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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Plan for Music Education

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Ministerial foreword

“ Whether we were born here or live in Wales, music has been a strong influence in all of our lives. Music has been, and continues to be, one of the most inclusive ways to communicate and celebrate our culture and language. We can be proud that our communities across Wales have long produced music renowned across the world.

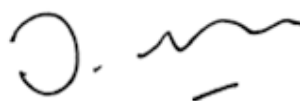
We have all learned music in some form from a young age. Whether it is from our family and friends or schools and settings, these tenets are a vital part of our music education. As Minister for Education and the Welsh Language, I can see the many benefits music can play in the life and well-being of children and young people.

However, for some time, learning to play a musical instrument has been for those few whose parents and carers could afford the tuition costs. This inequality must end so that no child or young person should ever miss out through a lack of means. Our vision for the National Plan for Music Education is for all children and young people across Wales, regardless of background, to have the chance to learn to play an instrument. Setting up the National Music Service will achieve our Programme for Government 2021 to 2026 commitment and ensure this vision becomes a reality.

We will significantly increase funding by investing £4.5 million a year to deliver the key work areas of the plan. We have already invested an additional £6.82 million in 2021/22, building on the foundation of the National Music Service to buy musical instruments and digital licences. This will ensure our children and young people are able to access musical instruments across Wales.

As the National Music Service’s lead body, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) will allocate funding to local authorities who will be responsible for delivering much of the work in this plan. The funding will also focus on children and young people from low-income households to help access tuition, as well as supporting disadvantaged learners and those from under-represented groups to join music ensembles.

“Nerth gwlad, ei gwybodaeth”, the strength of a nation is its knowledge. The development of the National Music Service will ensure that we nurture the musical skills of our next generation, in school and in the community, to continue to produce new talent and showcase our music to the world.”



Jeremy Miles MS

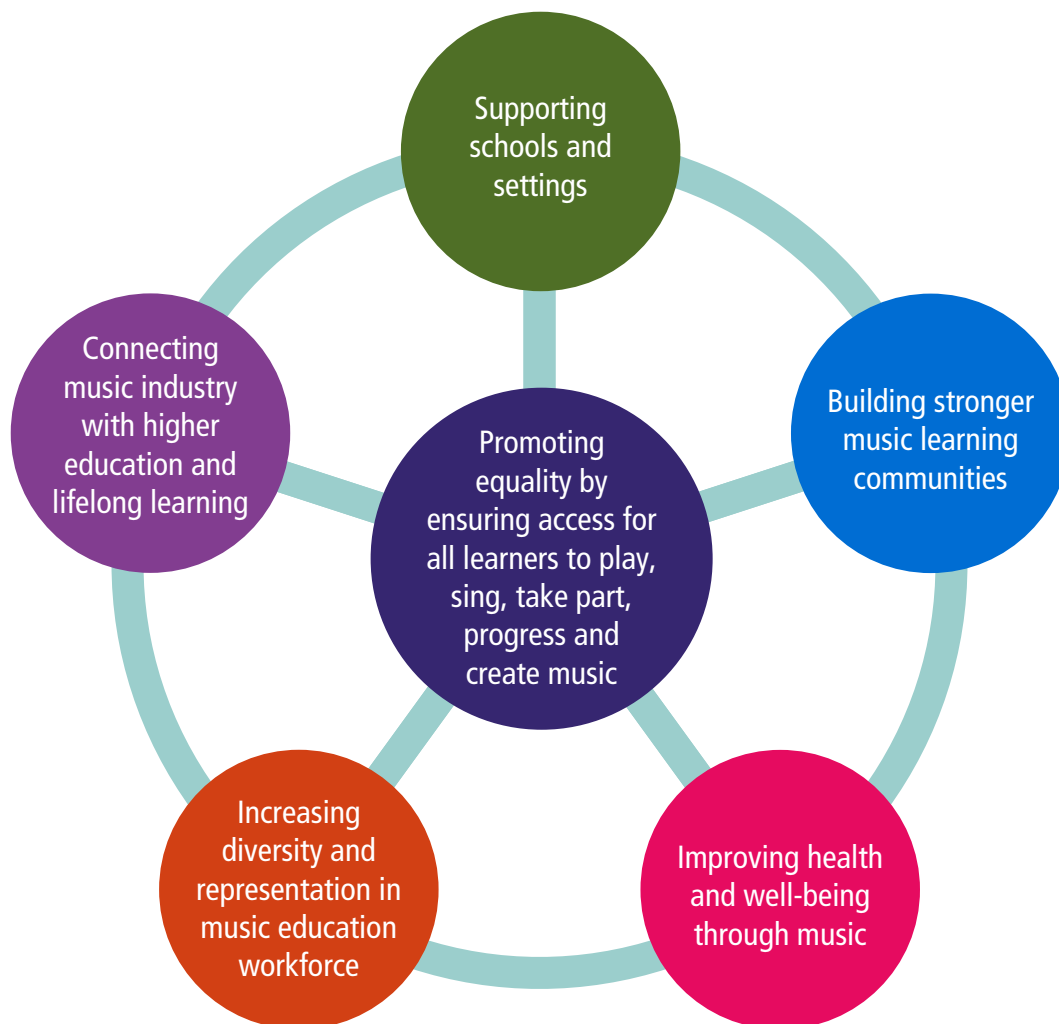
Minister for Education and the Welsh Language

Our vision for music education in Wales

Experiencing the joy of music, in all its forms, should be at the heart of every school and setting. We want children and young people from across Wales to have opportunities to play, sing, take part in and create music, in our schools and settings, as well as in our communities.

Music and well-being are so intertwined and we want our children to cherish and celebrate music in our 'Land of Song'. Through the National Plan for Music Education, we will establish a National Music Service to make sure that a lack of money does not stop our children and young people from accessing opportunities in music. Our plan ensures that our children and young people from all backgrounds make the most of what our rich culture, heritage and our communities has to offer across Wales and beyond.

Our priorities for music education are illustrated below.



The context for the National Plan for Music Education

The National Plan for Music Education (the ‘plan’) will deliver our Programme for Government 2021 to 2026 commitment to ‘establish a National Music Service for Wales’. It is the culmination of key findings and recommendations from reports on music education as well as our engagement with key stakeholders across the music education sector. The reports include the [Music Services Task and Finish Group](#) (2015), Senedd Committee [‘Hitting the Right Note’](#) (2018) and the [Music Services Feasibility Study](#) (2020).

Report of the task and finish group of music services in Wales

Recommendation 15

Local authorities, starting immediately where appropriate, should engage in formal collaboration and co-construction of service models, with a view to ensuring that they achieve high quality and value for money. A memorandum of understanding should be used between two or more authorities to reflect current service/delivery models, working practices and partnership arrangements; such memoranda should also be shared with other local authorities as exemplars of good practice and collaboration.

Hitting the Right Note: Inquiry into funding for and access to music

Recommendation 1

The Welsh Government should transfer responsibility for the delivery of music services to an arms-length, national body with a distinct regional delivery mechanism and footprint. The national body should be core funded by the Welsh Government and should be made responsible for ensuring that both pupils and staff working within the music education sector, regardless of their location or social background, are afforded equitable opportunities. The Welsh Government should ensure the responsible body is provided with any additional funding necessary in order to maintain equity of access on an all Wales level.

Music Services Feasibility Study

Conclusions

The development of a National Plan for Music Education should be considered.

The Welsh Government should consider whether a new organisation is required in order to develop and deliver the plan. The suggested options should be tested with strategic stakeholders and providers of Music Education Services.

The National Plan for Music Education

A strategic and sustainable approach is needed to ensure a diverse and equitable music education is accessible for our children and young people from ages 3 to 16. Strengthening our music education is important to rebuild and support the well-being of our children and young people after the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Enhancing the teaching, learning and joy of experiencing music in all its forms is vital with the support of our communities and the wider music sector.

In developing the plan, we have worked closely with key stakeholders across Wales and the wider music sector, who will have a role to play to support music education. These stakeholders included schools and settings, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Welsh Authorities Music Education Association (CAGAC), Arts Council of Wales, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD), regional consortia and partnerships, and many others. To support the engagement process, we also engaged with schools and settings to gather their views on music education.

From our engagement process, a number of key themes emerged as barriers to accessing music. These were cost of tuition, access to music provision, limited range and diversity of musical instruments and genres, lack of professional learning to support music, and more signposting and networking to opportunities and experiences in music.

We want the plan to break down these barriers and make sure that a lack of money in particular does not prevent any child or young person being able to play an instrument, sing, take part in or create music using traditional and digital ways.

The plan will support our schools and settings in their delivery of [Curriculum for Wales](#) where music is one of the disciplines in the [Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience](#). Giving schools and settings access to activities and experiences that support their curriculum design will help support our children and young people to access opportunities to learn music in and outside schools and settings.

Through the plan, we will build stronger links with organisations across the music education sector to ensure that there is a diverse range of opportunities for music-making and for enjoying music for life across Wales, no matter where the school or setting is based. It is important that the plan works to support schools' and settings' delivery for our children and young people to develop skills in music and other transferable skills which realise the [four purposes](#) of Curriculum for Wales and inform ideas for their future careers.

To deliver these priorities, the plan will:

- establish the **National Music Service** (the 'music service') – the music service will operate from May 2022 and will be comprised of key partners and organisations, working together as a 'hub'. The WLGA will be the lead body ('lead body') responsible for governance arrangements and allocating funding to deliver the priorities in the plan. The WLGA will, through their role, ensure the programmes of work are diverse and accessible to children and young people, and, in doing so, follow the principles of the Welsh Government's guidance on [foundational economy](#), where possible to do so
- develop a **Music in schools** programme to be implemented from September 2022 – the programme will ensure all children and young people of school age (3 to 16) have access to opportunities to play, sing, take part in and create music. The programme will focus on children and young people from low-income households as well as supporting disadvantaged learners and those from under-represented groups. This programme will be designed to align with Curriculum for Wales and delivered through the music service by local authorities and partners
- develop a **Making music with others** programme that will support access for children and young people to a range of opportunities to make music with others – the key activities will include an ensemble recovery programme and opportunities for children and young people to gain industry experience through working alongside musicians and creative industries. It is important for our children and young people to participate in and experience live music and to have access to digital music technology, as well as access to initiatives that support health and well-being. This programme will help build stronger links with communities and will provide more diverse opportunities outside schools and settings
- develop a **national instrument, resource and equipment library** – we have made a significant investment of £5.5 million in 2021/22 to support the purchase of musical instruments, adaptive musical instruments to support additional learning needs (ALN), and digital recording equipment for all our children and young people. This plan will enable the music service to support local authorities in establishing access to a library of instruments, resources and equipment, in particular to support disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people
- provide **professional learning support** – this is key to support local authority music service tutors and classroom practitioners in accessing professional learning materials. This is important to support the various programmes of work under the plan, in particular 'First experiences' and more widely music across Curriculum for Wales. We have invested £1.32 million in 2021/22 to develop a digital platform with access to materials to support delivery of music tuition. The music service will broker and facilitate professional learning opportunities with a range of partners, including local authorities, regional consortia and partnerships, and the Arts Council of Wales.

The National Music Service and its priorities

The National Music Service will ensure that all children and young people have access to play, sing, take part in and create music. The lead body will provide a strong infrastructure in delivering the plan for music education and provide music-making opportunities in Wales. Their work in delivering the music service's priorities will include the set up of the national instrument, resource and equipment library, co-ordination of professional learning support, developing initiatives on addressing equity, diversity and inclusion, and ensemble development.

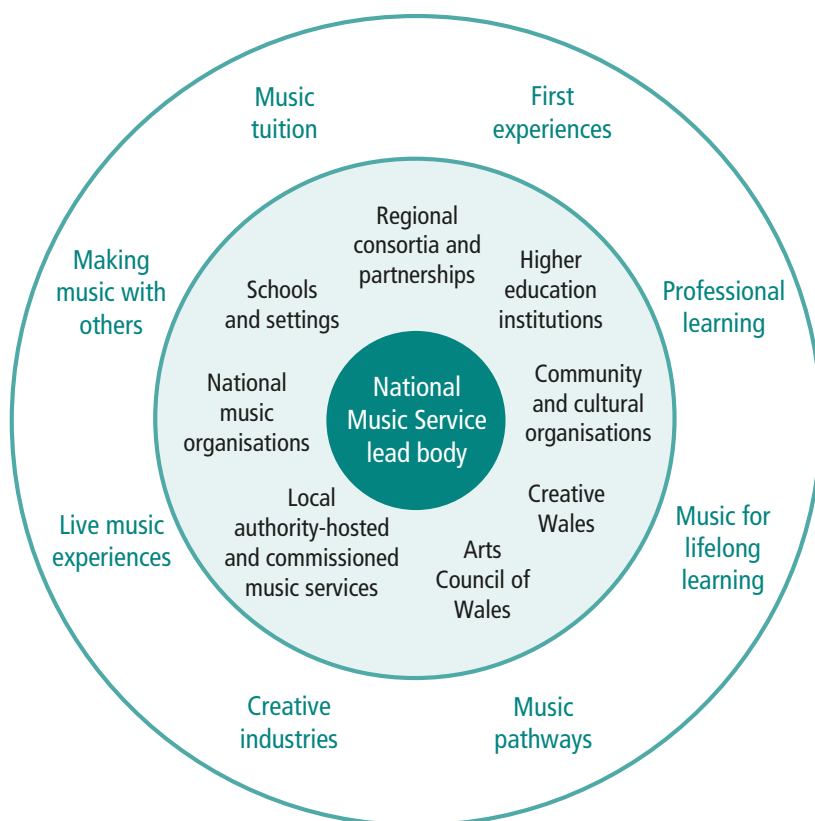


To co-ordinate activities beyond schools and settings, the lead body will work with local authorities and key music education partners, engaging with communities and working with cultural organisations and higher education institutions. This ensures that all schools and settings, children and young people and wider communities have access to a variety and diverse range of musical opportunities and providers, both at a local and national level.

Working in partnership

Working in partnership with schools and settings and musicians across Wales is a key priority for the music service as part of its work to celebrate the broad range of music that our culture and heritage has to offer.

The illustration below shows the range of partners that the lead body will work with as part of its co-ordination role to support the delivery of the plan. These partners, by no means an exhaustive list, are the wider music education partnerships such as community music groups, local youth organisations, brass bands and choirs as well as national organisations, local authorities, social partnerships and many more. These wider organisations play an important part to support schools and settings in the delivery of music as part of Curriculum for Wales and, in particular, the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience. The co-ordinating role of the lead body is essential to bring together music educators, musicians and performers from all walks of life, across Wales and globally to support our children and young people to explore and develop a lifelong engagement in music.



Operational delivery of existing music services and working in partnership with the lead body and partners

The priorities of this plan will build on, but not replace, the existing music tuition and music-making activities offered to schools and settings by local authorities. Local authorities' music services provide a vital link between activities delivered in school and those accessed out of school. Supporting children and young people in accessing the new activities outlined in this plan will be in addition to the important role that music tuition has to play in enabling musical progression.

The role for development and delivery of Curriculum for Wales, in particular the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience, sits with schools and settings and is supported by regional consortia and partnerships.

The lead body will, as part of its role to co-ordinate the priorities of the plan with partners, ensure that through developing stronger community links, across a broad range of networks, each local music service will retain its own identity, while the offer to children and young people is expanded.

The national instrument, resource and equipment library

The establishment of the national instrument, resource and equipment library (the 'library') will make best use of new and existing instruments, resources and equipment. The lead body will work with local authorities to build on existing processes for tracking loan of instruments and equipment, and identify opportunities for working together with its partners and other organisations to procure instruments and equipment at a local, regional or national level. Where possible, in line with the Welsh Government's guidance on developing the foundational economy, the library will ensure children and young people from low-income households have access to musical instruments in and outside schools and settings. The lead body will also work with Music Mark UK, the Music Industries Association and CAGAC to develop an accredited list of repairers, working with the Welsh Government to ensure that we get the best value for money in obtaining instruments, resources and equipment.

Review of terms and conditions for local authority-hosted music services

The lead body will review the challenges facing the workforce across Wales so that we address the actions required for implementing the plan and its priorities.

Since 1998, ongoing changes to local authority music services contracts have contributed to an increasing variation in the terms and conditions.

To address the workforce's needs and ensure that they are treated equitably and that their contribution to music education is recognised properly, the lead body will carry out a review of the terms and conditions for local authority-hosted music service tutors. The initial review will commence in autumn 2023 and is expected to complete by summer 2024.

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives

Equality of opportunities for children and young people to experience and develop their abilities in music regardless of their background is fundamental for a diverse and inclusive music education sector. Opportunities to engage in music experiences that are relevant to and representative of different cultural experiences of children and young people across Wales, in particular, ethnicity and disability is a key part of diversity and inclusivity. Important considerations for our activities include how we ensure access for children and young people to the range and diversity of musical opportunities available, as well as access to a wide range of instruments and choices. It is also important that we promote and celebrate the Welsh language and Welsh culture in how we deliver the service.

With the development and oversight of a national and local policy for EDI in music education, the lead body will work with partners to increase representation across the sector and develop EDI initiatives on how we can improve in this area.

The EDI initiatives will address barriers to accessing music such as cost and access to music tuition and provision. Through professional learning opportunities for the workforce, the lead body will work with partners to prevent bias, inequality, bullying, prejudice or stereotyping based on protected characteristics and support access for children and young people from low-income households. These initiatives will also look into ways of how we increase signposting and networking opportunities to under-represented and Welsh-speaking musicians so that they have the opportunity to be part of the delivery of the plan.

Evaluation framework

The lead body will work with the Welsh Government on developing the evaluation framework which is crucial to monitor how well the plan is doing in achieving its objectives. This work will look at how we measure the success of the plan including collecting baseline data, developing performance indicators and devising a methodology for investigating the extent to which these outcomes are realised in the short-, medium- and long-term. The lead body and the Welsh Government will outline its work on the framework in autumn 2022.

The National Music Service supporting Curriculum for Wales

Curriculum for Wales will be phased in across schools and settings from September 2022. The four purposes of the curriculum are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person in Wales. Building on this, every school and setting will design and implement its own curriculum within the national approach that secures consistency for children and young people across Wales.

Music is one of the disciplines in the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience. The role of the music service will be to support music education and signpost its programmes, and to advise schools and settings on the experiences and opportunities available from its programmes. It is for schools and settings to decide how they include what is on offer into their delivery of the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience, as well as making links to the wider areas of learning and experience.

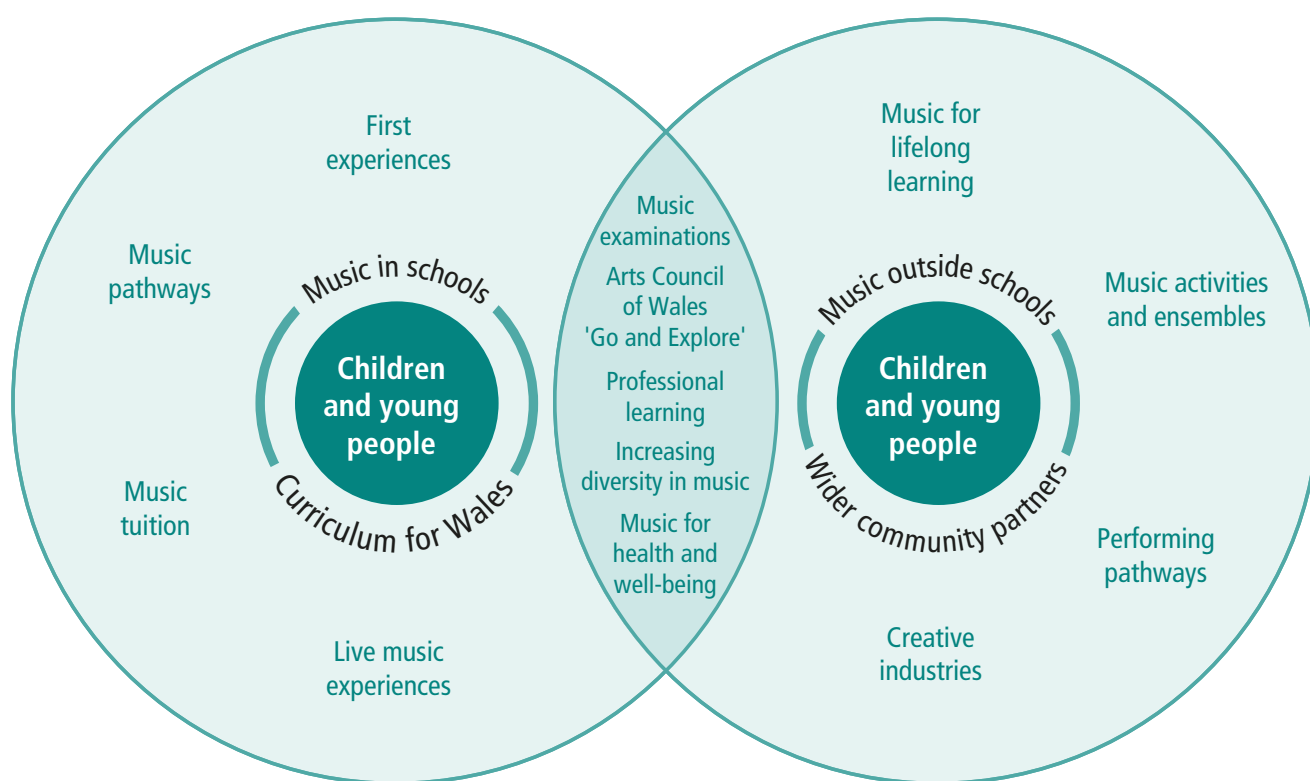
The music service will play a key role in supporting schools and settings with access for children and young people to experiences and opportunities for those wishing to progress and specialise in music, developing skills along the way that can be transferable for careers in the creative industries. Supporting the use and application of skills is inherent in musical development, ensuring that every child and young person will be given the opportunity to excel and achieve their ambitions.

Strong partnership working, supported by the valuable contribution of our music education workforce and wider music community, is key to supporting the opportunities that the music service can make available for children and young people in and outside schools and settings. The music service will provide signposts for children and young people and schools and settings to a diverse range of musical activities, both in their local communities and across Wales. Working with communities, with valuable input from music industry professionals and inspirational musical role models, can provide a quality music education and support the well-being of future generations in years to come.

The National Music Service: Programmes of work

The music service's programmes of work will provide opportunities for the lead body to work with schools and settings, local authorities and music services, and to plan activities in order to maximise opportunities for children and young people to learn and make music. These activities will be subject to evaluation and monitoring which includes input from music service practitioners, schools and settings, and children and young people who all have a key role to play in developing the activities offered by the programmes of work.

Through engagement with our stakeholders, we have identified a number of programmes of work for music education. The illustration below shows the experiences and opportunities that will be on offer to children and young people through these programmes of work, in and outside schools and settings or both, no matter where they are across Wales.



First experiences and **Live music experiences** will allow children and young people to play, sing, take part in, create or experience the joy of music-making and live music performances.

Music tuition (group and individual) and **Music pathways** will support children and young people wishing to pursue study of a musical instrument or singing to progress along the learning continuum, in developing complexity, control, depth and independence in musical understanding. Particular support in this programme of work will be given to young people from low-income households and those from under-represented groups.

Making music with others and **Music for health and well-being**, delivered in partnership with a wide range of organisations, will ensure that children and young people have the opportunity to benefit from experiences through playing in groups or ensembles, creating their own music, accessing recording studios or venues, and taking part in national and international events and festivals. These programmes will support our children and young people who wish to explore careers in the **creative industries**.

All of the programmes of work will be delivered in or outside schools and settings or a mix of both. The activities in the programmes of work will build on existing out-of-school activities offered by local authorities' music services, their partners and other organisations. These activities include learning online, weekly music centre activities, 'county' youth groups and ensembles, residential courses, concerts and festivals, overseas tours, masterclasses and external music examinations. While most local authorities' music services already provide this range of activity, the additional support for children and young people from low-income households will help ensure these activities are available to all.

Programme of work: First experiences

Primary schools, special schools and other education settings (ages 3 to 11)

The First experiences programme of work will ensure that every child and young person has an equal opportunity to play, sing, take part in and create music in primary schools and settings. The programme of work will provide opportunities for children to experience a wide range of instruments and styles of music. Schools and settings can use these opportunities to support their delivery of the curriculum by providing an inspirational starting point for the enjoyment of music.

For many children, primary schools, special schools and other education settings will be their first experience of music education. The lead body will work closely with local authorities and schools and settings to develop a programme of activity that will benefit children and young people and support classroom practitioners.

The First experiences programme of work will be developed with the aim of simultaneously inspiring children and young people and providing professional learning support to classroom practitioners. This will improve the health and well-being of children and young people, develop their skills and confidence, and support classroom practitioners in delivering music activities into their broader curriculum.

Networking and information sharing will be supported through closer links with music service practitioners, providing signposting opportunities to work with musicians from diverse backgrounds and with a range of lived experiences.

Schools and settings may wish to combine the First experiences programme of work with the **Live music experiences** programme of work or alternating the activities on a termly or annual basis in order to diversify the offer of experiences for children and young people.

To support children and young people, the First experiences programme of work will:

- be offered to all primary schools and settings over the next three years
- build on schools'/settings' existing provision, ensuring that every child has opportunities to play, sing, take part in and create music
- deliver inclusive face-to-face and/or online musical experiences
- provide opportunities to experience music-making and develop creative, transferable skills
- be delivered through instrumental, vocal, compositional or music technology-based sessions, to large groups or whole classes
- encompass a wide range of instruments and genres/styles of music, informed by the voice of children and young people.

To support professional learning for schools and settings, the First experiences programme of work will:

- be developed through a 'team-teaching' approach that will support classroom and music service tutors' professional learning
- provide access to professional learning materials for schools and opportunities for mentoring
- support schools and settings to consistently explore diversity in music from a wider range of genres across the world.

Programme of work: Music pathways

Secondary schools, special schools
and other education settings (11 to 16)

Improving health
and well-being
through music

Connecting
music industry
with higher
education and
lifelong learning

The Music pathways programme of work will provide children and young people with music-making activities to support their health and well-being, as well as giving opportunities for those who wish to progress and pursue a career in the creative industries. It is important for children and young people to have the opportunities to explore ways to develop their abilities in music whether it is for their enjoyment, their health and well-being, or to specialise in working for the creative industries. Progression through the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience is key to developing transferable skills across the wider curriculum.

It is important that we support the next generation of our children and young people to fulfill their musical potential and, for many, that will include becoming musicians, teachers and industry professionals in our creative industries. The Music pathways programme of work will also support children and young people who have the aspiration to pursue a career in the creative industries. Supporting our disadvantaged and under-represented group of children and young people to access music well-being activities is a vital part of this work.

The lead body will work with local authorities and other partners to identify and develop new opportunities for children and young people to take part in and experience music. This programme of work will signpost schools and settings, including special schools, to existing and new programmes of musical activity.

To support all children and young people to reach their potential, the lead body will tackle the 'aspiration gap' by working with schools and settings, the music industry and [Careers Wales](#) to raise awareness of potential career pathways in the creative industries.

The Music pathways programme of work will be available to all 11 to 16 schools and settings, support health and well-being and progression.

To support health and well-being, the Music pathways programme of work will:

- provide specific funding to ensure access to music well-being activities for disadvantaged and under-represented children and young people
- work with schools and settings to ensure that the voice of children and young people is represented in developing and promoting music-related activities and interventions that support improvements in health and well-being
- ensure, through work with organisations such as National Youth Arts Wales, that all children and young people have access to a range of musical ensemble experiences, at a local and national level.

To support progression and examinations, the Music pathways programme of work will:

- work with all schools and settings to address gaps in theoretical knowledge, rudimentary musical understanding and compositional skills required for further study
- ensure that those learners from low-income households wishing to pursue practical or theoretical music examinations have access to appropriate lesson durations to support progression, and financial support with examination fees
- work with Careers Wales and other partners in identifying and promoting pathways for non-academic routes into the music profession or access to apprenticeships and internships, or to engage in music-making in leisure time
- ensure, through the national instrument, resource and equipment library, that children and young people have access to the use of appropriate specialist instruments or equipment to help further their progression
- through the lead body, input into Qualifications Wales' review of the requirements of a new GCSE in music.

Programme of work: Music tuition

Primary and secondary schools, special schools and other education settings

Promoting equality by ensuring access for all learners to play, sing, take part, progress and create music

Connecting music industry with higher education and lifelong learning

Opportunities to develop experiences, knowledge and skills to children's and young people's abilities to explore, create and respond in a musical context is fundamental to a more coherent learning experience. We want to support all children and young people to develop their skills in music across the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience. We need to support our children and young people who wish to specialise in music, so their individual ambition and talent is harnessed, either in or outside of school.

Group and individual music tuition provide opportunities for children and young people to develop instrumental, compositional, music technology and/or vocal skills. This will allow children and young people to progress at an appropriate pace along the learning continuum, enabling them to develop and grow.

The lead body and local authorities will work in partnership with organisations and community musicians to ensure that a diverse choice of music, musicians, instruments and equipment is available to children and young people in and outside schools and settings.

The lead body and local authorities will work closely with a range of partner organisations to ensure that there is information and signposting available to children and young people with particular focus to those with ALN, disadvantaged and under-represented groups, and more able and talented learners.

To address barriers in access, cost, range and diversity within the Music tuition programme of work, the lead body and local authorities will work with schools and settings to:

access

- ensure there is access to tuition through music services via local authority-hosted or commissioned or other means across all areas of Wales
- ensure that learners from low-income households and disadvantaged learners have access to free use of an instrument or equipment to support tuition
- ensure that there are no barriers for children and young people from under-represented groups
- ensure children and young people with ALN needs have access to adaptive instruments or equipment where required to support tuition
- ensure opportunities are available regardless of location, through local authority music services continuing to develop a blended or digital learning approach

cost

- ensure that access to music tuition is not a barrier for learners from low-income households where parents and carers could not afford the tuition costs
- ensure that there are no charges made for music tuition/practical lessons that contribute to GCSE or A level music
- develop a policy to agree a maximum charge for music tuition delivered during school hours

range and diversity

- ensure that a diverse choice and range of music tuition is available to all schools and settings, through working in partnership with a range of providers
- build on the development in music technology to consider both blended approaches or digital platforms that can complement a more varied offer of musical genres.

Programme of work: Live music experiences

All education settings, including special schools

Experience is an integral part of learning in the Expressive Arts. The experiential aspect of music is important for our children and young people to explore rich, authentic experiences in the Arts, both in and outside schools and settings to learn and celebrate music. Drawing on the creative process for learning and reflecting and developing transferable skills is important for career opportunities in the creative industries and all areas of learning.

The lead body, working in partnership with local authorities and a wide range of organisations, will develop and deliver two programmes of activity to support primary, secondary and special schools and other education settings in connecting with music performers and industry professionals.

These programmes will incorporate a range of musically and culturally diverse opportunities across the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience, the wider curriculum and beyond the school settings.

These programmes will provide opportunities for children and young people to develop creative processes, explore how artists and composers, songwriters, digital and techno musicians, and filmmakers use and create music. By making valuable connections to careers pathways through raising children's and young people's aspirations and showcasing the variety of opportunities available, we can support children and young people to explore their full potential.

This element of the programme will complement our joint Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales **Creative Learning through the Arts** programme, in particular the 'Go and Explore' strand that will provide opportunities for children and young people to play music, dance and act with external creative practitioners.

The lead body will work with a range of national and local partners to develop and deliver a programme of live music for schools which will:

- provide opportunities for schools and settings to access to a wide variety of high-quality live or digital musical experiences
- include interactive musical performances, with input from creative and industry professionals that will inspire music-making, promote well-being and illustrate connections across all disciplines of the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience
- work with partners to provide 'side-by-side' playing opportunities to build children's and young people's confidence and support ensemble development
- support schools and settings by providing accompanying professional learning materials, hosted on the digital platform being developed by the lead body which will be linked to Hwb.

The lead body will work with partners in higher education to develop and deliver a programme of music residencies for musicians or industry professionals which will:

- provide children and young people with opportunities to develop links with role models from higher education and signpost pathways for further study
- provide support for aural, theory, song writing, music technology and composition resources, and opportunities for schools and settings to regularly work in partnership with a musician or industry professional
- support schools and settings by providing networking opportunities with music and creative industry experts
- ensure that music and creative industries undergraduates are aware of the role of music within Curriculum for Wales, and support ideas on career pathways for future generations
- highlight opportunities to help children and young people choose effective and appropriate learning pathways pre- and post-16.

Supporting schools, settings and wider communities

Supporting schools and settings

Increasing diversity and representation in music education workforce

Programme of work: Professional learning support for music services, classroom practitioners and wider music education partners

Schools, settings and wider communities

Professional dialogue between music services and schools and settings is necessary to ensure that this plan aligns with Curriculum for Wales. Providing supporting materials and tools will help our music education workforce which will ensure the plan is sustainable in the long term. Making support and professional learning opportunities available to music services and the wider music education partners, the lead body will play a key role in ensuring a consistent quality of delivery is achieved across all areas of the programme of work.

It is important that all partners develop a shared understanding of curriculum design and learner progression through music and across the other disciplines in the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience and the wider curriculum.

The lead body, local authorities, and regional consortia and partnerships will collaborate in sharing and learning from each other's understanding in order to support schools and settings in line with their curriculum design.

Working with local authorities, regional consortia and partnerships, Estyn and the Welsh Government, the lead body will co-ordinate an annual programme of professional learning for music service practitioners and leaders to support the delivery of the plan and, more broadly, Curriculum for Wales in schools and settings.

The **First experiences** programme of work will provide opportunities for schools and settings to develop music activities and experiences that support their curriculum. Equipping classroom practitioners from schools and settings, including early years, with the skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver high-quality learning of music within the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience is important. Doing so will ensure that the progression of children and young people in music will continue beyond their First experiences sessions delivered in partnership with music practitioners.

Professional learning support to music services' practitioners will:

- develop a programme of consistent support to music service practitioners in line with the delivery of the plan to schools and settings
- ensure that the design and delivery of the **First experiences** programme of work aligns closely with Curriculum for Wales
- ensure that the group and individual music tuition offer to children and young people is consistent, and of the highest quality, through monitoring and support of teaching and learning music
- ensure the digital resource platform that will support music services to meet the opportunities and overcome challenges of scaling up access to musical instrument learning and harnessing digital technology.

Professional learning support to classroom practitioners in schools and settings will:

- work with regional consortia and partnerships to develop professional learning materials to support the **First experiences** programme of work and make these available through Hwb
- signpost early years practitioners to professional learning materials and creative music opportunities which are both age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate
- provide networking and development opportunities across the sector that align with the objectives of this plan and support Curriculum for Wales
- work with a range of organisations, including Race Council Cymru, Disability Arts Cymru, regional consortia and partnerships, and others, to develop professional learning that addresses gaps in equality, and improve diversity and inclusion.

Programme of work: Improving equity, diversity and inclusion

Schools, settings and wider communities

Increasing diversity and representation in music education workforce

Building stronger music learning communities

Children and young people from all communities across Wales should have access to a wide range of musical opportunities and experiences to enjoy the benefits of music and for those who wish to progress and specialise in music.

For those who wish to specialise in playing a musical instrument, singing, composing and engaging in creative activities, it is important to address barriers for children and young people from low-income households, as well as those from disadvantaged or under-represented groups, to access music tuition and experience live music.

We want young people to have authentic, purposeful and rich experiences, but the core should be about the joy of music in whatever form without the pressure of having to get better.

The lead body will work with schools and settings, local authorities, National Youth Arts Wales, Anthem and wider partners, to fully develop equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the sector, and ensure that there are fair and consistent opportunities of musical activities, delivered by a range of diverse and representative musicians in all regions of Wales.

The lead body will work with local authorities and partners to develop and implement initiatives to ensure that there are opportunities for children and young people of all ages and levels of ability to make music with others, as part of a group or ensemble. This work will help schools, settings and colleges to work closely with the communities that they serve. Support for children and young people from low-income households will be prioritised to help families benefit from these opportunities.

The lead body will work in partnership with local authorities to develop an action plan for the music service to increase diversity and representation in the music education workforce. Part of this work will be achieved by working with musicians from ethnic minority backgrounds, disabled people and others with protected characteristics with a range of lived experiences in music.

The action plan will also include an initial skills audit to determine training and recruitment needs, and identify improvements on diverse needs through partnership working.

Our EDI initiatives, in partnership with National Youth Arts Wales, Anthem and others, will work to support children and young people through:

- expanding the opportunities for young people's voices to influence the music education offer through establishing a young person's forum to determine the focus of the priorities for the music service
- increasing the engagement of young people from under-represented groups to sing, play, take part and create music both in and outside of school
- signposting children and young people from under-represented groups to existing and new opportunities to support them in creating and making music with others
- ensuring that opportunities to perform together with others are representative of local cultures and community, as well as cultures from across the world
- providing platforms and opportunities for the achievements of children and young people from disadvantaged and under-represented groups, and more broadly Welsh culture and identity, to be celebrated at a national level.

We will work with our partners to support building diversity and inclusivity in our workforce through:

- actively bringing together organisations to develop and improve partnership working, ensuring that schools, settings, children and young people have effective signposting and are supported by both community-based and school-based musicians
- working with a range of organisations, including local authorities, Race Council Cymru, Disability Arts Cymru, regional consortia and partnerships, and others, to assess the workforce's needs to improve understanding of diversity and inclusion
- developing a better understanding of the links between music, language and culture, and address barriers that exist in access for under-represented groups
- developing partnerships with music organisations from across the UK and beyond, to broaden horizons for the children and young people of Wales in relation to understanding the diverse range of music.

Programme of work: Music for lifelong learning, health and well-being

Schools, settings and wider communities

Improving health and well-being through music

Increasing diversity and representation in music education workforce

It is crucial to support our children and young people whose emotional, social and physical well-being have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Supporting their recovery requires a variety of interventions and central to this is the vision set out in the [Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience](#).

Curriculum for Wales sets out the importance of children and young people developing the capacity to navigate life's opportunities and challenges. Our vision is that, through access to music, children and young people will have access to opportunities to sing, play and take part in music with others, providing valuable opportunities for measured risk-taking, presenting emotions through music, developing resilience and building self-esteem.

Access to music activities and experiences is fundamental to supporting development and well-being for children and young people of all ages.

Music has a key role to play in improving mental health and well-being for all children and young people, particularly those with protected characteristics. The lead body will work with schools, settings and local authorities to develop initiatives to support music health and well-being activities.

The Music for lifelong learning, health and well-being programme of work for schools and settings will:

- support maintained and non-maintained nursery settings to ensure that children's musical skills from the age of three are fostered and promoted through using their senses, imagination and experience
- ensure that children and young people with ALN are supported to overcome barriers, achieve their musical potential and access activities that improve their health and well-being
- work with schools and settings to develop delivery of music activities focusing on well-being, that align with the plans for 'renew and reform' of the school day
- support schools in accessing music well-being activities that enhance children's and young people's mental health
- work in partnership with a range of organisations to signpost and develop opportunities for children and young people, together with professional musicians, to perform and make connections with health and care facilities.

The Music for lifelong learning, health and well-being programme of work for practitioners and the wider community will:

- support school practitioners through access to music activities to improve their health and well-being
- work with local authorities and a wide range of partners to ensure that opportunities to experience the joy of music-making, in and outside of school, are well signposted and integrated into the music service delivery
- support music services with professional learning, focusing on both music therapy and music as an intervention to support improving mental health and well-being.

Music outside of schools

Promoting equality by ensuring access for all learners to play, sing, take part, progress and create music

Building stronger music learning communities

Programme of work: Making music with others – music activities and ensembles

Wales has long held a reputation for producing musical talent. We must support all children and young people to ensure that disadvantage, discrimination or disability does not impact on their opportunities to progress and realise their ambitions and potential.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on the opportunities for children and young people to make music with others, as part of an ensemble, choir or band at a school, community, local music services and national level. The music service will work alongside a wide range of organisations to rebuild and develop new opportunities for children and young people to take part and create music, in and outside schools and settings across Wales.

Work to rebuild includes making new opportunities for children and young people to benefit from the health and well-being aspects of making music with others and those who wish to specialise in music. Opportunities will include experiences to perform in public, and take part in practical and theoretical examinations. Support for children and young people from low-income households will be prioritised.

The music service will work with partners to identify, support and signpost more able and talented musicians and children and young people with ALN. This work will ensure that they have opportunities to experience performing to their best ability, with equal importance and support given to a broad and diverse range of genres of music, through links with a wide number of organisations.

Key to the delivery of this priority will be realising the vision that all children and young people are able to experience participating with others in a range of group settings, unhindered by any assumption of their ability due to additional or physical learning needs.

The Making music with others programme of work will support local music activities through:

- consulting with the young people at a local level to ensure that the development of this work is made by them and for them
- working with schools, settings, local authorities and wider local community organisations, to recover and rebuild numbers of children and young people impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and ensure there is a diverse range of access to local music activities for all children and young people
- working with local authorities, National Youth Arts Wales, children and young people, and a broad range of partners, to collaborate on new access and training ensembles, giving opportunities to develop and progress to perform to the highest levels.

The Making music with others programme of work will support youth and national ensembles through working with:

- National Youth Arts Wales and a broad range of music organisations to ensure that there is fair and equitable representation and engagement from all regions of Wales at a national level
- a range of funding providers, such as Anthem, Youth Music and others, to identify areas of financial support, or overcome barriers due to disadvantage or geographic location to access youth and national ensembles and activities
- National Youth Arts Wales and a broad range of organisations to ensure effective signposting and support for all children and young people with ALN, enabling them to experience performing with others in a range of music-making settings.

Programme of work: Making music with others – performing and creative industries

Connecting music industry with higher education and lifelong learning

Improving health and well-being through music

Creating and performing music brings opportunities for children and young people to enjoy music which benefits their well-being. It also broadens their horizons to the type of careers available in the creative industries that they can explore.

The music service will have a key role to play in supporting opportunities to perform and pursue career pathways in the creative industries. It is important that we work with a range of music organisations and venues across Wales, such as the National Eisteddfod, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, RWCMD, Wales Millennium Centre, Theatr Clwyd, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Welsh National Opera, Creative Wales, Arts Council of Wales, Tŷ Cerdd, Community Music Wales and others.

Key in building diversity and access is providing opportunities for children and young people to perform in their local community through Welsh and English as well as their own language for those with Welsh or English as an additional language (WAL/EAL). A variety of progressive opportunities will enable children and young people to experience and explore music and their creativity through schools and settings as well as local music services and community organisations.

It is important to build on the opportunities already available to schools from organisations such as the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Horizons project, the Urdd Eisteddfod and National Eisteddfod. The lead body will work with local authorities and partners to ensure that these existing opportunities as well as those offered through the plan are varied and diverse, promoting awareness of these opportunities to schools, settings and communities across Wales.

Experiences for children and young people in and outside schools and settings to access opportunities to create, record and produce music, will support their understanding of the career possibilities within cultural and creative industries. The lead body will work with Careers Wales, Creative Wales and partners to signpost children and young people to access career pathways into the creative industries.

In partnership with local authorities, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Creative Wales, Arts Council of Wales and the wider creative sector, the lead body will:

performing pathways

- develop an ongoing series of performing opportunities outside school at a local, regional, national and international level
- ensure that information and signposting about performance and recording studios, and music-making spaces that support opportunities for creating music, are clear and accessible
- support schools in accessing information regarding the Arts Council of Wales' Creating Learning through the Arts programme, in particular 'Go and Explore' which provides opportunities for children and young people to explore music outside schools and settings
- provide routes and information on higher education and music specialist courses
- work with Anthem and a range of funding providers to ensure that learners from low-income households have access to financial support to continue to pursue their ambitions in performing recording, producing and digital music.

In partnership with local authorities, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Creative Wales, Arts Council of Wales and the wider creative sector, the lead body will:

creative industries pathways

- signpost children and young people to Creative Wales' dynamic, interactive information resource which includes mapping of the whole infrastructure that surrounds the commercial music sector in Wales
- provide routes and information on apprenticeships into other music industry careers to be made available to schools, settings and young people
- work with higher education institutions on the development of an undergraduate placement programme to support schools and settings
- work with Creative Wales and other partners in developing practitioners' skills in recording and production and industry knowledge and experience.

Glossary

Aural skills	Aural perception skills are fundamental to success for all types of musicians. These skills involve listening to many different types of music, and learning how to describe individual parts and the effects created by the combination of these parts.
Creative industries	A sector of businesses and organisations with creativity at its core such as music, performing arts, film, drama, animation, video games, design, crafts and the visual arts. The term can be used to refer to creative and cultural industries as well as the creative and digital sectors.
Disadvantaged and vulnerable learners	<p>Children and young people who face barriers to learning or are vulnerable to underachieving. It includes, but is not limited to, learners who are in one or more of the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learners with special educational needs (SEN) or additional learning needs (ALN) • learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who access further education and training • learners from minority ethnic groups who have English or Welsh as an additional language (EAL/WAL) • care-experienced children, including looked after children • learners educated other than at school (EOTAS) • children of refugees and asylum seekers • Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners • learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM) (see also definition for 'learners from low-income households') • young carers • children at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. <p>Learners from these groups may face a range of barriers to achieving their potential and require diverse solutions and support to help meet their individual needs. In addition, learners may belong to several of the above groups at the same time, depending on their individual circumstances.</p> <p>The list of groups is not exhaustive. Learners not in these groups may be considered vulnerable or disadvantaged, including those affected by COVID-19. For example, some learners who would not have been considered vulnerable or disadvantaged pre-COVID-19 may require additional support because of their experiences during the pandemic.</p> <p>Guidance for supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged learners can be found online.</p>

Hub	A group of organisations, such as local authorities, schools and settings, arts, community or voluntary bodies, working together with a lead body in place to create joined-up music education provision.
Learners from low-income households	Children and young people previously or currently identified as being eligible for free school meals (e-FSM), as well as those qualifying for support through the Pupil Development Grant. This can include looked after children, whether they were previously eligible for free school meals or not.
Lived experiences	Personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement in everyday events.
Local authority-commissioned music service	A music service that is not directly overseen by the local authority but is engaged through a tender or other arrangement, and in which the organisation is responsible for the engagement or employment of tutors.
Local authority-hosted music service	A music service for which the local authority employs and/or oversees delivery.
More able and talented learners	Learners with abilities developed to a level substantially ahead of their peers, or with such potential.
Music education workforce	Those employed in the delivery of music education in all schools, settings and the wider community.
Non-maintained settings	Local authorities fund education places at non-maintained settings, usually a private day nursery or playgroup, for learners aged three and four who receive Foundation Phase. These settings will follow Curriculum for Wales from September 2022.
Practitioner	This can refer to two distinct categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classroom music practitioner – employed by the school or setting to deliver music in the school's curricula, and usually based in one location • music service practitioner/tutor – employed to deliver music service tuition, classroom support or activities on behalf of the local authority-hosted or commissioned music service, or independent companies. These tutors are usually peripatetic and teach at a range of schools and settings.
Side-by-side learning	A professional or more experienced musician playing or working alongside a younger or less experienced musician.

Under-represented group	A group of people who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are insufficiently or inadequately represented, e.g. LGBTQ+, Black, Asian and minority ethnic, or Gypsy and Traveller communities• may face barriers to opportunities due to a range of factors including mental health issues, physical health/disability, sensory impairment, learning disabilities, neuro-divergence, substance misuse.
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