

Schools Forum

September 2023

Application for Continuation of Music Funding £38,000 in 2024/25

Purpose of report

- To consider the work of Walsall Music Education Hub & Service in supporting Walsall schools and young people with music provision and opportunities.
- To consider continuing Schools Forum financial support for the Music Education Hub's activities at Walsall Arena and Arts Centre.

Recommendations

To approve £38,000 School Forum funding be granted to Walsall Music Education Hub & Service in 2024/25 in line with previous years.

Background

Over 4,000 pupils take part in weekly music tuition and ensemble activities in Walsall through Walsall Music Education Hub & Service's delivery programmes. Weekly after school opportunities provided at Music Centres for Choral, Vocal, Instrumental and Rock and Pop are firmly established.

The continued impact of financial and time pressures on schools, in combination with the shift in the musical, cultural and educational environments post-pandemic, mean that Walsall Music Education Hub & Service is well positioned to continue to provide outlets for young people to rehearse, participate and perform outside of traditional school hours and settings.

This additionally enriches and enhances the musical opportunities for Walsall's children and young people and enables further progression by bringing together young people from a variety of schools and other educational settings, to work collaboratively on music which may be limited within the constraints of individual schools.

Open-access programmes for music beyond the school setting enable Walsall's young people to engage in activities for extended periods of time, to fully develop their potential and, if appropriate, embark on vocational and continuation pathways into the creative industries and Higher Education.

DfE published an update to the NPME where a new strategic approach has been introduced with three broad aims and five strategic functions which will be implemented from

September 2023. Alongside the updated NPME, DfE announced that the current Music Hub areas across England will continue until August 2024. Following this period, new prescribed geographic Music Hubs areas will be implemented to address the new NPME, post a competitive application process to lead the new geographic areas.

Guided by Department for Education (DfE), Arts Council England (ACE), Headteachers, Hub advisory group and other stakeholders, Walsall Music Education Hub & Service continues to develop a localised framework to support Walsall schools in maximising the impact of music, within a broad and balanced curriculum, the National Plan for Music Education, the Model Music Curriculum and the OFSTED framework in and outside the school. This plan helps schools identify and provide essential additional support for their children's musical needs.

Walsall schools have traditionally been recognised for high levels of musical engagement. This is testament to the cohesive bonds of the deeply embedded partnership arrangements that have existed for many years and have enabled the Hub and Service to continue to offer, stabilise and enhance the musical opportunities for Walsall's children and young people.

Proposal

Schools Forum to continue to work in partnership with Walsall Music Education Hub & Service to provide essential resources and support to Walsall schools and young people for their musical education.

Financial Implications/Value for Money

The continued below-inflation increments of DfE/ACE grant funding combined with increases in essential costs and very limited direct streams of local government funding, place increasing year-on-year pressure on the economy of scale required to sustain the core functionality and maintain a diverse portfolio.

The DfE formula funding of Walsall's music grant will remain approximately the same and it is envisaged that grant funding levels for Walsall will continue at the current levels. However, from September 2024 this grant fund will be distributed via a larger area Hub Lead Organisation (HLO), which will result in a reduction in funding in real terms. In addition, the National Plan for Music Education brief has expanded to include additional school focused CPD support, pre-school, early years, health & wellbeing agendas and post 18. This puts increased pressure on the Hub to find funding to maintain the additionality that is currently provided. Individually, schools are under greater economic pressure to provide the full breadth of educational provision. The School Forum funding ensures Walsall's children and young people to have enhanced & enriched access to music education.

The proposed 2024/2025 revenue budget for Music is:

Walsall Music Education Hub & Service	
Budget 2024/25	
(Indicative budget based on 2023/24 ACE grant levels)	
Income	
<i>Schools Forum support?</i>	<i>38000</i>
Income from schools	297000
Income Concerts & Performances	12240
ACE DfE Grant	482088
Other earned /Generated Income	21450
Other income	10,000
Total Income	860778

A £38,000 contribution (~4.4% of Music Hub's budget) levers access to the broad spectrum of opportunities and schemes which normally would not be available within core portfolio due to financial constraints. All Walsall schools and young people have access to this service. The contribution of £38,000 equates to just ~75.6p¹ per child per annum but collectively unlocks access to all the activities and services listed.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

School Improvement

Walsall Music Education Hub & Service provides a range of opportunities and initiatives for Walsall's children, young people and schools which are made possible by the provision of resourcing from Schools Forum.

These include:

- **Music Centres**

Walsall Music Education Hub & Service continues to provide after school activities at the Walsall Arena and Arts Centre to facilitate opportunities for ensembles, bands, vocal groups and orchestras which might otherwise be unavailable in schools. The provision of borough wide after school Music Centres enable young people to develop group skills and play alongside their peers. Increased pressure within schools for time and resources means this outlet for musical development is becoming increasingly important for Walsall's young people. Walsall Music Education Hub & Service offers:

- Open-access evening Music Centres throughout the school year for Choral, Vocal, Instrumental and Rock and Pop.

¹ Based on school census data (Oct 2022)

- Specialist provision for SEND, LAC, Virtual School students to include large-scale events and workshops.
 - Continuation pathways for Vocal, Instrumental, Jazz and Rock & Pop.
 - Ensemble opportunities for orchestras, bands, percussion ensembles, vocal groups, choirs, music theatre, rock and pop academy, world music, music and dance companies, and bespoke projects.
 - Use of a variety of rehearsal spaces, two auditoria as performance spaces, to include the Walsall Arena and digital recording facilities based at Walsall Arena and Arts Centre.
 - Opportunities to perform in different venues in the local community and the West Midlands region, such as Walsall Arboretum, Walsall New Art Gallery, Symphony Hall Birmingham, Lichfield Jazz Festival, The Robin, etc.
- **Large Scale Ensemble Events**
Walsall Arena and Arts Centre provide use of all three of its large performance spaces for the Music Hub to organise and stage large-scale music events including:
 - Walsall schools massed Choir, a seasonal themed run of show style performances in the Walsall A3 Arena and online streamed presentations.
 - Junior and Infant Singing Festivals
 - Music Centre Concerts - 15 annual concerts spread through the year for Choral, Vocal, Instrumental & Rock n Pop Music Centres
 - Walsall Young Music Star (WYMS), a competition event for individual vocalists and instrumentalists
 - Bandstand Bonanza in Walsall Arboretum, an annual festival for Music Centre ensembles/groups
 - *Access to Music* (ATM) Summer Celebration, an annual event to celebrate the *Access to Music* project for LAC CYP
 - Rock and Pop Gig at The Robin II, an annual gig for music centre rock bands on a professional stage
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 - **Virtual/ Digital/ remote learning**
The Walsall Music Education Hub & Service continues to develop, incorporate and enhance the following digital learning mechanisms and resources introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - Virtual centralised Vocal and Instrumental Ensembles
 - Digital resource gateway
 - Asynchronous digital learning
 - Music Centre-based remote synchronous learning

- School-based remote synchronous learning, adopting individual school's preferred delivery platform.
- Online instrument/vocal focused tutorials
- Generic virtual music education resources via the Hub's website
- Targeted tutorials/ lessons via the Hub's YouTube channel
- Virtual online events

- **Projects**

Walsall Music Education Hub & Service organises and arranges the following projects:

- **Live Music**, a school-based project performed by professional musicians.
- **World Music**, class projects to discover & explore South American Samba, Caribbean Steel Pans, African djembe drumming and Indonesian Gamelan
- **Collaborative projects in partnership with the other West Midlands Music Education Hubs**, such as, *Big Month of Music* and *Sing!* a regional project performed at Symphony Hall
- **Mish Mash Productions**, a collaborative partnership with professional musicians working alongside pupils and teachers in the school setting to enhance music learning experience.
- **Access to Music (ATM)**, an ongoing Virtual School Project to offer Y4 & Y5 LAC a direct musical learning opportunity on an instrument of their choice.
- **Composing with pictures at The New Art Gallery Walsall**, an annual project to engage KS2, 3, 4 & 5 students with musical composition using visual art stimuli.
- **Song Writing Competition**: a partnership project with BIMM Birmingham, the winning song is recorded in BIMM studios.
- **Project Jazz – Jazz** features 2 youth big bands (New Generation Jazz and Jazz@6), small youth Jazz Combo and weekly youth Jazz Improvisation classes. The groups regularly perform in Music Centre Concerts, local festivals, such as the Lichfield Arts Jazz & Blues Festival and at other venues in the local community, such as Table Café and Walsall Arboretum. New Generation Jazz is an ensemble for junior/intermediate level jazz musicians to experience playing in a 'big band' for the first time; Jazz@6 is a 'big band' for senior/advanced jazz musicians to explore more difficult arrangements. Weekly Jazz Improvisation Classes help students to learn/experience/explore the art of improvisation. These skills are then used in the Jazz Ensembles. The Jazz Combo is a small ensemble that features the finest young jazz musicians from across Walsall. This group has worked collaboratively with the Midlands Youth Jazz Orchestra and University of Wolverhampton.
- **WYMS – a music competition for all ages (7 – 19)**, this year featuring a special up and coming junior category and adjudicated by working professional musicians.

- **Partnerships**

The Music Education Hub has active and collaborative working arrangements with the following:

- The New Art Gallery Walsall
 - Black Country Music Education Hubs
 - West Midlands Music Education Hubs
 - Walsall Council
 - Walsall Virtual School
 - Black Country Dance Hub
 - Charanga, online learning resource and ongoing CPD for schools
 - Rainbow Rhyme, early years music education specialists
 - BC Music, SEND music education specialist.
 - Lichfield Arts Festival
 - Exam boards – ABRSM, Trinity, London College of Music, Rock School
 - Summers Song Ltd
 - Forest Foundation
 - Mish Mash Productions
 - BIMM Birmingham – Higher Education Institute for Modern Music
 - Walsall Senior Citizens Orchestra
- **Music Educator Networks (*MusE* and *Mini MusE*)**
 Walsall Music Education Hub continues to develop the MusE network groups for Walsall music teachers from primary, secondary and special schools. We collaborate on an increasing number of events and CPD opportunities for staff linking Key Stages, aiding transition and development work across the sector. Some examples include:
 - regular CPD within termly twilight meetings from resource sharing to specific strategies for OFSTED Framework, OFSTED Deep Dive assessment, Model Music Curriculum and NPME
 - an ongoing “buddy” system to partner together music departments/schools/teachers.
 - improving joint working and mutual peer review
 - moderation work across the key stages
 - annual curriculum conference opportunities
 - termly Charanga training
 - creation of partnership events like World Music Days
 - collegiate support and open forum discussions
 - Networking
 - **Charanga**
 Walsall Music Education Hub & Service partners with Charanga, a digital music Education resources specialist, by subsidising the annual subscription for the *Musical School* support programme for Primary Schools.

This exciting Primary music scheme for the National Curriculum provides easy access to contemporary digital resources for music teachers and schools. It provides online

music learning resources for young people at all year levels and at all stages of development.

The package includes planning, and whiteboard resources, plus free training and CPD based in schools and centrally at Walsall Arena and Arts Centre. The scheme is non-specialist friendly, completely inspection framework compliant and enables primary schools to have superb and easy-to-use music curriculum resources.

- **West Midlands Music**

WMEHS is a pro-active member of West Midlands Music, a group of 14 Music Education Hubs based across the West Midlands who work in partnership with WMEHS, promote collaboration, enable collective music educational opportunities for children and young people, CPD for schoolteachers, on-going training opportunities for music education staff, regional projects, and support networks for best practice within the music education sector. In addition, The Black Country Music Hubs, a subgroup of West Midlands Music, work together on geographically close projects to extend the opportunities available for Children and Young people.

- **Music Mark**

WMEHS is member of *Music Mark*, a nationally recognised organisation, advocating and lobbying at a national level to promote music and music education.

Walsall Music Education Hub & Service mediates and facilitates access to *Music Mark* school membership which is free to all Walsall schools (with all associated costs borne by the Walsall Music Education Hub & Service) and can only be accessed through engagement with the Music Hub.

Music Mark Award is available to schools which appreciate the value of music education as part of a broad, balanced and relevant school curriculum and demonstrates a willingness to engage in the development conversations at a national level related to improving music provision for all children and young people.

Members eligible to vote.

All