pupils' work in National Curriculum in Action; [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk).

The Key Stage 2 Music CPD Programme website contains information on continuing professional development for instrumental teachers, classroom teachers and community musicians providing whole-class instrumental and vocal tuition (Wider Opportunities). The work is funded by the DCSF and provided by Trinity College, London, and the Open University; [www.ks2music.org.uk](http://www.ks2music.org.uk).

The Teaching Music website is funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA); it is managed by the National Association of Music Educators (NAME) and the Music Education Council (MEC). It aims to help all those involved in music education to reflect and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills in music education; [www.teachingmusic.org.uk](http://www.teachingmusic.org.uk).

Sing Up is the Music Manifesto's national singing programme for primary-aged children in England; [www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org).

The Music Manifesto was developed by the previous Department for Education and Skills and DCMS in collaboration with music organisations, arts practitioners and a variety of organisations and other government departments and agencies; [www.musicmanifesto.co.uk](http://www.musicmanifesto.co.uk).

## **Glossary of musical terms used in this report**

Djembe	an African skin-covered hand drum
Gamelan	a musical ensemble of south-east Asia typically featuring a variety of instruments such as metallophones, xylophones, drums, gongs, flute or oboe, small cymbals and strings; vocalists may be included.
Head notes	a technique used to sing higher sounds more easily through creating resonance in the air cavities of the head
Marimba	a low-pitched instrument with wooden notes
Ostinato	a musical pattern that is repeated many times
Samba	a Brazilian musical genre with African roots; common samba is characterised by a syncopated 2/4 rhythm

## Annex A. Schools visited for this survey

### Primary schools

Alfred Salter Primary School	Southwark
Ashby Hill Top Primary	Leicestershire
Audlem St James' CofE Primary, Crewe	Cheshire
Baltonsborough Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Glastonbury	Somerset
Bevois Town Primary School	Southampton
Bierton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Combined School	Buckinghamshire
Bourton Meadow School, Buckingham	Buckinghamshire
Bowmansgreen Primary, St Albans	Hertfordshire
Caldicotes Primary School	Middlesbrough
Calveley Primary School, Tarporley	Cheshire
Cherry Hinton Community Junior School, Cambridge	Cambridgeshire
Creswick Primary and Nursery School, Welwyn Garden City	Hertfordshire
Crigglestone St James Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School	Wakefield
Croft Infant School, Alfreton	Derbyshire
Eaglesfield Paddle CofE VA Primary School	Cumbria
Earl Soham Community Primary, Woodbridge	Suffolk
Earl Spencer Primary School, Northampton	Northamptonshire
East Wold Church of England Primary School, Louth	Lincolnshire
Elworth CofE Primary School, Sandbach	Cheshire
Everton Primary School, Doncaster	Nottinghamshire
Farnborough Primary School, Orpington	Bromley
Fleetville Junior School, St Albans	Hertfordshire



Foundry Lane Primary School	Southampton
Glebelands Primary School, Chateris	Cambridgeshire
Green Lanes Primary School, Hatfield	Hertfordshire
Grimston Junior School, King's Lynn	Norfolk
Hamworthy Middle School	Poole
Hannah More Primary School	Bristol, City of
Hemsworth West End Primary, Pontefract	Wakefield
Hill West Primary School, Sutton Coldfield	Birmingham
Hollin Primary School, Manchester	Rochdale
Honeybourne First School, Evesham	Worcestershire
Hornton Primary School, Banbury	Oxfordshire
Keresley Newland Primary School, Coventry	Warwickshire
Killamarsh Junior, Sheffield	Derbyshire
Long Lawford Primary School, Rugby	Warwickshire
Lostock Gralam CofE Primary School, Northwich	Cheshire
Lower Peover CE Primary School, Knutsford	Cheshire
Lowton Junior and Infant School, Warrington	Wigan
Lowton St Mary's CofE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School, Warrington	Wigan
Ludlow Junior School	Southampton
Mexborough Montague Junior School	Doncaster
Moorlands Primary, Huddersfield	Kirklees
Moss Hall Junior School	Barnet
Moulsham Junior School, Chelmsford	Essex
Muscliff Primary School	Bournemouth
Newbald Primary School, York	East Riding of Yorkshire
Northfield House Primary School	Leicester

Ossett South Parade Primary	Wakefield
Oswald Road Primary School	Manchester
Outwood Ledger Lane Junior and Infant School	Wakefield
Park Lane Primary School Nursery and Parents' Centre, Nuneaton	Warwickshire
Pebworth First School, Stratford-upon-Avon	Worcestershire
Repton Primary School, Derby	Derbyshire
Rushcroft Primary School	Oldham
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Roehampton	Wandsworth
Sacred Heart RC Junior Infant and Nursery School	Oldham
Shirley Junior School	Southampton
South Hill Primary School, Hemel Hempstead	Hertfordshire
South Kirkby Burntwood Junior and Infant School, Pontefract	Wakefield
Springvale Primary School, Sheffield	Barnsley
St Aidan's Catholic Primary School, Wigan	Wigan
St Andrew's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School, Totteridge	Barnet
St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School, Blackburn	Blackburn with Darwen
St John's Church of England Primary School	Coventry
St Joseph's RC Primary School, Ross-on-Wye	Herefordshire
St Joseph's RC VA Primary School, Gateshead	Gateshead
St Mark's Church of England Primary School	Bromley
St Martha's Catholic Primary School, King's Lynn	Norfolk
St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School, Basingstoke	Hampshire
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Littleborough	Rochdale
St Michael's CofE (C) First School. Stone	Staffordshire
St Michael's Church of England School, Louth	Lincolnshire

St Paul's Catholic Primary School	Portsmouth
St Saviour's CofE (C) Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent	Staffordshire
Standish St Wilfrid's CofE Primary School	Wigan
Taylor Road Primary School	Leicester
The Meadows School, High Wycombe	Buckinghamshire
The North Hykeham All Saints Church of England Primary School, Lincoln	Lincolnshire
The Prince of Wales School, Dorchester	Dorset
The Saint Hugh's Catholic Primary School, Lincoln	Lincolnshire
Thornham St James CofE Primary School	Oldham
Valley Primary School	Bromley
Wakefield Hental Primary Jin School	Wakefield
Wakefield Pinders Primary (JIN) School	Wakefield
Welland Primary School, Malvern	Worcestershire
Wensley Fold (VC) Church of England Primary School, Blackburn	Blackburn with Darwen
Wyvern Primary School	Leicester

### **Secondary schools**

Addington School	Wokingham
Aireville School, Skipton	North Yorkshire
Alcester High School Technology College	Warwickshire
Amery Hill School, Alton	Hampshire
Arnold Hill School and Technology College, Nottingham	Nottinghamshire
Birchen Coppice Middle School, Kidderminster	Worcestershire
Birchwood High School, Bishop's Stortford	Hertfordshire
Bishop Justus CofE School	Bromley
Blakeston School – A Community Sports College	Stockton-on-Tees

Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School	Reading
Blyth Community College	Northumberland
Bottisham Village College, Cambridge	Cambridgeshire
Bramcote Hills Sport and Community College, Nottingham	Nottinghamshire
Bretton Woods Community School <i>This school is now closed</i>	Peterborough
Castle Vale School and Specialist Performing Arts College	Birmingham
Churchill Community Foundation School and Sixth Form Centre, Winscombe	North Somerset
Colchester County High School for Girls	Essex
Coloma Convent Girls' School	Croydon
Cordeaux School, Louth	Lincolnshire
Danetre School, Daventry	Northamptonshire
Dayncourt School Specialist Sports College, Nottingham	Nottinghamshire
Deptford Green School	Lewisham
Dr Challoner's High School, Amersham	Buckinghamshire
Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre	Durham
Filton High School, Bristol	South Gloucestershire
Garforth Community College	Leeds
Gordano School, Bristol	North Somerset
Gosforth East Middle School	Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Guildford County School	Surrey
Harrogate Grammar School	North Yorkshire
Hinchley Wood School, Esher	Surrey
Holmer Green Senior School, High Wycombe	Buckinghamshire
Holy Trinity CofE Senior School, Halifax	Calderdale

Holy Trinity Catholic Media Arts College	Birmingham
Jo Richardson Community School, Dagenham	Barking and Dagenham
John Cleveland College, Hinckley	Leicestershire
Joseph Whitaker School, Mansfield	Nottinghamshire
Keswick School	Cumbria
King Edward VI Church of England Voluntary Controlled Upper School, Bury St Edmund's	Suffolk
King's Manor School, Specialist Sports College	Middlesbrough
Ladymead Community School, Taunton	Somerset
The Latimer Arts College, Kettering	Northamptonshire
Linslade Middle School, Leighton Buzzard	Bedfordshire
Linton Village College, Cambridge	Cambridgeshire
Litcham High School, King's Lynn	Norfolk
Lordswood Boys' School	Birmingham
Magdalen College School, Brackley	Northamptonshire
Malet Lambert School Language College	Kingston-upon-Hull, City of
Meadowdale Middle School, Bedlington	Northumberland
Minsthorpe Community College, A Specialist Science College, Pontefract	Wakefield
North Walsham High School	Norfolk
Northumberland Park Community School	Haringey
Nower Hill High School	Harrow
Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Sports College	Wolverhampton
Padgate Community High School	Warrington
Parkside Community Technology College <i>This school is now closed</i>	Plymouth
Prince Henry's High School, Evesham	Worcestershire

Priory Community School, Weston-Super-Mare	North Somerset
Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet	Barnet
Robert Pattinson School, Lincoln	Lincolnshire
Saint Thomas More Language College	Kensington and Chelsea
Titus Salt School	Bradford
Selston Arts and Community School, Nottingham	Nottinghamshire
Sharples School Science Specialist College	Bolton
Southfield School for Girls, Kettering	Northamptonshire
Southfields Community College	Wandsworth
Springwood High School, King's Lynn	Norfolk
St Andrew's CofE Voluntary Aided High School	Croydon
St Bede's Catholic High School, Lytham St Annes	Lancashire
St Bernard's Catholic High School, Barrow-in-Furness	Cumbria
St Bonaventure's RC School	Newham
St John Fisher Catholic College, Dewsbury	Kirklees
St Joseph's RC High School and Sports College	Bolton
St Osmund's Church of England Voluntary Aided Middle School, Dorchester	Dorset
St Wilfrid's CofE High School and Technology College, Blackburn	Blackburn with Darwen
St Wilfrid's RC College, South Shields	South Tyneside
Sunbury Manor School	Surrey
Temple Moor High School Science College	Leeds
The Aveland High School, Sleaford	Lincolnshire
The Beaconsfield School	Buckinghamshire
The Bishop Wand Church of England School, Sunbury-on-Thames	Surrey

The Coventry Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College	Coventry
The Dormston School	Dudley
The Malling School, West Malling	Kent
The Misbourne School, Great Missenden	Buckinghamshire
The North Halifax Grammar School	Calderdale
The Nottingham Emmanuel School, West Bridgford	Nottingham
The Ridgeway School	Swindon
The Wye Valley School, Bourne End	Buckinghamshire
Trinity CofE High School	Manchester
Tudhoe Grange School, Spennymoor	Durham
Twyford Church of England High School	Ealing
Westley Middle School, Bury St Edmund's	Suffolk
William Lovell Church of England School, Boston	Lincolnshire
Winchmore School	Enfield
Wren Spinney Community Special School, Kettering	Northamptonshire

## Annex B. Judging music provision

### Achievement and standards (text in italics is for secondary schools only)

Good	Inadequate
As a result of high expectations for all, learners enjoy their musical experiences and most groups (including learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) make good progress in class lessons and extra-curricular activities. Music is a popular subject and pupils actively participate in lessons and extra-curricular activities. Learners show broader benefits from music, for example increased self-confidence and self-esteem.	A significant number of learners make unsatisfactory progress in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. Expectations are too low and there is very little demonstration of quality or depth of musical response. Music is not a popular subject and does little to develop broader outcomes. Few learners take part in extra-curricular activities.
<i>Learners show a readiness to engage positively with different musical styles and traditions.</i>	<i>Learners either have no opportunity to respond to different musical styles or, when given this opportunity, they respond negatively with shallow comments.</i>

NB: 'Achievement' in music includes involvement in activities and development of the broader outcomes, such as self-confidence, as well as the musical outcomes.

### Teaching and learning

A constant emphasis on musical quality and aural development, and practical music-making helps learners learn how to respond musically.	There is a lack of aural development and too much reliance on non-musical activities (for example, worksheets). There is a too narrow emphasis on increasing musical competence.
Performing is at the heart of all musical activity and learners are given every opportunity to experiment with instruments and voices and to experience making music with others.	Insufficient attention is given to the development of learners' creativity and to providing opportunity for all learners to perform to others.
Working relationships are positive so that learners are given the confidence to perform, be creative and learn from mistakes.	Behaviour is often poor because working relationships are not secure and/or not all learners are treated as musicians. Learners are not given the confidence needed to succeed.
Learning objectives are clear and simple and focus on the musical skills, knowledge and understanding to be learnt by learners rather than the activity to be completed.	Objectives are unclear so that different tasks are often unrelated. Learners are unclear what they are learning and/or how to improve the quality of their work.



Assessment helps to maintain a clear focus on learners' musical progression. Audio recordings are an integral part of all work.	Assessment and recordings are not frequent or accurate enough to monitor learners' needs or help them improve.
<i>Learners are helped to make connections between their work and the work of others (including established composers) so their work is informed by an increasing range of musical styles and traditions.</i>	<i>Learners are not helped to make connections. The repertoire is too narrow and little attempt is made to extend learners' work through reference to specific features of the work of others.</i>
<i>Work is made relevant so that tasks are put into context and related to 'real' practice.</i>	<i>Work is unrelated to 'real' practice.</i>

### Curriculum

Learning is planned according to the needs, experiences and interests of learners. Steps of learning are identified so that teachers and learners are clear what is expected and understand how to improve the quality of work. Tasks are sequenced well to consolidate and extend learning. Progression routes are clear with established courses in all key stages, providing opportunities for all learners to progress and develop well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are good catch-up arrangements for work missed or not understood.	There is an over-reliance on commercially produced schemes which are insufficiently adapted and used to meet the requirements of all learners. Teachers' planning does not demonstrate an understanding of progression in learning. Resources are unsatisfactory and do not include provision for ICT (especially in Key Stage 3). The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements. There are few extra-curricular activities and participation is poor because the activities provided do not meet the needs and interests of all learners.
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### Leadership and management

The music provision includes all learners. The inclusion of all learners is central to the vision and it is effective in enabling successful participation for all. Learners' progress is tracked so that appropriate support and challenge can be given when necessary. Assessment is effective and related appropriately to National Curriculum levels. All groups are represented in a good range of musical activities.	There is no clear vision of music for all. There may be an over-reliance on extra-curricular activities as a 'shop window' without comparable attention given to music in the curriculum. Learners' progress is not tracked and learners do not know how well they are doing or how to improve their work. Assessment is ineffective and no attempt is made to relate expectations to National Curriculum levels.
Partnerships are strong, benefiting all learners. Good partnerships provide greater diversity and inclusion, and promote community cohesion. There	Partnerships are underdeveloped. Learners have limited opportunities to attend regional and community musical activities, to work with different

<p>are good links between schools. Where outside specialists work with a whole class, the class teacher is fully involved and plays an active part. Instrumental/vocal programmes and lessons are an integral part of music provision. Learners are encouraged to attend regional and community musical activities.</p>	<p>practising musicians or to experience live music. There are no links between schools and additional experiences are treated as a 'bolt on' – they are not developed as part of a coherent overall music provision.</p>
<p>There is a clear vision for the development of the music provision in the school. There is a good understanding of the school's musical strengths and weaknesses through effective self-evaluation, which takes into account the needs and interests of all learners. Provision is monitored well and there is a good track record in raising achievement and making improvements. Resources are well used, including any extended services, to improve outcomes and to secure good value for money. There is good awareness of national initiatives.</p>	<p>Provision is not mapped or monitored effectively. Not enough time is given to the subject leader to monitor and support the work of colleagues. The quality of self-evaluation is unsatisfactory and priorities for improvement are not clearly identified. There is very little awareness of national initiatives and/or shared discussion and development of any additional activities.</p>

## **Annex C. Characteristics of good and outstanding instrumental/vocal programmes**

### **Achievement and standards**

- Learners enjoy their musical experiences and make good progress as a result of high expectations for all – every child can make, and benefit from, music. Enjoyment and success start from the earliest stages of musical learning. Singing is confident, and attention is given to correct posture and increasing control of intonation, expression, and diction. Instrumental techniques are accurate and secure; there is no need for beginners to be out of tune. Constant attention to detail focuses on aspects that need improvement rather than just singing it all the way through again and again. All groups are involved, for example boys and girls, different abilities and ethnicities.

### **Teaching and learning**

- A constant emphasis on aural development and practical music-making helps learners learn how to respond musically. Rhythmic and melodic skills are developed effectively through singing, playing instruments and creative work. An emphasis on aural perception and aural memory ensures that the visual aspects of decoding notation do not detract from the important aural aspects of playing tunefully and expressively. Work is constantly modelled by the teacher so the learners can see and hear what is expected. Learners are also encouraged to model the work for each other. Demonstration is much more effective than constant oral interruption.
- Performing is at the heart of all musical activity and learners are given every opportunity to experiment with instruments and voices and to experience making music with others. Repertoire is selected carefully to ensure maximum success and enjoyment. Songs are pitched correctly and the language demands gauged appropriately. There is more than one line of music for learners to sing and play, so different levels of attainment are supported and learners can gain greater satisfaction through performing in an ensemble. This is particularly important where more than one instrument is involved.
- Working relationships are positive so that learners are given the confidence to perform, be creative and learn from mistakes. Opportunities to invent patterns, phrases or sections are given from the earliest stages; improvising is part of musical learning from the beginning. Technical exercises and warm-ups are balanced by longer pieces of music so that learners have the opportunity to make decisions about interpretation.
- Learning objectives are clear and simple and focus on the musical skills, knowledge, and understanding to be learnt by learners rather than the activity to be completed. All lesson activities are related to the learning

focus and work is developed incrementally. The most able are challenged and appropriate support is given for the less able. Vocal or instrumental starter activities are relevant, progressive and linked with what follows, not just used as warm-ups or an opening ritual. The focus of and achievement in sessions are clear, and learners are able to practise and consolidate their work between lessons.

- Assessment helps to maintain a clear focus on learners' musical progression. Simple effective information is collected and used to improve learners' progress. Instrumental tutors and teachers observe and log progress, discuss and monitor learners who need support, and promote those who show a talent for instrumental learning. Recordings of learners' work are used regularly to help raise the standards of work. Clear assessment data are matched to National Curriculum levels and learners know how well they are doing and what to do to improve. Learners are involved through effective self-assessment.

## Curriculum

- Learning is planned according to the needs, experiences and interests of learners. Schemes of work and resources are adapted to meet learners' different learning needs. Extra-curricular activities extend learners' musical experiences. Steps of learning are identified so that teachers and learners are clear what is expected and understand how to improve the quality of work. Tasks are sequenced well to consolidate and extend learning. There are good catch-up arrangements for work missed or not understood. There is no attempt to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum in each session as these are delivered through the provision across the whole key stage. Each experience is developed as a coherent part of the whole provision. Good singing techniques are applied across all lessons and singing experiences.

## Leadership and management

- The music provision includes all learners. The school promotes music for all. The school knows the learners well so that individual learners are selected proactively for involvement in extra-curricular activities and other musical opportunities on the basis of need and aptitude. All groups are represented in a good range of musical activities and respect is shown for all musical styles and interests.
- Partnerships are strong, benefiting all learners. Instrumental/vocal programmes are developed as an integral part of music provision. Instrumental/vocal work is consolidated between sessions by the class teacher and the class teacher is completely involved in the instrumental/vocal programme. Good links are established with local secondary schools, the music service and other professionals. Learners are encouraged to attend regional and community musical activities.

- There is a clear vision for the development of the music provision in the school. The headteacher, or another member of the senior team, and subject leader monitor all provision, including instrumental and vocal sessions; the subject leader has time to work with other teachers and ensure all classes have a similar quality of musical experience. There is good awareness of national initiatives.

## **Annex D. Characteristics of good provision for singing**

- Singing is developed as an integral part of the whole music curriculum – not that it covers everything but that it contributes to the whole.
- Good singing techniques are developed and applied across all lessons and singing experiences.
- High expectations result in constant attention to detail and focusing on aspects that need improvement rather than just singing it all the way through again and again.
- Clear learning objectives and differentiated expected outcomes ensure everyone knows what is expected and what to do to make their singing even better.
- There is clear progression within each session and across the key stage.
- Effective warm-ups are used to engage interest and prepare voices through short exercises that warm up the vocal chords and mouth flexibility and activate the head voice.
- Constant modelling by the teacher and by pupils enables the class to see, and hear, what is expected.
- Effective assessment provides information about progress, identifies those who need to be extended as well as those that need more help and is used to adapt teaching plans.
- A well selected repertoire is matched to pupils' interests and maturity as well as their emerging vocal range, and is easily available for all staff.
- More help is provided for those pupils who are not finding it easy to pitch and extension opportunities for those with demonstrated ability/interest.
- Secure monitoring of all work means that help is provided for teachers by the subject leader where this is needed.
- All groups are involved, for example boys and girls, pupils of different abilities and different ethnicity, and specific actions are taken to include those who would gain most benefit.