

MEL Inspire – 23 February 2017

I am delighted to be here today as part of the Music Excellence London programme. As you all know, the tag line for Music Excellence London is “Transforming Key Stage 3 Music in London schools” and is all about helping you champion the delivery of Key Stage 3 music in secondary schools. It is supported by the Mayor of London, Sound Connections, Trinity Laban, Music Mark, University of Greenwich, Barbican and Guildhall. It is the successor to two funded programmes called Teach Through Music and Peer to Peer network. The ISM has also been involved in Music Excellence London, delivering three webinars, presented by teachers from the MEL network, entitled Composing in the classroom, Assessment in Key Stage 3 music and How ambitious should we be for Music at Key Stage 3 with another one – on composing and arranging for classroom and schools ensembles – to come.

Accessibility and diversity is on the government’s agenda, covering the music profession, the wider creative and arts sectors and board members within arts organisations and the music industry. As Matt Hancock, Culture Minister said “We want to drive open

diversity, and no one – regardless of their accent, gender or postcode – should be excluded from any of the creative industries”.

Karen Bradley, the Secretary of State at DCMS said in a similar speech last year “The gap in arts engagement between white adults and adults from a black minority ethnic background widens. Small wonder that people from disadvantaged backgrounds are poorly represented in the artistic professions – or that young people from backgrounds are less likely to play an instrument and are underrepresented at conservatoires compared to higher education in general”

Indeed in 2014, a poll conducted for the ISM found that 85% of adults backed Michael Gove’s statement that ‘Music education must not become the preserve of those children whose families can afford to pay for music tuition.’

And Justine Greening, the Secretary of State for Education said she wanted “to see businesses spotting and polishing up the talent of a new generation – the rough diamonds – to make sure we unlock the talent of everyone in our country.”

So the government is calling on our sector to make sure it is doing its bit to promote diversity and talent. Whilst the music industry has a higher percentage of black, Asian and minority ethnic workers at 15.6%, it is also the case that a recent report from UK Music found that this percentage figure falls to 7.6% for older and senior employees. So there is definitely more that can be done within the music industry to make sure that the talent which you the teacher spots is nurtured and supported. And this is where you come in.

And there are some interesting stats out there which do raise concerns around social mobility. The Social Mobility Commission's State of the Nation report published in November 2016 found that 43% of children whose mother had a post graduate degree had music lessons compared with 6% of children whose mother had no qualifications.

Music education as "performing, composing, listening, reviewing and evaluating" has a central role to play in tackling social mobility and providing opportunity to the next generation regardless of background. And we need to remember that music education is a

compulsory part of the national curriculum to the end of Key Stage 3.

And there is plenty of research which shows the amazing impact that studying music has in terms of other output. Research by the University of Kansas has shown that students in schools with high quality music education programmes scored around 22% higher in English and 20% higher in Maths compared to schools with low quality music programmes, regardless of socio economic disparities among schools or schools districts.

And of course Sue Hallam's key work, *The Power of Music*, highlighted the positive impact access to high quality classroom music education has on listening skills, awareness of phonetics, literacy, and special reasoning which supports the development of certain mathematical skills.

As a result of the amazing impact from music education, music students are often able to demonstrate skills and attributes that help improve their overall employability. Music graduates are employed across a varied range of fields such as publishing, editing, media production, broadcasting and marketing. It is also

the case that large numbers of music graduates work in finance, banking and the legal world. A report from the Culture and Sport Evidence Programme “Understanding the impact of engagement in culture and sport”, found that the employability of students who study the arts is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment. And indeed our UK conservatoires also show very high levels of employability for their students.

If the UK, post-Brexit, is going to be an ‘international trading nation’ as we have heard, children and young people must be educated for the industries of the future.

Figures published – and celebrated – by the Government show that the UK’s Creative Industries grew by 8.9 per cent in 2014 – almost double the UK economy as a whole [[source](#)].

Our creative industries are now worth a record £87.4 billion to the UK economy [[source](#)], (comparable to financial services or the construction industry) and there are 2.8 million jobs (1 in 11 jobs) in the creative economy. It is precisely these sectors that will generate the workforce of the future, it is precisely these skills that – when combined with science and engineering – generate new economic growth.

The music sector contributed a staggering £4.1bn to the UK's economy. The global success of artists like Adele, Sam Smith and Ed Sheeran helped recorded music exports rise by 17% as British artists once-again dominated the global charts. Music provides 117,000 full time jobs. Most of these people are at its creative heart - composing, creating, recording and shaping the future of music. And let us not forget the 26 million visits made to UK live music events last year. So you can see the potency of culture both in terms of income generation and engagement.

According to a study by researchers at Oxford University and Deloitte:

“In the future, businesses will need more skills, including: digital know-how, management capability, creativity, entrepreneurship and complex problem solving.”

Given that about 35% of current jobs in the UK are at high risk of computerisation over the next 10 to 20 years, music is going to be critical in this new world.

This depiction of a future run by robots was reiterated in a recent report by Carl Frey co-director of the Oxford Martin programme on technology and employment at Oxford University. The report suggested that 15 million jobs are at risk of automation in the UK. On the low end of his research, alongside doctors, surgeons, audiologists and occupational therapists and multi-media artists stood just 1.49% chance of computerisation, musicians, writers and authors had a 3.84% chance of computerisation and elementary school teachers a 0.44% chance of computerisation.

Things were not quite so positive for credit analysts who have a 97.85% chance of computerisation.

We all know the importance of cultural opportunities for young people and the potential for culture to transform places and the lives of people who live there. The Culture White Paper published by the DCMS in March 2016 reiterated the responsibility for all state-funded schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils.

Ofsted reinforces these curriculum obligations. A school will be judged, to have serious weaknesses if there are important weaknesses in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

So with both the extrinsic and intrinsic arguments being so in favour of a well-balanced curriculum, why are we still struggling to make the case in our schools. One answer is the EBacc and the mixed messages head teachers are receiving.

The EBacc was first proposed in November 2010. On 7 February 2013 after a large scale campaign coordinated by the ISM, the EBacc measure was dropped. Michael Gove called it a bridge too far. Instead he introduced the eight subject school accountability measures which allowed creative subjects to count (called Progress 8 and Best 8). This move was welcomed across the creative industries and education sectors.

The EBacc is a list of five subject areas deemed more valuable by the Government. To get the EBacc you must study a minimum of seven GCSEs, and students could be forced to study up to ten GCSEs. This would leave little room for other subjects like art & design, dance, design & technology, drama and music.

Both universities and businesses ([including the CBI](#)) have asked the Government to think again on the exclusion of arts subjects. And even the Chair, Neil Carmichael, MP, of the Education Select Committee came out against it this month.

Speaking to TES, Mr Carmichael said: “I am personally interested in the Edge Foundation's idea of making an EBacc out of a group of subjects. Their publication is very interesting.”

The most recent figures published by the Department also show - since 2010 - creative, artistic and technical subject uptake at GCSE has declined by 20%. Since 2015, the fall for the creative, artistic and technical subjects at GCSE has been 8% and for music it has been just over 4%.

There has of course been some good news not least the Government's announcement of a £300m investment in music education hubs, which comes nearly five years after the launch of the National Plan for Music Education.

Keeping creative, artistic and technical subjects in our schools is a good way to support our thriving creative industries – which form such a vital part of our economy. We cannot afford to exacerbate the skills gap facing our creative businesses, and we cannot afford to lose a broad and balanced curriculum in our schools.

All of you here shape the lives of your students. Sometimes you will be aware of just how great an impact you have had and sometimes you will not be. I would like to share with you some personal testimony from a range of performers which really does show the power of what you do. The first is from Laura Mvula which appeared in the Huffington Post in December 2016. She said:

“Music in some way, shape or form has and will touch the lives of each of us. It excites, heals, motivates and uplifts us. For me personally music has been a constant as I moved from childhood to adolescence to adulthood.”

“Learning to play the piano from the age of 8 was the start of my relationship with music through education. Even just hearing my teacher Mrs Matthews play the piano was something I looked forward to each week. Mrs Matthews encouraged me to develop musical style and to have the confidence to play beyond the notes on the page. She had genuine faith in all her students and had an immense amount of patience. After Mrs Matthews there were so many teachers who took the time to invest in music education. It was a teacher who first suggested I tried singing solo – something I had never been interested in doing. It was a teacher who introduced me to composition as a degree option and, once at Birmingham Conservatoire pursuing that degree it was a teacher who suggested I consider writing and performing my own music. All of these teachers went over and above to draw out the best in me and to push me to keep going. They truly cared about developing young people’s creative lives.”

“Music teachers of this kind through that unwavering dedication both in and out of school are the unsung superheroes of the education system.”

And then Alison Balsom has said that “learning music is not a luxury”. This certainly reflects her own background. She started to learn music at a primary in Royston called Tannery Drift where she had the chance to learn lots of different instruments and came into contact in her words with “great, inspiring teachers”. She started with the trumpet and she never waivered from her choice. In an article from 2014 she said “You have got to have inspiring mentors, people who are passionate about it as well and support you.” She said of her first music teacher “I had this amazing teacher called Bill Thompson. He was the most inspiring teacher and really super fun. All of us couldn’t wait for band practice. It was a little brass group actually – there were probably seven of us – but quite a lot of us have gone on to become professional musicians, which tells you a lot about the teaching.”

And Damien Lewis said of his music teacher:

“When I was roughly your age, 11 or 12, I sang in a chamber choir and had an inspirational teacher, Mr Woodgate, who rearranged Beatles tunes. And so, as an 11 year old I was able to sing

Eleanor Rigby and I Love Her and other Beatles tunes in four-part harmony, and it's a memory I treasure to this day."

So what you are doing at the coal face is incredibly important. You are working on so many different levels and giving young people the opportunity to pursue their dream through to tackling diversity and inclusivity, enabling youngsters to find their creative voices and preparing students for a very challenging job market. It is a huge challenge but one which I am sure is not beyond you.

Remember the words of Thomas Carlyle and the Dalai Lama. Carlyle said: "When the oak felled the whole forest echoes with its fall, but 100 acorns are sown in silence by an unnoticed breeze."

And the Dalai Lama also something said very similar: "Just as ripples spread out when a single pebble is dropped in to water, the actions of individuals have far reaching affects."

You may feel that your voice may not be heard and that there is no point in speaking up. But always remember that there is something

you can do. Whether it is making use of the excellent music education, a Guide for Governors document produced by Arts Council England, the National Governors Association and Music Mark, or taking part in the Bacc for the Future campaign.

Remember you can play your part whether it is talking to your head teacher, your governors, bringing your MP or indeed your councillors into school to listen to a concert. And all of this makes an impact. So go forth superheroes of the education system and have a great day!