

# The Tinder Box? – Music Education in England



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<https://www.flickr.com/photos/widnr/7018652249>

# A potted history since 2010

DfE & Minster fail to accept negative impact on Music due to EBacc (2016-19)

Further fragmentation across music education providers following introduction of MEHs

Dramatic increase in academisation, particularly secondary schools

Key Stage 4 overhaul & new GCSE qualifications introduced (2016 for music)

Ofsted - Subject Lead & Triennial reports stop. Focus on EBacc subjects (2012-18)

Reduction in ITE Music target numbers and Music staff 2010-2018

Music not in Russell Group list of 'facilitating subjects'

EBacc (re)introduced (2012) with Progress 8 (2016)

Expert Subject Advisory Group for Music established

National Curriculum revised 2012/13

Music Education Hubs introduced (2012)

Henley Review and National Music Plan for Education established (2010-12)

# And yet...Government commitment to music education appears to be high

*“... high-quality arts education should not be the preserve of the elite, but the entitlement of every child. Music, art and design, drama and dance are included in the national curriculum and compulsory in all maintained schools from the age of 5 to 14.”*

**Nick Gibb, April 2018**

# Music in the school curriculum feeds the rest of the system

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

Darren Henley (2011)

# The Statute is clear

**This National Plan provides a flexible template for high quality music provision throughout a pupil's education.** It aims for equality of opportunity for all pupils, regardless of race; gender; where they live; their levels of musical talent; parental income; whether they have special educational needs or disabilities; and whether they are looked after children.

**All schools should provide high quality music education as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.**

# Recent Publications



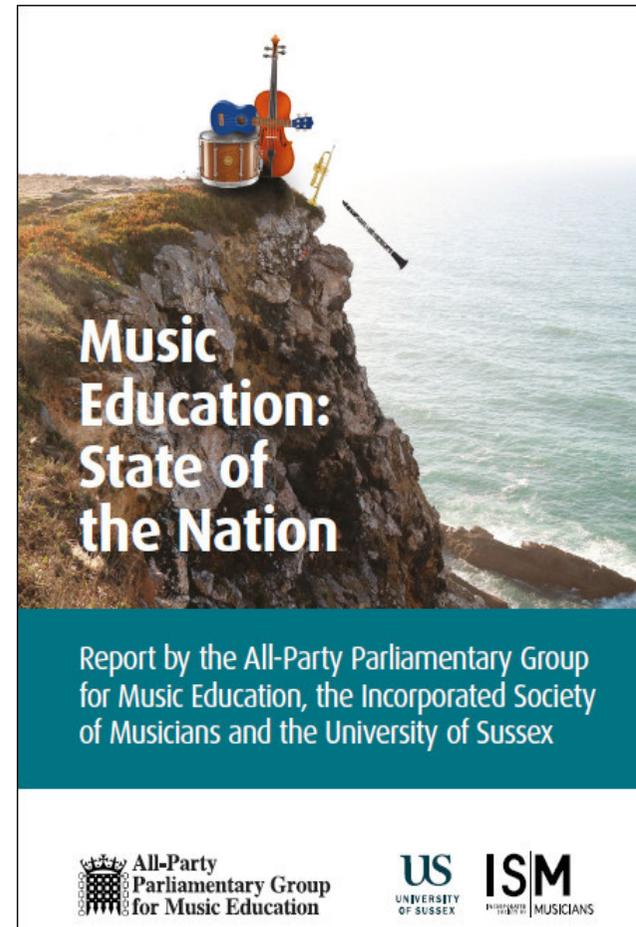
## Consultation on the future of music education

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

December 2018

### Download from:

<https://www.ism.org/news/the-ism-releases-report-on-the-future-of-music-education>



### Download from:

<https://www.ism.org/news/new-music-education-report-state-of-the-nation-released>

# Access and equality

The school is the only place where **all children are entitled to access a music education.**

**If schools do not give children a sustained music education through the curriculum, it becomes the preserve of those who can afford to pay.**

It's time to work together

**There is no longer  
widespread denial that  
government policies have  
created undesirable and  
unintended issues.**

# Ofsted recognise the negative impact on access and equality

## Reduction of Key Stage 3

***...pupils did not have any opportunity to study a language or some arts subjects, as the school directed them onto a pathway that excluded the subject as an option, in some cases from the age of 12.***

***It is a risk to social mobility if pupils miss out on opportunities to study subjects and gain knowledge that could be valuable in subsequent stages of education or in later life. Restricted subject choice for low-attaining pupils disproportionately affects pupils from low income backgrounds.***

Amanda Spielman's (Ofsted) speech 11 Oct 2017:

[ps://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-commentary-october-2017](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-commentary-october-2017)

# DCMS know there are problems...

*“Yes it is concerning [that it is a stark reality that numbers are falling]... I think there has been a problem of enough time and resource in schools being committed to the performing arts.”*

Margot James, Senior Minister DCMS talking about the EBacc and the impact on Music (2018)

# DfE recognise that their policies have undesirable consequences ...

*“I appreciate that there is a lot of concern, **and real concern and legitimate concern about the narrowing of the curriculum, especially for arts, but not only for arts, but especially for arts.** What I’d say about it and I’m sure there will be lots of questions and concerns noted, is the Department [of Education] is really keen, really wants all pupils to experience a high-quality arts education, we can disagree about the impact of what we’re doing, but that’s absolutely our intention.”*

*Josh Beattie, Assistant Director, Curriculum Division. DFE (2018)*

# ...and were warned a long time ago

*Bearing in mind the influence that the EBacc is having on the provision of academic courses in Key Stage 4 for a larger proportion of pupils, we are concerned, as in primary education, that the role of art and music in a broad, balanced and effective education should not be lost<sup>7</sup>.*

*Tim Oates (Chair), Professor Mary James, Professor Dylan William, Professor  
Andrew Pollard*

*DFE Expert Group for the Review of the National Curriculum*

*November 2011*

# Ofsted's new Music Lead knows that music is falling by the wayside...

*“The take up [of music] is low and getting lower... **school leaders, for all sorts of reasons, and it is not for me to make those judgements, but for a variety of reasons, some of which may well be measurement from DfE, means that somehow it is falling by the wayside.**”*

Susan Aykin, Ofsted National Lead for Visual and Performing Arts (2018)

But. Schools are trying to please systems... which exclude music in more ways than 'just' the EBacc

*“Children are steered towards the EBacc, SLT don't want students to take GCSE and sadly, aren't interested in the course, how it is taught, what the children get out of it as the school doesn't seem to be judged on music when it comes to Ofsted.”*

*Music teacher, Sussex 2016-2018 study*

# And yet the 'unintended consequences' include these from teachers in the Sussex study

*We have less pupils having instrumental / vocal lessons than in past years. 5 years ago we had 200 having instrumental/vocal lessons every week in school. This number is closer to 110 now.*

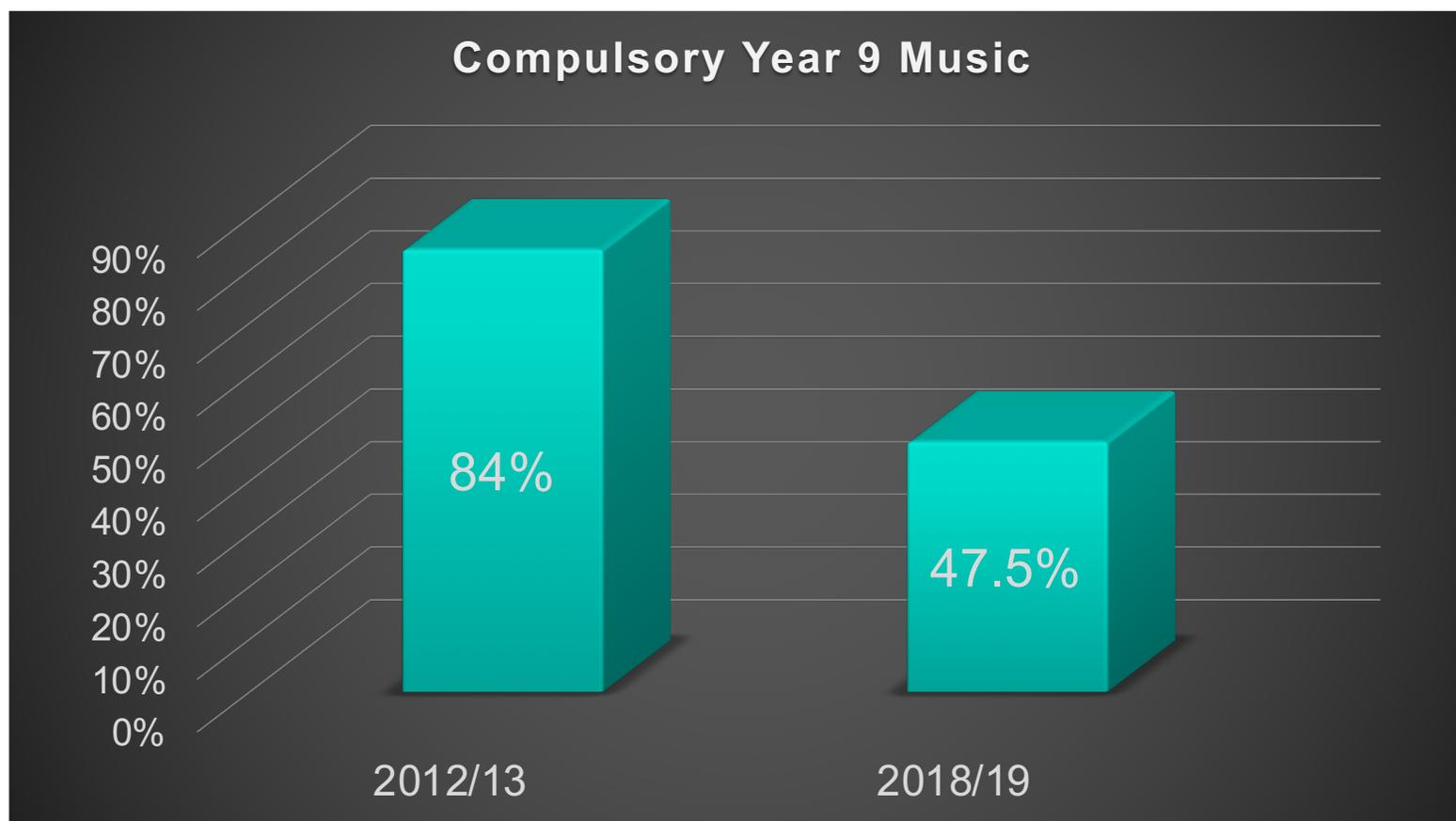
*12 students had opted for GCSE Music before the option was removed.*

*The KS4 course was dropped without consultation due to funding issues.*

*...headteachers are running scared from Whitehall with pressure for students to study more STEM than Arts Subjects. Option boxes are now containing arts subjects pitted against each other so a student cannot take music, art and drama. they have to do something which contributes to the school's 'progress 8' data - more meaningless jargon.*

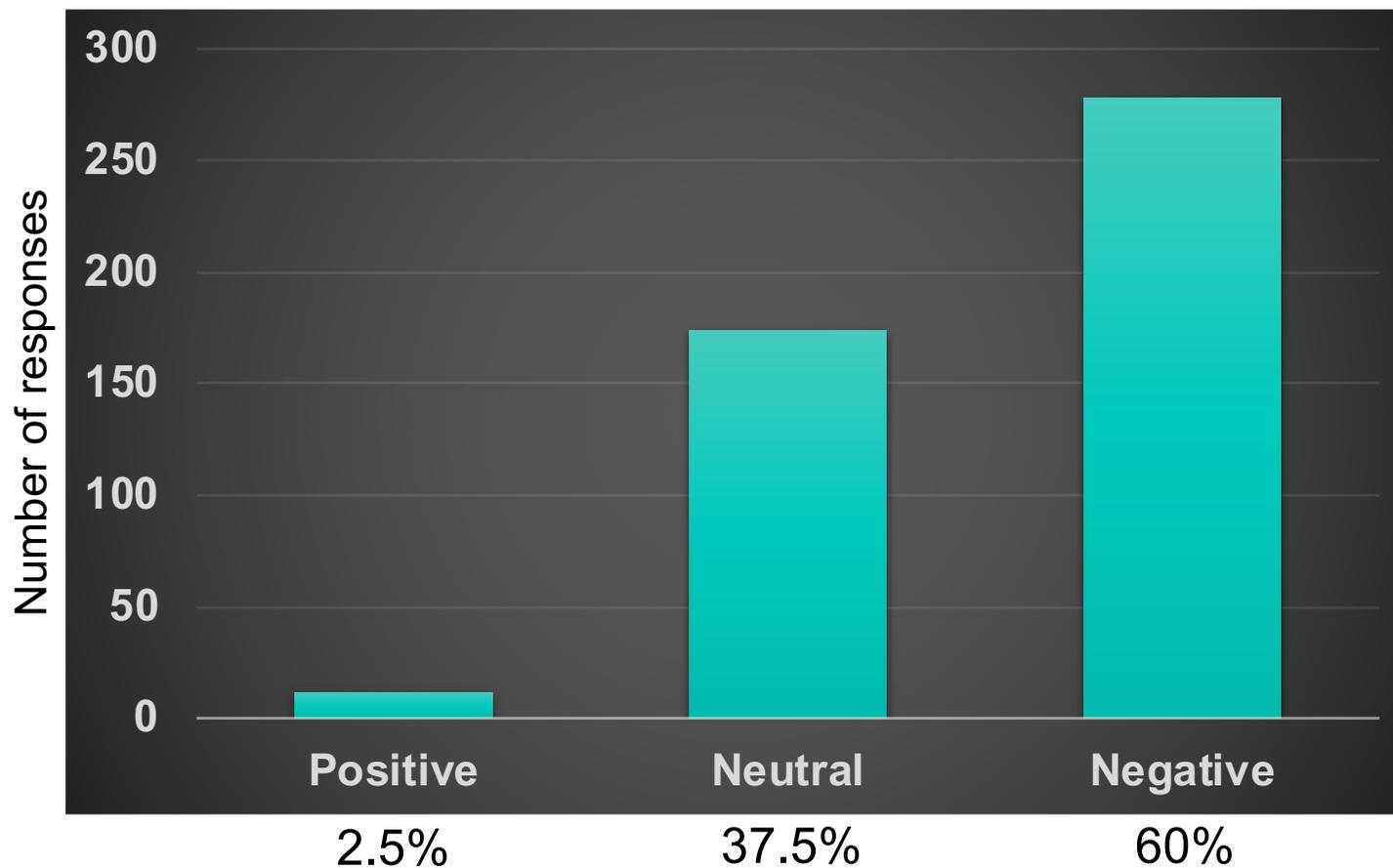
# Year 9 Provision

- In 2018/19, more schools reported Year 9 music being optional than compulsory, despite the promises of the National Curriculum:



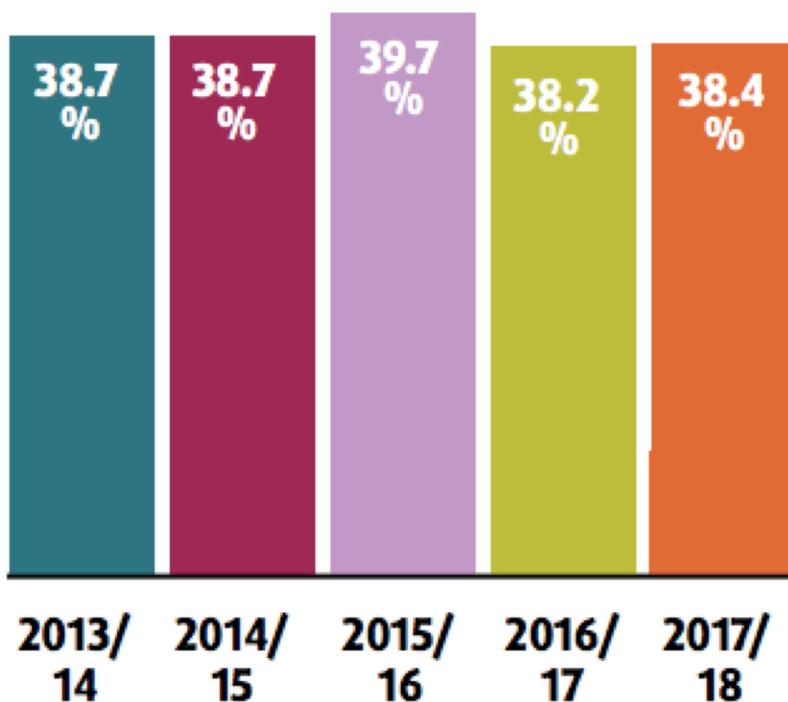
- Increasingly, it is either optional (48.4%) or not taught at all as a curriculum subject.

*Are any changes to the provision / uptake of music in your school (within and beyond the curriculum) as a result of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) performance measure, positive, neutral, or negative?*

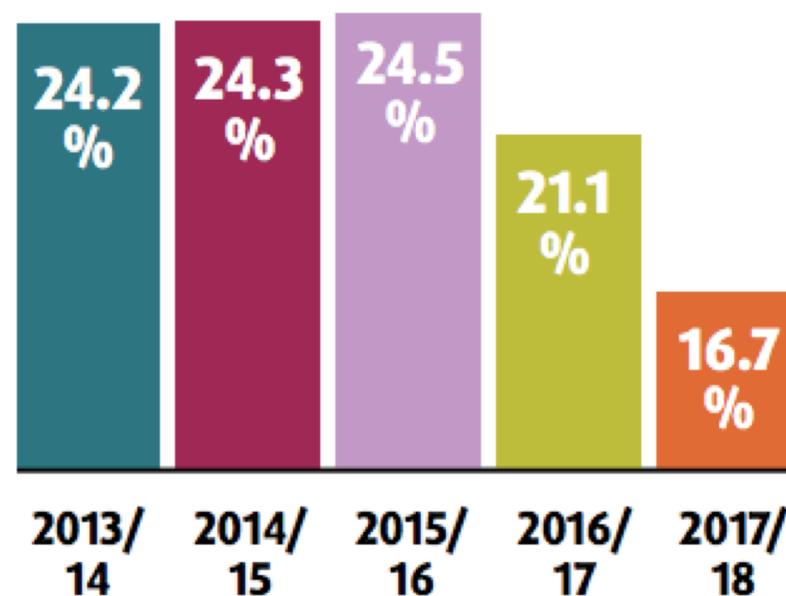


# The current EBacc situation...a failing policy

**Figure 1.** Percentage of Year 11 state school pupils entered for the EBacc

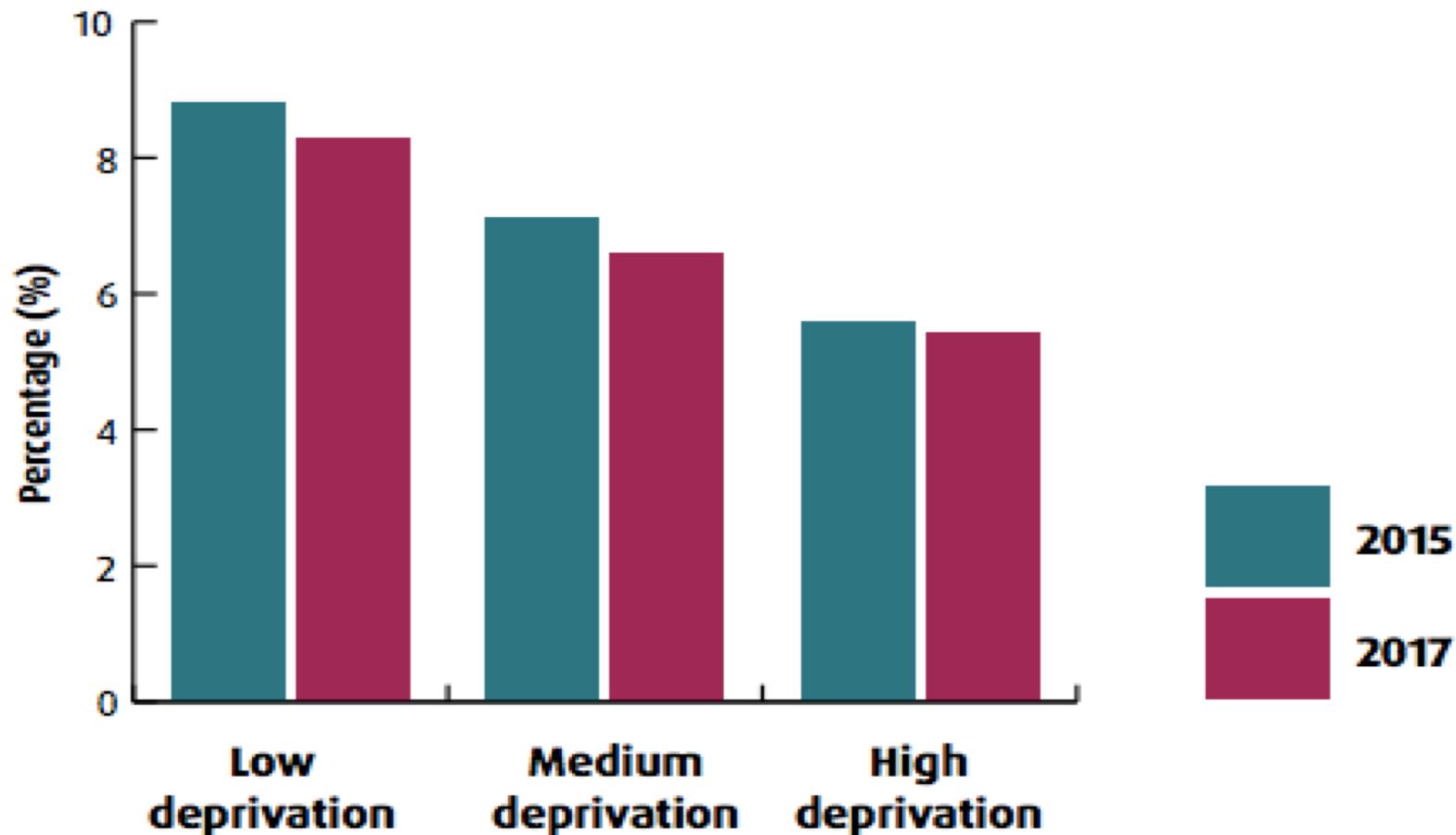


**Figure 2.** EBacc achievement 2013-2018 in state-funded schools



# Equality?

**Figure 3.** Percentage of pupils taking GCSE music (based on deprivation levels)

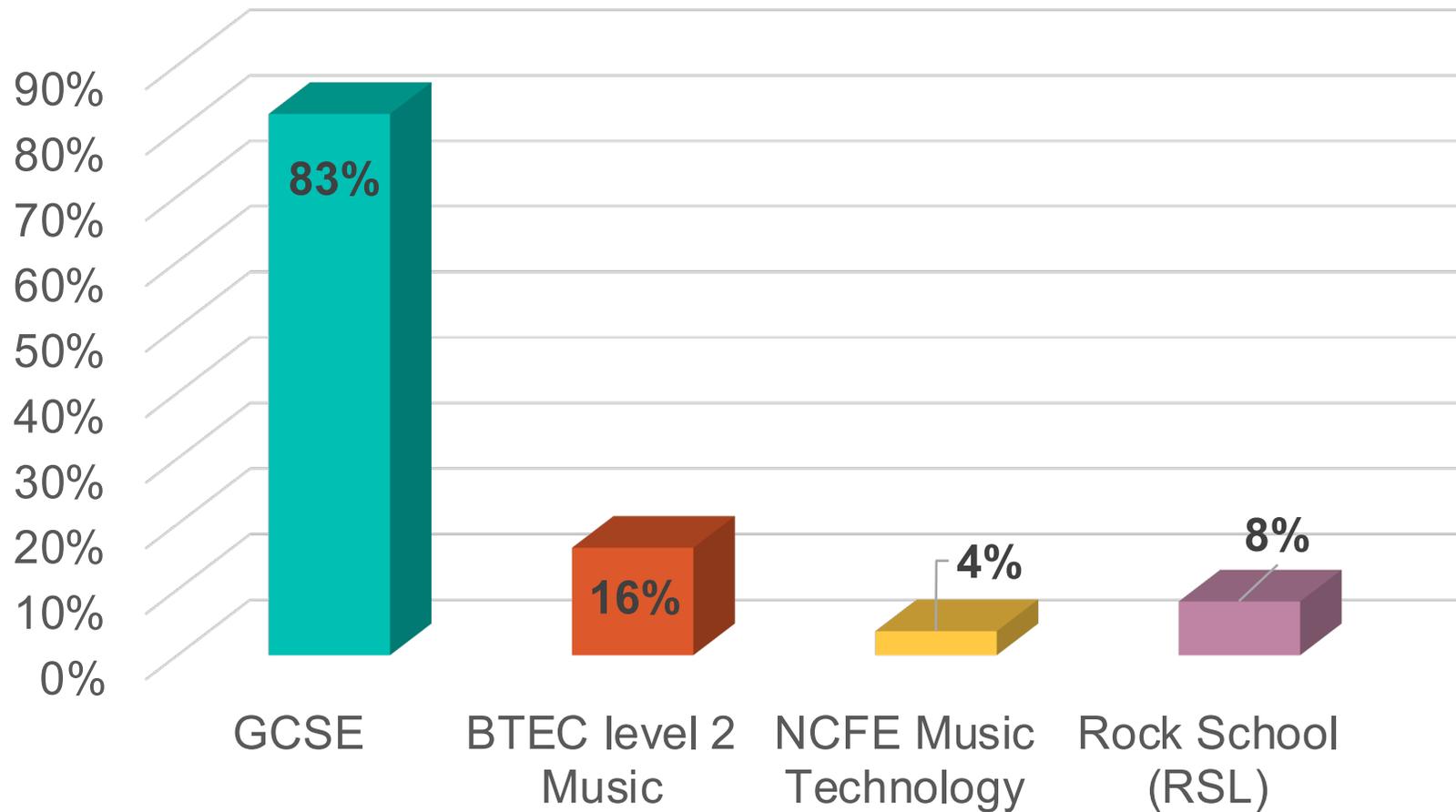


# Systemic problems feeding into this from all parts of music education

*“Less music teaching in Primary schools means there are less instrumentalists in the transition process and the music hub isn't doing much to resolve this due to lack of funding.”*

*Music teacher, Sussex University 2016-18 study*

# Qualifications available at Key Stage 4 2018-19 (responding schools)



# And at KS5 access is even more restricted

## **Music is the fastest disappearing A Level subject:**

ASCL research shows that the number of schools and colleges offering A Level music between September 2016 and September 2018 **dropped by 38%**.

**A large drop in A Level music entries:** These have **dropped by over 38% since 2010**. In 2018 there were just 5,440 entries in total.

In 2017 A Levels were 'de-coupled' from AS levels, making them a stand-alone 2-year qualification. Edexcel (Pearson) recently announced that they will be **dropping AS level music** from the suite of subjects they offer.

**Music Technology A Level entries are also falling:** Our Sussex research shows that **the number of centres offering A Level Music Technology for students beginning courses in September 2018 fell by 31.7%**, with a 10.6% drop in the number of students recruited.

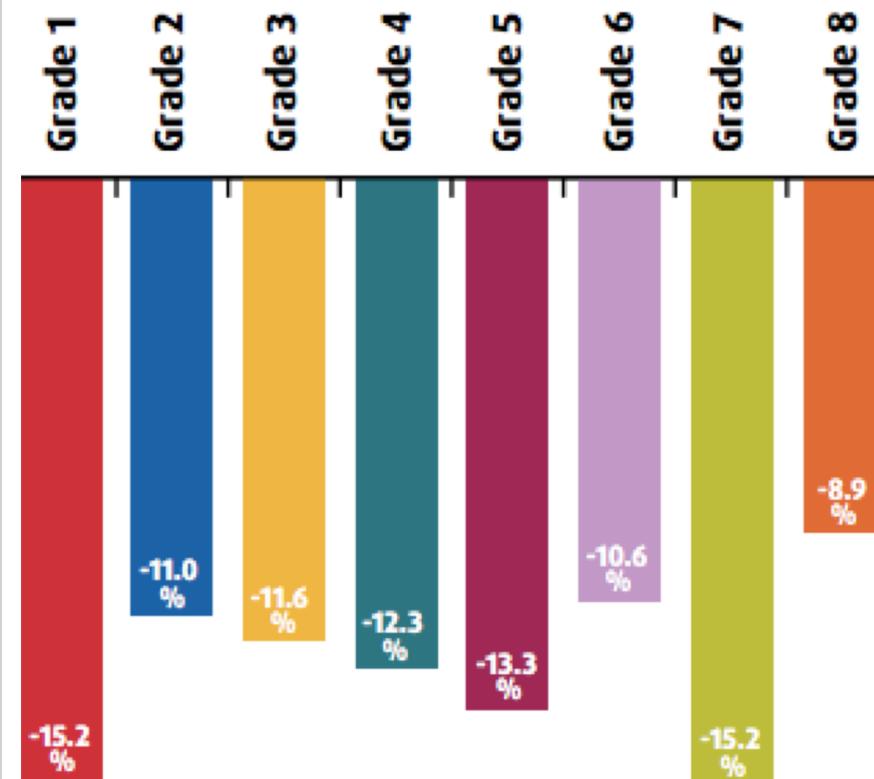
# It isn't just 'school' qualifications!

In terms of ABRSM exams, the difference between 2012 and 2017 equates to 42,000 less students in 2017 than 2012.

There is also a 14% drop in the number of students taking ABRSM Grade 5 theory 2012-17.

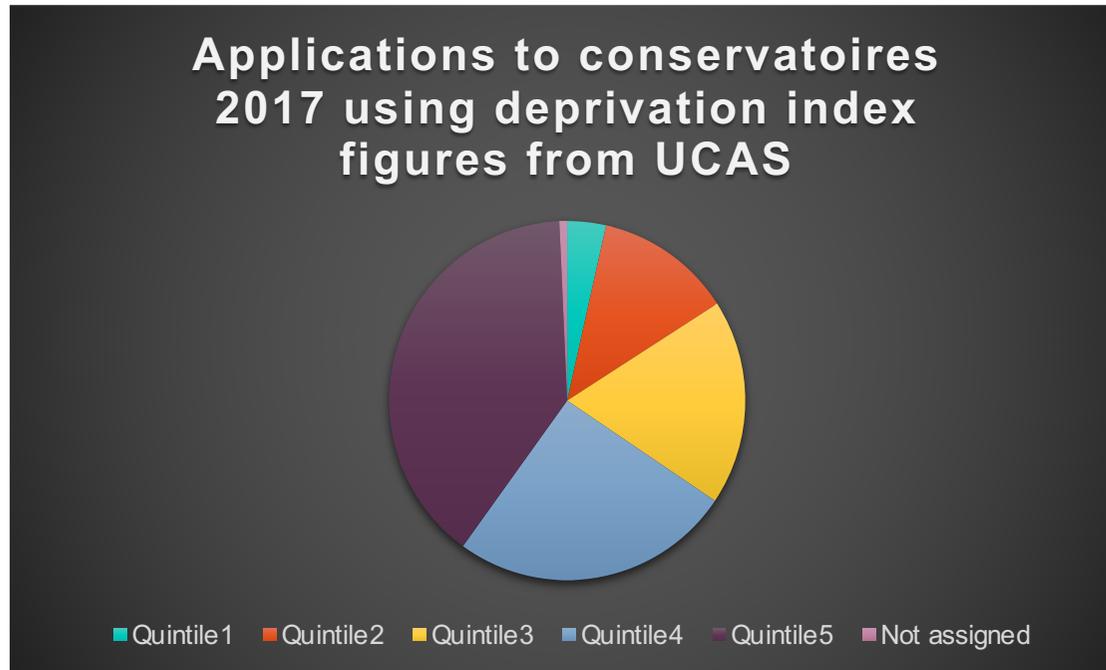
This potentially inhibits the progression routes of certain students. The drop is only very partially made up by the other exam boards.

**Figure 4.** Percentage drop in graded music exam certificates awarded 2012 to 2017 (ABRSM, TCL, RSL, UWL)



\*data compiled from figures supplied by Ofqual<sup>75</sup>

# Another devastating link between postcode and access



In 2017, only 3.5% (15 students from a cohort of 430) of entrants to UK music conservatoires were from Quintile 1 backgrounds (a drop of 1.7% from the previous year) compared to 39.5% from Quintile 5. The data from UCAS shows that there is a direct correlation between socio-economic grouping and likelihood gaining a place to study music at a conservatoire.

# Here's some thoughts from teachers in our Sussex University 2016-18 study

*Top sets guided towards eBacc. Lower sets guided to college applications.*

*Decimated GCSE numbers, which together with changes to AS, have also now decimated previously healthy A level numbers.*

*Due to change in exams - GCSE is now much much harder - which is making it harder for lower students to access.*

*Emphasis placed on the core subjects which result in lots of students thinking that the arts are less important. Maths and English forced intervention after school impacts on the arts.*

Schools need to be vibrant musical communities, drawing upon great teachers based in schools to facilitate this

*“Make music the hub of the school, **bring it around the school** and put on concerts as often as possible that students organise!”*

*“Exposure - making sure Music is in every newsletter, we run extra-curricular consistently, organise workshops and trips and do this by forming relationships with local bodies such as Rotary Club, Music Hub, who can offer support and funding. Also events in the community.”*

*Music teacher, Sussex 2016-2018 study*

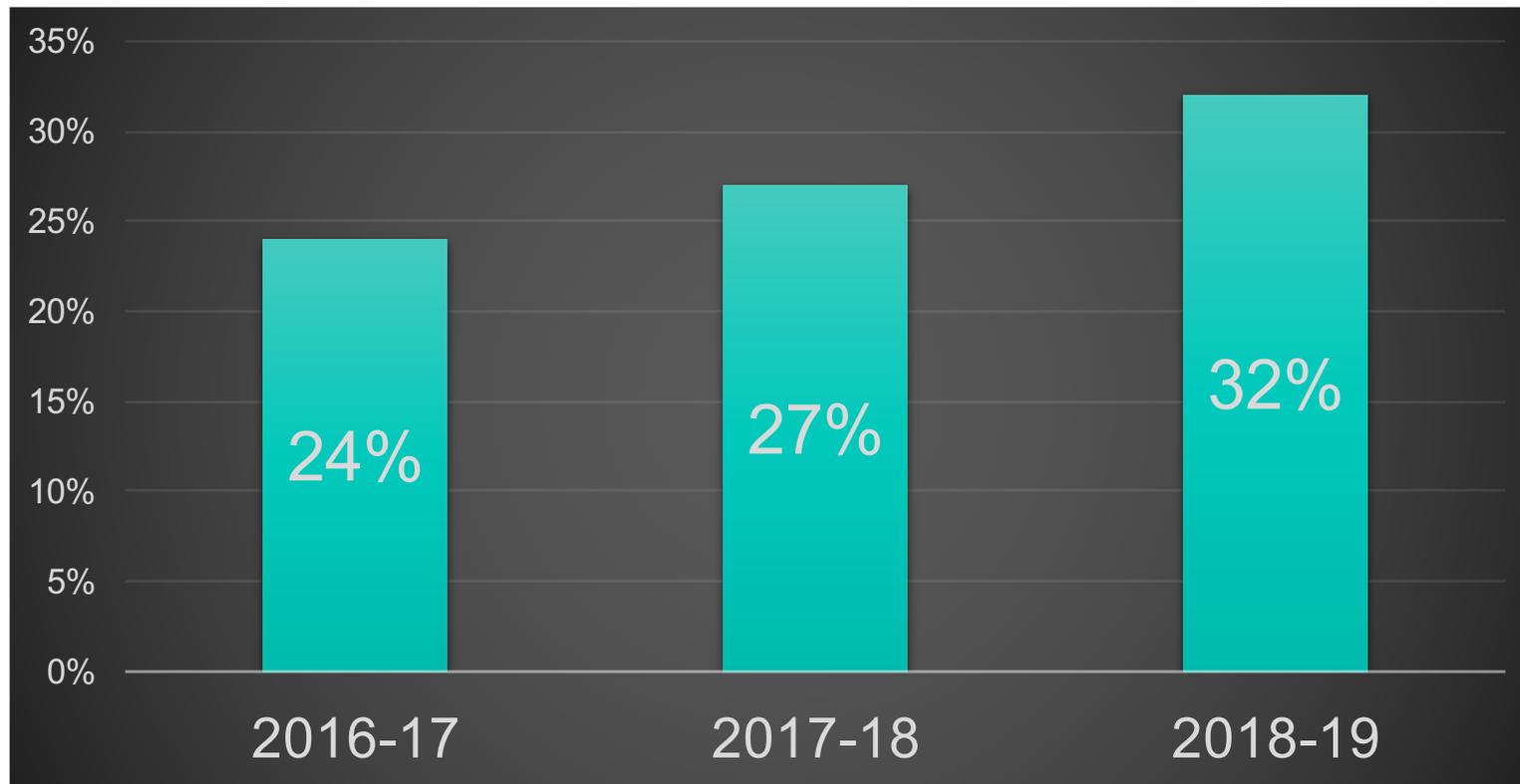
# And yet...

**Figure 5.** changes in in-service teacher numbers  
2010–2017

	2010	2017	% change
Music	7500	6500	-13.3
Maths	33000	34600	4.9
English	36600	37500	2.5
Geography	13500	15600	15.6
History	15000	16700	11.3
<b>Total number of teachers (all subjects)</b>	239800	219700	-8.8

Compiled from DfE workforce data<sup>88</sup>

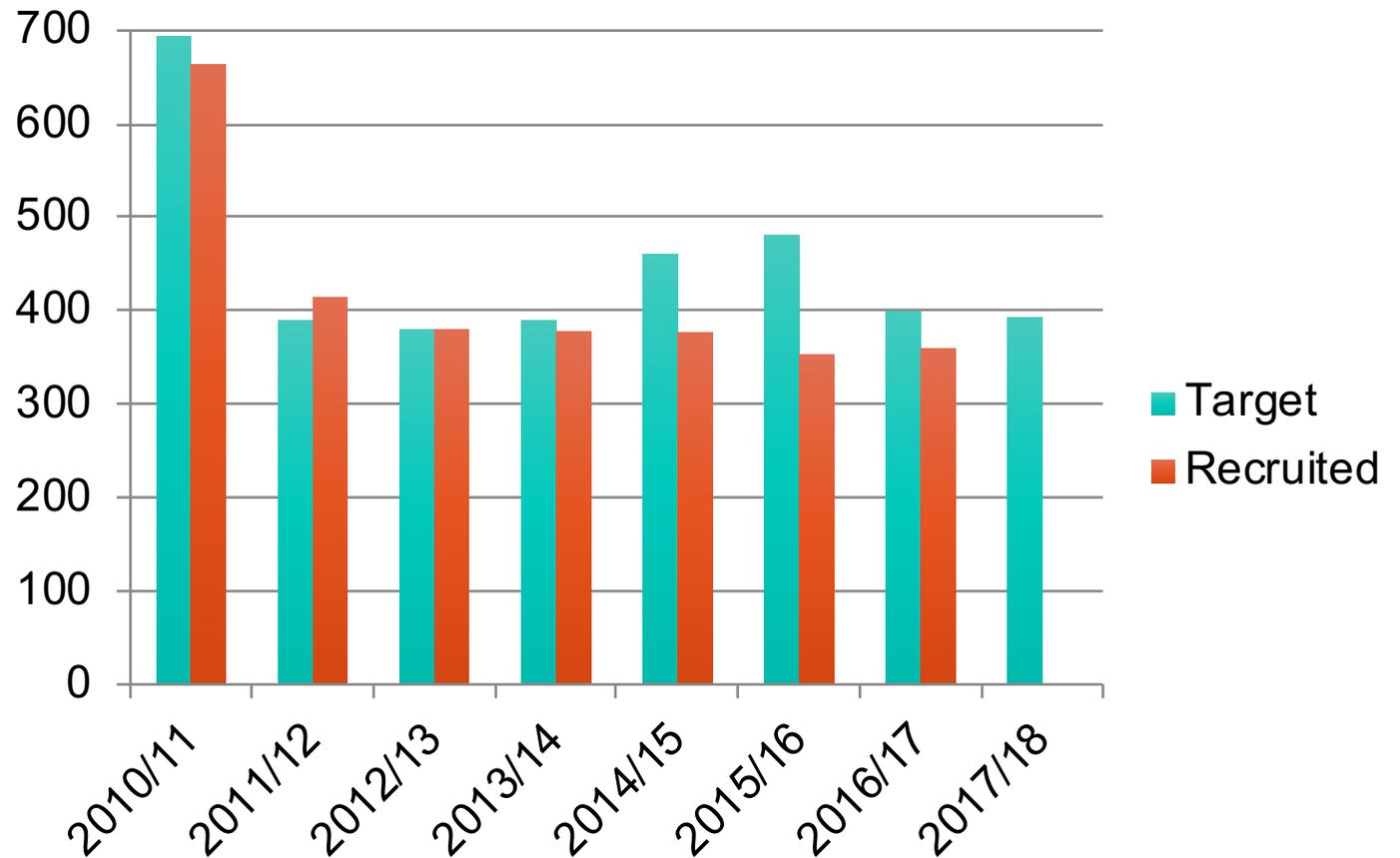
# Departments teaching music with up to one FTE Music Teacher



- 35% of schools reported a fall in staffing levels between 2016 and 2018/19.
- 70% of teachers reported teaching outside of their subject area at some point since 2016
- Professional isolation is increasingly a problem

# Music Teacher Targets and Recruitment

- Music target in 2010/11 = 694
- Music target in 2017/18 = 393 and is **a reduction of 43.4%**
- 270 fewer Music teachers from targets over the seven years
- 1903 fewer Music teachers from the much higher target of 2010-11



Data from: <https://www.gov.uk/education/initial-teacher-training-itt>

# And here are some real-life stories about our colleagues (Sussex Uni date 2016-18)

*Role made redundant / academy needs to save money so subjects (Music) have been cut.*

2nd in dept also taught drama and was full time but was made redundant this year.

*Part time member of staff left and was not replaced. Y7 went from once per week to once per fortnight to save money on staffing.*

*Following my return from maternity leave, we were unable to successfully recruit a new teacher so both music and music technology were cut at A-level.*

# Multiple stakeholders have important voices and roles

*“**Primary liaison** is very important in generating confident musicians who want to continue at secondary school. Big Sings, orchestral work etc. It helps to **create a musical culture** which cannot be measured exactly but it is vital. Working with the **music service and any local groups to promote music in the community** builds reputation and expectation and seems to future proof the music provision. We have had very **vocal parents support our provision to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of it's value** and this has helped prevent some bigger losses. “*

*Music teacher, Sussex 2016-2018 study*

# How can hubs 'support and augment' music in the curriculum?

## CORE ROLES

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

## EXTENSION ROLES

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

# Hubs are there to 'augment and support' schools

*Hubs will augment and support music teaching in schools so that more children experience a combination of classroom teaching, instrumental and vocal tuition and input from professional musicians. Hubs will be able to deliver an offer to children that reaches beyond school boundaries and draws in the expertise of a range of education and arts partners, such as local orchestras, ensembles, charities and other music groups.*

(DfE & DCMS, 2011 p.10)

# Can hubs do more to support students in need?

*“Increased charges for peripatetic music lessons have impacted on students wishing to opt for the subject. Now £320 per year. Previously had a GCSE half price discount but this has been removed.”*

*Music teacher, Sussex 2016-2018 study*

# What else works?

“Offering as much extra-curricular opportunities as possible and a really good recruitment programme for instrumental lessons - we recruited nearly 50% of our current Year 7 cohort into instrumental lessons at the beginning of the year. This was partly through persuading the school to invest in DA students [in receipt of PP] lessons and working with [our MEH] to able to deliver these at an appropriate cost.”

*Music teacher, Sussex 2016-2018 study*

# A call to work together

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

ISM Future of Music Education report, Dec 2018

# Our parting thoughts

*“Let it not be said that  
nobody knew”*

*Music educator, 2019*



# Some things to muse over today...

1. Pupils increasingly come to secondary school with less than one term of Whole Class music (a 41.97% rise in the past four years). How can Hubs better support sustained instrumental learning (in line with their core role) so that more children have more experience when they arrive in secondary school?
2. The most recently published ACE data returns for MEH demonstrate that a smaller percentage of pupils with SEN or in receipt of Pupil Premium are involved in WCIVT. This potentially exacerbates the situation seen in uptake at Key Stage 4 and runs counter to our collective aspirations of inclusivity and access for all. What can be done to reverse this situation?
3. What can every Hub and organisation do in their role to *augment and support* music education so that ALL children have access to a high quality and sustained music education throughout Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and to make all schools the thriving musical communities we all want to see?
4. What can schools do to support Hubs to do this?

### **Recommendation 1**

Schools should receive clear guidance that headline accountability measures must not erode the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3, and that a broad and balanced curriculum must be delivered across all schools at all Key Stages. Music and the arts are at the heart of a broad and balanced curriculum.

### **Recommendation 2**

Music should be taught by a subject specialist teacher as part of the curriculum in all state schools for all pupils for at least one hour every week across all of a three-year Key Stage 3. All secondary schools have at least one full time music teacher who exclusively teaches music.

### **Recommendation 3**

The English Baccalaureate and Progress 8 accountability measures should be reviewed and reformed to provide a better education for our children. At the very least a sixth pillar should be added to the EBacc for the creative subjects including music.

### **Recommendation 4**

The Government should scrap the 2018 introduction of the 'average points score' measure for the EBacc.

### **Recommendation 5**

The Government should broaden the National Curriculum by making individual creative subjects including music entitlement areas at Key Stage 4, replacing the broader entitlement area of "the arts".

### **Recommendation 6**

The Government should encourage all schools to embed a culture of singing via classroom teaching.

### **Recommendation 7**

Ofsted and the Government should make it clear that delivering only the narrow curriculum prescribed by the EBacc will have an adverse impact on inspections and grading awarded.

### **Recommendation 8**

The new National Plan for Music Education must provide clarity as to the roles and responsibilities of schools and Hubs relating to the delivery of a music education for all pupils.

**Recommendation 9**

The revised National Plan for Music Education should address the quality, provision and access to music education for Early Years and SEND, and improve signposting of music education opportunities for 18 to 25-year-olds.

**Recommendation 11**

Ring-fenced funding for Hubs must be continued beyond 2020 at current levels or increased levels.

**Recommendation 13**

Ofsted should reconsider their proposal contained in Education inspection framework 2019: inspecting the substance of education in connection with their approach to the EBacc. We urge them to drop their proposal that inspectors understand what schools are doing to prepare for the EBacc to be achieved, and they should take those preparations into consideration when evaluating the intent of the school's curriculum.

**Recommendation 10**

The metrics for measuring the work delivered in response to the NPME need to be revised to go beyond 'levels of activity' reported through the current narrow set of metrics. The quality of the work being delivered needs to be part of this evaluation work.

**Recommendation 12**

Ofsted must look for evidence of sustained and high-quality musical learning across the curriculum at all key stages, instead of focusing heavily on accountability measures imposed by the Government that have shown to be failing. They must be responsible for ensuring that a full and balanced curriculum is being delivered regularly in all schools.

**Recommendation 14**

Ensure that as per the Government policy directive in 2016, classroom teachers teach within their area of specialism and that this is respected.

**Recommendation 15**

Ensure that all teachers are supported to access regular and relevant high-quality subject-specific continuing professional development, and improve the working conditions of the workforce.