



Provision of music services in 15 local education authorities

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Introduction

1. The Standards Fund for music was introduced in 1999 so that local education authority (LEA) music services could bid for grants to protect and expand their provision. Between May 1999 and July 2000, Ofsted inspected the nature and quality of provision, reporting to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). This was followed by a 'good practice' survey of a further 28 LEAs between October 2000 and March 2002, which focused on the quality of tuition, ensembles and curriculum support and formed the basis of *Local education authority music services – survey of good practice*, published by Ofsted in June 2002.¹

2. Between November 2003 and April 2004, a further 15 inspections were conducted. As with previous inspections, the selection of LEAs ensured a spread in terms of type, size and range of ways in which music services are structured. Some services are responsible for all aspects of provision; others are not responsible for curriculum advice or support. In some, funding has been delegated to schools; in others, part or all of the services have been contracted to an independent agency or charitable trust.

3. Inspections were carried out in two parts. At a pre-inspection meeting, each LEA was asked to demonstrate how funding was used, what range of resources were available and how these were organised and distributed. In advance of each inspection, a questionnaire requesting contextual information on the service was completed by the LEA and analysed by HMI. These questionnaires yielded important and new information about take-up of tuition, analysed by gender, instrument, key stage and by particular groups of pupils. Each LEA was asked to draw on its internal information and monitoring procedures to provide a programme for inspection. The programme covered the full range of the work of the music service and, at the same time, was designed to demonstrate good practice in the three inspection strands of tuition, ensembles and curriculum support.

4. This report is the overview of the findings from the 15 LEAs inspected since November 2003. In total, inspectors observed 397 sessions of tuition, 56 ensembles and 50 sessions of curriculum support.

5. In the report, the following terminology is used:

tutors	the staff employed by the LEA music service
teachers	school-based staff
tuition	the teaching of instrumental or vocal work undertaken by tutors
beginner/junior	standards expected from up to two years of learning
intermediate	standards expected after three and four years of learning
advanced	standards expected after five or more years of learning

¹ *Local authority music services – survey of good practice*, HMI 458, Ofsted, 2002. Available on the Ofsted website.

Main findings

The evidence across all 15 LEAs shows that provision made by music services was good overall. The quality of work was evaluated in the three strands of music provision: tuition; ensembles; and curriculum support. In addition, the survey evaluated the quality of leadership and management of music services, including their use of funding.

Tuition

- The quality of tuition was very good in 2 LEAs (13%); good in 7 LEAs (47%) and satisfactory in 6 LEAs (40%).
- Almost 400 tuition sessions were observed by inspectors. Of these 8% were outstanding; 19% very good; 37% good; 31% satisfactory and 5% unsatisfactory in the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- About one third of the sessions were only satisfactory, typically because the purpose and range of activities were narrow, or pupils were not making steady progress.
- The tuition provided by music services is concentrated at Key Stage 2. There is a clear and disappointing reduction in the percentage of pupils continuing tuition in Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Music services do not have firm systems to monitor or seek to address the reasons for discontinuation of lessons by pupils.
- Barely a third of special schools in the sample receive tuition, although some LEAs are extending provision of music therapy.
- Music services rely very heavily on part-time and hourly-paid staff, particularly the latter.
- About a third of tutors have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), although many others are well qualified musically, often with graduate or graduate-equivalent status. Few services provide sufficient opportunities for the further professional development of tutors, however, particularly those who are employed on a part-time basis.
- One and a half times as many girls as boys in this sample receive tuition.
- There is clear gender stereotyping in the instruments studied. Nine times as many girls as boys learn the flute and twice as many boys as girls learn the trumpet. Services do not have sufficiently secure systems for monitoring such patterns, or strategies to try to counter them.
- There is a considerable imbalance in the range of instruments being studied overall, with upper pitched woodwind, string and brass instruments predominating.

- The present pattern of choice of instruments is limiting some pupils' access to worthwhile and musically balanced ensemble experiences.

Ensembles

- The overall quality of ensembles was very good in 6 LEAs (43%) good in 6 LEAs (43%) and satisfactory in 2 LEAs (14%).
- A total of 56 ensemble sessions was observed. Of these, 6 (10%) were outstanding, 15 (27%) were very good, 24 (43%) were good, 10 (18%) were satisfactory and 1 (2%) was unsatisfactory.
- Pupils in the best ensembles achieve high standards and several advanced ensembles have a high reputation nationally and also perform regularly abroad.
- Pupils in weaker ensembles often need access to better models of live performance to raise their aspirations.
- Pupils participating in ensembles are highly motivated, focused and keen. Their attendance is very good.
- Pupils perform a demanding repertoire but the music they play often represents too limited a range of musical styles.
- Ensembles are providing valuable opportunities for pupils to extend their social and learning skills alongside their musical skills and experiences.
- In some LEAs, opportunities for beginners and younger players are limited and the geographical siting of venues for ensembles restricts access, particularly for pupils who have to rely on public transport.

Curriculum support

- In all 11 of the music services which provide curriculum support to schools, its overall quality was good or better. In 3 LEAs (27%) it was outstanding, in 3 (27%) it was very good and in 5 LEAs (46%) it was good.
- A total of 50 sessions was observed. Of these, 7 (14%) were outstanding, 16 (32%) very good, 20 (40%) good, 6 (12%) satisfactory and 1 (2%) unsatisfactory.
- Curriculum support covers a wide range of activities, including performances and workshops in schools, support for the national curriculum in music and professional development for school-based staff.

Leadership and management

- The overall quality of leadership and management was good or better in 12 of the services inspected. In two LEAs (13%) they were very good, in 10 (67%) they were good, in one (7%) satisfactory and in two (13%) unsatisfactory.
- Several services have been too reactive in negotiating provision with schools, allowing too much to depend on 'market forces' rather than allocating provision equitably and proportionally on the basis of a clear rationale in the LEA's Educational Development Plan.
- Music services need to use data more effectively. As well as responding to requests from individual schools, for example, they need to target resources for curriculum development where they are most needed.
- Monitoring of provision is often the weakest area of management, with roles and responsibilities for this frequently remaining unclear.
- The need to attract funds is leading several services away from some of the stated policies of their LEAs, particularly in terms of ensuring access, inclusion and equality of opportunity.
- Several services make inefficient use of resources by teaching too few pupils or by teaching in groups which are unnecessarily small.
- Some LEAs maintain their instrumental stock poorly and do not use it well enough.

Funding

- The contribution made by the Music Standards Fund (MSF) to the income of music services varies considerably. The average contribution from the MSF was 45%, the highest being 100% and the lowest 24%. In most cases, LEAs have made good use of the MSF to protect services and to extend the range of their work.
- The financial contribution made by LEAs to their music services varies widely. No service received more than a third of its total income from the LEA and two services received nothing from their LEAs.
- Most services have a system of fee remission for pupils from families with low incomes. However, the remission in some instances is very small and schools receive limited advice on how to ensure that these families benefit from such arrangements. Little consideration is given to support for families whose incomes are just above these limits.
- Neither schools nor LEAs have secure systems to monitor or promote access to lessons by pupils from families with low incomes.

Recommendations

To improve standards and the quality of music provision, its organisation and management, aspects of the work of several LEAs require attention.

In their relationship with LEAs, services should:

- ensure that their work is firmly integrated within the overall education provision of the LEA, so that their contribution to developing and supporting music is clearly aligned with other policies and procedures; and with the education of all pupils
- ensure that staff understand and implement policies for inclusion, equality of access and equality of opportunity for all where they relate to music
- take full account of school and LEA data, particularly at the point of recruitment of pupils to tuition and on transfer to secondary or upper schools
- make more effective use of data when allocating their provision of curriculum support to schools.

In organising the provision, music services should:

- provide live performances and workshops which demonstrate high-quality music making, so that pupils can hear, observe and respond to effective individual and ensemble playing
- encourage pupils to explore and understand the sound qualities and musical potential of middle and lower pitched instruments, as well as those less commonly played, to avoid the unbalanced ensembles resulting from large numbers of higher pitched instruments
- ensure that they challenge inappropriate gender stereotyping of instruments and find ways of tackling the gender imbalance in instrumental take-up
- monitor the provision within and across schools, so that a range of musical styles and traditions are represented and given equal status and ensure that repertoire is broad and challenging
- ensure that tuition is linked with opportunities for ensemble playing from the earliest stages of learning.

In their staffing, music services should:

- ensure that professional development programmes enable all music service staff to sustain and improve the quality of their

work, as well as updating them on national trends, issues and developments in music education

- put in place monitoring procedures which yield data on take-up, progress, transfer into Key Stage 3 and involvement in school-based and central activities
- use the data to provide management information about trends, issues and matters which need to be addressed and ensure that the roles and responsibilities of senior staff enable them to carry out this important aspect of their work.

Provision of music services in 15 local education authorities

Quality of tuition

6. Inspectors observed 394 sessions involving 1041 pupils (409 boys and 632 girls). The quality of tuition across the sessions was:

	Number	%
Outstanding	31	8
Very good	75	19
Good	146	37
Satisfactory	123	31
Unsatisfactory	19	5

7. The overall quality of tuition in the 15 LEAs inspected was:

	Number	%
Very good	2	13
Good	7	47
Satisfactory	6	40

8. Of the 15 LEAs, two were judged to provide very good quality of tuition overall. No LEA provided unsatisfactory tuition overall and, of the total sample of lessons seen, only five per cent were unsatisfactory.

9. The sessions judged to be of high quality have the following characteristics and content:

- a clear focus on musicianship, which enables pupils to acquire musical knowledge and understanding, as well as learning the technical skills of instrumental playing

- tutors are good, versatile and enthusiastic musicians who demonstrate, model and accompany their pupils, often using more than one instrument and backing tracks, to enrich sessions and support pupils' learning
- tutors have a well-planned curriculum for individuals and groups, so that all pupils acquire secure individual and ensemble skills
- tutors have high expectations of all pupils at all stages of learning
- pupils have been taught how to practise and what to do in order to improve
- high-quality music making, with minimal verbal descriptions or instructions, is the clear priority in all sessions
- tutors set targets, with regular assessment points, and pupils are given effective feedback on their progress
- tutors' work is integrated with the school's provision for music, including the National Curriculum for music
- progress and success are celebrated in and beyond the school
- pupils' families receive appropriate and regular information about progress and involvement.

10. The LEAs were invited to provide examples of what they considered to be good practice and it was therefore disappointing to find that a third of sessions were no better than satisfactory. In view of the high uptake of flute, guitar and trumpet, it was also disappointing to note that there was unsatisfactory teaching in each of these areas and, in the case of flute teaching, most lessons were graded as satisfactory or worse.

11. The most frequent criticism made of lessons was the limited range of activities. The deciphering of notation and development of technique dominated at the expense of opportunities to improvise, compose, develop aural and musicianship skills by playing by ear or from memory, or improve ensemble skills. Where such activities did take place, they tended to be confined to lessons for beginners, giving the impression that a broad curriculum was only a preliminary to the main task of developing individual performance skills.

12. One of the reasons for the limited range of activities was the shortness of lessons. In many instances they were no longer than twenty minutes, mainly because of the need to try to accommodate schools' and families' demands for individual lessons at low cost. Some of the best tutors did provide a variety of activities within these constraints. In a small number of sessions, however, pupils did little more than tune their instruments, play through a piece prepared for homework and sight-read a new piece to be practised for the next lesson. There was no time to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of performance or to work on improvement.

13. In these lessons there was a heavy reliance on preparing for examinations and assessments; either those organised by external boards or by the services themselves. This resulted in too great a focus on playing through pieces and scales, with some limited opportunities for attempting sight reading. An over-reliance on working through a single tutor book and the unimaginative use of published materials further restricted the range of activities within lessons.

14. In several services, schemes of work are weak and do not give a clear indication of the long-term intended learning outcomes. Some consist of no more than a collection of materials to be followed in a suggested sequence. This detracts from the work of tutors. As a consequence, in unsatisfactory sessions, there was no clearly defined purpose to the lesson. In these instances too, teaching was a reactive process with technical and musical work being pursued in response to errors made by the pupil, rather than being part of a planned series of teaching and learning objectives.

15. In satisfactory sessions, while progress was secure, there was insufficient emphasis on making sure that pupils were involved in a rich musical experience. In some cases, for example, tutors focused on a specific aspect of technique without putting it into the context of a piece of music. In others, the frequent stops to correct errors meant that pupils never played more than a few phrases in their entirety. Opportunities for sustained music playing were further reduced by the tendency of some tutors to spend too much time talking about the music rather than demonstrating. Too often, the focus in these lessons was on accuracy of pitch, with insufficient attention being given to improving articulation, phrasing, dynamic control, tone quality and intonation. Solo performance without accompaniment by the teacher or from a backing track, further detracted from the musical purpose of the experience.

16. Some group lessons made insufficient use of the ready-made opportunities for ensemble playing. Unsatisfactory group sessions were no more than a series of short individual lessons with no opportunity for pupils to accompany each other, to perform as an ensemble, or to listen and comment on each other's playing.

17. In most of the services in this sample, tutors are expected to keep written records of pupils' progress. However, the detail and the accuracy with which this is done by tutors varies considerably, even within the same service. Most services also expect pupils to keep homework diaries. Again there was little consistency in the use of these, even within a service. In many lessons they were not used at all. In others, the homework consisted of no more than a page reference with no indication of what specific aspect of the music should be the main focus of practice. With such limited information families and other teachers working with the pupils were given no guidance on how to help them. An allied weakness was that tutors did not teach pupils how to practise. As a result, the pupils were in danger of making inefficient use of time, of making insufficient progress and therefore becoming demotivated.

Use of music technologies

18. The use of music technologies by tutors and pupils is not yet widespread, but some effective applications were observed. The most common were backing tracks and commercially produced CDs which support pupils' practice between sessions. The musical extracts are, however, often at too fast a speed for effective use by pupils. Most are recorded at a performance, rather than a practice, tempo. Good tutors produce or obtain additional backing tracks and support materials which are designed for specific pupils or stages of learning. Audio and video recordings are less commonly used, but are very valuable in giving feedback to pupils, as well as storing evidence of their progress. It is rare to find, though, the good use of software which allows the combined use of acoustic and electronic sound sources so that pupils can experiment in improvising or composing as an integral part of music making and music learning. Closer links with school-based music staff could help to establish these facilities and applications.

19. Tutors are making better use of information and communications technology (ICT) than was evident in the last survey, though this is still not widespread. Good use was observed in keeping attendance records and logging pupils' progress. Electronic communications are also more common and are effective in sending and receiving information, particularly as tutors often visit several venues each day and can rarely meet together.

Quality of ensembles

20. Fifty six ensemble sessions were observed, involving 1,490 pupils; 576 boys and 914 girls. The ratio of 2 boys for every 3 girls in the ensembles seen reflects the gender balance of pupils receiving tuition.

21. The overall quality of the 56 ensembles was:

	Number	%
Outstanding	6	10
Very good	15	27
Good	24	43
Satisfactory	10	18
Not satisfactory	1	2

22. The overall quality of ensembles in 14 LEAs was:

	Number of LEAs	%
Very good	6	43
Good	6	43
Satisfactory	2	14

23. In the best instances, music services offer a wide range of ensemble opportunities for pupils of all ages and stages of learning. There are clear pathways for the development of skills and experiences as young players progress through their school years. Several music services have advanced ensembles of a very high standard which have established a considerable reputation nationally. These players perform a demanding repertoire and make regular appearances at prestigious venues, both in this country and abroad, often performing with distinguished professional soloists and conductors. Such activities also enhance the reputation of the music services involved and ensure that they attract considerable support from families and the communities which they serve.

24. At all levels the pupils are highly motivated, focused and keen and clearly enjoy performing with others. Attendance is very good, with many players travelling considerable distances to take part in the activities provided. During rehearsals they show considerable perseverance, self-discipline and patience. They work hard to produce good tone, intonation and attack and to develop sensitivity and style in their playing.

25. They are helped in this by the high standard of tutoring they receive. In many instances, staff who conduct ensembles make very effective use of their own considerable experience as performers to advise and support the pupils. They make good use of well-planned sequences of activities and routines to focus the attention of players on details of intonation, phrasing, bowing and breathing in order to improve and develop the musical quality of their work. In many sessions observed, conductors ensured that pupils were provided with a good balance of training, rehearsal and performing activities which stimulated and challenged them.

26. Despite the high profile given to advanced groups, some music services provide only limited opportunities for younger players to gain ensemble experience. In some of the beginner and junior ensemble sessions seen, staff had inadequate conducting techniques and relied too heavily on describing rather than demonstrating how to improve a performance. In some junior ensembles, the competing demands of differing instrumental families resulted in difficulties in matching the music to the full range of players within the same group. Some junior and intermediate ensembles also suffered from an imbalance of instruments, with a preponderance of high pitched instruments and a lack of middle pitched and bass instruments to balance

them. In view of the great imbalance in the range and types of instruments taught by music services, this is almost inevitable.

27. In one LEA, where no ensembles were available for observation, there were insufficient centrally organised beginner and junior ensembles to encourage pupils to persevere with their instrumental tuition. Furthermore there were only limited opportunities for intermediate and advanced players to take part in a range of appropriate ensemble activities outside school.

28. In some services, which do introduce pupils to a demanding repertoire, the music they play covers a limited range of styles. However, there were some good examples of pupils being offered samba, gospel, rock and steel pan music traditions and to a range of repertoires, including contemporary pieces. In general, however, the music activities tend to represent Western European classical traditions or repertoire from music theatre and film music. Pupils are too rarely given the opportunity to extend their technique and preferences through performing non-tonal, rhythmically irregular or dissonant music or music from a wider range of cultures and traditions. This results in a safe, undemanding and somewhat repetitive repertoire and limits the musical development and experiences of pupils. Also, pupils in ensembles need more opportunities to hear each other's music making. For example, players in wind bands rarely have the opportunity to hear some of the same instruments playing jazz.

29. In many LEAs, services rely heavily on the goodwill and support of schools which are prepared to host ensemble activities. However, this sometimes detracts from the accessibility of those activities. Four LEAs, for example, had not analysed the extent to which the venues used ensured access for the greatest number of potential participants. As a result, provision across those LEAs was very uneven and worked to the disadvantage of many pupils, particularly those who had to rely on public transport to attend.

Quality of curriculum support

30. During the inspection, 50 curriculum support sessions were observed involving over 2,700 pupils. The overall quality of sessions was:

Quality of sessions	Number	%
Outstanding	7	14
Very good	16	32
Good	20	40
Satisfactory	6	12
Unsatisfactory	1	2

31. The overall quality of curriculum support in 11 LEAs was:

	Number	%
Outstanding	3	27
Very good	3	27
Good	5	46

32. The curriculum support provided takes several forms. These include: whole-class lessons taught by a visiting curriculum specialist who provides the class teacher with follow-up activities to be pursued between visits; music therapy sessions for pupils in special schools; live instrumental and vocal performances provided by music service tutors or brokered by the service from professional companies; workshops conducted over a period of time with a number of schools and culminating in combined performances at an area or LEA-wide festival.

33. These support sessions are highly valued by schools as a means of providing teachers, many of whom lack confidence or experience in music, with a means of extending their skills and confidence in delivering this area of the curriculum. In the best instances, visiting staff provided good models of how to structure and deliver curriculum music lessons and provided clear guidance on how these activities could be developed further by the class teachers. In the most successful lessons, the class teacher was not a passive observer but was given a clear role and was provided with feedback from the visiting tutor. The documentation and material to support follow-up activities were also of good quality and were clearly related to the requirements of the National Curriculum for music.

34. There are good examples of services targeting support well and being sensitive to the needs of schools. In two music services, for example, support sessions are being used to encourage greater collaboration and sharing of expertise between small primary schools in isolated rural areas. In another LEA, the music service has worked with secondary schools to develop a series of performances, provided on a rotating basis, to support GCSE courses and to give pupils access to a wider range of genres than is usually available in their schools. Similarly, the music therapy work seen in special schools was well planned and provided good support, not only for pupils but also for staff.

35. Most music services, though, need to ensure that the provision of curriculum support is seen as integral to the LEA's provision for all pupils and is targeted to schools where it is especially needed. Too often, the music service provision is too detached and not sufficiently well communicated as a part of the whole LEA support for the curriculum. Also, while the contribution to supporting music in schools is

usually made very clear, the contribution to pupils' learning skills, social skills and broader aspects of education are not well explained or promoted.

Quality of leadership and management

36. The quality of leadership and management across the 15 LEAs was:

Quality of sessions	Number	%
Very good	2	13
Good	10	67
Satisfactory	1	7
Unsatisfactory	2	13

37. Leadership and management were good or better in most of the services inspected. In two cases, however, they were unsatisfactory. In the best instances, managers give the service a clear sense of direction, which is understood and shared by staff and they lead well-defined strategies and policies. In several cases, however, even where the service is securely managed overall, leadership is too reactive, with a lack of long-term vision or no clear development plan for its realisation.

38. The management structures of services vary considerably across LEAs. In this sample most of the LEAs have a head of service who liaises with, and in some instances is managed by, a member of the LEA's school effectiveness service. In other instances, the lead officer on school effectiveness is also the head of service. In some cases, the roles and responsibilities of senior staff are not defined sufficiently clearly, especially in relation to monitoring the quality of provision, and the current structures are not well matched to the developing needs of the service.

39. In two LEAs the music service works in partnership with an independent trust. In both cases the collaboration is very successful and is providing pupils and teachers with an enhanced range of opportunities to develop their experiences and learning in music. They have access to equipment, accommodation, performance and recording spaces of very high quality.

40. The extent to which services devolve funding to schools varies. Two LEAs have devolved most of their funding in this way but have not established systems for monitoring its effective use by schools or ensured that the teaching which schools then buy is of an appropriate quality.

41. In most instances, schools hold the music services in high regard and see them as efficient and responsive to pupils' needs. Where services have to operate in a market situation, often in the face of fierce competition from independent providers,

this is clearly important for them. However, several services have allowed market forces to dictate the nature and scope of their work too much and have been too reactive, rather than strategic, in their approach. For example, they have been reluctant to challenge the assumption that individual tuition is better than group lessons or to provide pupils with guidance to allow them to choose instruments other than those with gender stereotypical take-up. In these cases music services need to influence schools much more to support LEA's policies on inclusion, equal opportunities and access. Also, families need information about the full range of opportunities available for pupils, as well as advice on access and choice.

42. Most music services have reliable data on funding, but too little and limited information on other aspects of their work, such as progress of pupils, their achievements and reasons for ceasing tuition. Much of the existing data has been collected recently and has not been analysed in detail or been used to monitor the quality of existing provision. Even in good music services, systems for evaluating the effectiveness of new initiatives are weak and information gathered through lesson observations is not being collated or used to identify strengths or areas for development in teaching and learning. Similarly, even where clear systems for performance management are in place, the data is not collated or analysed well enough to make a secure contribution.

Funding

43. The patterns of funding for LEA music services vary considerably. The annual income for the services in this sample ranged from £130,800 to £3,612,370. The average was £1,494,422. The average contribution from the MSF was 45%, the highest being 100% and the lowest 24%. More surprisingly, the contribution from LEAs also ranged widely. Two LEAs made no contribution to their services and the highest contribution amounted to barely a third of the service's income. The average contribution from LEAs was 14%, and from schools 30%. The remaining income came from directly from families (average 6%) and other sources (average 5%).

44. The total reliance of some services on MSF raises questions about: the strategies that LEAs have to develop those services further; the contingency plans they have in the event of reviews of MSF; and the effectiveness of the partnership between the services and schools. The extent to which services rely on family contributions is not clear, since they tend not to monitor what proportion of the charge to schools is passed on to families. The two highest percentages of total income generated from direct charges to families recorded in this sample were 22% and 31%.

45. Where LEAs make limited financial contributions to a service they do not usually have procedures which ensure that the service upholds and promotes corporate policies. In this sample, for instance, the services relying most heavily on direct family contributions were weaker in terms of: ensuring greater participation by pupils from low income families; in the distribution of tuition across schools; in combating gender stereotyping; and in offering a balanced range of instruments.

46. In most cases, LEAs have made good use of the MSF to protect services and to extend the range of their work. Examples of expansion include: increasing the

numbers receiving tuition; extending the range and breadth of ensemble opportunities; increasing provision for pupils in special schools; increasing curriculum support to schools, particularly in the primary phase; providing access to a wider range of instruments, musical styles and traditions; and supporting the 'Wider Opportunities' initiative at Key Stage 2. However, although the range of activities has increased, it is unclear whether the overall quality of provision has improved, since the services often lack detailed monitoring and evaluation systems.

Charging and remissions policies

47. The hourly charge for lessons made by the services in this sample ranges from £15 to £29, with an average of £25. Some LEAs make a further charge for membership of ensembles. In some LEAs, most of the charges are made directly to families. In others they are made directly to schools and, in a third group, there is a combination of these arrangements. The best arrangements involve schools in the negotiations with families, so that knowledge of pupils and of the school profile of pupils' needs is used to inform decisions about who should learn and what the charges to families should be. Tuition which is paid for by schools or music services, and which is free to families at the beginner stages of learning, is most effective in addressing issues of equitable distribution, inclusion and equality of opportunity.

48. Most of the LEAs have a system of remission for pupils from families with low incomes. However, the administration of this is often left to schools. In some instances, bursaries are offered to pupils from families with low incomes but, in one LEA, the amount offered was far too little to enable pupils to benefit from a full course of tuition. There is no systematic guidance to schools on how to identify and encourage pupils who may wish to participate, but do not put themselves forward because of their family circumstances. In the schools visited during this inspection, the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals who were receiving tuition was low and in several cases, no data had been collected by schools until the question was raised by the inspection.

Distribution of tuition

49. The overall percentage of schools within each phase receiving music service provision was:

Primary	73%
Secondary	86%
Special	35%
<hr/>	
Overall	73%

50. The overall percentage of pupils within each Key Stage receiving music service tuition was:

Key Stage 1	4%
Key Stage 2	14%
Key Stage 3	9%
Key Stage 4	5%

51. In this sample, music service tuition is concentrated in Key Stage 2. Returns from LEAs show that many services have used the MSF to extend provision in this phase. This needs to be monitored by senior managers, to try to ensure that the increase will be sustained and lead, in future years, to an increase in the percentage receiving tuition at subsequent key stages.

52. Considerably fewer pupils receive tuition in Key Stages 3 and 4 than receive it in Key Stage 2. There is a drop off between years 6 and 7. This is partly due to the negative impact of the transition from Key Stage 2 to 3, the impact of examination pressures at Key Stage 4, or the decision by some families to choose private tuition outside school. It also reflects a range of other factors including: lack of progress; negative peer group pressure; lack of opportunity for ensemble performance; and declining commitment and interest. Too few music services explore in any detail the patterns and reasons for discontinuation and are therefore not able to take appropriate action to address these significant issues.

Use of ICT

53. Most music services are using ICT applications effectively, particularly in keeping up-to-date information in the form of pupil registers and receipt of payments. In a small number of music services, laptops are used more extensively than paper record keeping systems. However, now that facilities are available, data need to be collated, retrieved and analysed more effectively to show trends and patterns of, for example, take-up and discontinuity in tuition. Also, used effectively, the software allows detailed analysis of specific issues, for example gender balance and distribution of instruments. ICT software has the potential to give up-to-date information for tutors and managers on the nature, amount and quality of the provision, and is insufficiently used for this purpose.

Use of music technologies

54. While most music services have enabled tutors to acquire portable keyboards and recording facilities if they wish, there is much potential which is not yet being realised. Occasional, but very effective, central facilities for music writing and editing enabled tutors to contribute their own work to an electronic database of materials

which they can all use and for which they hold the copyright. The use of software which allows pupils to develop their own work, though, was much more rarely found.

Staffing

55. Staffing across the 15 LEAs shows the following distribution:

Full-time staff	24%
Part-time staff	16%
Hourly-paid staff	54%
Other	6%

Staff with Qualified Teacher Status 38%

56. The music services in this sample rely very heavily on part-time and, more particularly, hourly-paid staff to deliver the tuition. Only 38% of staff have Qualified Teacher Status, although many staff are well qualified musically, with graduate or graduate-equivalent qualifications.

57. The preponderance of hourly-paid staff is not surprising. The insecure funding of music services and the limited opportunities for career progression are obstacles in attracting sufficient full-time teachers. Freelance musicians and those with rare specialisms often find hourly teaching more appropriate for their portfolio of performing activities and, in some cases, work for more than one music service. The challenge for music services is to ensure that arrangements for recruitment, performance management and professional development are flexible enough to meet the needs of all staff and are responsive to the demands made on them by schools and central activities.

58. Providing appropriate professional development programmes for large numbers of part-time tutors remains a challenge to most music services. In several LEAs their work was not well integrated within or across teams, so that there were inconsistent approaches to the curriculum and in particular, to pedagogy. Also, these tutors need to be kept up to date with local and national developments. For example, too few of the part-time and hourly-paid tutors were well-informed about the government's 'Wider Opportunities' policy for pupils in Key Stage 2, as well as the implications this has for their future work.

Instrumental resources

59. In most LEAs, the majority of instruments owned by the service at the time of the inspection were in full working order. In two music services, however, only three quarters were fully operational. On average, almost a fifth of instruments were in storage and not being used. In one service over a quarter were in storage and in another almost a third were out of use because of poor maintenance. The most serious case, however, was a service where over half of the stock was out of use, despite the fact that there were long waiting lists for tuition. This is an inefficient use of resources and represents poor value for money. It also means that large numbers of potential learners are being denied access to tuition.

Range and distribution of instruments

60. The 11 most popular instrumental choices in these 15 LEAs are:

Rank	Instrument	Total	Boys	Boys (%)	Girls	Girls (%)
1	Violin	5244	1208	23	4038	77
2	Flute	2401	225	9	2176	91
3	Guitar	2309	1695	73	614	27
4	Recorder	2230	995	45	1235	55
5	Clarinet	2222	505	23	1717	77
6	Voice	1579	477	30	1102	70
7	Keyboard	1187	436	37	751	63
8	Trumpet	1010	675	67	335	33
9	Percussion	936	682	73	254	27
10	Cello	799	219	27	580	73
11	Saxophone	706	373	53	333	47

61. Over 54,000 pupils are being taught by the services inspected in this sample. Of these pupils, 60% are girls and 40% are boys. Not only is there an overall gender imbalance amongst pupils, there are also further imbalances in the types of instruments which they are learning.

62. The 11 most popular instruments are shown in the chart above. Within this group, there are clear gender imbalances. For example, nine times more girls than boys learn the flute, and three times more girls than boys learn the violin and the clarinet. Conversely, there are twice as many boys as girls learning the trumpet, percussion and guitar.

63. Prior to the inspection, few services had detailed data on instrumental choice and most had not analysed the results to identify implications for future policy making. Thus these gender stereotypes go largely unchallenged and in some cases are being reinforced. In one school, for example, the headteacher had bought a set of brass instruments for the exclusive use of boys. In two other LEAs, service managers accepted without challenge the assertion that girls preferred woodwind instruments and boys preferred percussion. Furthermore, they felt that, in a market economy, the service should provide what was requested without necessarily questioning it.

64. If services are to ensure that principles of equal opportunities are maintained, then they need to have clear strategies to enable pupils to make more informed choices and to select from a wider range of instruments. Pupils and their families also need to be knowledgeable about the musical and educational opportunities provided.