

Birmingham Music Hub

Secondary School Music Teachers Survey 2018

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Services
For Education

Foreword

I am pleased to be able to share this research commissioned by the members of the Birmingham Music Education Partnership. The Birmingham Music Education Partnership is the Music Education Hub for Birmingham. Services For Education is the lead organisation.

Other partners include The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Ex Cathedra, Quench Arts, Mac Birmingham, Town Hall/Symphony Hall and Birmingham City University.

It is timely research. The National Plan for Music Education is approaching the end of its tenure and the shifting landscape of the school system has presented a number of challenges to the subject during its period of implementation.

This research is a good temperature gauge for musical activity happening in our secondary schools as well as signposting to some of the emerging challenges. It offers the Music Education Hub a data set on which to champion our successes and build solutions to some of the identified issues.

Much is expected of this large urban Music Education Hub. With a school age population of over 202,000, there will always be young people who wish to learn to play, sing or who enjoy creating their own music.

However, activity alone is only one measure of success. We are committed to ensuring that our work in the primary phase is understood and built upon in partnership with our colleagues in the secondary phases.

From the responses, it is clear that we continue to have a committed workforce in our secondary schools. They champion extra-curricular work and there is much good music going on.

It is also clear that, for some, the music stops. The research here offers evidence of truncated KS3, declining GCSE numbers, financial pressures on the most disadvantaged and the terminal state of A Level Music – an erosion of the subject from the advanced levels of learning.

The Hub will respond. It is a role we take seriously. But it is clear that we cannot do it on our own. We hope that this report feeds into the growing bank of evidence that depicts the demise of Music in our school system.

We call on policy makers to ensure that access to a progressive music curriculum in school is protected. The remit of Music Education Hubs is to 'transcend' the work of schools. We cannot achieve that if it is allowed to disappear from our schools.

Ciaran O' Donnell, Head of Music Service
Services For Education

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Introduction

Birmingham City University Centre for the Study of Practice and Culture in Education (CSPACE), based in the Faculty of Health, Education, and Life Sciences, was asked by Birmingham Music Education Partnership (BMEP) to undertake a survey of Secondary School Music Teachers in the city during the spring and early summer terms of 2018. This paper reports on that survey.

Key points from this research

- Over half of respondents stated they were part of a Multi Academy Trust or were a Stand-alone Academy
- Most respondents said they had a level of freedom with their music curriculum
- 70% self-reported that they are a musical school, which means they are potentially a good progression route for primary schools
- Most secondary schools have more than one music teacher, but a number of them have to fill their timetables with other subjects
- Most (85%+) KS3 Music lessons are approximately one hour per week, although carousel timetables mean that sometimes this is spread across other arts subjects
- 35% reported they have a telescoped KS3, meaning they only teach music to Y7&8, as GCSE subjects start in Y9
- On average there are 20-24 pupils per Y10 class
- Of 22 schools responding to the survey, 8 are not currently operating A-level music groups music in either Y12 or 13
- Schools that do offer music at A Level have group sizes of between 1-5 pupils
- 15 out of the 22 schools are running GCSE/ 6 BTEC courses
- Extra-curricular music is offered across the majority of schools, and this is voluntary. Choir is the most popular but the offer is varied. 11 out of the 20 schools do musicals and shows.
- Most schools only monitor the quality of their music work in house so more work needs to be done to have external quality assurance.
- At KS3 the majority of schools do not use published schemes of work.
- Gifted and Talented is not a term used as much as before. The new term is *higher achieving pupils*, which is often based on their attainment in English and Maths, and this is frequently as measured at the end of KS2
- Most schools operate a thematic or topic based KS3 programme of study
- Most schools review their KS3 music schemes of work annually
- 76% of respondents say they have attended a BMEP network event
- 55.6% of respondents report that they believe their CPD is adequate.
- Music teachers still feel that in general, they need more support with exams, assessment, moderations, singing and composing
- Most schools subsidise the instrumental music lessons they offer. Very few charge parents the full amount. Pupil Premium is sometimes used for subsidy.
- The terminology “Gifted and Talented” seems to be falling out of favour in Birmingham Secondary Schools, and is being replaced by the phrase “Highly Able Children”.
- Work with feeder primary school seems to be patchy. This could be because Multi Academy Trusts have their own networks which may not be geographical and, therefore, relationships with local schools can be limited
- The majority of secondary schools have engaged with a BMEP performance offer.

- 80% of respondents stated Services for Education provision is very effective
- Many music teachers comment that they have poor facilities and limited resources

Methodology

The CSPACE team used an on-line survey methodology, which was designed using the Bristol on-line survey tool (BOS), for completion by the respondents at their convenience, and available via any web-based browser to complete. BOS is the normal means CSPACE uses for this sort of research.

Full ethical clearance was obtained by the researchers from the Faculty ethics committee. Participants were promised anonymity in their answers, and they also agreed to the use of direct quotes in publication with all names being anonymised. To this end this report redacts the names of teachers, and of their schools, colleges, and academies to prevent ready identification.

22 people from different schools were participants in this survey of secondary schools across Birmingham. As is common with many online surveys, not all respondents answered all of the questions, and so some responses do not add up to this number.

This survey was offered to all appropriate secondary school music teachers in Birmingham via direct messaging emails, with regular follow-up reminders. There was therefore the option to only respond if the teacher wished. What this means is that the teachers undertaking this survey were a self-selecting cohort from all of the available secondary schools. We know that there are problems associated with self-selecting groups of participants:

Self-selection bias is the problem that very often results when survey respondents are allowed to decide entirely for themselves whether or not they want to participate in a survey. To the extent that respondents' propensity for participating in the study is correlated with the substantive topic the researchers are trying to study, there will be self-selection bias in the resulting data. In most instances, self-selection will lead to biased data, as the respondents who choose to participate will not well represent the entire target population. (Olsen, n.d.)

Although self-selection bias is an issue, for the purposes of this study the self-selecting respondents were all secondary school music teachers, and so this was deemed apposite for the purpose of investigation.

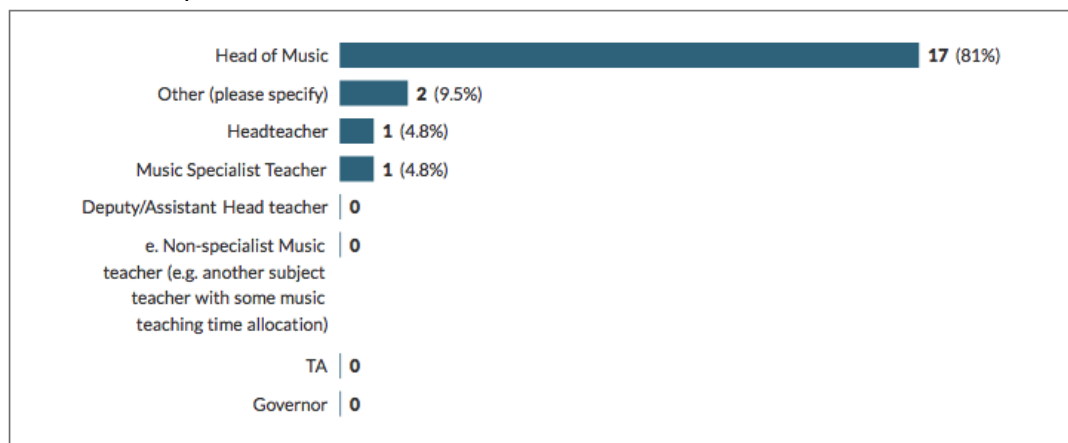
In this report, responses are taken directly from the survey. Figure numbering, where graphical data has been derived from survey responses, is based on the question numbers from the original, and therefore is not necessarily sequential in the way they are presented, neither are all questions illustrated with a graph.

Free text responses were used throughout the survey. These are normally reported on using bulleted text, with indented sub-bullets being used for run-on answers from the same respondent. All answers are normally presented verbatim, although some spelling and grammatical anomalies have been regularised. As was noted above, anonymity is maintained through the report.

Discussion

The survey had 22 responses from secondary schools across the city. Not all of these answered all of the questions.

Question 5: Respondents

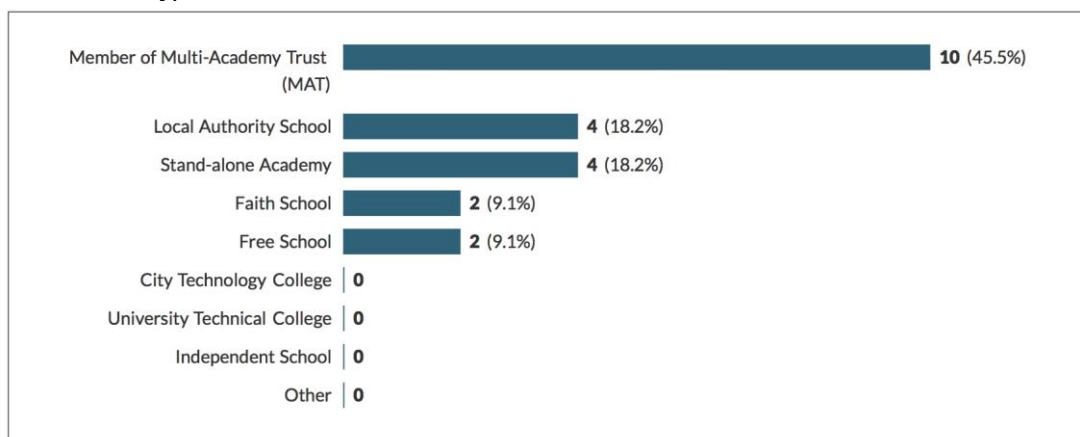


As can be seen, the majority of respondents were Heads of Music in secondary schools. The 'other' respondents self-identified as:

- Achievement lead for year 7
- Head of Year 9

The types of schools which were represented are these:

Question 6: Type of School

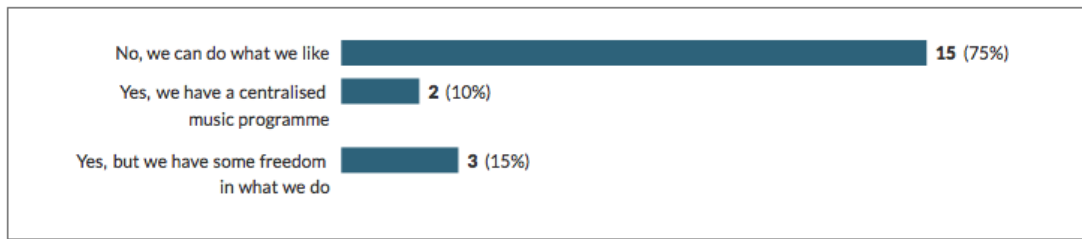


Schools and academies which are members of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) clearly dominate this list, with other schools forming a much smaller percentage of responses. This has some relevance for the next question, which asked:

- *Does your school type and structure have any bearing on what you can do in your music curriculum?*

Responses to this show a range, with freedom of curriculum being the commonest response:

Question 7: Freedom of curriculum



However, within this answer we can see that 5 schools, 25% of respondents for this question, do have their music curriculum affected in some way by their school type and structure. Respondents were given the opportunity to expand on these answers:

- We are free from the confines of the NC, being a free school (not that the NC for KS3 provides a great deal of information in the first place...)
- Currently we are using the Ark Secondary Music program for years 7,8,10. From next year this will include years 9 and 11.
- We do Multi Academy concerts for all the schools in the trust twice per year

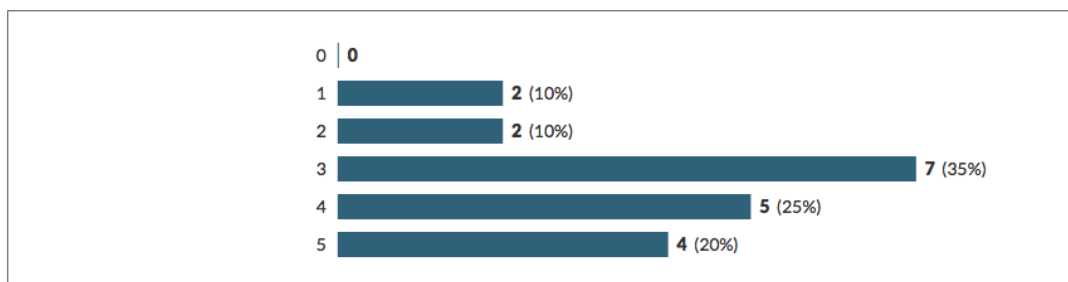
These are interesting responses, and it seems likely to be the case that for BMEP to engage with schools in the future, recognition will need to be made as to the ways in which curriculum for any given school is determined or influenced by external agencies which are beyond the remit of the school. This seems to be a matter which warrants further investigation.

We then asked if the respondents felt they could identify whether theirs was a 'musical school'. We deliberately did not qualify what we meant by the notion of a 'musical school', as we wanted to see how the respondents would self-identify to this question, the wording of which was:

- *Would you describe your school as a 'musical school' (0-5 with 0 meaning not very musical and 5 meaning very musical)*

Here are the results:

Question 8: Musical School



We know that respondents tend to choose a middle option when one is offered (Bishop, 1987; Kalton et al., 1980), but even with that caveat we can be moderately encouraged by the results that show that 35% of respondents chose this category. Even more encouraging is the fact that 45% of respondents chose either the level 4 or level 5 category response, meaning that summing the levels 3-5 responses shows that 80% of respondents are placing themselves as being average or above in terms of having a musical school. However, it must be of concern that 20% of respondents placed their school as being in the level 1 or 2 categorisation, which will clearly be an issue for those schools. However, it may well be the case that as Heads of Department, it is important for these teachers to consider their schools as being musical, unless they have strong grounds not, as otherwise this might perhaps devalue their subject.

What is not clear, however, is how generalisable these results are across the city as a whole, and it would not be appropriate to be complacent about this. There is clearly work to be done by all partners of the music education hub in addressing this issue.

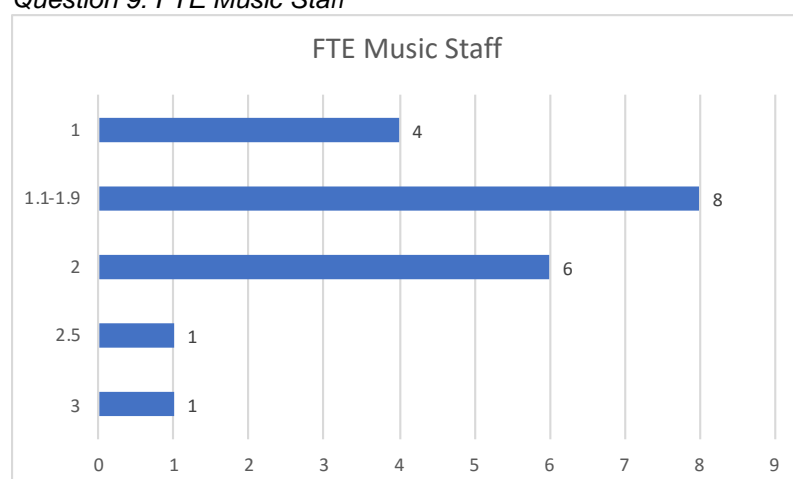
Music teacher numbers

We then turned our attention to the numbers of teachers in secondary schools. We asked about full time equivalent staff, and asked the question using this form of words:

- *How many full time equivalent (FTE) classroom music teachers are there in your school please? (Please answer using a decimal point, e.g. 2.5 for two and half FTE, 1.4 for one FTE plus the equivalent of 2 days, etc.*

Here are the responses:

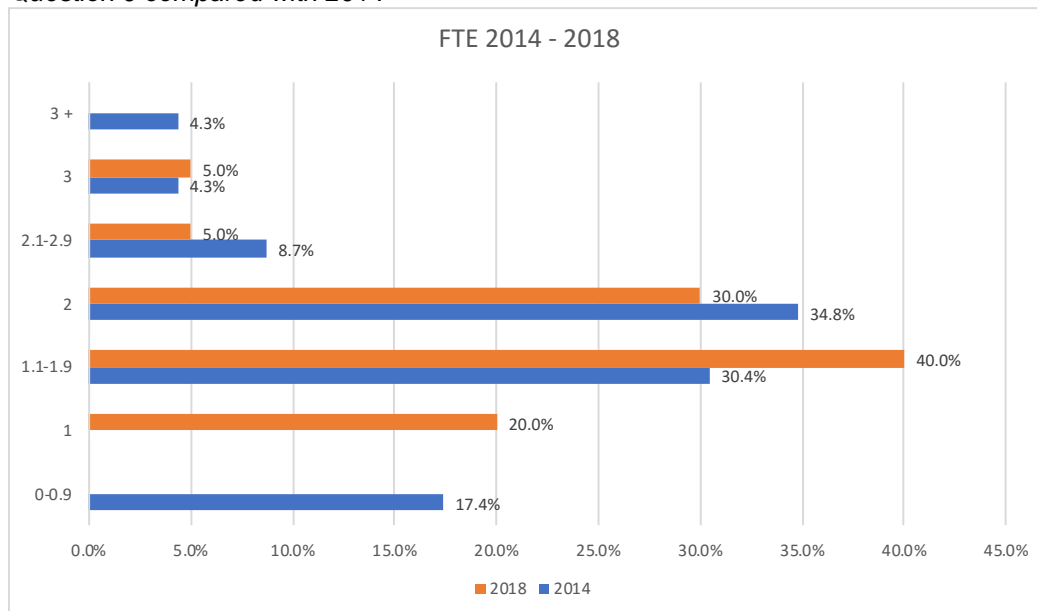
Question 9: FTE Music Staff



NB In the response where there are 3 FTE staff, the following text was entered by the respondent: "2 of us are post holders on smaller timetables, we all have to teach drama and/ or art too to fill our timetables".

This spread of results is broadly in line with the last time we asked a similar question of Birmingham Secondary School Music Teachers, in 2014. However, there has been a slight shift in distribution. As there were different numbers of respondents in 2014, the next table shows these figures converted to percentages to allow for ready comparison.

Question 9 compared with 2014



What this chart shows is that there has been a slight shift from music departments with more than 2 FTE staff to departments having less than 2 FTE staff. However, unlike the previous survey, there are now no departments with >1 member of staff, which may be good news, but equally may mean that there are music departments with zero staff, which may not have been picked up, as they would not have completed this survey!

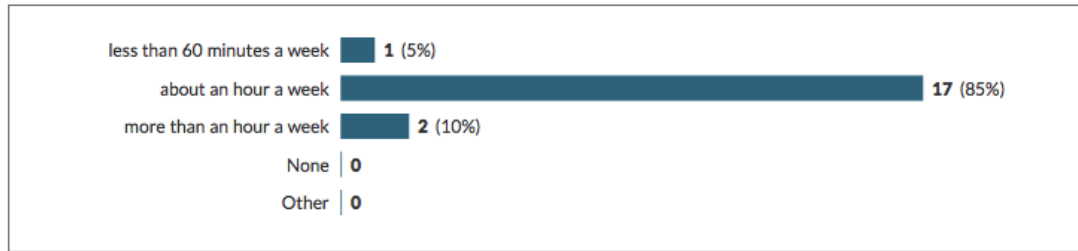
Time allocated for curriculum music – KS3

From staffing figures, we then turned our attention to how much time is allotted for music in various parts of the secondary school. We began by inquiring about KS3 music, and phrased the question thus:

- *Roughly how much time does each KS3 class get for music in your school? (We will ask about carousels shortly, so don't worry about that here.)*

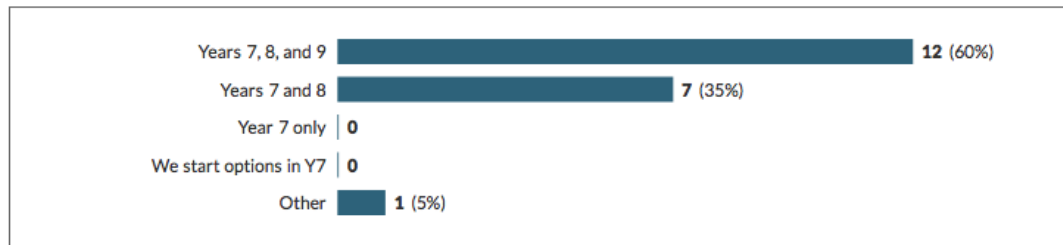
The issue of carousels will be picked up and dealt with later, at the moment these numbers are solely concerned with raw timings. Here are the responses for Key Stage 3:

Question 10: Time for KS3 music



Here the modal response is that KS3 music classes are allocated about an hour a week, and that this is the case in the clear majority of Birmingham schools who responded to this survey. However, allied to the amount of time available for KS3 is the length of the Key Stage itself. We know that there has been an increasing trend to telescope KS3 into 2 years instead of the more usual 3 years. Question 11 asked about this, and from the responses we can see that only 60% of respondent schools still operate a three-year KS3:

Question 11: Length of KS3



35% of respondents have had KS3 reduced to 2 years. The single 'other' respondent noted this:

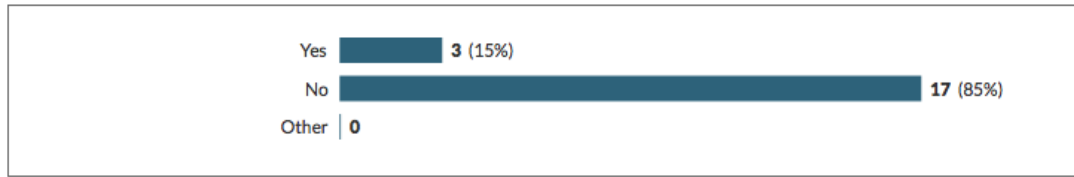
Year 7 creative curriculum 12 weeks a year.
Year 1 hour per week.
Year 9 options but not GCSE – 1 hour per week.

The effects of a reduced KS3 clearly have effects on the ways in which teaching and learning in classroom music can be delivered. This has stayed fairly constant since 2014, and so is clearly something which has become established in some schools. With Ofsted's renewed focus on 'broad and balanced' curricula in inspections, this will be something to monitor.

Carousel arrangements, where music 'rotates' on the timetable, normally with other arts subjects, were only operating in 3 schools, which is heartening, as this is an issue which can cause serious headaches for progress and progression. The question asked here took this form:

- *Does your KS3 operate on a carousel type arrangement (e.g. do you have a group for half a term, or something, then they go on to another subject)?*

Question 12: Carousel for KS3



The three respondents who operate a carousel described how it works:

1. We work in four nine week cycles so each year group rotates between art, dance, drama and music.
 1. Y7: 36 hours (2 doubles per week)
 2. Y8: 18 hours (1 double per week)
 3. Y9: 18 hours (1 double per week)
2. Year 7 run on a creative curriculum. Creative writing. Drama. Music vocal and brass and technology.
3. Each group gets the opportunity to undertake 2 performing terms, music technology and music business.

However, the simplicity of the responses to question 12 above belie a slightly more complex set of activities going on underneath. Here are the free-text responses which teachers could use to amplify their answers should they so wish. Seven teachers availed themselves of this opportunity. Here are their answers verbatim:

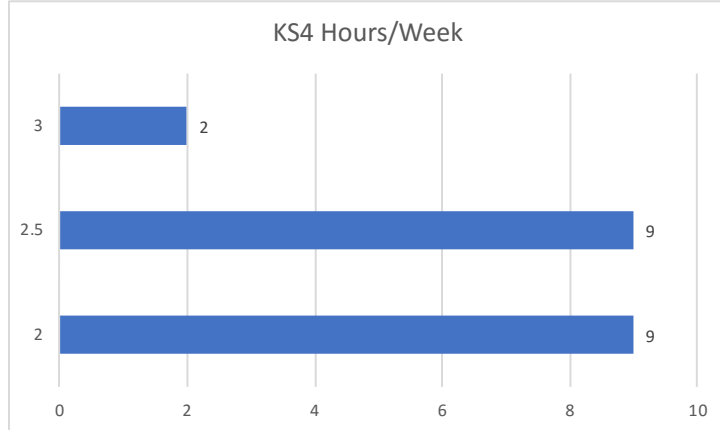
- Year 8 are an exception to the above information receiving 1 hour per fortnight as a result of being given an extra period of English/Maths. This impacts the central year of our KS3 curriculum.
- Some students are often taken out of music for intervention sessions, especially with students who are incredibly weak with literacy.
- Year 7 will be expanding to lessons every week next year as well as the creative curriculum.
- 50-minute lessons each week for each KS3 class.
- 2 x 50 minute lessons for all KS3
- Year 7 and 9 receive an hour a week. Year 8 receive 3 hours a fortnight.
- Twice a week we run a reading session so lessons on those days are 55 minutes

The effect of this is that it becomes quite complex to state what a 'normal' KS3 music experience entails across the city. This is something which it will be worthwhile for BMEP to continue to monitor over time.

Key Stages 4 and 5 – curricular music

Moving next to Key Stage 4, question 14 asked about the amounts of time pupils have for music during this phase of their education. Here the answers cluster significantly around the 2 and 2.5 hours/week figure:

Question 14: KS4 music hours/week



Two respondents have 3 hours a week, the rest come in at the 2 and 2.5 hours figure. However, even with this there are some variations. One respondent observing:

- Year 10 and 11 GCSE groups receive 5 hours a fortnight. 3/5 of these hours are double-staffed due to the large size of the groups (28 in Year 11; 30 in Year 10)

Whilst another said:

- 2 - Hour lessons, We also have a required after-school intervention session of approximately 1.5 hours.

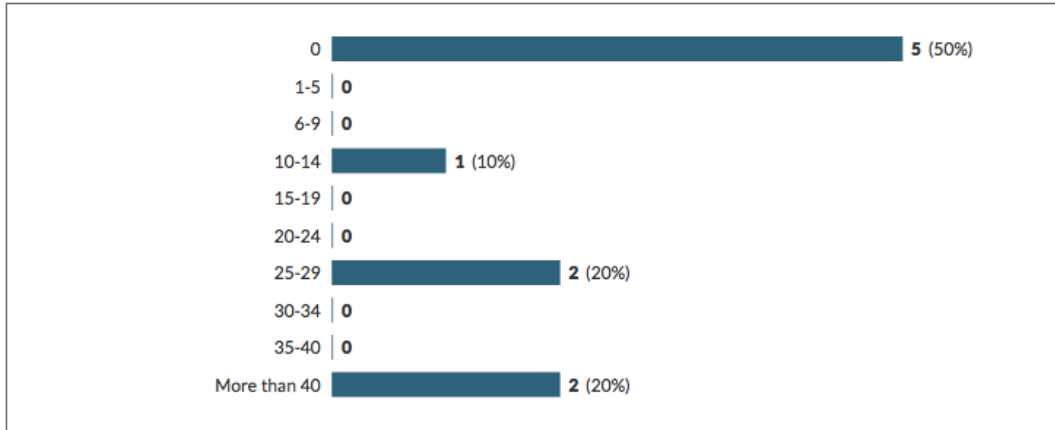
Whilst for another there was 10 minutes less available if the music lesson fell on a Monday.

From time allocations, we next turned our attention to group sizes for KS4 music. Bearing in mind that we knew that some KS4 classes begin in Y9, we asked first about these, and then inquired about years 10 and 11. The question posed was:

- *How many pupils do you have studying music in KS4 and KS5 please? There is a line for year 9, please only use this if your option groups start in Y9.*

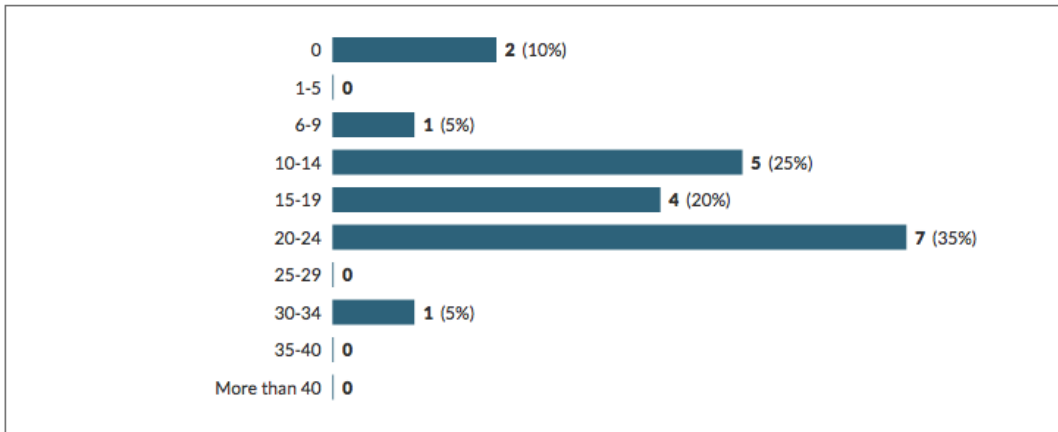
Here are the figures for each of these in turn. First, year 9:

Question 16.1a: Year 9 pupils KS4 music



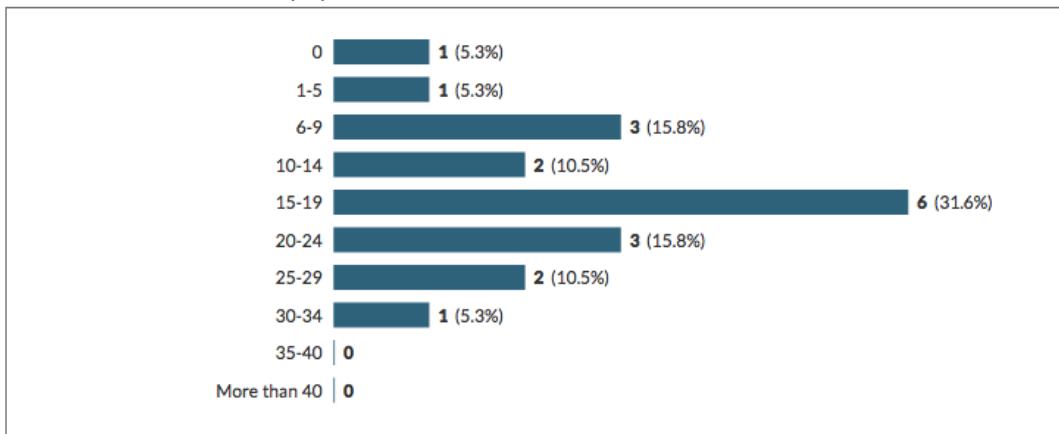
Here we can only assume that the large number of Y9 are where music is a discrete option, which may or may not lead to uptake in Y10 the following year. This supposition is borne out by the figures for Year 10:

Question 16.2a: Year 10 pupils



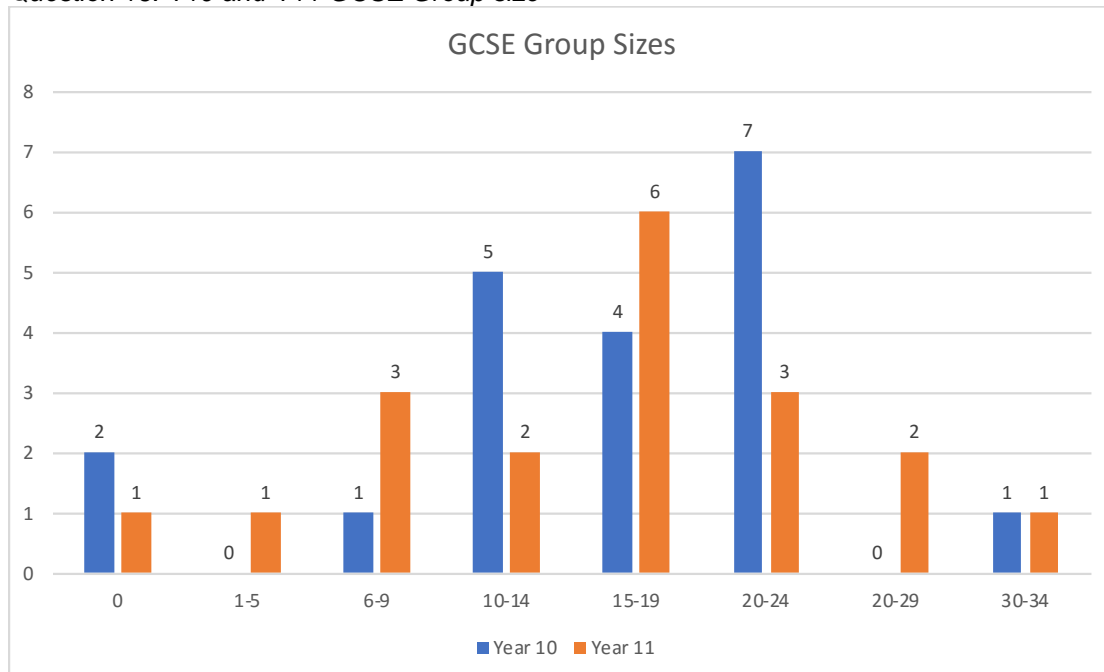
...and for Year 11:

Question 16.3a: Year 11 pupils



Plotting these group size figures onto a bar-chart produces the result shown here:

Question 16: Y10 and Y11 GCSE Group size



What we can deduce from these figures is that the modal average group size is between 20 and 24 in year 10, and 15 and 19 in year 11. What we can also see, and experience triangulates this viewpoint, is that there is considerable inter-cohort variation in terms of group sizes, and so schools will need to be supported in what might be considered ‘fallow’ years, as there is little stability in group sizes from year to year.

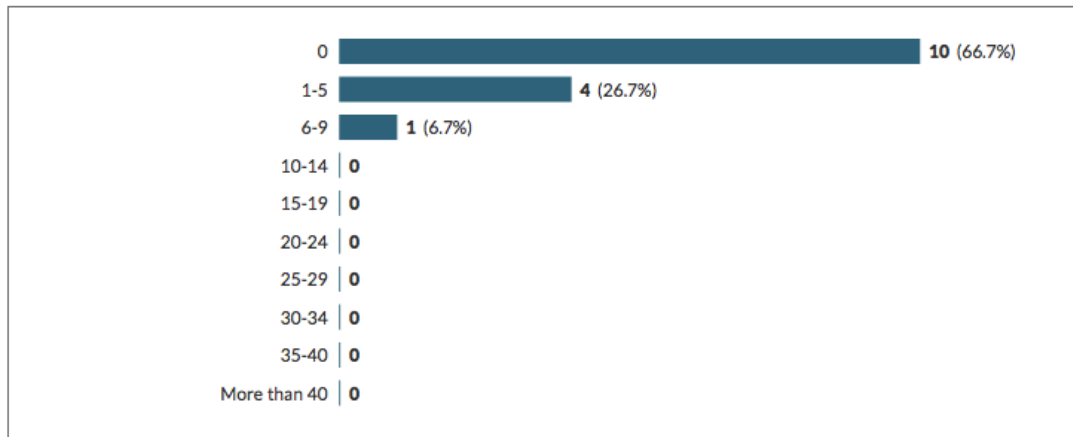
Continuing this investigation into KS4 figures, four teachers took the opportunity to tell us a little more about their group size details. Here are their responses:

- The school only covers KS3 and KS4 (ages 11-16). Normal KS3 (years 7-9) and KS4 (years 10 & 11).
- We do not currently have Year 10-11 (KS4) in the school.
- We did not recruit a music group last year
- We offer music GCSE at y9, however we did not recruit any y9 last year.

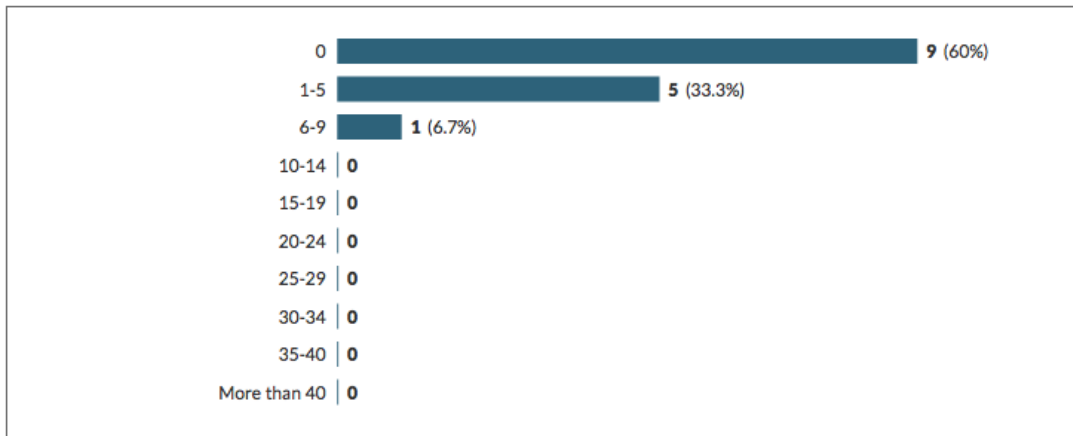
There is clearly some concern from some of these teachers about the take-up, or lack thereof, of GCSE music in their schools. There are lots of reasons for this, and what is being said here seems likely to reflect the national picture. However, at the same time, it is also to be observed that there are some significant sized groups in this reporting. This will hopefully continue, as we know that there is a downward trend in GCSE music entries owing to the effects of the EBacc (Hill, 2018).

We also know that take up in music at A level is very low, and seems to be continuing to drop. With the lack of feed-through from KS4 this is hardly surprising. Take-up rates for A level from the respondents’ schools are these:

Question 16.4a: Year 12 numbers



Question 16.5a: Year 13 numbers



What is of concern here is that of the 22 schools responding to the survey, a significant number do not have A level groups. In order to see if it is the same schools report zero A level students, we cross-tabulated the results from the lower sixth, year 12 question, with those from year 13, the upper sixth. They are shown here:

Question 16 4a and 5a Cross-Tabulated

Year 13	Year 12										No answer	Totals
	0	1-5	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-40	More than 40		
0	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
1-5	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
6-9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
10-14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20-24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25-29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30-34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35-40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
More than 40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	7
Totals	10	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	22

What this cross tabulation shows is the Year 12 data on the x-axis (horizontal), and the Y13 data on the y-axis (vertical). The figure 8, with a red circle round it, shows that 8 schools do not have an A-level group. The blue square encompasses all of the data returns. It seems reasonable to say that the position of A-level music in these schools is not strong. However, this situation is very little different from the national picture. But even so, it does give cause for concern regarding the sustainability of A-level music in schools in the city.

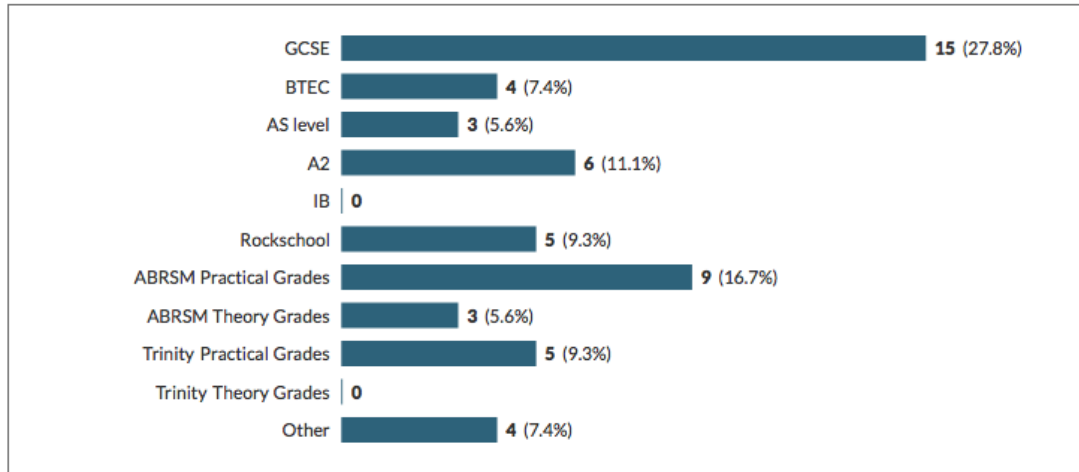
Only one teacher availed themselves of the opportunity to elaborate here, noting that:

- *Yr 12 and 13 taught together (not ideal), and with two students on consortium*

Which again can give a cause for concern. It may well also be an early-warning for conservatoires and university music departments, as without a supply of home-grown students, they will need to become all the more dependent on overseas students coming to the UK to study music at a higher level. This will affect a whole range of aspects of the music profession.

We are also interested in the range of examinations offered in Birmingham secondary schools, and so we asked which examination were offered:

Question 18: Examinations offered



The 'other' examinations are:

- VCert NCFE Level 2 Technical Award in Music Technology.
- NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Music Technology
- Arts Award

And one teacher observed:

- A Level, we don't do AS and A2 anymore. We run 2 year A level music course

On this point, with the phasing out of the AS level music examination the figures for this are hardly surprising. What is of interest is the range of certification opportunities which are open to the children and young people in Birmingham secondary schools. It will be particularly important to BMEP members and partners to think about the range of qualifications and courses on offer in schools, and of how they can best fit in with what is taking place. This will require establishing at an early stage in discussions between music organisations and schools.

Once again there are some interesting responses in the free text section of this question. Again, here are the teacher comments verbatim:

- Most instrument and theory related exams are those submitted by Birmingham Music Service teachers.
- In each year we have a Btec and GCSE group. Numbers are as follows currently:
 - Y10: GCSE - 12 Btec - 10
 - Y11: GCSE - 10 Btec - 16
- We have approximately 100 students studying with peri teachers. They prepare students for grade exams.
- Music Service teachers prepare and enter the most able pupils for the ABRSM and Trinity Practical Grades

- If we could recruit pupils that are able to do music A level we would run the course

The close working relationship between S4E and the schools is clearly evident in some of these responses. With the possibility of schools ‘claiming’ graded music examinations for inclusion into Progress8 scores, it will worth watching this to see if there are trends developing across the city.

Extra-Curricular music activities

From curricular music we turn our attention next to extra-curricular music. We know that the very term ‘extra-curricular’ is a loaded one, and that some commentators prefer ‘extended curricular’ or ‘co-curricular’, however, we have used ‘extra curricular’ as it widely understood, and serves as a useful shorthand for activities that happen beyond the teaching day.

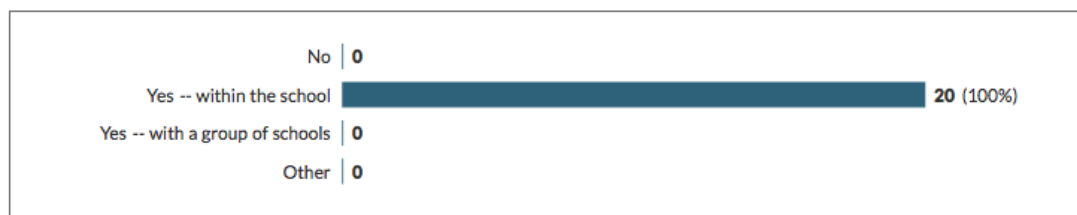
It is worth reiterating here that extra-curricular music in English schools is normally a voluntary activity by both teacher and pupils, and that the teacher will not be being paid for their work here. Indeed, in schools with significant extra-curricular music programmes a lot of work can be done with and for music making, which would make not a jot of difference to the teacher’s salary if they stopped doing it. This places the experience of teachers in England very much at odds with many other jurisdictions, and is a point worthy of note for organisations working with schools for the first time.

With this in mind it was encouraging to observe that the 20 people who responded to the question

- *Do you have any extra curricular music activities in your school?*

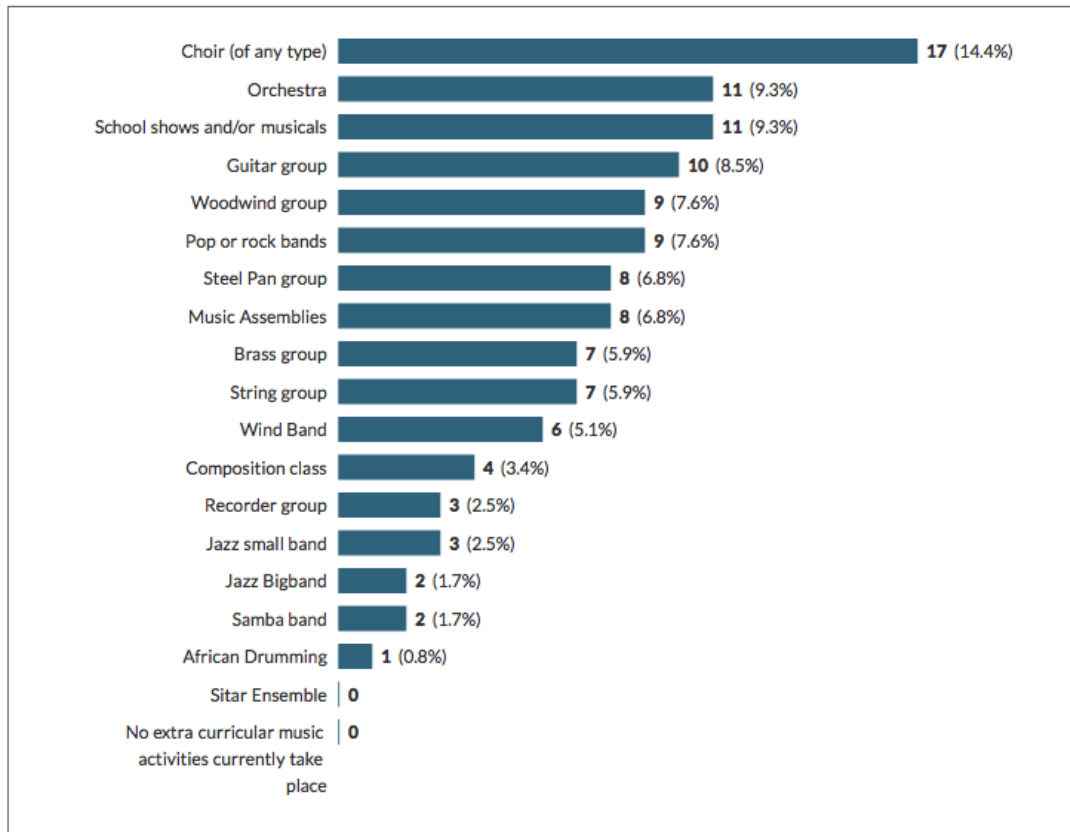
all did so positively:

Question 19: Extra curricular music



Drilling down into the sorts of activities that were taking place under the heading of extra-curricular music, we provided a list of common activities, from which we asked respondents to select all that they ran in schools. Here are their responses:

Question 20: Common extra curricular activities



Choirs are clearly the most common form of extra-curricular activity in the Birmingham schools in question, followed by orchestras (which can cover a multitude of activities, as well as school shows).

In addition to the activities listed above, teachers were also given the opportunity to list other extra curricula activities that they ran. Of these the most popular was a dhol group, which was operated by 7 respondents, then a keyboard club, which 2 schools ran.

Other ensembles and musical activities mentioned are these:

- Termly small scale concerts for peripatetic teachers to showcase their work with students.
- Bi-annual orchestra day with invited local primary schools run by peripatetic staff.
- Performances at all whole school events.
- We have just finished We Will Rock You. We also have a Dhol Group and an 'Urban Fusion' group. The latter is about creating music using the studio and often the kids bring in music from their own culture.
- We run both Upper choir and a Year 7 choir.
- Music technology, DJ skills and mixing
- Music hub venue.
- All listed above. 2 orchestras (training and senior)
- Drumline
- Percussion ensemble

- Theory Class
- Music Tech Club
- Trumpet Club
- Keyboard ensembles
- Flute Ensembles
- Sax Ensemble
- Band Club
- String Quartets.
- Wind Quintet.
- Marching drumming group
- Ukulele Group

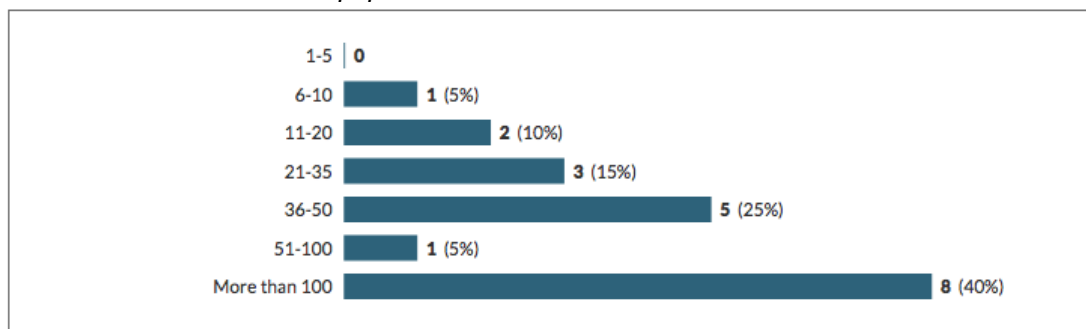
This list, alongside that provided in response to Q20 shows a broad range of musical activity taking place in Birmingham Secondary Schools. This perhaps is also a signifier of the diverse cultures and communities in Birmingham. It also shows that the teachers are in touch with the interests of their pupils.

Numbers of children and young people participating in these extra-curricular music ensembles is also of interest, and so we in question 21 we asked about this:

- *How many children participate in your extracurricular groups each week?*

Here are the responses:

Question 21: Extra curricula pupil numbers



There is a huge contrast in this answer, from schools where only a handful of children and young people participate, through to those where we are looking numbers in excess of 100.

Respondents were again offered a free text response to explain any aspects of their extra curricula provision. Here are their responses, verbatim:

- This is hard - I haven't included the numbers for the musical (the cast was about 70 strong) as we have finished it, however we have yet to start up the things that got displaced by it (Choir and our soul band). Orchestra is about 20ish, dhol and urban fusion are smaller - limited by equipment so maybe 8 between the two, the pop band is 6, and I'm

hoping for at least 20 in the choir and soul band. We have struggled for time due to meetings (I am three days and have meetings on two of those) but have an excellent music technician who runs some of the groups.

- The extra curricular is thriving thanks to the hard work of the department and excellent peri team. It wouldn't happen without the team effort.
- We have compulsory attendance tied into subsidised lessons and an enrichment process in 6th form.
- We have a strong and vibrant offering
- Hard to cope with anything more than what we have considering sparse staffing and long school days.
- Rehearsals have to take place before school and in the lunch hour and there are many extra academic activities being organised in these times that it is increasingly difficult to get full attendance at rehearsals
- I have 3 days to run extra curricular due to meetings.
- I run composition (year 10), choir and band club.
- My colleague (NQT) runs a keyboard club and supports composition club.
- We also open our rooms at lunchtime for rehearsal spaces.
- We would like to do more, but don't have the time or money to facilitate.
- Joint organisation with [*name of school redacted*] as well as some independent ensembles.
- it is increasingly difficult with the amount of meetings, barely any other department runs extracurricular activities
- Extracurricular music only works at our school due to the dedication of the music teachers and some of our peri's. Without this there would be no extracurricular clubs

There are some troubling comments here. It has already been noted how extra-curricular music only flourishes where there is good will for it to do so. This whole area seems to warrant closer scrutiny to see what we can find out from these answers, especially about ways in which BMEP can assist those who may be wanting some help with their provision here.

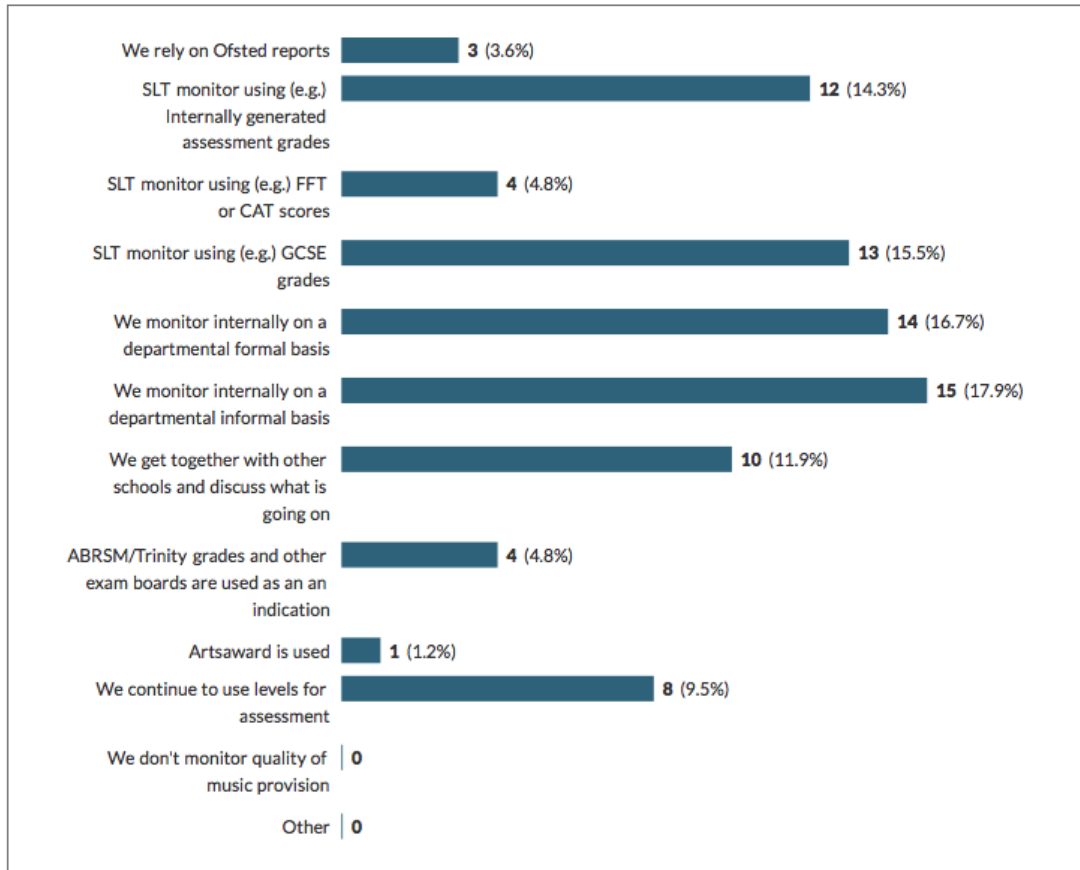
The School music curriculum

The first question that was asked in this section was

- *How do you monitor the quality of music provision in your school?*

The respondents could choose from more than one category, and so the percentages are somewhat misleading here, as they refer to the totality of *responses*, rather than *respondents*. However, there is much here that is of interest nonetheless. Here are the responses, in the order in which the question was presented:

Question 23: Monitor music provision



What is interesting about these responses is that there is a range of monitoring procedures in place, from the internal informal departmental review, through to the more formal, such as Ofsted reports. It is also interesting that assessment grades form a significant part of music departments self-monitoring. This theme of assessment is picked up in the next question, which asked:

- *How does your school monitor progression in musical learning?*

This was a free text question, and so here are the responses:

- As far as SLT and parents are concerned, each pupil is marked accordingly; either they are developing, competent or highly developed. These statements are explained in more detail on our website. Within the department we also give each pupil a number (eg. 8.4 for a Y8 pupil who is potentially able to get a 4 at GCSE). We record that number once a year but it isn't shared with pupils and is more about us identifying kids who are not progressing. Each one of the numbers is explained in the schemes of work, so that we know what a 7.6, for example, looks like. (Because we are obviously still in the dark when it comes to the actual GCSE grades!)
- Birmingham Music Services For Education peripatetic staff reports.

- KS3 units are mapped aiding skill progression from year 7-9. All KS3 units are planned in preparation for GCSE content and to create fully-rounded musicians.
- The school meets on a half-termly basis with other schools within the collegiate to moderate and standardise grades at both KS3 and KS4 and ensure that each school within the collegiate are assessing students equally.
- Frog Progress¹ - bank of regular recordings and feedback that kids, parents, teachers and senior staff can access.
- Learning walks
- Student forums
- Lesson observations
- Video recordings
- Through SLT focus on written reports plus external exam grades
- Use the music mark framework for guidance.
- Using assessment data
- Progress grades.
- School formatted thresholds.
- Use of levels in line with whole school policy
- We attend Academy moderation days with teachers in the [*name of MAT redacted*] network to compare students' work in KS3 and KS4.
- For KS3 we implemented our grading system which is in line with the new GCSE grading criteria
- Internal and external assessment.
- Assessment grades 0 - 9
- KS3 grades and then KS4 GCSE data
- We have built our own trackers for KS3 and KS4 which relate directly to the skills needed at GCSE. We then update these half termly, or after an assessment point.

These show a complex range of responses which it would probably be useful for BMEP to understand in more detail. The complexity is underlined by the free text comments which 6 teachers chose to supply in order to help illuminate their answers:

- This has been a hot topic for a long time but especially the last year. Changing to the developing/competent/highly developed criteria is great for parents as they are now not looking at a number that has no meaning. Also, there is less anxiety attached to constantly getting higher numbers. However, we didn't feel that it gave us enough to go on, ie, a pupil may be competent but I know that they should be highly developed. This is why we keep the numbers going on in the background. To be honest they are more related to our own criteria that we have written into our schemes than any currently imagined GCSE grades!

¹ Frog progress is a commercial data software package for schools. Details at: <https://www.frogeducation.com/solutions/progress>

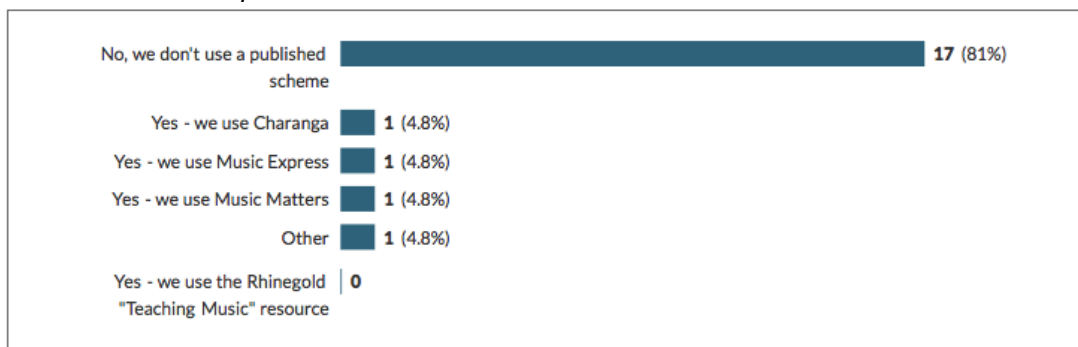
- I hate FFT² grades and have this argument every year about their lack of value in a practical subject
- Impossible to standardise, easy to doubt your standards/judgment.
- We are often compared to target grades which students achieved in KS2 Maths and English.
- I am looking to become a paperless department and introduce Showbie as a way of storing evidence and show progression over time.
- Most of the Gifted and talented higher achieving pupils are pushed to study triple science meaning they cannot choose music GCSE, the GCSE groups seem to be EAL/ SEN non-musicians but the musicians that take triple science attend the extracurricular groups.

We know assessment is a key issue in music education (Fautley, 2010), and these comments emphasise this. BMEP has provided a number of teacher network sessions on this topic, and it seems likely that this will continue to be an area which is worth regularly revisiting.

It may also be the case that it is assessment literacy (Price et al., 2012) that requires addressing, both in classroom music teachers and in the SLTs (senior Leadership Teams) who manage the schools. This is a key issue for music education, as some of the teachers observe above. Predictive data for music education derived from maths and English KS2 results are likely to have high construct-irrelevant variance (Messick, 1989), and maybe this needs explaining? Again there is an important role for BMEP here.

Looking more closely at what is being taught, we asked whether teachers used a published scheme of work with KS3 music classes. The answer was a resounding 'no' by and large, but with a handful of people using some form of publication:

Question 26: Use of published KS3 music scheme



The one 'other' response was for Doodle boardworks, an online homework platform and progress reporting system³

As has been the case for a number of years, not using a published scheme was by far the most common response. There is more work to be done on

² Fischer Family Trust: a commercial education data analysis software tool. See <https://fft.org.uk>

³ <https://www.doodlelearn.co.uk>

why this is the case, but personalisation and tailoring to local needs are going to be key amongst reasons for this response.

G&T and SEND

We asked next about provision for Gifted and Talented (G&T) learners within the context of school music. G&T is terminology which is not used as much as it was, it seems to have been replaced in a number of schools by the phrase "Highly able Children", but the phrase G&T still has some resonance in the area of music education, and, again, is one which is readily understood by classroom practitioners. This was a free text response, and so here in full is what the teachers said:

- In addition to classroom differentiation, additional extra-curricular opportunities such as; Masterclass event at Birmingham University, forming the band for the school production given on a case-by-case basis.
- Differentiation within curriculum music lessons. E.g. when Y8 create their own version of *In the Hall of the Mountain King* using Reason, some kids use a template with the melody recorded in, others have to start completely from scratch.
- Occasional workshops (e.g., using NYO inspire day, visiting artists, BCMG)
 - Performance opportunities. Y7 showcases, concerts, musical, Summerfest, The Voice competition.
- Extra Curricular Sessions
 - Erasmus E-Twinning music project opportunities.
 - "[name of school redacted] Has Got Talent" performance opportunity.
 - MAT Christmas Concert performance opportunity.
 - Performance/Master Class/Research opportunities with partners like The Pump and the MAC.
- Extension tasks within lessons.
 - Students acting as teachers/leaders within lessons.
 - Pupils encouraged to lead ensembles or take on other leadership roles.
- Opportunities for more advanced level music within lessons
 - opportunities to extend extra-curricular music.
- Opportunities for extra time with peri teachers.
 - Showcase at school events eg open evenings, presentations.
- PoP provision for instrumental lessons.
 - Extra curricular.
 - Extension activities in lessons
- Opportunities through trips, masterclasses, concerts.
- G&T are catered for in extra-curricular
- Students are invited to bring their instruments into lessons.
 - Students are supported individually.
- PoP scholarships from the music service,
 - extra mile tasks in lessons,

- participation in concerts etc.
- Differentiated classroom work.
 - Extracurricular opportunities
 - Entry for ABRSM examinations
- Instrumental programme,
 - music clubs,
 - differentiated resources,
 - class sets according to English grades.
- Instrumental Lessons
- Extensive opportunities both internal and external.
 - Consistent in-built differentiation.
- We differentiate work in lessons
 - They are encouraged to do instrumental lessons
 - They are offered Arts Award in year 7
- They are called Higher Achieving pupils and they are the priority cohort, these are chosen by English and maths data, there are no music G&T pupils (formally identified)
- G&T music students are given peri lessons, involved in school bands and also given more opportunity to access higher level work.

There is a raft of work going on in schools to support G&T, or higher achieving pupils, and it would potentially be of interest to BMEP to investigate how much some of these appertain directly to music.

We also asked about provision for special education needs and disabled (SEND) pupils. Again a free text modality was employed, and again the teacher comments are provided verbatim:

- Pupils with physical difficulties may have a TA with them.
 - Often I find that many SEND pupils do well in music and don't require the same amount of support that they might need in a different subject.
- 1 to 1 break time learning/perf. opportunities.
 - Differentiated teaching materials.
- Differentiated work is planned into each SoW allowing students to develop skills at their own rate. Pupils with SEND are monitored closely within lessons and are given more 1-1 time with teachers or with pupil leaders (G&T pupils).
- Differentiated teaching based on need, TA support, intervention support and extra-curricular music support.
- All within the context of lessons
- Teacher support and monitoring in lessons. Focus from head of music
- Frameworked work, nurturing environment. All inclusive environment.
- Seating plans have SEND information on them.
 - Students are supported individually.
- Differentiated resources/tasks in lessons.
- Differentiation of tasks
- Instrumental programme, music clubs, differentiated resources, class sets according to English grades.

- Lunchtime clubs
- Lessons are tailored for the needs of SEND pupils, resources have been specially created and bought for those pupils.
- Needs carefully monitored. 1-1 support available.
 - Support resources (large-print etc)
- In-lesson support, all pupils can take peripatetic lesson
- All SEND and EAL students are given music on their KS3 timetable.

Once again there is a lot going on here. When the numbers of classes and limited contact time discussed earlier are taken into account, it is clear that classroom music teachers are working hard to meet the needs of all their pupils. Also, in light of the above comments there is clear evidence that a lot of teachers go beyond what might be expected by supporting a diverse range of pupils, without additional help in the classroom

The KS3 curriculum

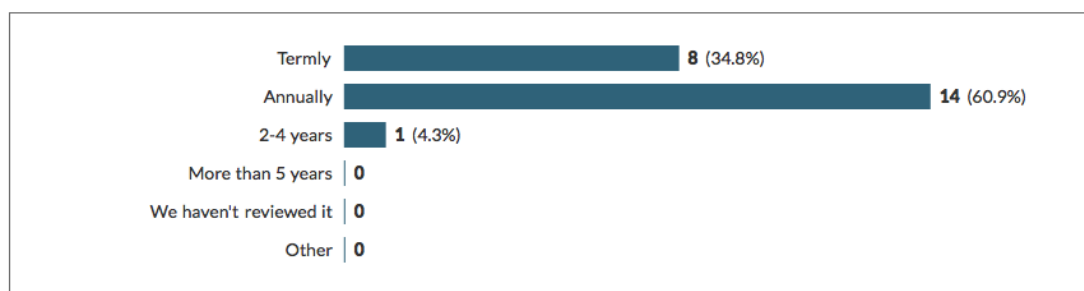
What goes on in the KS3 music curriculum is of significant interest, and it is this area where BMEP and partner organisations are likely to be working with schools, teachers, and children and young people.

The first question we asked was this:

- *How often do you review the KS3 curriculum for music in your school?*

Interestingly, all of the respondents did this at least annually, with a number of respondents reviewing termly. Only one school said they reviewed their KS3 curriculum in longer time-scales than this:

Question 29: review of KS3 curriculum

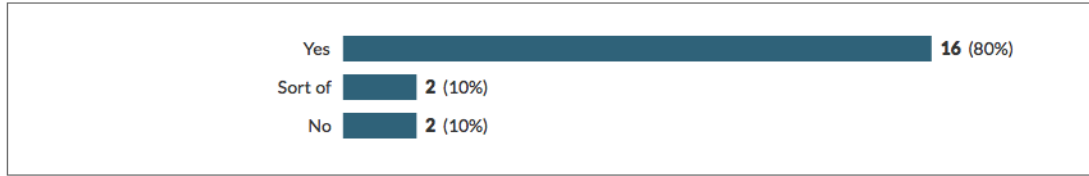


We know from previous work in this area (Fautley, 2016b; a) that many KS3 curricula are conceptualised and operationalised on a thematic basis. To investigate whether this continued to be the case in Birmingham we asked:

- *Do you teach what might be called a topic or project-based curriculum in KS3? (if no, ignore next question)*

In response to this, 80% of the teachers said that they did:

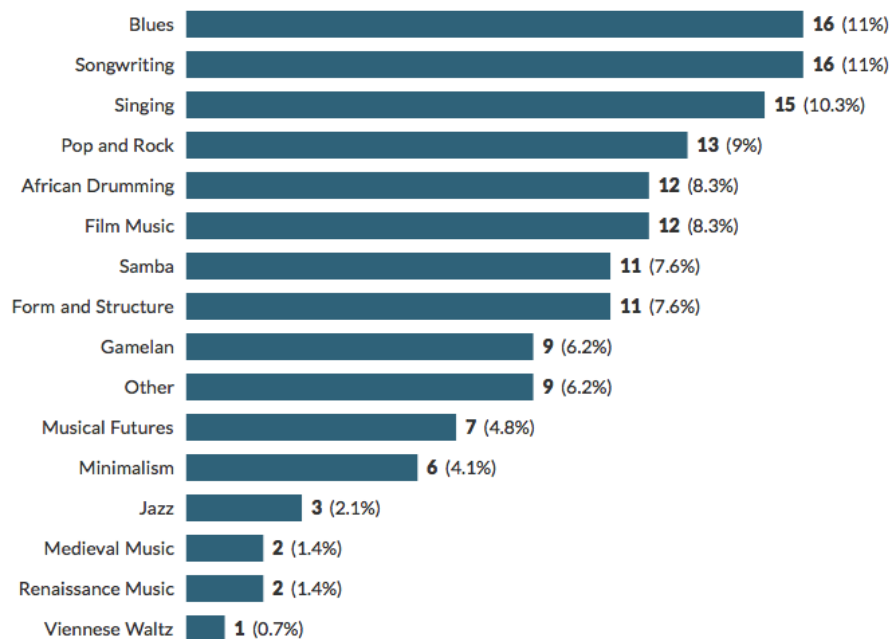
Question 30: Topic based curriculum



The remaining 20% either did not, or did ‘sort of’ teach a curriculum of this nature.

We provided a list of the most commonly taught topics at KS3, derived from our previous work in this area, and asked teachers to indicate if they taught them. Here are the results from that question, arranged in order of popularity⁴.

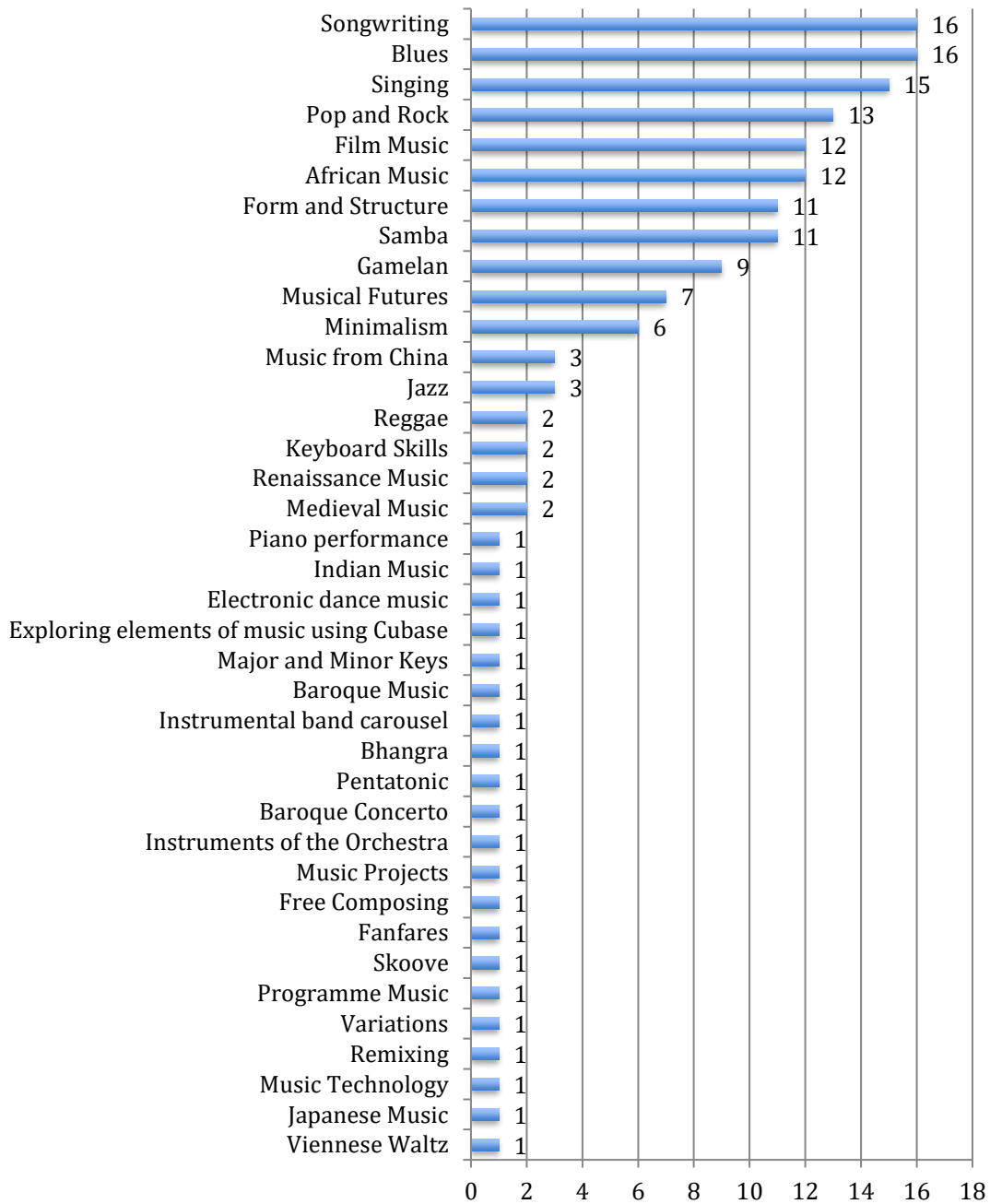
Question 31: KS3 topics taught: Short version



There was also an ‘other’ box for teachers to select, and then specify their additional topics. Adding those to the results above, and recalculating the numbers of people who said they do each topic produces the listing shown in figure 31a:

⁴ Percentages are again calculated by the survey software, as teachers could select as many responses as they wish, % figures need to be read taking this into account.

Question 31 and 31a: KS3 topics taught in Birmingham Schools: Full version



What this tells us is that there is a significant range of KS3 topics being taught and learned in Birmingham schools. This has implications in a number of ways. It is the case that it cannot be assumed that there is very much by way of commonality of topic approach between different secondary schools, and even when there is some degree of commonality of topic title, for example the blues, it is highly likely that the curriculum content of this will be significantly different between schools.

We also asked if there were any of the KS3 topics which they had devised that the schools were particularly pleased with. Thirteen teachers used this opportunity to tell us about such projects. Here are their responses:

- Musical Futures: The student response and quality of musical learning is excellent for these units. As it the case for other 'workshopped' units such as Samba.
- There is only one scheme in each year, but the following bits are my favourites:
 - Y7: Creating music inspired by some imagery and text from Midsummer Nights' Dream, including compositional devices, using the elements and melody writing. I feel like it pulls together everything they have learnt so far. They work as groups and some groups get to perform their pieces to parents.
 - Y8: Creating their own version of *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. Kids have real ownership and it is their first time on computers which they love.
 - Y9: Used to be Stomp but this year the kids are not responding well to it so I'm about to rewrite that bit! They like creating some music for a computer game trailer (they get the choice of five trailers and use Reason).
- Singing for Yr 7's as the whole year get to contribute to an in-house performance.
- I am particularly proud of the composition projects which aim to develop skills in composition in preparation for GCSE. The balance of working with instruments, technology and music theory encourages progress effectively.
- Japanese Music, incorporating singing and performance with year 7 and 8, ability to develop well structured individual and group performances.
- Hip hop / sequencing projects
- Programme Music based on Pictures from an Exhibition. Develops creativity and links with other curriculum areas.
- Really pleased with the Skoove project. Great to see students working independently.
- Baroque Concerto - high levels of engagement with high quality music appraising and compositions.
- Year 8 8 bar melody construction, as this enables all pupils to access notational and creative elements in order to produce a successful mini composition
- Bhangra - engages year 9, links to the community we work in.
 - Band Carousel and song writing - sets up for year 10.
- They're all good! We've honed it to provide a firm foundation for KS4 and 5 as well as a broad and musical grounding. As new specs emerge we "tweak".
- Composition, especially film music works very well at KS3. Students are extremely engaged as we use film clips from movies that they know

There are some really interesting things going on here, and it may well be fruitful for some of these projects to be shared between teachers to facilitate workload and progression impact.

For BMEP and partner organisations the implications of knowing about planned and delivered KS3 curriculum topics are that at early stages of discussions with schools concerning possible projects, it will be helpful to find out how the proposed work fits into the planned curriculum, and what topics the school is engaging with at other points in the curriculum cycle.

In the final question of the curriculum section of this survey we inquired as to whether the music departments had made any meaningful cross-curricular links with the music curriculum. This was again a free text response, and fourteen of the respondents described instances of where they had done this. Responses are again presented verbatim:

- Art: Provide musical items for a Fashion Show
- We are planning on a Y7 intensive week with maths at the end of the summer term...
- Currently working with the drama dept. on the production of Joseph and his amazing technicolor dream coat.
- A number of the projects within the music curriculum link with extra-curricular work, i.e. projects on the orchestra; world music; and others.
- Links with MFL to look at language and music, link with drama for film music/theme and variation work with year 8 and 9.
- Music and drama, art.
- Art. Drama. History
- Yes. We try to do this in most topics.
- Yes with Drama, Technology and Dance
- We run an arts festival in the summer with drama and art.
- As part of Extra curriculum activities we are staging Oliver! and prepare this production in collaboration with Creative Department: Art, D&T and Textiles departments are making props and costumes. After school club for SEND children is also involved in making props.
- Shakespeare week with English
- Pi day with Maths
- Sports Relief with PE

Once again there are a number of interesting responses here, and this goes to show that many music departments are not as isolated as some might have us think! This also goes to show that the teachers again are supporting other subjects through music, although it might reasonably be asked as to how many of these types of projects are truly cross-curricular?

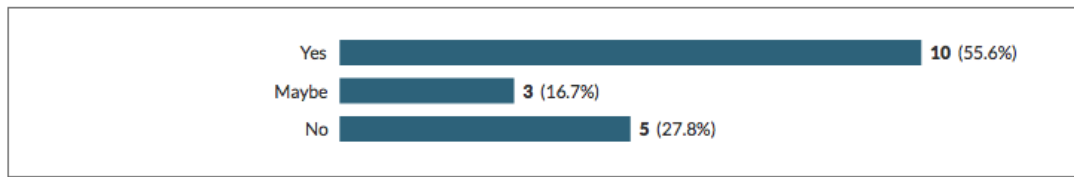
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

We turned our attention next to aspects concerning CPD. Question 34 asked:

- *Do you feel the teacher(s) responsible for music in your school is/are currently adequately supported in terms of CPD?*

Results for this are as follows:

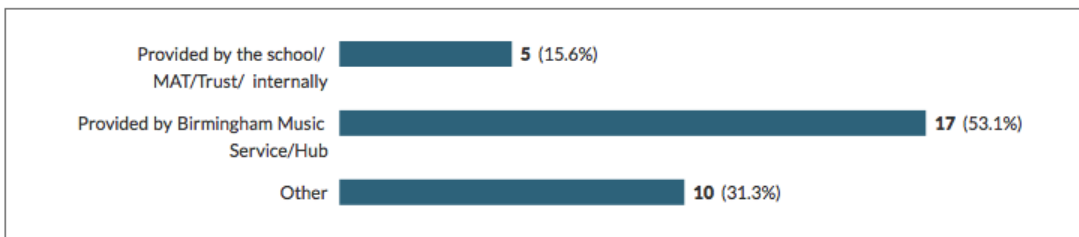
Question 34: CPD supported



Although the 'yes' answers are in the majority, there are still a number of Birmingham teachers for whom CPD is not necessarily adequately supporting their professional work. In order to investigate this in a little more detail, the next question asked:

- *Have any of your school attended music-specific CPD in the past 2 years? If so, was it:*

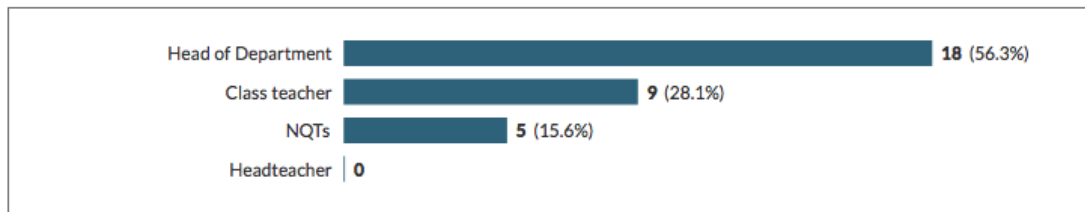
Question 35: Attended CPD



Most of the 'other' responses will be accounted for by teachers attending examination board training for GCSE and/or A level entry training. However, it is interesting for BMEP that a goodly number, over 50%, have attended the CPD sessions organised by them. Of course, the challenge, as always, is to extend this to the other teachers and schools, and to those hard-to-reach music teachers who have not found this survey.

In finding out which teachers had attended training, we asked respondents to provide details of who had benefited for this. These are their responses:

Question 36: Who attended CPD



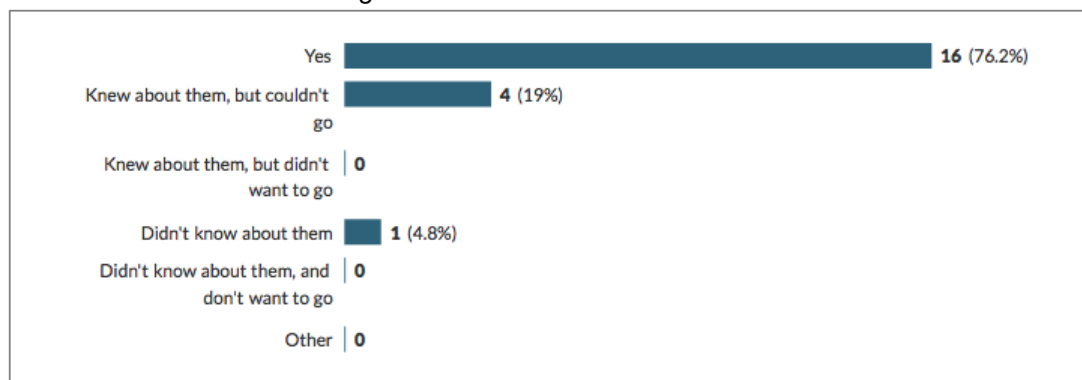
Possibly unsurprisingly, it is heads of departments who have attended CPD. Equally unsurprisingly, headteachers have not attended music-specific CPD. The issue of engaging with senior leadership teams (SLTs) in secondary schools is always going to be a problematic one as far as music is concerned, and BMEP will undoubtedly continue to address this in a variety of creative ways!

Positive news for BMEP, though, is that in answer to the question

- *Have you, or any of the music staff in your department, attended one of the Birmingham Music Education Partnership's secondary music networking events?*

The answers showed that this group of respondents were well aware of them, even if they had not managed to attend:

Question 37: BMEP networking events



It seems worthwhile to dwell on this topic a little longer. In order to do this, question 38 asked the survey participants to outline what aspects of CPD they would like the Birmingham Music Hub to provide in future events. Here are the results, again verbatim:

- GCSE and Btec training.
 - Teaching kids to compose
 - Class singing strategies.
- Development of listening skills in pupils at KS3.
- Assessment and moderation, planning to incorporate Music industry and other music specific development.
- Moderation at KS4 / 5
 - Learning from others about successful recruitment to GCSE and A level.
- GCSE and A level Edexcel support and training. Moderation of coursework etc
- New curriculum ideas.
 - New technology.
 - Ideas to save us time.
 - More help on practical elements of teaching such as developing composition
- KS3 standardisation.
- Vocal Material for Secondary Schools
 - Ongoing updated support for Secondary Music Teachers
- Charanga, GCSE, collaborative workshops and performances together with other schools
- Inspiring and “head-lifting” musical input.
 - OCR exam support.

- AB/Trinity exam support
- Networking/sharing good practice.
- BTEC course planning, delivery and assessment
- Recruitment of pupils at KS4 and 5, how to challenge and overcome the community's misconceptions about music
- Up-to-date research and trends on music education. New techniques for assessment within music. Resources.

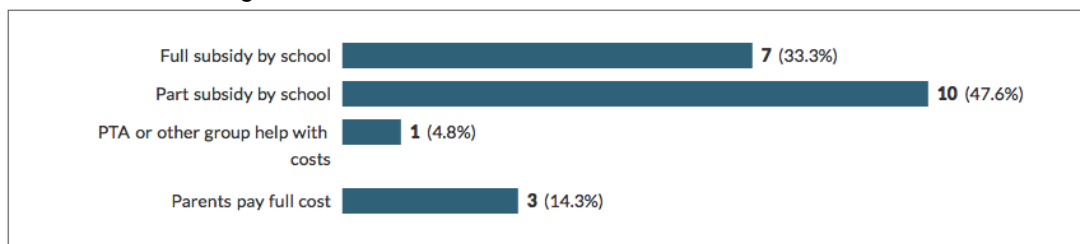
A number of themes emerge from these responses. BMEP has already provided CPD on assessment at KS3, curriculum planning, and KS4 requirements. These seem to be ongoing needs, and so it may well be the case that iterative ways need to be found in order to deal with issues which occur with some degree of regularity. Other aspects seem to provide a clear role and opportunity for BMEP partners to work with teachers; BCMG, for example, has provided twilight CPD sessions for secondary teachers on composing pedagogies, and there are other aspects to which hub partners could usefully contribute.

Instrumental music lessons

The next section of the survey was concerned with instrumental music lessons. This is clearly a matter of significant interest to BMEP, and in particular to S4E, although other hub partners also are important stakeholders in this.

The first question in this section was concerned with the ways in which instrumental lessons were funded in the respondent's schools. There were a range of responses here:

Question 39: Funding instrumental music lessons



Although part subsidy by the school is the commonest response, it is by no means the majority outcome from this question. Full subsidy by the school also happens in a number of instances, and for three respondents it is the parents who bear the full responsibility for the payments.

The next question asked whether pupil premium (PP) was being used to help with costs of music activities. 18 respondents answered this question, another free text response. Here is what they wrote:

- PP funding can be transferred to instrumental budget if required on a case by case basis.
- PP pupils pay half cost of music lessons.

- Yes. All of the pupils currently taking instrumental lessons qualify for pupil premium.
- No.
- Yes, PP pupils are fully subsidised.
- Yes, peri lessons are usually fully funded for PP students.
- Pays for full cost of lessons for those on PP
- Yes. It used to pay for lessons and trips for students if requested.
- PP pupils get free instrumental lessons
- To provide equipment
- On a case by case basis, up to 50% discount.
- Pupils on pupil premium funding receive free Instrumental lessons
- Yes - funding is taken out of PP for instrumental lessons.
- Not Yet
- Yes. Free tuition to all PP (as well as all KS4/5 musicians)
- Instrument funding available.
- I believe the money does come from pp funding
- No
- Unsure.

This is clearly an important area, and one which needs careful monitoring, as well as careful handling, by both the school and the music service. It is important that children and young people are not presented with barriers to participation in a broad range of activities, of which music is one, caused by financial matters.

As circumstances change, and with changes to governmental centralised funding of music hubs possible with the ending of the National Plan for Music Education (DfE & DCMS, 2011) in 2020 this whole area of financing music lessons will be an area to monitor carefully in the longer term.

Musical Connections

The next section of the survey asked about musical connections made by the secondary schools. The first question asked about connections with primary schools. Here are the responses:

- Through our orchestra day bi-annually but not regular contact.
- We have taken groups to perform at local primary schools
- Yes. With the primary schools that are a part of our MAT. I am timetabled to deliver singing workshops in preparation for Christmas, drumming workshops and an annual performance at the Tower of London.
- Not yet; however, this is one of the many things that will be improved in the near future.
- MAT
- Not directly
- Not really. Grammar school means not many links with local schools apart from coming to watch school show dress rehearsal
- Not currently.

- We run outreach at local feeder primary schools
- No
- No.
- Occasionally.
- Support for Assemblies
- Instrumental workshops
- Yes, we have connections with some of our feeder schools and have used the music service to do cross links and performances with them.
- [local primary school] joint performances
- Waverley school Academy incorporates Primary, Secondary, Sixth Form and Studio College
- We invite local primaries in for performances. Sixth form work in primaries. We perform in primaries with STRINGCREDIBLES.
- Not currently, but we are looking to team up with one soon.
- Yes, we are now a through school, I deliver the music for the primary pupils as well as the secondary
- We have primary schools within our MAT.

There are a number of useful connections made here, and some others with intentions to work on this in the future.

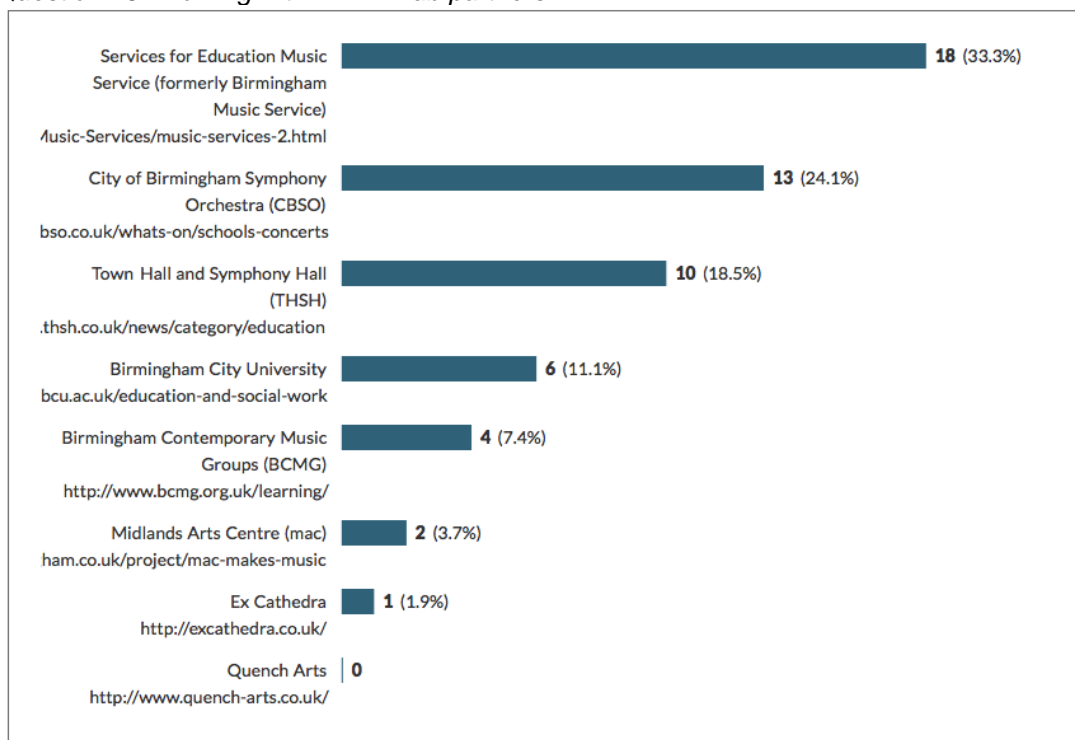
- In contact with others for moderation at GCSE.
- Occasional network meetings.
- GCSE moderation
- Yes. With the secondary schools within our MAT. The Christmas concert and annual performance at the Tower of London
- Yes. I have created the Music Action Group for [this MAT] in Birmingham.
- MAT
- [Name of school redacted] combined A level teaching, 2017-18 is the first year of this collaboration.
- Local secondary schools. Occasional meeting up and sharing resources
- We are planning a joint concert with the local Girls' Grammar school.
- We work closely with 2 other schools in our MAT,
- Yes - We share the teaching of A-level music.
- Moderate coursework.
- For many years have participated in a Joint Musical
- Have become a MAT since Sept 2017
- First Joint Concert to be held March 18
- through the Ark Network.
- Unfortunately none.
- KS5 and extracurricular programme run jointly with [local secondary schools]- BTEC moderation
- yes, we are a multi-academy trust and we are the lead school for music. We run the MAT concerts
- Schools within the MAT, as well as links made from PGCE course and through the music service.

The next question asked this:

- *Have you worked with, attended performances by, or been visited by any of these Birmingham Music Hub partners on any aspect of music education in your school?*

A number of the respondent schools reported that they had worked with BMEP hub partners:

Question 43: Working with BMEP hub partners



Finally in this section we asked if the schools had worked with any other external music organisations not mentioned in this survey. A number of them had, as their free text responses shows:

- We are a partnership school for Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.
- NYO - National Youth Orchestra Inspire Orchestra
- University of Birmingham
- Birmingham Conservatoire
- Ark Music
- Birmingham Cathedral.
- Trinity College, Cambridge
- Schubert Ensemble.
- Birmingham Hippodrome and Rep.
- Welsh National Opera (WNO)
- ACFEA Tours
- WNO
- Punch Records

- The conservatoire sent performers to our school to perform (jazz group) this was amazing and our pupils loved it, we have a project planned with NYO (National Youth Orchestra)

There are a number of external organisations represented here, and a range of musical styles and genres are encompassed too.

Final section

The final section of the survey was concerned with relationships with services for education (S4E) and instrumental music staff. Question 45 asked:

- *How might Services for Education Music Service instrumental service staff support your work better than at present?*

Again, free text responses were provided. Here they are in full:

- I feel that music service staff are very supportive when working in school.
- Some staff are much better at seeking out pupils who don't attend a lesson (we don't have loads, but it does happen). I know that it isn't always possible, but if a member of staff is just sitting in a room alone because a whole group hasn't shown up, I feel that they should at least try to find a member of the department to see if someone can be sent to find the pupil/s.
- Assistance in preparing for the annual talent show.
- The provision of a Piano and a Steel Pan teacher.
- I can't think of anything currently. I am very pleased with their service.
- The service works well in school.
- Even more awareness of GCSE and A level requirements, especially with the recent curriculum changes to these courses.
- More focus on preparing students for GCSE performances.
- Possibly training staff on how best to record performances.
- They do a fantastic job already.
- Run ensembles.
- Continue with their outstanding provision
- We employ our own Instrumental Team.
- We have 2 hours of string ensemble provision from S4E.
- Encourage pupils to join local ensembles.
- Arrange performances for assembly.
- Promote music as an options choice
- Ours are fantastic- part of our team and our pupils work well with them all
- They do so much already.

There are some points here for S4E to take into account when thinking about their work with schools, but also some points of good practice, which again could well be useful to share amongst S4E colleagues. The issue of GCSE

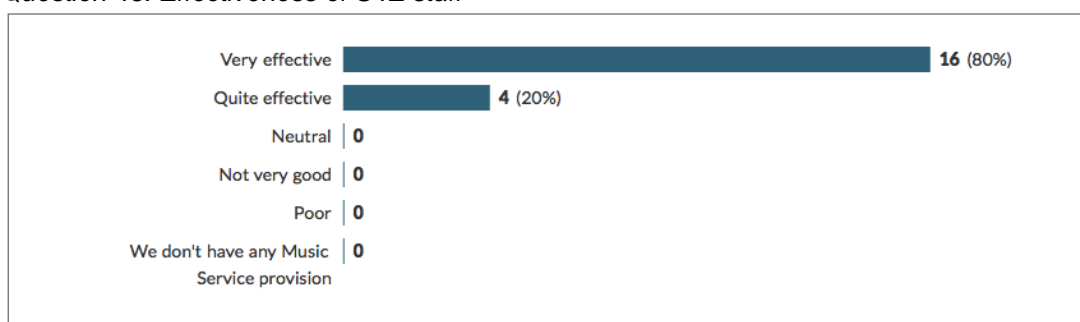
and A levels is a complex one, and instrumental staff are likely to working across a range of schools, and exam boards, as we saw earlier in this survey. Maybe it might prove helpful for S4E to provide a simple 'crib sheet', updated regularly, which helps instrumental colleagues know what the essential requirements for each examination board are. It is likely that schools would welcome this.

Question 46 asked:

- *How effective do you find your current provision from Services for Education Music Service (formerly BMS) Staff?*

S4E will probably be quite pleased with the results from this:

Question 46: Effectiveness of S4E staff



Respondents were offered the opportunity to comment further using a free text box. Three took the opportunity to do so, and these are their results:

- In all honesty it has proven difficult to liaise with the staff in person due to how little time I have available on my time table. However the work that they are doing with our students is good.
- The team we have in the school are truly brilliant.
- They work hard with all our pupils, we have barely any students that stop their lessons, we hope to be able to afford their service in the future as they are an important part of our team

...and finally!

The last question of the survey asked if there was anything that the schools had not been asked about which they would like to tell us. Six respondents took this opportunity:

- We are currently working towards becoming a 'musical school'; however, there are a large number of things still to do in order to achieve this goal.
- Facilities are pretty dire - no tech for KS3 classes as resources are limited. Enough keyboards for mostly one between two in lessons, but that's it.
- It would be great to find out about any performance opportunities for our Primary choir

- We're in desperate need of more music facilities but, whilst our music is perceived as strong, it's not seen as a priority.
- ICT infrastructure and resourcing is poor and in dire need of upgrading
- Budget cuts have meant that most of the job is now fundraising for essential music resources
- Community engagement and parental engagement is an issue for us, as is the options process and recruiting pupils at KS4 and KS5

It is of little surprise that funding matters dominate these comments. There is probably very little that BMEP can do in this regard, but knowing the extent of the problem is a useful beginning.

Endnote

There is a great deal of interest in the responses to this survey. Ways will need to be found to address some of the concerns, as well as opportunities to work better with schools. The picture that emerges from this survey is that there is good work going on all over the city, but that things are patchy. It will be a significant challenge for a hub the size of that in Birmingham to address this, but another factor that emerges strongly from this survey is the strength of commitment to music making by both school and S4E staff, along with the hubs partners. There is much to be pleased with in this report, alongside the areas of concern. There are also many areas which will require further thought and reflection in order to be able to develop things in the city. The willingness is clearly there in many quarters, it is now a matter of building on what we know to take this forward.

At the same time as running and analysing this survey of Birmingham Secondary School music, the Birmingham City University music education research team are doing a similar piece of work for BMEP looking at Primary School music teacher responses. There are some useful symbiotic linkages between the two reports, indeed, we have used some of the text from each in the other, and it is suggested that they are read alongside each other.

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Birmingham Music Hub
Secondary School Music Teachers Survey 2018

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