

Changes in Secondary Music Curriculum Provision over time 2012-16
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The research was undertaken in the second half of 2016. This summary focusses on the main findings relating to changes in curriculum provision for Music.

705 schools responded from across England providing a representative sample of the Secondary school provision. These broke down into 657 State schools and 48 Independent schools. Responses were from Academies, Local Authority, Free and Independent schools with 80% having an Ofsted grading of 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

Ofsted grade/ Type of school	Inadequate	RI	Good	Outstanding	Not known	TOTAL	%
Academy MAT	13	42	90	55	1	201	28.5
Academy not MAT	1	16	103	65	2	187	26.5
LA school	6	33	141	32	3	215	30.5
Free School	0	0	6	2	3	11	1.6
Faith School	0	3	15	7	0	25	3.6
Special school	0	1	3	3	0	7	1.0
Other	0	2	4	3	1	9	1.4
Teaching School	0	0	0	2	0	2	0.3
Independent school	0	0	10	25	12	48	6.7
TOTAL	20	97	372	194	22	705	
%	2.84	13.76	52.77	27.52	3.12		

The results highlight widespread evidence of change and include:

Changes at Key Stage 3

- In some schools there is no Key Stage 3 Music provision within the curriculum.
- Carousel teaching across Key Stage 3 (for example where students only study Music for one term on a rotation with other subjects) has become more prevalent with Music curriculum time reducing year on year. This has led to a significant decrease in the time given for Music, particularly from 2015/16 to 2016/17 where the mean average of hours over the year for Year 8 dropped from 20.8 hours to 17.5 hours. The least time offered for Music via a carousel was 25 minutes for six weeks in the year – just 2.5 hours across the entire academic year.
- In Year 9 there is an increasing number of schools where Music is now optional, despite being in the National Curriculum. In 2012/13 Year 9 Music was compulsory for all students in 84% of schools but by 2015/16 it had dropped to 67%. Then in 2016/17 it decreased further to 62% of schools teaching Music to all students in Year 9.

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Staffing changes

- The average number of full time equivalent music staff is reducing year on year. 39% of respondents reported falling staffing levels for Music departments, with only 17% indicating levels had risen.
- Single teacher Music departments are up from 22.4% in 2012/13 to 29.8% in 2016/17. This is a concern in terms of the potential for further isolation of music teachers but also, given the expected rise in the number of students entering Secondary education, the capacity for all children from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5 to receive a quality Music education.
- The target for Initial Teacher Training Music trainees in 2010/11 was 694. In 2011/12 it reduced to 390 and apart from 2014/15 and 2015/16 (where it increased to 461 & 481 respectively) it has remained around 390. This is a reduction of 43.4% on the 2010/11 targets. In addition, Music has also under-recruited to target.

Impact of the EBacc

- In a neutrally worded question, 59.7% (393) of the State schools highlighted the EBacc specifically as having a negative impact on the provision and uptake of Music in their school (within and beyond the curriculum). Evidence from our research supports this perception. Conversely, 3% considered that the EBacc had a positive impact on Music.
- The number of schools offering GCSE Music at the start of the 2016/17 academic year was 79% (down from 85% in 2012/13). Thus students in some schools do not have an opportunity to take Music GCSE.
- The number of students taking Music qualifications other than GCSE has reduced. For example, there is a 70% reduction in schools offering BTEC at Level 2 from 166 in 2012/13 to 50 schools in 2016/17.
- 18% of schools reported that not every pupil was able to opt for Music as an examination subject at Key Stage 4 should they wish to do so. Evidence from the data shows that the EBacc has a detrimental impact on whether students are able to opt for Music where it is offered. It is also important to note that GCSE uptake figures for 2016/17 will have been artificially boosted where schools have changed to a three year Key Stage 4 starting in Year 9 this year as these figures will include two different year groups starting the qualification in the same year.
- Of those offering GCSE Music 11% are taught out of core curriculum time.
- 22% of schools have specific entry criteria for taking Music GCSE. The most common are achieving a specific grade in their instrument/voice or in a school assessment (36%), be singing or playing an instrument (29%) and taking instrumental lessons (25%).
- Whilst there is no obvious pattern between the Ofsted grade and curriculum time increasing or decreasing at Key Stage 4, schools with high numbers of students who are Pupil Premium are more likely to have had their Music curriculum time decreased. Apart from schools with low PP numbers (0-10%) all others are decreasing more than increasing.
- In some schools top sets were guided away from taking Music GCSE because of the EBacc, whilst in others lower ability students were prevented from taking Music so they could concentrate on EBacc subjects.
- The most common single reason that teachers felt impacted negatively on students choosing Music at Key Stage 4 (based on 604 responses, both positive and negative) were the EBacc (57.3%) and changes in options available (25.1%). As these two are frequently inter-linked, this gives a combined total of 82.4%. (All other reasons were below 2%.)
- Other changes that impact negatively on the Music department were booster classes (36%), shortened lunchtimes (31%) and less extra-curricular opportunities (12%).