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Local Education Authority  
Music Services  
Survey of Good Practice

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Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

Telephone 020 7421 6800  
Web site: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Main findings</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of tuition</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Characteristics of good tuition</i>	4
<i>Improving music tuition</i>	9
<b>Quality of ensembles</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Characteristics of high-quality ensembles</i>	11
<i>Improving the quality of ensembles</i>	13
<b>Curriculum support</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>High-quality curriculum support</i>	15
<i>Improving the quality of curriculum support</i>	20
<b>Commentary on aspects of the management and efficiency of music services</b>	<b>22</b>

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# Local Education Authority Music Services: Survey of Good Practice

## Introduction

1. OFSTED was asked to carry out a survey over the period October 2000 to March 2002 to provide a detailed evaluation of the use of grants provided by the government to protect and expand LEA music services. This report presents the findings of the survey carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) and Additional Inspectors recruited by OFSTED. It draws on evidence based on the inspection of 28 local education authority (LEA) music services. It identifies features of good practice relating to the provision of tuition, ensembles and curriculum support. The report is intended to help senior managers and tutors to improve standards and raise the quality of provision in LEA music services.
2. The Standards Fund for music was introduced in 1999 by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), now the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). LEA music services were invited to bid for funding under two categories; the first to **protect** their provision and the second to **expand** it. Each LEA made a separate submission with details of how it would use the funding. The total annual grant of £60 million was distributed across almost all of the existing 150 LEAs, with the exception of a small number that made no original bid for funding.
3. Between May 1999 and July 2000, OFSTED inspected the nature and quality of the core 'protected' areas and the agreed areas of expansion, reporting to the DfES. This was followed by a good practice survey of a further 28 LEAs between October 2000 and March 2002, focusing on the use of the Standards Fund and the quality of provision of tuition, ensembles and curriculum support. The selection of LEAs ensured a range in terms of size, type and geographical distribution as well as including music services at different stages of development. Additionally, the content of the original bid and the amount of funding allocated were taken into account. This sum ranged from less than 25% to over 40% of the total cost of the service. The music services selected have different roles and responsibilities within their LEA. Some are responsible for all aspects of provision. In a second group, the music service is not responsible for curriculum advice and support. In others, part or all music services have been contracted to an independent agency or charitable trust.

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4. Inspections were carried out in two parts. At a pre-inspection meeting, each LEA was asked to explain how funding was used, the sources of funding, together with details of the organisation and content of the work of the music service. In order to maintain a focus on good practice, LEAs were asked to draw on their internal information and monitoring procedures to provide an appropriate programme of inspection, with a structured sample reflecting the amount and relative proportions of work in the three strands of tuition, ensembles and curriculum support.
  5. This report provides an overview of findings from the 28 LEAs inspected in the good practice survey. In total, inspectors observed over 1,000 sessions of tuition, over 400 ensembles and over 200 sessions of curriculum support.

## **Main findings**

- The Standards Fund for music has been welcomed and well used. Music services have responded quickly to opportunities to protect and expand their work. The DfES is continuing to work with music services to find ways of distributing resources more equitably and of ensuring the improving quality of music services. However, refining the use of the Standards Fund alone will not address all the issues of funding.
- Music services, many emerging from insecure and challenging times, have managed to re-establish their role in LEA provision. There is much work of high quality in the three strands of tuition, ensembles and curriculum support. Many music services are reaching large numbers of pupils in primary, special and secondary schools because of the breadth of their provision.

## **Recommendations**

6. This survey highlights aspects of good practice in several LEA music services. In order to improve standards and quality of provision, key aspects of the work of some of these LEA music services require attention. In particular, such music services should:
  - work more closely with other sections of the LEA, regardless of its structure and organisation, in order to maximise their contribution to supporting music in schools for all pupils
  - provide more access and equal opportunities for pupils, particularly when they are being recruited for tuition; criteria for recruitment should include aspects of their musical potential, their preferences, and their readiness to learn

- provide demonstrations and live performances, as well as documentation about the opportunities available to all pupils, in particular information about those opportunities that are new to them and to their families, ensuring that subsequent decisions are based on educational principles and not unduly affected by market forces
- promote a more balanced instrumental recruitment process, so that fewer pupils learn melody instruments and that middle and lower register instruments are taught in numbers which will encourage more appropriately balanced ensemble training
- expand the range of provision to take account of the traditions within schools and in their communities and of the agreement on which the funding from the Standards Fund is based
- demonstrate how each group within the progressive pyramid of ensembles has a valued place within the whole provision, without undue emphasis on the most advanced groups.

## Quality of tuition

7. During the inspection 1,197 sessions were observed, involving 2,580 pupils. The quality of these was as follows:

**Table 1: Quality of music lessons inspected**

Outstanding:	120	10%
Very good:	351	29%
Good:	442	37%
Satisfactory:	260	22%
Not satisfactory:	24	2%

8. The overall quality of tuition in 28 LEAs was:

**Table 2: Quality of tuition in sample LEAs**

Very good:	10 LEAs	36%
Good:	15 LEAs	54%
Satisfactory:	3 LEAs	10%

9. In each LEA, between 8 and 88 sessions were observed, with an average of 42.

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10. In making their judgements inspectors took the following into account:

- musical expertise of tutors
- teaching skills of tutors
- response of pupils
- standards achieved
- support available for pupils within lessons
- support for pupils between lessons.

11. Of the 28 LEAs inspected, 10 were judged to provide a very good quality of tuition overall. Some 39% of the total evidence base of 1,197 separate sessions were judged to be very good or outstanding. These sessions displayed strong and consistent characteristics, which were found in relation to the full range of instruments taught and across all pupils' ages and stages of learning.

### **Characteristics of good tuition**

12. Essentially, the successful tutors have very good teaching skills and musical expertise that ensure that pupils understand how and what they are to learn. The tutors know how to set their instrumental teaching into the broader context of pupils' music learning, including the National Curriculum, examination requirements and participation in a progressive pyramid of ensembles. They are also versatile musicians who can model, demonstrate and participate alongside pupils to support, enrich or extend the music-making in sessions.

13. Such expert subject knowledge is shown in the following example:

*In a woodwind session for three junior players, two clarinets and one saxophone, the pupils begin by playing a trio arranged by the tutor. They have practised together between sessions. They discuss the balance of the individual lines and how they can add more colour to their playing. The tutor makes a cassette-recording of the second playing. They listen carefully and make several adjustments for the final, third playing, which is also recorded. The tutor introduces on his clarinet and saxophone a new pattern of notes that they copy and rehearse. This is built in to a series of musical phrases that they copy from the tutor, playing from aural memory. Each is asked to make up a piece using this pattern and to*



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*play it in the next session. A new piece is presented and played by the trio from notation, including the new note and fingering patterns.*

14. In the best sessions tutors maximise the time available for music-making, with the minimum of discussion and verbal instruction, and without undue visual emphasis on de-coding notation. Technical aspects of learning, for example posture, hold, embouchure, fingering, are taught in a musical context in sessions which have a good sequence of linked activities and where the musical purpose for acquiring secure technical skills is always clear. Tutors ensure that good attention is paid to aural development, so that pupils vocalise, memorise and improvise with increasing skill from the earliest stages of learning, as in this example:

*In a session for Year 4 beginner violin pupils, the two girls and one boy begin by playing from memory a short piece each has composed at home. They listen carefully to each one and the tutor helps them to describe the shape of phrases and range of notes. They continue with a bowing exercise and the tutor encourages them to make strong, clear movements in the air. They play patterns in the note range they have already learned in first position, listening carefully to ensure firm bowing and secure intonation. Each pupil plays a different short piece from notation from the tutor book and they play all of them as a group, with the tutor adding a keyboard accompaniment. A new note is introduced by the tutor on his violin. They all find it and he shows them a new pattern to practise at home. The lesson ends with the pupils playing two favourite pieces: the tutor adds a second, accompanying part to the first piece and the whole group plays the second as a round.*

15. Most importantly, good tutors show pupils how they can learn for themselves. Pupils are shown how to practise so that they can make progress between lessons and tutors know the support available for individuals and groups to ensure that progress is sustained. For this to happen, pupils need to learn through ensemble-playing as well as undertaking individual work. Tutors ensure that pupils are involved in ensemble-playing, organised by the school or the music service, at an early stage of learning, to encourage progress and to emphasise the purpose of tuition beyond the sessions themselves.

*In a junior trumpet session, four boys in Years 7 and 8 are practising for a chamber music festival organised by the music service. Each plays an individual line in a familiar four-part piece. The tutor has matched the players carefully to the parts, which are of varying*

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*difficulty, and emphasises the fanfare style of the music. The group suggests that this could open the festival and that they should walk in procession, while playing from memory. They rehearse individual sections from each part, then together, adding more dynamic colour to the performance and memorising two of the sections.*

16. Sessions should be enjoyable and challenging, as in the following individual advanced cello lesson where a pupil was preparing for an external assessment:

*Preliminary work in the lesson ensures that the technical requirements of scales and studies are related closely to the piece of music that follows. The same fingering patterns, key relationships, musical style and dynamics are integrated into each activity and the session has shape and high musical quality. The tutor models a difficult passage, which they then play together, and the pupil finally plays it with commanding fluency. The tutor provides a piano accompaniment for the whole piece and their performance is recorded. They then discuss how and what the pupil will prepare for the next session.*

Here, all the requirements of the examination are set in a musical context, an approach that is encouraged by external assessors and examination boards. The pupil has a regular accompanist, as well as a recording of the piano part with which to rehearse. The session offers both enjoyment and challenge and there is high-quality music-making throughout. The pupil will be performing the piece at a school event, as well as for the assessment, and is well prepared for this with a range of experience of playing in small and large ensembles.

17. Good tutors work closely with schools to ensure the appropriate grouping of pupils for lessons. They also review the arrangements each term, to maximise the use of time and resources. The following example shows how a music service responded quickly to the individual needs of a pupil, ensuring that her progress was maintained:

*A specialist tutor in North Indian instruments has been teaching santoor to a Year 4 pupil for two terms. The preliminary work in this lesson is based on a Raga melody and a 16-beat cycle. During the session, in which they build up a piece in three sections, the pupil is asked to sing, clap and play, all from aural memory. The tutor models new work vocally and on a second*

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*instrument, with the pupil improvising additional phrases. The final playing of the music shows excellent control of the two beaters, with very sonorous and varied tone quality, integrating fluent improvisation.*

This pupil began learning in a group with three other beginners. She made exceptional and rapid progress, demonstrating musical giftedness. For this reason she now has an individual lesson. The headteacher and tutor discuss and monitor her progress so that she receives appropriate support for her exceptional talent. The music service has provided the instrument and a case with wheels so that she can take it home. She plays in a school ensemble.

18. Some excellent tutors provide a range of appropriate, carefully tailored provision for pupils in special schools. For example, in a school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties a keyboard tutor is teaching a Year 6 pupil:

*The pupil has had a difficult morning and is silent and withdrawn at first. The tutor improvises at a keyboard, using a theme that the pupil has played in the past. Without any discussion, the pupil begins to participate in the improvisation, until musically he leads the playing of the piece that lasts for five minutes. Next, the tutor changes the voice settings on both keyboards, and plays a new unaccompanied melody with the right hand. The pupil adds chords quickly, using his musical imagination, aural memory and knowledge of the folk style of the tutor's phrases. The tutor gives him time to experiment and to try out chords and sequences, then the piece is put together as a duet. The pupil seems completely absorbed in the music-making and ignores the signal for the end of the lesson.*

This tutor works very closely with school staff and discusses the lessons for individual pupils as soon as he arrives each week. He knows that one pupil is unlikely to want to participate, so has worked out teaching strategies which would encourage, without placing any overt pressure on the pupil. He also knows that this is a talented pupil who is making striking progress in keyboard playing and whose memory and aural imagery are well developed, and that in music his achievement and potential are high. The tutor wants to ensure continuity in learning to help realise this potential, so his close liaison with school staff is crucial.

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19. In the music services where sessions are consistently good, there is an agreed, secure curriculum of high quality, which tutors implement effectively to ensure that pupils make good progress. In the best practice, tutors ensure a common curriculum, incorporating materials that they have produced as well as commercially available resources of high quality. For example, some tutors planned for the introduction of new technical work by producing short but very effective pieces, using new fingering patterns for notes or chord combinations. In response to such incremental demands, pupils were able to practise in their own time, putting new work into a musical context and style. Similarly, the well-timed introduction of 'catchy' melodies and rhythms proved particularly effective in improving the skills of junior and intermediate pupils, who were highly motivated by pieces specially composed for them. In some of the most effective music services, good use is made of music software and technology, creating collections of materials to which all tutors have access, adapting and editing them as appropriate. The good management of such resources also ensures that the costs of printed materials for which pupils pay are not too high.

20. A further characteristic of these good sessions is that tutors help pupils to make progress in and between lessons and give them regular feedback, as in this case:

*The pupils agree to rehearse together between sessions. The tutor uses the recordings to keep records of their progress and attainment. He will give them more detailed feedback during the next session and will use the information to plan future work.*

21. Such good tutors set targets, using established internal or external assessment systems, so that pupils are constantly extended.

22. For the majority of pupils, sessions take place weekly during curriculum time on a rotating timetable. The length of sessions varies from 15 to 30 minutes. Sessions of 15 minutes, although rare, are too short to be effective, particularly for pupils learning in groups. Throughout the inspection, the highest quality was observed in sessions of 30 minutes for three or four pupils, from beginner to intermediate stages of learning. For advanced pupils, tuition was most often on a one-to-one basis, though some paired sessions were equally effective and offered better value for money, as well as being of musical value to pupils. Current legislation states that no charges can be made to parents if groups contain more than four pupils. Inspection evidence shows that the highest quality is found where pupils learn in groups of three, four, five or more, up to and including the intermediate stage of learning.

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23. For most pupils, the organisation of tuition is fixed from the outset and this can become too inflexible. While tutors can re-group pupils from time to time, the contract with parents and the current legislation are constricting what can be done with more flexible organisation. In LEAs where schools make no charge for tuition, some tutors plan for occasional sessions which involve larger groups of pupils. They also organise pupils for example, in groups of six for one term and then in groups of three for a second term, according to the musical demands of the curriculum and pupils' needs. For beginner and junior pupils in particular, experience of learning in a larger group for part of the time ensures that individual progress and ensemble training are developed in parallel. This supports the work of tutors and school-based teachers who organise large extra-curricular groups to extend pupils' musical experience and to contribute to school events.

### **Improving music tuition**

24. In order to make good lessons better and to raise the quality of lessons that are satisfactory, there are a number of points which tutors should address. In some cases, they should:

- ensure that sessions are well planned and lead to purposeful music-making, not just a series of routine tasks – some tutors insufficiently demonstrate on their own instruments, and they do not use opportunities to participate in ensemble-playing with pupils
- provide practical illustration, rather than relying on verbal instruction; showing pupils what to do, rather than telling them
- encourage fluency in music-making, so that they are not unduly 'corrective', stopping at each mistake and giving pupils largely negative feedback, for example:

*In an individual intermediate flute lesson, the pupil is preparing for an external assessment in three months' time. The lesson covers the assessment requirements, but too rigidly, so that the tutor intervenes to correct each error. This results in a series of disjointed activities, all undertaken by the pupil without any accompaniment and without the tutor playing her own instrument. The pupil has prepared well for the session and can play at least half of the repertoire with fluency, but receives no positive feedback on this achievement. The lack of accompaniment is resulting in undue focus on technical matters of fingering and tonguing, without attention to colour and phrasing or to the directions printed on the music, regarding speed and dynamics.*

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Discussion with the tutor reveals a lack of confidence in using any other teaching strategies in the approach to external assessment. There is also undue concern that simply obtaining 'good results' are what matter to the pupils, their families and their schools; and that these are likely to be achieved by addressing the detail of examination requirements at all times. The pupil is not being given an opportunity to perform any of her work, which is being prepared solely for the examination. Her only performing experience is in a very large ensemble, although she has always received tuition on a one-to-one basis.

## Quality of ensembles

25. Inspectors observed 406 sessions and judged the quality as shown in table 3.

**Table 3: Quality of sessions observed**

Outstanding:	69	17%
Very good:	167	41%
Good:	121	30%
Satisfactory:	49	12%

26. The overall judgement of the quality of ensembles in the 28 LEAs was:

**Table 4: Quality of ensembles in sample LEAs**

Very good:	18 LEAs	64%
Good:	10 LEAs	36%

27. In each LEA, between 6 and 25 sessions were observed, with an average of 13.
28. In making judgements, inspectors took the following into account:
- long-term planning for the ensemble activities
  - programme and repertoire for the ensemble
  - directing, rehearsing and conducting skills of tutors
  - standards achieved
  - pupils' response to the provision.

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29. The inspection of ensembles shows this strand to be the strongest in the LEAs' provision, with the quality in 18 of the 28 LEAs judged to be very good. Of the total of 406 ensembles observed, 17% were judged to be outstanding. These occurred in 14 different LEAs and across a wide range of types of ensemble, from beginners to advanced players and singers.

### **Characteristics of high-quality ensembles**

30. The best ensembles involving beginners and junior players are locally or school-based, directed by music services tutors. This often means that pupils can receive tuition and ensemble training from the same specialist and that pupils learning different instruments join an ensemble at an early stage, directed by a tutor who works regularly in their school. From these secure foundations, pupils have the skills and experience to move through to intermediate and advanced ensembles, knowing how to prepare for and participate in rehearsals and performances with increasing independence and confidence.
31. This example shows the importance of exemplary and expert teaching.

*A rock band with six players is rehearsing a familiar piece that requires elaborate improvisation from the lead guitarist. The tutor plays phrases and motifs from the piece and asks all the players to contribute ideas to shaping the improvisation. There is an excellent example from the bass guitarist, who gives a striking and effective musical excerpt. The tutor works this back into the lead player's line and the whole band integrate the improvised section into the whole piece. The tutor plays guitar to demonstrate, or to reinforce the lines from inside the ensemble. He stops at times to listen carefully to the balance and the musical effect the band is aiming for and they discuss it. This is an excellent example of tuition taking place within an ensemble, so that all players are given new ideas or techniques from a specialist who plays alongside them, and develops the work of the whole group.*

32. The best tutors plan a rich but balanced programme of rehearsals and performances during the year. Repertoire is chosen so that there is the challenge of new work, added to more familiar pieces. This might include a wide range of music including pieces that are aurally challenging, as well as those with dissonance and irregularity. In these ensembles, they demonstrate their expertise through their good conducting technique, using the conventions of gesture and baton very well. Particularly with large ensembles, they maximise the time available, involving a team of specialist staff in sectional rehearsals for part of the time.

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*A junior string orchestra of about 20 players from Key Stages 2 and 3 are rehearsing a set of Christmas pieces. The director suggests they should improvise their own piece to add to the sequence and they decide on 'Candle Flames'. They demonstrate ideas and the director introduces playing techniques that are new to them, which will allow them to represent the fluttering of the candle flame. They experiment with these and decide on a sequence for their composition. They rehearse the section, review it, refine it and then add it to the existing suite of pieces. There is a high level of involvement in the activity and much enthusiasm is evident. The tutor ensures that there is a focus on the musical purpose of the piece and on its aural effect; so players are required to listen very carefully from the earliest stages of the improvisation.*

33. Rehearsals for beginner and junior players are planned so that they include a range of activities and avoid the physical stress of too much continuous playing; and, at all times, tutors show vigilance over pupil welfare and safety. Additionally, the best tutors are sensitive to the difference between teaching in schools and directing a large, voluntary activity in pupils' free time for young people from a wide age-range. They encourage good support by parents and families so that breaks in rehearsals are well-organised social occasions.
34. Such care with younger musicians is demonstrated in this example:

*A beginners' brass ensemble has about 40 players aged 9 to 12, most of whom have been learning for less than six months and are drawn from a number of local schools. The tutor involves them in warm-up games and exercises in which they use clapping, singing and chanting. They use 'buzzing' exercises and then mouthpieces only, and practise rhythms from pieces in their repertoire. Finally they rehearse several of the pieces, with their instruments. By sequencing the activities carefully, the tutor ensures that players can sustain their work through a rehearsal lasting more than an hour, without the physical stress of playing for too long. A number of parents stay for the rehearsal and volunteer to continue some of the activities with pupils at home. The children play with very secure rhythm and good intonation and have already learned how to listen carefully to other players to ensure good attack and ensemble. They make excellent progress at a rapid pace, with much humour and fun shared with the tutor.*



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35. On occasion, pupils learn in a larger group. This is usually in those musical traditions and styles where tuition and ensemble training are provided simultaneously, with no separate session for individual pupils' technical work. This includes pupils who learn in ensembles for steel pans, African music ensembles, jazz, pop and rock groups and vocal ensembles. Tutors teach the ensemble as a whole, in the time allocated for tuition. Some of these sessions are of outstanding quality, as in this example:

*A group of seven pupils from Years 9 and 10 have been learning steel pans for just over a year. They play a demanding repertoire that involves pieces in classical, pop and folk styles, each responsible for a separate part in the ensemble and all playing from memory. Technical aspects are taught to the whole group and posture, hold and control are good, as are aural memory and listening skills. They also change parts and instruments, moving from one to another fluently. They rehearse together between sessions and perform regularly in school and in the community.*

The tutor of this ensemble has excellent performing skills that he uses to demonstrate to the group and coach individuals within it. He blends technical and musical aspects so that, for instance, dynamics are always incorporated into both new and known pieces. There is excellent attention to instrumental tone quality, as well as to the balance between melody and accompaniment. Pupils have excellent listening skills on which he draws constantly, so that they can refine and develop their playing.

### **Improving the quality of ensembles**

36. In order to make good ensembles better and to raise the quality of those that are satisfactory, tutors should address one or more areas of their work. In particular:

- ensure that repertoire is appropriate and varied, with a balance between new and familiar pieces, as well as giving aural challenge by including music which is dissonant or irregular
- demonstrate good conducting skills which establish, where appropriate, the conventions of gesture and baton, so that pupils understand how to make essential progress in musical and technical aspects of playing and singing
- establish the ethos of an enjoyable, voluntary and valuable activity which pupils undertake in their own time, distinctive and different from tuition sessions in school time.

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## Curriculum support

37. Inspectors observed 215 sessions in 26 LEAs of which the quality was as follows:

**Table 5: Quality of sessions inspected**

Outstanding:	36	17%
Very good:	80	37%
Good:	72	33%
Satisfactory:	24	11%
Not satisfactory:	3	2%

38. The overall judgement of the quality of curriculum support in the 26 LEAs was:

**Table 6: Quality of curriculum support in sample LEAs**

Outstanding:	1 LEA	4%
Very good:	14 LEAs	54%
Good:	9 LEAs	35%
Satisfactory:	2 LEAs	7%

39. In each LEA, between 4 and 13 sessions were observed, with an average of 6.

40. In **curriculum support**, inspectors observed a wide range of work. This included:

- live performances by LEA music tutors
- class-teaching by tutors
- the support for music in GCSE and post-16 groups
- music in special schools
- professional development for school-based teachers
- regular or occasional events which involve one or more schools
- the work of visiting professional musicians.

41. In these aspects the work of one LEA was judged to be outstanding and the work of a further 14 was judged to be very good. It is in this aspect of their work that music services are demonstrating to schools what they can offer to all pupils, in order to support and develop the music curriculum in primary, special and secondary schools.

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### **High-quality curriculum support**

42. Some of the work of music service tutors in primary schools is of outstanding quality. For example, specialist music tutors gave a series of lessons to classes, to demonstrate good practice in developing the National Curriculum for music. Class teachers observing these sessions regarded them as an effective form of professional development, because they were able to continue the work between lessons and, ultimately, deliver the curriculum themselves. This allowed tutors to show how the school could use its own resources to good effect, as well as introducing new materials to match the national requirements.
43. Some LEA music services invite primary music co-ordinators to regular meetings to discuss important developments or changes to national requirements, form networks of effective communication, and share good practice. The results are: the increasingly good use of ICT in music; improvement to the quality of pupils' singing; better use of acoustic instruments; and devising manageable and realistic assessment procedures.
44. Several LEAs have developed particular specialisms. So, for example, they have been able to offer curriculum support to all special schools, including the work of music therapists. This is resulting in some outstanding examples of effective teaching and learning, matched to the school's specialism and to pupils' needs.

*In a pupil referral unit and in several schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, pupils from Key Stage 4 were composing their own music, using technology, sometimes in a music studio. The tutors and teachers observe the commitment and enthusiasm which these pupils are showing, as well as the improvement in their learning skills: concentration, application and understanding of complex processes; all this is within a context of producing an effective piece of music. Pupils spend considerable amounts of their free time between sessions on their music and know how it relates to work in the music industries and in the media.*

45. Another specialist service is the use of vocal tutors to work in primary, special and secondary schools, teaching whole classes or groups and working towards events involving pupils from a whole key stage, year group or large vocal ensemble. Overall, this support is excellent. Additionally, the music service offers specialist backing tracks, recordings and materials for teachers to continue the work between sessions. They observe and then participate in lessons, so that they can continue to develop and integrate vocal activities when the project ends.

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*A specialist tutor works with a nursery class of 25 pupils. The class teacher is present throughout as part of her professional development plan. She will also continue the work with the children between the tutor's visits. After circle games and chants, the tutor introduces several hand percussion instruments, some for shaking and others for tapping. This is the first time that the pupils have used them. They explore with the tutor how to make the sounds and then they incorporate them into two well-known songs. Finally, the tutor uses a cassette which contains a lively accompaniment to the songs, with a group of pupils playing instruments.*

This session involved a carefully linked sequence of activities, using songs and sounds which were familiar to the children, then introducing instruments for two new sounds that they quickly incorporated. By using a recording, the tutor did not have to leave the group's circle, nor reorganise the pupils. All the activities took place sitting, standing or moving in a circle.

46. The following example is a development of this approach, also used in a music service providing specialist support for primary schools:

*In a Year 3 class of 32 pupils, which the tutor teaches fortnightly, she has been asked to provide professional support to class teachers to develop the school's scheme of work. In a topic they have jointly planned, using animals as the theme, the tutor this week teaches a sequence of activities relating to songs and sounds from the jungle, involving two songs which she introduces and a piece which the class composes together. This involves whole-class singing, group and solo-singing and adding a range of good-quality, large percussion instruments. In addition, one boy plays the piano accompaniment to some of the songs, which he has learned with his private teacher. Pupils learning flute and violin with the music service also participate on their instruments. The tutor has produced the printed materials. She also records their newly composed piece, performed by the whole class on instruments.*

47. This was a complex session with pupils grouped and regrouped, ensuring good provision for individual pupils; and with all pupils taking part in several carefully sequenced activities. After the lesson, the tutor and class teacher allocated time to review it and to write the plan for the following week's lesson, which is the responsibility of the school-based class teacher. Because a good deal of new work has been introduced by the tutor, with

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excellent supporting tapes and materials, the teacher has a clear plan, as well as the confidence, to rehearse and consolidate some of the activities in the next lesson. In two weeks' time, they plan to rehearse and record a sequence of songs and pieces, which they will ultimately present for a school assembly.

48. Some music services offer support to secondary schools, which at best closely matches the needs of teachers and pupils. Such support was often judged to be outstanding where, for an agreed number of lessons, LEA tutors led or co-taught composing and the use of music technology in classes for GCSE and post-16 courses.

*A specialist tutor is working once each week for half a term with a Year 10 GCSE music group of seven pupils. The school has recently re-equipped the music department with a range of music technology facilities. The tutor works with the whole group, introducing them to software that they will use for composing. Then pupils continue with individual tasks, while the tutor and class teacher observe and discuss the work together. The tutor has specialist knowledge of the technology, and the teacher knows the pupils' musical experience and aspirations. They combine all the information and log pupils' progress. Then the tutor reconvenes the whole group during which, each pupil demonstrates part of their work, which is discussed and all of them plan the next stages.*

In this example, the school is updating the music department's resources, but also wants to increase the numbers in GCSE music groups taught by the new subject leader. By using school-based professional development provided by the music service, the school achieves its three objectives of updating, supporting and developing the music curriculum. Broadening the activities to match the needs and interests of more pupils is being adopted as a medium-term strategy to enlarge group sizes in the subject.

49. In LEAs where support for music in the National Curriculum is a significant part of their work in this strand of provision, the music service also ensures that pupils are aware of the availability of tuition and access to ensembles, including school occasions and special events shared by all pupils. In the best examples of live performances in schools, groups of tutors present a programme, linked with topics or aspects of the school's own curriculum. These include brass, woodwind, string and world percussion ensembles of high quality.

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*Five music tutors rehearse and perform as a jazz quintet and give performances in the LEA's schools. This workshop is for the whole of Key Stage 2 in a school in which music is strong and well established. The pupils know two of the tutors, because they teach woodwind and brass here. The quintet performs a total of eight pieces, with pupils participating throughout. A Year 6 pupil who is learning trumpet with the tutor from the quintet joins in with confidence and skill; there is an enthusiastic response from the audience of pupils, who listen and watch intently. The school-based music teacher, also a brass player, participates in a lively jazz classic; and the quintet improvises a piece while children give directions for how it is to be played. Pupils are given opportunities to hear the individual instruments, as well as the whole ensemble, in new pieces, familiar music and also the improvised piece composed during the workshop. The whole performance has been recorded on video for follow-up and the pupils leave the workshop to a lively arrangement of 'When the Saints'.*

In this school, which has a strong music curriculum, the jazz workshop added a valuable extension, with high-quality performances of live music. The music co-ordinator planned to use the video for different purposes with each year group, to sustain the impact of the group's visit and ensure that it contributed to the curriculum.

50. Live performances by groups of tutors mean that pupils see and hear the instruments that they can subsequently learn. This is particularly important when pupils are not familiar with the full range available, including large and less commonly played instruments. In one LEA, a primary school workshop in African drumming led to requests from pupils to learn these instruments because they 'liked the sounds'. The instruments were new to them and were added to the existing choices of woodwind, brass and strings. African instruments are now taught as a regular part of the music service provision.
51. In selecting pupils for tuition, music services provide guidance on the criteria that can be applied by schools, working together with tutors. In one LEA, a newly appointed music co-ordinator asked for a Samba workshop so that she could observe the response of the class of Year 5 pupils and use this information when requests for tuition were received from pupils' families.

*Two tutors have organised a Samba workshop for a class of 36 Year 6 pupils in an inner city primary school, criticised in its recent inspection for the poor quality of its music provision. The new music co-*

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*ordinator and the class teacher both participate in the workshop. After the tutors have demonstrated a range of instruments, they use word patterns and rhymes to familiarise the pupils with sequences of fast, syncopated rhythms. These are then transferred onto instruments until each pupil is playing in one of six groups. By the end of the session, all pupils can sustain a piece using vocal call and response patterns, as well as instrumental phrases. A pupil with autism volunteers one of the call lines, leading reliably several times and participating fully in the workshop.*

At the end of the session the school-based teachers discuss the progress pupils have made. They decide to request percussion and guitar tuition to broaden the range of instruments provided by the music service and to encourage as many pupils as possible to take up an instrument. They discuss with the headteacher the skills which pupils have demonstrated during the workshop – concentration, working in groups, sustaining new music activities for more than five minutes, using aural memory and listening skills and showing increasingly good co-ordination when using instruments. However, they also observed the progress made by pupils for whom this experience was new, including a pupil with autism. They will be offering tuition, therefore, to all pupils in this class, both to extend their opportunities in music, and also to increase their confidence and their skills in working in groups.

52. In another music service, such workshops proved very successful for pupils with special needs:

*In a school for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties a music therapist is working with a group of four post-16 pupils. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, but have very little motor control, so she is using music technology that responds to their slightest movement. With her technical help, but their ideas, they select, layer and combine sounds to make a piece in three sections, with evident achievement as well as fun.*

The therapist is a tutor from the music service, who is responsible for establishing work in all the LEA's special schools. She works closely with the staff in each school and ensures that they can continue some of the activities between her visits. In this way, valuable music experiences have been added to the curriculum and pupils' achievement and enjoyment extended.

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## **Improving the quality of curriculum support**

53. To further improve curriculum support, LEA music services should ensure that:

- the purpose of sessions and their contribution to the school's music curriculum are established from the outset: in particular, live performances and projects involving visiting professional musicians should be carefully planned with schools
- tutors and school-based staff should use resources and time to the full, for example:

*A specialist percussion tutor presents a workshop to pupils in Years 3 and 4 in a primary school that has an experienced music co-ordinator and where music tuition is well established. The session is musically excellent, using percussion instruments from a range of world cultures and balancing musical demonstration with pupils' learning about distinctive sounds from single instruments or collections. The tutor introduces songs, and invites several pupils to play verses, using only instruments. The pupils are engaged throughout, in observing, listening and participating, and their response is lively and positive.*

This session, though musically very valuable, is an isolated occasion. There has been only written correspondence about the event, with no discussion about how the school staff could help the pupils to prepare. For example, the tutor used well-known songs, but it took time for the pupils to rehearse them from memory. This could have been undertaken by the school, in preparation for the visit. The school owns a drumkit and has a good collection of hand percussion instruments, the same as those used by the tutor for part of the demonstration. There was no use of the school's instruments, which could have considerably increased the number of pupils participating. The school's music co-ordinator has many ideas of how to continue the work with these classes, but had no advance information of the musical content of the workshop. While follow-up work will be possible, valuable opportunities were lost for musical preparation for the session and, therefore, for the secure integration with curriculum work which could have been achieved.



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- when tutors are planning performances for schools, ensembles have recognised repertoire, to avoid mismatch and imbalance in the resulting instrumental combinations, for example:

*A group of four music tutors give a live performance to Key Stage 2 pupils using the instruments of a recorder consort and also flute, trumpet, viola and drumkit. The recorder pieces are excellent, using authentic repertoire and the full range of instruments. All other music for the session comprises arrangements of well-known themes, because the instruments do not form a recognised ensemble. Demonstrations and solo pieces are very good, but the ensemble is poor and unbalanced when tutors play together.*

Again, in this session opportunities were lost for links with the school's music curriculum. A number of these pupils are learning to play the descant recorder and can read from music notation, but there was no opportunity for them to participate. Also, the mismatch of instruments limited the repertoire available for ensemble pieces played by the tutors, although individually, their solo performances were excellent.

- when topics have been agreed with schools, maximise the opportunities for music-making, for pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, for example:

*A specialist tutor is making a series of visits to support curriculum development for a class of Year 4 pupils. The topic 'Romans' is well linked to other curriculum work and they are rehearsing a soldiers' marching song, as well as composing music to interpret part of an historical event. The class is divided into groups of soldiers, groups of instrumentalists and a group of composers. The session takes place in the school hall. The pupils have clear tasks, which they carry out well in separate groups. Finally, they put the sequence together, but there is insufficient time to rehearse all of it.*

This session contained all the features of good curriculum planning and high-quality musical content. There were, however, problems in organising and rehearsing the sections. By dividing pupils into groups with only one task, opportunities were lost for the tutor to work with the whole class, as well as for pupils to be involved in a range of work. In this case, dividing into groups was less appropriate than giving all pupils opportunities to participate. By dividing the

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pupils into separate groups to perform the song, to play instruments and to compose the music to illustrate the historical event, the session was fragmented, and there was, for most pupils, too little regular input from the tutor. In putting together the sequence, most pupils were listening and waiting, rather than participating. In particular, the instrumentalists had too little time from the tutor to explore a range of ideas and in their final contribution could offer only a series of single sound effects, to their obvious frustration and disappointment.

### **Commentary on aspects of the management and efficiency of music services**

54. The music services inspected vary widely in regard to their size, structure, funding and responsibilities. In addition, some music services are well established, others have been more recently formed within unitary authorities and a third group has been re-established after several years of reduction or closure. Music services, even those which are well established, have also been restructured as part of wider changes and LEA reorganisation. Throughout this period, too, music services have remained a distinctive but not a statutory part of provision, which also has an impact on the function that they carry out within LEAs. The introduction of Standards funding in 1999 resulted in further review and redirection as music services planned to meet the criteria of protecting and expanding their work in order to qualify for the grant.
55. Overall, LEA music services are well led and managed, usually by experienced heads of music service and senior management teams. The best management is found in those LEAs where the head of music services is responsible for the total provision of music support for all schools and represents the whole service within the LEA's management structure. In small LEAs it is possible and helpful for the head of music service to remain a leading practitioner, but in large LEAs much of the responsibility has to be shared or delegated within larger management teams. Where the head of music service is not responsible for the total provision, it is usually because curriculum support is located within a different section of the LEA structure. Even so, successful integration and good management of the strands of music were observed in this model, and were the result of secure professional and administrative organisation, and good communication between all those involved. It is not, therefore, the structure of the music service, nor necessarily its location within the LEA, but the quality of its practice and procedures which ensure its success.

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56. The combination of centrally controlled and delegated funding to schools for music services often leads to inequitable distribution of opportunities and resources. These arise from the tension between the aims and principles of the LEA's overall music provision and the rights of individual schools. Currently, most schools decide the extent to which they will buy or accept provision, and they also decide policy as to whether the service will be free, or a charge made to pupils' families. There are, though, some music services that make a direct charge to parents, where schools are not part of this process. Therefore, the charges to parents, in both systems, vary widely across LEAs.
57. The best music services continually monitor the organisation of tuition, so that, within current regulations, pupils are given the best opportunities for individual progress and ensemble training. The number of pupils taught in sessions is also monitored to ensure that time is well used and that value for money, as well as valuable musical experiences, are assured. In addition, such music services work more closely with schools at the point of recruiting and selecting pupils for tuition. However, twice as many girls as boys are involved at present, even though LEAs and schools have policies on equal opportunities. In many cases, parents are informed of the opportunities available and they request tuition but the amount in each school is usually limited, so some selection procedures have to take place taking into account pupils' preferences, their potential, and their readiness to learn.
58. Most music services have a well-structured and established 'pyramid' of ensemble opportunities that they provide for junior, intermediate and advanced players and singers. The most efficient consider how beginners will be introduced to ensemble experiences to ensure that such beginners are involved from the earliest stages of learning. For younger pupils in particular, some music services are providing more school-based or locally organised ensembles, so that all pupils have access to the opportunities, without undue reliance on family support or private transport arrangements. Where several ensembles from the 'pyramid' share the same venue on a regular basis, there are excellent opportunities for pupils in beginner and junior groups to observe the work of more advanced players. All pupils can also hear a wide range of music, as well as learning about the variety of styles and traditions within their locality. In some music services, though, the most advanced ensembles are too isolated from the rest of the provision, and the work is not shared with younger or less advanced participants. Schools also are not kept in touch with their successful former pupils and opportunities are missed to expand the audiences for large-scale events.

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59. Curriculum support is strongest in those LEAs where music services offer and promote a range of provision, as well as responding to the requests of individual schools. Members of senior management teams often have considerable experience and expertise in class-teaching as well as music service provision. At best this expertise is replaced or renewed among full-time and part-time tutors, to preserve the range of provision.

