

The Music Partnership – Progression Strategy

Musical ‘Progression’ is a broad concept often covering the ‘means’ (pathways) through to the ‘ends’ (outcomes). Many different organisations and reports have focused on musical progression from different angles, whether from the viewpoint of the learner, the curriculum, or the structures.

This strategy sets out TMP’s understanding of Musical Progression, how the Music Hub will support it, and details the current challenges and risks for young people and their musical journeys. It is also important to note that progress and achievement may not always be a musical outcome, gaining self-esteem, improving wellbeing, school attendance or behaviour are all considerations for where Music may have impact.

Where possible, the strategy highlights existing thinking, good practice, studies, reviews, and reports.

“What it means to make progress in music is many faceted. No two journeys, in and through musical learning, are the same. Nevertheless, everyone starts from an initial inspiring experience of music, either hearing or performing it” – *The Music Commission. What does it take to make progress in music? 2019.*

Definitions

For the purpose of this strategy, the following definitions will be used:

- **Progression** – long term musical development over time
- **Progression Routes** – the pathways available to young people.
- **Progress** – the small steps in the journey over time (e.g. movement from A to B).
- **Continuation** – doing something initially and then continuing to do so in that, or in another, relevant format.
- **Achievement** – completing something successfully.
- **Attainment** – the standard being reached.

The Aim

To provide the environment, structure, and opportunity for pupils to start learning an instrument and to develop musically over time. Learning to play an instrument or to sing involves developing a broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding in addition to making progress with specific techniques. This will require collaboration between teachers, schools, communities, parents and young people over many years, and many hundreds and thousands of hours.

Data

The most recent data collection showing pupils by standard across the partnership is from October 22. This follows a two-year hiatus in reporting amidst the pandemic. The first four years, marked with an Asterix denote reporting for Staffordshire and Stoke prior to Telford joining The Music Partnership.

The majority of pupils have consistently been participating at 'entry level' with fewer pupils continuing to higher levels of attainment. This picture improved prior to the pandemic but then, perhaps unsurprisingly, many pupils who could not access provision through this time despite efforts from the Hub, dropped out from the 'foundation and intermediate' levels. Post-pandemic, greater focus on continuation following WCET and a new growth in co-curricular lessons is hoped to have impact at these levels.

	*Oct-13	*Oct-14	*Oct-15	*Oct-16	Oct-16	Oct-17	Oct-18	Oct-19	Oct-20	Oct-21	Oct-22
	<u>2012/13</u>	<u>2013/14</u>	<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>	<u>2015/16</u>	<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>2021/22</u>
<u>Standards</u>											
Entry	9707	9982	14708	13384	17323	18881	20094	19804			22186
Foundation	2684	2745	966	1145	1473	2275	2509	2439			1260
Intermediate	564	533	200	244	260	345	350	410			238
Advanced	274	214	145	179	184	188	211	210			106
Total	13229	13474	16019	14952	19240	21689	23164	22863			23790

The Concept

Children and young people, adults and organisations **collaborate** to create progression environments for all children and young people:

- Coordination and Communication.
- Opportunities.
- Empowerment and Support for Teachers and Adults.
- Children and young people leading their learning.
- Empowerment and Support for the Young Person.
- Harnessing Technology.
- Bringing together external forces (e.g., the music industry and venues).

Source: Ben Sandbrook, Musical Progression Roundtable, 2012

The Music Commission has an 8-point approach for children to be **supported** to realise their musical potential. The points below are a summarised:

1. Leaders in school are confident and enabled to put music at the heart of learning.
2. Schools are supported to provide an effective curriculum.
3. Training is available for a diverse and skilled workforce of specialist and generalist teachers.
4. Financial support is universally available to support all musical learners beyond 'first access'.
5. Collaboration between schools and partners helps students to progress.
6. Parental engagement is prioritised.
7. Young people are informed, engaged, and shape their own learning pathways.
8. New, integrated approaches to teaching and assessment of learning are developed.

The Music Partnership's Approach

Within the constraints of finance, prioritise the learner and their needs wherever possible.

1. Involve schools in high-quality instrumental and vocal work across a diversity of genres of music.
2. Provide teaching to a consistent quality and set of expectations– curricula, progression models, assessment frameworks.
3. Run a high-quality 'Whole Class Ensemble Teaching' programme, widening the opportunity for young people to start their musical journey.
4. Support the improvement of Curriculum Music in schools across Key Stages.
5. Provide training, CPD, support, and quality resources for practitioners, schools, and families to support progression.
6. Prioritise local transition pathways where schools and teachers collaborate to support the musician.
7. Draw together partners, funding, and bursaries to provide remissions and support for the EDI Strategy and for Gifted & Talented musicians.
8. Organise and facilitate a progressive ensemble offer across the region alongside schools and partners.
9. Organise and involve pupils in a range of quality performance opportunities provided by partners and the community.
10. Regularly monitor pupil attainment data sets across The Music Partnership to assess impact and success.

Key Challenges

This is not an exhaustive list and will be developed further as the strategy is delivered and impact measured.

Funding	Funding levels continue to be a significant risk with more young people needing financial support alongside a widening brief, and actual reductions in funding levels, for Music Hubs (lack of inflationary increase, cessation of TPS addition grant in Staffordshire). As schools pass increasing costs of provision to parents (who themselves are facing a tough economic climate) music lessons can become unaffordable without further support.
Local Management of Schools (LMS)	Starting in the early 1990s, LMS has seen schools become increasingly individual in approach, priority, and education. This often challenges natural musical pathways and can be a significant blocker to progression routes.
Data	Access to direct parent contact information is problematic for many thousands of young people involved in TMPs weekly activities. Where the school organises provision, data sharing is very difficult at the scales involved (569 schools). This means many opportunities to celebrate progress and to signpost progression routes are reliant on schools and their own comms channels rather than direct comms via the Music Hub.
Recruitment and Resourcing	Securing the employee with the right skillset, across specialisms and genres, and at the right time is a key operational challenge. This is particularly the case in the current climate with low numbers of music graduates, a national shortage of teachers and an often-expected minimum standard of qualification from schools.
Geography	The region is vast with pockets of significant rural and cultural isolation.
Young People and Distractions	Long term progression takes commitment, graft, and determination. Alongside this, young people have more distractions in life than ever before making it harder to focus and work on long-term attainment.
School Curriculum (e.g. Ebacc)	Many school settings are not able to prioritise delivery of music beyond Key Stage 3. This can be a contributing factor to the decline of KS4 and KS5 exam entries.

Actions

Action	Owner	Timescale
Continue to work on or develop charitable partnerships (e.g. Telford Charity) to improve the resource available for bursaries.	Telford & Wrekin Music Steering Group	Through 2023-24
Pilot data collection for parents where appropriate to improve communications between teachers and families.	Music Services	January 2024
Highlight the importance of pyramid working through school support programme.	All partners	Through 2023-24
Use 'Assessing Musical Progress Framework' across all relevant activities.	All partners	From September 2023
Share resource across organisations to widen performance opportunities using established good practice (e.g. widening of recorder festivals, young musician events).	Music Services	Through 2023-24
Share bursary schemes more widely and where places are available (e.g. Furthering Talent).	Music Services	Through 2023-24
Raise awareness of 'progression' and the risk for young people of pathways breaking down with all stakeholders.	Steering Group Marketing and Comms	Through 2023-24

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The Music Partnership
Entrust Support Services Ltd.

Local Plan for Music Education 2023/24

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