

Music in schools: sound partnerships

Eight effective music education partnerships



The schools featured in this case study booklet exemplify good practice in building effective partnerships to improve access and raise achievement in music for all groups of pupils. These schools were visited as part of the survey for the report *Music in schools: sound partnerships*; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120282.

Five key actions taken by the most successful schools emerged strongly during the survey. In these schools, music education partnerships were used well to:

- ensure good value for money, through rigorous monitoring and evaluation
- ensure equal access to, and achievement in, music for all groups of pupils
- augment and support, rather than replace, the classroom music curriculum
- improve the practice of teachers and music professionals
- improve senior leaders' knowledge and understanding about music education.

The featured schools have paid close attention to most, if not all of these five key actions. The text links to sound files, video files and external websites and resources.

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Ensuring musical quality and total inclusion in a small school: Crich Junior School with Derbyshire City and County Music Partnership

The music education partners



- Crich is a very small junior school with around 50 pupils, situated in the heart of the Peak district. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, although nearly all are of White British heritage. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average, as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Crich Junior School was judged to be good in its last inspection.¹
- **Derbyshire City and County Music Partnership** was formed as a joint venture between Derby City and Derbyshire County Councils.² The partnership facilitates instrument, vocal, and whole class music tuition for schools, and organises music centres and ensembles across the city and county. A small core of staff are employed permanently by the partnership; the great majority of the two-hundred-plus full- and part-time teachers are accredited by the partnership but self-employed. Teachers are awarded partnership accreditation after audition, interview, and observation of their teaching. In return, while remaining self-employed, they are offered free continuing professional development, access to instruments and resources, and regular support from the core partnership management team.

Music at Crich Junior School since 2001



**Cheryl Julian,
Headteacher**

- Shortly after Cheryl Julian arrived as headteacher in 2001, she approached the Derbyshire City and County Music Partnership to request additional instrumental tuition for pupils. For the first few years of the programme, things did not go smoothly; as a small school, it was difficult to justify visits by more than one or two peripatetic teachers and, as a result, the range of instruments on offer was limited. Furthermore, rapid changes in music staffing caused difficulties in maintaining the programme continuously. However, the school persisted and by 2005, lessons were

¹ Crich Junior School inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/112534.

² www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools_colleges/school_life/out_of_school_activities/music_partnership.

offered in flute, violin, piano, guitar, cello and trumpet. The following year recorder classes started led by Caroline Hand, a parent volunteer.

- In 2007, the school orchestra was formed under the direction of Tracey Kearney, an accredited music partnership teacher. In 2009, **Sing Up** training led to one of the classroom teachers forming a school choir and, before long, every child in the school was involved in an extra-curricular music ensemble.³ Today, music is central to the life of the school. As well as class-based music lessons, led by class teachers, the whole school has a weekly ensemble session – timetabled during the school day – where every child participates in mixed-age rehearsals of either orchestra, choir, or recorders.
- A short video extract of the school orchestra in rehearsal is available on **Derbyshire County Council's** website.⁴

▶ Play

A short video extract of the Crich Primary School orchestra in rehearsal.

Every child a musician

- There are two remarkable overriding characteristics of music at Crich Junior School.
 - Standards are outstanding. A significant number of pupils are working towards Associated Board instrumental examinations. The school orchestra, which numbers over 30 of the 50 pupils and is still led by Tracey Kearney, plays challenging arrangements of well-known classics and provides accompaniment for the school choir, which includes all pupils who are not in the orchestra. The four-part recorder consort, too, performs to a very high standard.
 - Music at Crich is inclusive. It is true that, as a small school, staff are able to know the individual needs and interests of every child very well and it is much easier to provide music tuition for every pupil than, say, in a school of 300. However, what is remarkable is that musical activities are managed in a way that allows pupils of all ages and all abilities to work, learn, and make music together. For example, the school orchestra includes Grade 5 violinists – one of whom helps to take rehearsals and conduct performances – alongside pupils with learning difficulties.

³ www.singup.org.

⁴ www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools_colleges/school_life/out_of_school_activities/music_partnership/schools/primary_schools/default.asp.

Musical arrangements of orchestral repertoire are made according to need, and teaching assistants are very well deployed to support the less able pupils.

Strong management, great music

- Key to the success of music at Crich is the headteacher's determination, not only to establish and sustain good provision, but also to ensure that every child is included and is able to achieve. Meeting this ambition has taken considerable time and persistence, together with a robust approach to quality assurance.
- Quality assurance is also provided by the Derbyshire City and County Music Partnership. Jayne Briggs, head of the partnership, knows that quality assurance is both a crucial part of the partnership's service to schools but also a shared responsibility.

'It's vital that the partnership has a strategic oversight of our schools and our teachers so that we can set high standards, celebrate and share good practice, and intervene and support where necessary. But it's also vital that we share these expectations and ambitions with schools and headteachers, and that headteachers tell us when they are not happy with the quality of our accredited teachers' work'.

- An important strand of the Partnership's quality assurance programme is the [Derbyshire City and County Music Partnership Quality Mark](#) initiative. This quality mark is awarded to schools in Derbyshire and Derby City that demonstrate good practice in supporting the provision of instrumental teaching and the work of their instrumental teachers. Self-evaluation by the school is followed by a visit from a member of the Partnership's management team, observation of provision, and a feedback letter that highlights strengths and suggests areas for development. No formal grades are awarded, apart from the award of the Quality Mark where appropriate. Evidence from the recent Quality Mark assessment of Crich Junior School, which happened shortly before the visit by HM Inspectors, suggested that the Partnership's judgements were both accurate and very helpful in promoting good dialogue with the school's leadership and promoting even further improvement in a small school with a remarkable level and quality of music provision.



Giving every student a voice: Emmanuel College with The Sage Gateshead



The music education partners

- **Emmanuel College** was founded in 1990.⁵ The college has grown and now has 1,250 students on roll across the 11 to 19 age range. The proportions of disabled students and those who have special educational needs, students known to be eligible for free school meals, and who speak English as an additional language, are all below national averages. In its last inspection in June 2009, Emmanuel College was judged to be outstanding.⁶ Inspectors visited Emmanuel College as part of Ofsted's 'good practice' programme in May 2012, to look specifically at the music education partnership with The Sage Gateshead.
- The **Sage Gateshead's** music and arts centre opened in 2004.⁷ Its 'Join in and make music' programme includes provision for early years, work with schools, vocal and instrumental learning, professional learning, community music, further and higher education, and teachers' professional development. Around 30% of this work takes place at The Sage Gateshead, with the rest of the programme taking place in community settings. The Sage Gateshead receives 23% of its revenue from Arts Council England funding and earns the rest through a mixture of ticket income, contracts for service delivery, charitable donations and commercial trading.⁸
- Emmanuel College's partnership with The Sage Gateshead began in September 2009. With considerable encouragement from the college's founder-sponsor Sir Peter Vardy, an experienced vocal leader from The Sage Gateshead was sought, to change the attitudes of students and staff throughout the college to singing. Sir Peter - himself a former chorister at Durham Cathedral - was determined to see the work of the college's music department enhanced through the catalyst of high-quality, imaginative vocal work.
- Sharon Durant was initially engaged to work at the school for two-and-a-half days a week. As well as leading year-group singing sessions that involved all students, Sharon instigated a range of formal extra-curricular singing groups. These included a sixth-form choir, a boys-only vocal ensemble, and singing support sessions for students with learning difficulties. Sharon was innovative and creative in encouraging participation, including by taking her guitar and song-sheets



Sharon Durant

⁵ www.emmanuelctc.org.uk.

⁶ Emmanuel College inspection report;
www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/108420.

⁷ <http://thesagegateshead.org>.

⁸ www.artscouncil.org.uk.

onto the corridors and out to the school yard at break-times.

Sharon also formed a staff choir, and a special professional development session on singing was held for all 150 staff at the college.

- During the second year of the partnership, the emphasis moved to improving the quality, as well as the quantity of vocal work. Students began to participate in high-profile concerts and workshops beyond the college, including in Newcastle City Hall, and at The Sage Gateshead with Bobby McFerrin. It was during this year that the success of the partnership caused the college to look again at the entire Key Stage 3 music curriculum. As a result, it has now embarked on an ambitious project in parallel to the vocal scheme where, in addition to regular curriculum music lessons, a majority of students in Years 7 and 8 are also learning to play woodwind, brass or string instruments in small groups. Instruments are provided free of charge, with a charge to parents of £99 for the first year of tuition. The college engages its own team of instrumental teachers.
- A further and significant feature of the partnership is the way that curriculum teachers at Emmanuel College have become fully involved in the vocal work. Classroom observations during the inspectors' visit included observation of a Year 7 lower ability group where pupils were learning techniques of melodic composition and stave notation through skilful use of the **Curwen-Kodaly method**.⁹ This was delivered by one of the college's music curriculum teachers. The college reported that involvement in the vocal partnership work had played a significant role in improving students' willingness to participate in music education – particularly the boys.
- The college has also built partnerships with two instrumental ensembles. The **Northern Sinfonia**, also based at The Sage Gateshead, has recently completed an orchestral project at Emmanuel and the college's Concert Club offers subsidised tickets for Northern Sinfonia concerts.¹⁰ In addition, the college has also developed strong links with the **Reg Vardy Brass Band**.¹¹
- A performance by 'One Voice', directed by Sharon Durant can be found on the **Ofsted website**.¹² Before the performance, Sharon can be heard reminding the singers about the different components of the arrangement, including through vocal modelling.
- An extract from a Year 7 singing session, led by Sharon Durant is found on the **Ofsted website**.¹³ Again, Sharon's leadership is centred around vocal modelling, judiciously supported by verbal instruction and questioning.

⁹ www.britishkodalyacademy.org/news_noticeboard.htm.

¹⁰ <http://thesagegateshead.org/about-us/northern-sinfonia>.

¹¹ www.regvardyband.co.uk.

¹² www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120311.

¹³ As above.

► Play

A performance by 'One Voice' directed by Sharon Durant. Before the performance, Sharon can be heard reminding the singers about the different components of the arrangement, including through vocal modelling.

► Play

An extract from a Year 7 singing session led by Sharon Durant. Sharon's leadership is centred around vocal modelling, judiciously supported by verbal instruction and questioning.

Key achievement and improvement indicators

- There are a number of key indicators of achievement and improvement at Emmanuel College.
 - All 200 Year 7 students attend a weekly choir rehearsal as a timetabled activity, in addition to their regular classroom music curriculum lessons.
 - There has been a significant increase in the proportions participating in extra-curricular music activities, particularly in Years 7 and 8 where almost one in every four students is involved.
 - Over 20% of the student population is now learning to play a musical instrument. The proportions of boys and girls receiving instrumental tuition are similar, although significantly more girls than boys participate in extra-curricular activities.
 - There has been a dramatic increase in the number of students taking examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.¹⁴ In 2011-2012, over 90 students were entered for these qualifications compared with just five students in 2008-2009, before the partnership started.
 - The proportion of students opting for GCSE music was broadly average in 2010; it is now above average.

¹⁴ www.abrsm.org/en/home.

Why this music education partnership is effective

- Clearly, the proximity of The Sage Gateshead to Emmanuel College is hugely advantageous. This alone, however, is no guarantee of the partnership working effectively. Inspectors identified four key factors that underpinned the success of this partnership.
 - **Sustained funding:** although The Sage Gateshead receives subsidies from other sources, the music education programme requires significant additional funding from the participating schools. Emmanuel College has committed between £14,000 and £22,000 each year over the past three years to partnership projects with The Sage Gateshead. This long-term financial commitment is a key factor in the partnership's success, not least because it has allowed the vocal work to develop weekly, in depth, and throughout the college, over a sustained period of three years.
 - **Rigorous monitoring and evaluation:** in return for the funding, The Sage Gateshead has provided high quality vocal and musical leadership. This is underpinned by teaching that includes excellent modelling and an expectation that students will spend the great majority of their time in sessions engaging practically with music through singing. However, the college has not taken the success of the projects for granted. Led by Vice-Principal Matt Waterfield, senior leaders set five key objectives and five sources of quantifiable and qualitative evidence against which the effectiveness of the partnership with The Sage Gateshead would be measured. This included consideration of the views of students and their parents. Reports to college directors, and liaison with Sarah Kekus, Head of the Schools' Programme at The Sage Gateshead, ensure that good value for money is assured and demonstrated.
 - **A holistic approach to partnership working:** improvements in music have not relied on the partnership work; nor is the partnership seen as a replacement for classroom curriculum music provision. On the contrary, the higher standards achieved in singing through the partnership work have spurred improvements and enhancements in other areas of provision, including partnerships with other providers and professionals.
 - **Continuing professional development for all:** the partnership work has placed emphasis on both student and staff development. Curriculum teachers in music have been fully involved in the extra-curricular and curriculum singing sessions; these teachers have taken learning from these sessions into their own classroom practice and have successfully linked the singing work to the classroom programmes. As importantly, the vocal leader from The Sage Gateshead has been given opportunities to extend and improve her own practice by learning from the school staff and contributing to regular classroom curriculum teaching.

Next steps for music at Emmanuel College



**Jonathan Winch,
Principal**

- Principal Jonathan Winch is forthright in his self-evaluation of music at Emmanuel College. He declares, 'We are on a journey. We have not arrived!' The evolution of the partnership with The Sage Gateshead, and the addition of other music education projects, shows very clearly the college's desire for continuous improvement. When inspectors visited, three areas for further improvement were agreed.
- First, the college recognises, through its own analysis of participation, that more could be done to involve and encourage students known to be in receipt of free school meals, and those from non-White British backgrounds, in musical activities.
- Second, the robust evaluation that has underpinned the partnership with The Sage Gateshead has not been applied so thoroughly to the instrumental teaching programme. While there is clearly some very encouraging evidence that standards in this work have improved, the college recognises that more could be done to monitor these lessons.
- Finally, with the advent of the Gateshead and South Tyneside Music Hub in September 2012, senior leaders at Emmanuel recognise that there are opportunities for students to benefit from the hub funding and for the college to build improved links with feeder primary schools, and particularly to learn more about and build upon their 'Wider Opportunities' programmes.





Improving primary-secondary transition in Penzance: Humphry Davy and Newlyn School with Musical Bridges

The music education partners

- **Musical Bridges** – Transforming Transition, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, aims to help primary and secondary schools strengthen their students' experience of transition from primary to secondary school in and through

music.¹⁵ The initiative is designed for primary teachers, primary music subject leaders and secondary music teachers, but has also proved useful to headteachers and senior school leaders with responsibility for school transfer arrangements. Musical Bridges also supports local authorities and music education hubs by providing a music transition framework to help connect and develop students' musical progress between primary and secondary school.

- One of the first phase 'Musical Bridges' projects was with primary and secondary schools in Penzance. Ofsted conducted a music subject inspection at the **Humphry Davy School** in March 2010 – prior to the start of the Musical Bridges work – when the overall effectiveness of music was judged to be satisfactory.¹⁶ In July 2012, Newlyn School, a feeder primary for Humphry Davy, received a subject inspection, when the overall effectiveness of music was judged as good.¹⁷ The day after the Newlyn inspection, Ofsted returned to Humphry Davy School to look at the impact of the Musical Bridges work and also to consider the overall progress made since the 2010 subject inspection.¹⁸



**Headteachers
Bill Marshall and
Alison Whitney**

¹⁵ www.musicalbridges.org.uk.

¹⁶ www.humphry-davy.cornwall.sch.uk.

¹⁷ Newlyn school inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/111987.

¹⁸ Humphry Davy school inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/112067.

- The proportions of students in receipt of free schools and with special education needs or disabilities are above average in both Newlyn and Humphry Davy schools. At the last inspections, Newlyn was judged satisfactory overall and Humphry Davy was judged good overall.

- Leonora Davies, Musical Bridges consultant, says that the key to the Penzance partnership's success is inclusion, on all levels.

'There are five 'transition bridges' – administrative, personal and social, curricular, pedagogic, and independent learning. Each demands commitment and understanding from all school leaders and managers involved, and each demands that all groups of pupils are considered.'

- As far as the pupils are concerned, there is little doubt that involvement in cross-phase musical activity, both in and out of the classroom, has done much to improve their confidence – and that of their parents. Parents attending the Humphry Davy new intake evening, which coincided with the July 2012 visit by Ofsted, were overwhelmingly positive about the self-esteem and ambition that this work had given their children – as one parent told inspectors,

'...involvement in music has demystified the transfer process – my son really does know that he will be welcome and be able to contribute the moment he arrives at Humphry Davy.'

- Typically, primary-secondary liaison in music education gives most attention to the students who take part in additional instrumental tuition and extra-curricular music. While this is also a focus in Penzance, such liaison goes beyond simply supplying details of grade examinations or a one-off concert at the end of the summer term. Through the 'Musical Bridges' initiative, Humphry Davy School has organised a Transition Band and Transition Choir – large groups that run throughout the year, involving older pupils from the primary schools and Key Stage 3 students. The band and choir, along with other ensembles from Humphry Davy and Newlyn, play a central part in the musical life of Penzance, including at the annual Mazey Day festivities.
- Another striking aspect of the Musical Bridges project in Penzance is the close working relationships between headteachers Alison Whitney and Bill Marshall, and Jo Fitzgerald and James Oecken, the music coordinators. It's clear that dialogue between the two schools goes way beyond strategy and meetings.
- Jo and James have been given time to visit each other's classrooms and engage in regular professional discussions. As a result, the music coordinators have a very good understanding of each other's work and pedagogical philosophy, and both have adapted their own teaching styles as a consequence. A number of practical classroom initiatives



have started, including a curriculum transition project for Year 6 pupils – The Passenger,¹⁹ using materials from Musical Futures,²⁰ another Paul Hamlyn Foundation initiative.

- A short video about the Musical Bridges initiative, including interviews with pupils, can be found on the Musical Bridges website.²¹

▶ Play

A short video about the Musical Bridges initiative, including interviews with pupils.

Improving music in schools, the importance of great leadership at all levels

- In March 2010, there was no doubt that, as a specialist music college, Humphry Davy had built some impressive partnerships with external organisations, such as the Purcell School. The inspection found teaching to be good, with good capacity for further improvement. However, on a day-to-day basis, students weren't making good enough progress because of key weaknesses in the curriculum, both at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
- Returning in July 2012, HM Inspectors saw that the school had made outstanding progress since March 2010. The Key Stage 3 programme had been thoroughly overhauled and restructured to include a much stronger focus on a broader range of different musical and cultural styles. All students now followed this course for the full three years of Key Stage 3 (rather than two years, as was the case in 2010), and a GCSE music course had been reintroduced with the proportion of students opting to continue studying music in Key Stage 4 increased to three times the national average. The quality of singing work had improved considerably, and new boys' and chamber choirs were thriving. Furthermore, the school had taken firm action to ensure that all music teaching, whether whole-class or by the visiting instrumental and vocal teachers, was monitored regularly and robustly. This included members of the local authority music service and the independent teachers employed directly by the school. To do this, James Oecken is allocated the equivalent of one day every fortnight to manage and quality-assure the work of the 'peris'.

¹⁹ www.musicalfutures.org.uk/c/Transition+project.

²⁰ www.musicalfutures.org.uk.

²¹ www.musicalbridges.org.uk.



- Headteacher Bill Marshall has also taken a leading and active role in helping to raise standards in music. Bill took part in joint lesson observations with HM Inspectors during the March 2010 subject inspection, and has since conducted further visits to music lessons and trialled **Ofsted's guidance for senior leaders observing music in schools**.²² Bill says:

'I have a love of learning, still, and always appreciate the opportunity to reflect on practice. As headteacher, especially of a specialist music college, it's vital that I understand the characteristics of good teaching and learning in music as opposed, say, to science (my own subject specialism).'

- A further sign of this strong leadership is the acknowledgement that there is more to do, both at Humphry Davy and in the Penzance partnership. In particular, the music coordinators, Jo Fitzgerald and James Oecken recognise that cross-phase curriculum planning could extend beyond the transition project to consider longer term issues of musical progression from Year 1 to Year 9. However, the strong track record of both headteachers and musical coordinators in securing good practice through partnership working, suggests that there is excellent capacity for further improvement in music at both schools.

The screenshot shows a page from an Ofsted guidance document. At the top right is the Ofsted logo with the tagline 'raising standards improving lives'. The title of the document is 'Music in schools: promoting good practice'. Below the title is a subtitle: 'Guidance from HMI for teachers, headteachers, and music hub leaders when observing musical teaching and learning'. A quote from a school states: 'Schools, all other funded providers of music education, and providers of Continuing Professional Development should work together to... strengthen senior leaders' knowledge of music in schools by increasing headteachers' and senior leaders' knowledge and understanding about the key characteristics of effective music provision, including the appropriate use of musical assessment and the importance of teachers' musical preparation, so that they can more effectively observe and support music in their schools.' This is attributed to 'Music in schools: raising standards, Ofsted, 2012'. The main body of text explains that the guidance was produced by specialist music HMI in response to a key priority from the 2012 Ofsted term 1 music report. It outlines the six wide studies of good practice published alongside the report at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130136, also providing musical illustrations to exemplify the key principles for observation. It notes that while there is no single, definitive, 'approved' format for structuring effective music lessons, inspection evidence shows that there are, however, some broad principles for all good musical teaching and learning, to mirror to all music education contexts. The principles and key questions combined in this guidance are applicable to all forms of music teaching and learning – in the classroom, in additional instrumental and vocal tuition, in ensemble work, and in project work led by music professionals and amateurs. The guidance is intended for use in schools, in music hubs, and in music education partnerships. It is intended to support dialogue between teachers, headteachers, and music education hubs. The principles can be considered whether the pupils are in Key Stage 1, part of a whole-class class on ensemble programs, competing in a popular style, studying for GCSE or A Level, preparing for a Grade 6 practical examination, or taking part in a general workshop. When observing, accuracy must always be taken into account in the context of the school and pupils being inspected, and against nationally agreed standards. A final note states: 'This guidance is not an inspection or performance management instrument, and should not be used as such. Rather, it is intended to promote dialogue and understanding about the features of good teaching that results in good musical learning.' At the bottom, it repeats the title and subtitle, and has a page number '1'.

²² Ofsted's guidance for senior leaders observing music in schools; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/subject-professional-development-materials-music-schools-promoting-good-practice.

CPD for all at the heart of partnership work: King Edward VI Handsworth School with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group

The music education partners



- **King Edward VI Handsworth School** is a selective girls' school in Birmingham.²³ Very few students have disabilities or special educational needs, and well-below average numbers are eligible for free school meals. Around a third of students are from White British backgrounds, a third from Indian Asian backgrounds, and a third from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds. The school converted to academy status in September 2011; the last inspection of the predecessor school, in April 2008, judged the school's overall effectiveness to be outstanding.²⁴
- **Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (BCMG)** was formed in 1987.²⁵ The core of BCMG's work is the performance of new music, and the Group has premiered over 150 new works by leading composers. BCMG has a long tradition of attracting new audiences for contemporary music, and has an extensive learning programme, engaging a wide range of people (including students in a range of schools) with the composition and performance of new music.
- Although the school makes a considerable financial investment in music provision, the BCMG projects are funded in great part by funding from Arts Council England, Birmingham City Council and private charitable foundations, including the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

The history, key features and impact of the partnership

- The school's partnership with BCMG goes back to 2002, when the school participated in Exchanging Notes, a four-day symposium led by BCMG and the Birmingham local authority music adviser, Robert Bunting. Then, in 2005, A-level students worked with a professional cellist and the composer Tansy Davies on the 'Sequenza' project, based on Luciano Berio's instrumental studies of the same

²³ www.kingedwardvi.bham.sch.uk.

²⁴ King Edward VI School inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/103551.

²⁵ www.bcmg.org.uk.

name. Sequenza was followed by a further Exchanging Notes initiative. BCMG's resource packs for Exchanging Notes can be found on the BCMG website.²⁶

- Using the BCMG Sequenza model, the school has developed its own scheme of learning, involving members of the school's visiting instrumental teaching staff as expert performers instead of BCMG musicians. The benefits of this early focus on composing skills can be seen in the significant improvements in GCSE results. In the year before the BCMG partnership was formed, the average mark for students' composing was 78%; in 2010 and 2011, the average marks were 95% and 93%.
- In 2008, the school took part in the 'Electro-Sequenza' project with BCMG; this time working with GCSE students and professional musicians, including the pianist and composer David Horne. Recordings of King Edward VI students' work can be heard on the BCMG website.
- Most recently, another cohort of GCSE musicians have been working with David Horne on the 'Listen, Imagine, Compose' project. This project also involved further partnership with Sound and Music and with Professor Martin Fautley from Birmingham City University who was engaged to research the project.²⁷ In particular, they use his expertise in musical assessment to research the different ways in which composers and musicians used questioning techniques to improve students' musical understanding. A third of the total time for this project has been devoted to planning, reflection and evaluation by the teachers, musicians, and academics involved – time well spent, according to BCMG's education manager, Nancy Evans.

'I want the BCMG composers and musicians to be challenged, and develop their understanding of what makes for good teaching and learning, as well as good music. It's important for students to learn about how composers think, but it's also important for composers and musicians to think about how students learn.'

- Nick Heppel, Head of Music, is in little doubt about the value of the school's work with BCMG.

'This partnership has brought huge benefits, not just to the participating students, but also to the teachers, professional musicians and professional composers who have taken part. Obviously, the students have created high quality compositions that have helped them achieve the highest grades at GCSE and A-level, and a number have gone on to specialise in composing at university. One of our students won the BBC Proms 'Inspire' competition for her Electro-Sequenza composition. I have developed my own repertoire of compositional techniques and my ability to generate and develop musical ideas. For the school, quite apart from the kudos of working with BCMG and well-known, successful composers, the

²⁶ www.bcmg.org.uk/downloads.php?id=379.

²⁷ www.soundandmusic.org.



partnership has made a significant contribution to our whole-school development of independent learning skills, learning to take risks, and promoting imaginative thinking – particularly important to help us stretch and challenge some very able girls.’

- David Horne agrees.

‘Working with schools through the BCMG has made me a better composer – and it’s also improved my teaching and lecturing work in higher education, too. I need to think about the composing process more analytically so that I can show students how music works and can be made to work, to develop their curiosity – and this is different to lecturing them about how I or other composers have worked.’

- Elisabeth Wager, deputy headteacher, can see the benefits of this approach very clearly.

‘We’re trying constantly to develop strong, independent learners. That means teaching them – and allowing them – to take risks. Sometimes, that means failing – but you have to fail sometimes in order to learn. The quality of students’ work at the end of these projects, the improved examination marks, and the confidence that working with BCMG has given our students shows that the approach works. The partnership is an example of high quality teaching and deep learning that we could do well to apply across all areas of the curriculum’.

Next steps for music at King Edward VI Handsworth School

- Although King Edward VI Handsworth School was not selected for a full subject inspection, observation of regular classroom and extra-curricular activities during the visit revealed some particularly strong practice – including a dhol drumming group that was taught extremely musically through expert modelling and concise instruction. In a GCSE lesson, students’ understanding of serial composing techniques was accelerated through some excellent composing and performing tasks. The school recognises that the Key Stage 3 music course could set even higher expectations with regard to the standards that students can achieve, particularly in view of the school’s selective intake. Improvements made to results at GCSE and A Level, including through partnership work, suggest that the school is very well placed to bring about improvements in Key Stage 3, too.



Coordinating and sustaining multiple, complementary partnerships: Morpeth School, Tower Hamlets



SERIOUS

**Guildhall
SCHOOL**
of Music & Drama



The music education partners

- **Morpeth School** is a large secondary school in Bethnal Green, in London's East End.²⁸ Students come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds; over half come from a Bangladeshi heritage and a high proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled students or those who have special educational needs is higher than average and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is very high. In its last inspection, Morpeth School was judged outstanding in every respect.²⁹
- Over the past ten years, the school has developed long-term working relationships with a large and eclectic range of music education partners to provide additional workshops and performance activities for students. These include the **Guildhall School of Music and Drama**, based at the Barbican Centre, 'Serious' (producers of live, jazz and contemporary music including the London Jazz Festival), and the **Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service**.^{30,31,32}

- Morpeth School also has strong partnership links with feeder primary schools, including John Scurr Primary School, featured in an Ofsted **good practice video**.³³

► Play

A good practice film about John Scurr Primary School is available on the Ofsted website. It includes singing work in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The film exemplifies good practice in music teaching and the curriculum which meet the needs of all groups of learners.

²⁸ www.morpethschool.org.uk.

²⁹ Morpeth school inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/100967.

³⁰ www.gsmd.ac.uk.

³¹ www.serious.org.uk.

³² www.webfronter.com/towerhamlets/thames.

³³ www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/music-schools-wider-still-and-wider-good-practice-case-study-john-scurr-primary-school.

Raising standards of performance for all pupils through partnership

- Sir Alasdair Macdonald, Executive Headteacher, is unequivocal about the high priority given to music at Morpeth;



'We all have to make choices; at Morpeth, we choose to spend considerable sums of money on music because it's an investment that brings fantastic returns for the whole school. Everyone here recognises that excellent arts work enriches the whole curriculum.'

Sir Alasdair Macdonald, Executive Headteacher

- This financial investment made by the school is considerable; parents are not charged for the cost of additional instrumental and vocal tuition.
- The school's commitment to music education is matched by highly effective planning and excellent support for the music department by senior managers. The music department staff handbook is a key working document for the five curriculum music teachers and the 13 instrumental and vocal teachers. At the heart of Morpeth's music provision is the classroom curriculum for all students, taught in exceptionally spacious and well-equipped accommodation. This is complemented by an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities, workshops, and opportunities to work with musicians from around the world.
- There is shared ownership of clear, concise departmental strategies for promoting equalities and high standards; a simple assessment scheme shows how students are expected to become better musicians as they progress through the school; and the departmental action plan shows how all aspects of music at Morpeth are rigorously monitored to ensure the school's high expectations are met.

Managing the music department and leading musical learning

- At Morpeth School, a Music Development Manager is responsible for department administration and management. His role includes responsibility for organising additional tuition and extra-curricular music programmes, securing additional funding and resources from commercial and public organisations, and administering the continuing professional development programme for music staff.
- All this allows Peter Romhany, Head of Music, to give his full attention to promoting high standards of musical teaching and learning, including securing high standards when working with professional partners. It also allows Peter to maintain his professional knowledge and share his expertise with colleagues nationally, including through the [Teaching Music](#) online community and through

the **Musical Futures** network.^{34,35} Morpeth is a Musical Futures Champion School. The department continuously looks for the next steps in school improvement. For example, staff have recently identified the need to provide greater focus to western art-music styles to match the outstanding opportunities in popular and world music genres.

- A short video, presented by Peter Romhany and showing a day in the life of Morpeth School music department including classroom curriculum music, extra-curricular activities, individual tuition and partnership work, is available on YouTube.³⁶

▶ Play

A video showing a day in the life of Morpeth School music department including classroom curriculum music, extra-curricular activities, individual tuition and partnership work.

Raising expectations and musical standards for all pupils through partnership

- The success of the great management of music at Morpeth is reflected by the remarkable musical outcomes for students, staff and music education partners.
 - One third of all students in the school participate in additional instrumental and/or vocal tuition.
 - Over 100 students progress from Key Stage 3 to take a music qualification in Key Stage 4.
 - Excellent participation is secured for students from all groups, particularly boys and those from Muslim backgrounds. Discussions with students reveal that the school has worked extremely hard to build partnerships with parents and families and particularly to help them understand the importance of good music education.
- Partnerships with the local authority music services, local primary schools and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama ensure that students, staff and music professionals have an excellent understanding of progression in music education.
- The tradition of music at Morpeth, and many of the partnerships, was established well before the founding of THAMES, the local authority music service, in 2006. Although the school has continued to employ its own peripatetic teachers, it has

³⁴ www.teachingmusic.org.uk/forum.

³⁵ www.musicalfutures.org.uk.

³⁶ www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pdbQ4M7KeU.

been quick to draw on THAMES's resources where they offer new opportunities for Morpeth students. As importantly, THAMES recognises the advantage of having such a strong, well-established secondary music department in the local authority. Karen Brock, head of THAMES, also acknowledges that, as THAMES becomes the new music education hub for Tower Hamlets, building and facilitating flexible and mutually supportive partnerships between schools and professional music organisations is crucial.

'Within such a large and diverse borough, it's vital that we have schools such as Morpeth to model good practice, to help us target and support provision that is not as strong. It's also important that the music service is able to provide additional funding and opportunities to complement the work done by the school – for example, supporting students who have places at the Centre for Young Musicians at the Guildhall on Saturday mornings, and that students have access to our borough-wide ensembles and projects.'

- Sigrun Sævarsdóttir-Griffiths is Programme Leader for the Masters in Leadership course at the Guildhall. This develops students' own performance practice through exploration of different creative processes in a practical and reflective research environment including through leading education workshops. Sigrun is clear why the partnership is so strong. She explains:

'Because Morpeth has such a well-established music department, where good musical learning happens as a matter of course and students have such a positive and open attitude, I have confidence that I'm sending my students – some of who will be embarking on their first experience of leading a music education project - into a safe environment where they can learn very quickly and not be afraid to try things out. They often join the course with new and imaginative ideas, ideas which are only improved through working with the Morpeth students. And of course, the Morpeth students benefit enormously from working with performers of the highest calibre.'

- Katrina Duncan, Associate Director at Serious, believes that the strength of Morpeth School's music department lies in the staff team.

'The staff are totally committed to seizing every possible opportunity for the students – but not without also making every effort to ensure that these opportunities are of high quality and will have good benefit for the students' musical and wider cultural development. We know that we're always going to enjoy dialogue and challenge when we work with Morpeth – not challenge in the sense that the school and students are difficult to work with, but challenge in the expectation that our work and the outcomes for students must be of high quality. The consequence for us, and for our artists, is that we too enjoy good outcomes in terms of our learning and professional development.'

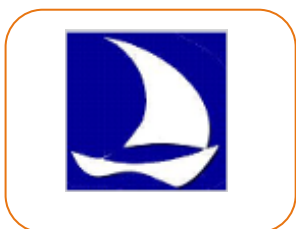
- Finally, Marie Maxwell, headteacher at Globe Primary School, believes that partnership has been a catalyst in raising expectations and ambitions amongst the local community.

‘Through our partnership work with Morpeth – including some generous additional funding for instrumental teaching – every pupil in Years 5 and 6 is now learning an instrument. We know that Morpeth makes a difference, because our pupils come back to visit us and show us how well they’re doing. The confidence that they started to build here is continued at Morpeth; the annual ‘big performances’ at the Barbican give our pupils the ambition that goes way beyond their immediate experience, and that of their families.’



Strong partnership between leaders and managers at all levels: St. Columb Minor Academy, Newquay

The music education partners



■ **St. Columb Minor Academy**, known locally as 'The Blue School', is a primary school of above-average size.³⁷ Serving an area of Newquay that includes a base for Her Majesty's armed forces, the proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times of year is well above average. There is also a higher than average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special education needs. Almost all pupils are of White British or Cornish ethnicity. The school converted to academy status in July 2011; the last inspection of the predecessor school judged overall effectiveness as good.³⁸ In March 2012, the school's subject survey inspection also judged the overall effectiveness of music to be good, with outstanding leadership and management.³⁹

Outstanding leadership of music through partnership

- The outstanding leadership of music at St. Columb Minor is due in no small part to outstanding partnership working within the school. Three key participants in this partnership are music coordinator Julie Jenkin, headteacher Jennie Walker, and link governor for music Barry Millington. The role that each plays is distinctive but complementary.
- Julie Jenkin is responsible for coordinating the day-to-day music curriculum, taught by class teachers. The music inspection report noted that the school's planning for the music element of this curriculum 'sets strong and appropriate expectations for pupils' musical development'. There was no doubt that a good quality, coordinated curriculum provision, for all pupils, was at the heart of the school's musical life.
- Provision for choirs, a programme of additional instrumental tuition, and the popular ocarina ensembles - which are led well by the headteacher - complement pupils' classroom experiences in music. Older pupils help Jennie Walker to tutor the younger groups, another excellent example of distributed leadership. The headteacher's active involvement and expert leadership of these groups gives a very powerful message about the importance of music education at St. Columb Minor.

³⁷ www.blueschool.co.uk.

³⁸ St. Columb Minor School (closed) inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/111908.

³⁹ St. Columb Minor Academy inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/136869.

- The third leadership partner is Barry Millington. As well as being a parent-governor, Barry teaches music at the neighbouring **Newquay Tretherras secondary school**, to where many of St. Columb's pupils progress at the end of Year 6.⁴⁰ Barry takes an active role in the musical life of the primary school, including high-quality piano accompaniments for the choirs. He also joins lessons and meets with the music coordinator in his role as link governor – a role he describes as 'critical friend'. As importantly, Barry provides a sustained link with the secondary school. This has led to workshops for the most gifted and talented pupils and transition projects from Year 6 to Year 7, led by the secondary school music teachers.



Leadership partners, Julie Jenkin, Jennie Walker and Barry Millington

Key achievement indicators

- These are the key achievement indicators for music at St. Columb Minor.
 - Forty-five per cent of all pupils at the school participate regularly in extra-curricular musical activities. In Key Stage 2, around two-thirds of the pupils throughout Years 3-6 are involved. Participation is mainly through the school choirs and ocarina groups, although more girls than boys are involved.
 - Half of all pupils in Key Stage 2 receive additional instrumental lessons although, again, more girls than boys are involved.
 - Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those known to be in receipt of free school meals are as well represented as other groups in extra-curricular music and additional tuition.
 - The proportion of pupils from armed services families who participate in extra-curricular musical activities is similar to that of pupils from other backgrounds.

Extending provision through other local partnerships

- The strength of music at St. Columb Minor Academy lies, very clearly, in both the core day-to-day curriculum and the additional extra-curricular ensembles for all pupils. Led by the school's staff, this work is bound together by extraordinary partnership working between school leaders at every level. This work is enhanced

⁴⁰ www.tretherras.cornwall.sch.uk.

through external partnerships with other local schools, community organisations, and initiatives.

- Members of the school choir join with pupils from other primary schools as part of a local Cornish Children's Choir. The school participates in many other local and national music festivals such as 'The Big Sing', held on the beach at Watergate Bay in 2011 in partnership with the Cornwall Youth Dance Company. A video showing extracts from this event featuring St. Columb Minor working in partnership with other local primary schools, the Treviglas College Choir, the Newquay Tretherras Band, and local adult choirs including the **Newquay Male Voice Choir**, can be found on [YouTube](#).⁴¹ Other performances include the local 'Rotary Spring Concert' and the 'Voice in a Million' event at the O2 Arena, London in 2010.

▶ Play

A video showing St. Columb's participation in the Big Sing in 2011.

- Individual and small-group instrumental lessons are provided in partnership with **Music Cornwall** and an independent percussion tutor.⁴² The school is proactive in seeking out subsidies and bursaries for pupils from vulnerable backgrounds, and has used the Personal Education Allowance for looked after children to support their participation in additional music activities. At the same time, the school is robust in monitoring the quality of external provision, taking action to improve it where necessary. For example, the school decided to stop participating in the whole-class ensemble programme ('Wider Opportunities') because the quality of teaching did not meet senior leaders' expectations.

Next steps for music at St. Columb Minor Academy

- The overall effectiveness of music at St. Columb Minor was judged good, rather than outstanding, for two reasons. First, although overall participation rates were very good, significantly fewer boys than girls were involved, particularly in Years 5 and 6. There was also scope for more whole-school ensemble work, to challenge the more advanced instrumentalists.
- Second, with the growth of music across the school, there was a need to expand the range of instruments available for classroom work, particularly for the older year groups. The lack of a dedicated classroom space devoted to music meant

⁴¹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=GidW6tHg1vE.

⁴² <http://musiccornwall.org>.

that instruments had to be transported between classrooms, again restricting the choice available to teachers and pupils.

- Despite these areas for improvement, leadership and management were judged outstanding because the school knew exactly what needed to be done to improve further, through high quality self-evaluation. Comprehensive analysis of provision and outcomes was benchmarked against national expectations and practice, including the Ofsted triennial music report *Music in schools; wider still, and wider* (which was published less than two weeks before the inspection).⁴³ Furthermore, prior to HMI's visit, the school had already set in place some strategies for improvement, such as with student role models from the secondary school to improve the participation of boys.
- Such proactivity and energy, together with a strong track record of partnership working and raising standards in music, left HM Inspectors in no doubt that St. Columb Minor Academy is well-placed to achieve its ambition of providing students from all groups with an outstanding music education.



⁴³ *Music in schools; wider still, and wider* (110158), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110158.

Open access, musical technology and excellent communication: St. Rose's Special School, Stroud, with Drake Music



The music education partners

- **St. Rose's Special School** was founded in 1912, by the Dominican Sisters of St. Rose's Convent in Stroud.⁴⁴ It is now a non-maintained school for around 60 pupils aged 2-19. Most are day pupils who travel from within Gloucestershire and neighbouring local authorities, with a small number of borders from Wales and the south of England. Pupils come to the school with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. Almost all are of White British heritage. In its last inspection in July 2011, the overall effectiveness of St. Rose's Special School was judged to be good.⁴⁵ HMI visited the school as part of Ofsted's 'good practice' programme in June 2012, to look specifically at the music education partnership with **Drake Music**.
- Founded in 1988 and funded by a range of organisations and private donors, Drake Music has built a national network of musicians to promote the use of assistive music technology to make music accessible.⁴⁶ This has resulted in the development of a number of innovative and imaginative approaches to teaching, learning and making music. Drake Music works in partnership with schools, universities, arts organisations, local authorities, music services, software and hardware developers as well as musicians, technologists, composers and artists from other disciplines.
- The partnership between Drake Music and St. Rose's started in 2004, as an exploratory research project carried out and completely funded by Drake Music. Throughout the past eight years, there has been a real sense of shared professional development between the two partners. School staff have benefitted musically from working alongside the Drake Music practitioners, and at the same time the school's flexible and innovative outlook has enabled Drake Music to trial

⁴⁴ www.stroses.org.uk.

⁴⁵ St. Rose's Special School inspection report; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/108420.

⁴⁶ www.drakemusic.org/about-us.

and pioneer a number of ground-breaking approaches to music education with the most severely disabled students.

- Drake Music continues to support St. Rose's Special School in kind through informal consultancy; however, as the project has expanded, the school now funds the great majority of this work. With this comes the school's expectation that the partnership work should be properly monitored and evaluated, to ensure good value for money. Jonathan Westrup, National Manager for Learning and Participation who joined Drake Music in 2005, is clear that this commitment to managing the partnership properly is essential.

'Money for resources and delivery to students isn't the only issue – it's time that people need, time for planning, liaising and evaluating. That's what has made this partnership successful and sustainable.'

- Nevertheless, considerable investment has also been made in providing resources to make music accessible for students at St. Rose's, many of who have complex disabilities. The creative use of music technology is central to the success of partnership work between Drake Music and St. Rose's. Standard sequencing and recording programmes, and commercial applications such as Soundbeam, are used judiciously to provide bespoke solutions that meet the specific needs of individual students.⁴⁷

Raising standards, improving lives

- Staff at St. Rose's and Drake Music associates told inspectors that their professional knowledge and understanding had deepened considerably through partnership working. The way that all partners use their expertise was shown in a lesson observed, where the Drake Music leader's high level of musical and technological knowledge was complemented by the St. Rose's staff's detailed knowledge of students' personal needs. The high quality of communication between partners, evident in the lesson but also in the detailed planning and preparation, meant that the lesson was expertly tailored to include every student. The most significant indicator for the success of the partnership, is that St. Rose's staff now feel sufficiently knowledgeable about the music and the technology that they are confident to lead sessions without support from the Drake Music associates.
- In 2011, the partnership was featured in a BBC Radio 4 programme.⁴⁸ A video, showing a computer-aided performance of an abridged arrangement of the Prelude from Bach's First **Cello Suite by Charlotte White**, a former St. Rose's student featured in the BBC programme, can be found on the Drake Music website.⁴⁹ The video provides compelling evidence of how technology can help students with severe disabilities to respond creatively and musically. Since leaving

⁴⁷ www.soundbeam.co.uk.

⁴⁸ www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00zt6v0/Charlotte_Whites_Musical_Fight.

⁴⁹ www.drakemusic.org/showcase/av/charlotte-plays-bach-cello-suite-no-1-prelude-abridged.



St. Rose's, Charlotte has gone on to study at university and has become a Drake Music Advocate.

- St. Rose's helped Drake Music to develop and pioneer the 'Introduction to Music' course, which has now been accredited by the Open College Network South West Region as a Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 qualification. Bradley Warwick was the first student to complete the course. Bradley has since become a leading advocate for disabled people's music-making, devising and delivering a presentation to the school staff and contributing to regular classroom curriculum teaching.
- A short film featuring Bradley's [presentation to postgraduate students](#) at the University of Bristol, where he tells of the difference that his music education and involvement with Drake Music at St. Rose's Special School has made, can be found on the Drake Music website.⁵⁰
- Students at St. Rose's also have access to Young DM, an online forum where they can chat, blog and share music with students from other schools in the Drake Music partnership.⁵¹

▶ Play

A video, showing a computer-aided performance of the Prelude from a Bach 'Cello Suite by Charlotte White, a former St. Rose's student. The video provides compelling evidence of how technology can help students with severe disabilities to respond creatively and musically.

▶ Play

A short film featuring Bradley Warwick's presentation to postgraduate students at the University of Bristol. He tells of the difference that his music education and involvement with the Drake Music Partnership has made to his life.

⁵⁰ www.drakemusic.org/showcase/av/bradley-warwick-presents-bristol-uni.

⁵¹ www.drakemusic.org/young-dm.

High expectations for high standards of teaching and learning

- Headteacher Jan Daines was appointed in September 2011, and so his knowledge of the partnership with Drake Music is relatively recent. However, he is in no doubt that the partnership is crucial to raising standards and expectations for his students.
- Jonathan Westrup, too, is clear that music for students with special needs is more than simply recreational or therapeutic – improving the quality of their musical responses is as relevant and as important as it is in any school.

‘It’s crucial that the work that we do here at St. Rose’s is as creative and musically driven as any good music teaching in any other school. That’s even more important as we’re using music technology – for me, the music technology is of critical importance because it enables good access for so many students here. But you still need to be focussed on the quality of the musical outcomes. That’s true in any school – good teaching is good teaching, meeting the individual needs and aspirations of students and raising musical standards. You know that you’re being successful when you’re considering the music first and only see the technology and the disability after that.’



A tradition of musical performance in the local community: Uxendon Manor Primary School with Brent Music Service



The music education partners

- **Uxendon Manor Primary School** is a two-form entry school in the London borough of Brent. Most pupils come from Asian heritages and about four in every five speak another language as well as English.⁵² The school is committed to securing strong neighbourhood and community engagement; indeed, the headteacher of three years, Jon Parry, is proud of his own local roots. The last inspection of the school in 2010 judged its overall effectiveness as satisfactory, while pointing out that many improvements were underway.⁵³ In June 2012, the school's subject survey inspection in music found the overall effectiveness of the subject to be good.⁵⁴ Pupils' attainment in musical performance throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, through singing and playing instruments, was much higher than the age-related expectations set out in the National Curriculum.
- **Brent Music Service** (which became a music education hub on 1 September 2012) provides individual and small-group instrumental and vocal tuition to schools and a range of cross-borough music activities.⁵⁵ In addition, the service has created 'Music'sCool', a multi-cultural music curriculum programme for primary schools. Taught by specialist teachers from the music service, pupils from Years 1 to 6 in the subscribing schools have the opportunity to participate and ultimately, to learn to play an instrument. By Year 4, students are expected to have a clear basic understanding of sound, pitch and rhythm and by Years 5 and 6 this progresses to an introduction to the rhythmic traditions of South America and Africa through samba and djembe playing.

⁵² www.uxendonmanor.com.

⁵³ Uxendon Manor Primary School inspection reports; www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/101502.

⁵⁴ As above.

⁵⁵ www.brent.gov.uk.

Raising standards of performance for all pupils through partnership



**Jon Parry,
Headteacher**

- Headteacher Jon Parry considers music to be key in promoting good achievement and a positive ethos in the school. His personal involvement together with that of Advanced Skills Teacher Jashu Vekaria, and other senior staff, does much to help music thrive and helps secure good engagement and behaviour. He also considers the school's £13,000 annual expenditure on 'Music'sCool' and borough instrumental teachers represents good value for money.
- In return for the school's funding, all twelve classes from Years 1 to 6 receive a weekly half-hour music lesson from a music service specialist teacher. There is no doubt that pupils benefit greatly from following a coherent, coordinated programme throughout their time in Key Stages 1 and 2, taught by teachers with strong subject expertise. Through their example and clear guidance, pupils learn to sing in a well-controlled and accurate way. Similarly, all pupils learn to play several instruments, including recorders from Key Stage 1 and djembe drums in Key Stage 2, using correct techniques.
- This was shown in a performance observed by HMI, by the two Year 2 classes. Pupils enjoyed singing a quiet song to a high technical standard, accurately and in harmony, and with some adding instrumental parts.
- It is quite common for pupils to progress from class music making to learning to play a specialist instrument in school. The school is successful in encouraging boys, as well as girls, to join its instrumental ensembles.
- Jon Parry understands the possible attraction to some headteachers of using the class music lessons, taught by the visiting specialists, as personal preparation and administration time for teachers and teaching assistants - 'leaving the music service staff to it' - but he has firmly resisted that temptation. School staff observe and contribute to the weekly music lessons taught to their classes by the visiting specialist teachers – which is great professional development for them, and a good support for the visiting teachers. Furthermore, they are often set informal 'targets' in the lessons by the specialist teachers. For example, in a Year 3 class, the specialist teacher asked the class and staff to improve aspects of their performance of a song, using voices and instruments, before the following week's lesson. Class timetables contain half an hour weekly for this directed 'follow up', which reflects a true partnership.



A community partnership

- From this strong tradition of performing, the school has built further partnerships with other local community groups. Pupils perform in their classes or in the school choir and instrumental ensembles at many school and local concerts and events. These are led in partnership by class teachers and music service staff.

Next steps for music at Uxendon Manor Primary School

- HM Inspectors judged standards in pupils' musical performance to be excellent during the music subject inspection. This was in no small part to the excellent partnership with Brent Music Service. Paul Fensom, Head of Brent Music Service, believes that, as a result of the partnership programme, Year 6 pupils are much better musicians and performers, than in the past.
- However, pupils' composing, listening and appraising work is noticeably less well-developed. Jon Parry and Paul Fensom are committed to working together to redress this balance, through improvements to the 'Music'sCool' scheme. While rightly identifying the strong progress that pupils make in their musical understanding and musical response through performance work, there is no doubt that the 'Music'sCool' programme could include a much greater range of traditional Western art-music. At present, world musics and pop music tend to predominate. The school and music service also recognise that, while working dialogue and communication are excellent, more formal lesson observations, to the same standard and intensity that are carried out in other areas of the school's teaching, are necessary – not only to improve teaching and learning even more, but also to ensure that success can be celebrated.

Notes

Five visits were made to schools on the recommendation of national associations or funded music education partnerships, and three of the case studies are based on good practice observed during music subject inspections. The schools featured include primary, secondary (comprehensive, secondary modern and selective), and special schools; they are located across the country, with some in close proximity to major music organisations and venues but others in areas where it is more difficult to access professional music-makers. The music education partners featured include local authority music services; a professional ensemble; an arts centre; a conservatoire; a charitable organisation; a privately funded music education initiative; feeder schools; local community musicians; and self-employed musicians.



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