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eis

# CHANGE the TUNE

Invest in Instrumental Music



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**Larry Flanagan**  
EIS General Secretary

The first edition of the Charter for Instrumental Music, launched in 2011, was a landmark publication for the EIS asserting, as it did, the right of every child to learn to play a musical instrument and/or to develop their ability to sing. The Charter set out the extraordinary work going on in schools in Scotland and argued that this was work that should be developed into the future.

Unfortunately, since then instrumental music services across the country have been on the receiving end of often brutal austerity-driven cuts. This timely relaunch, therefore, again pays tribute to the sterling quality and talent of our Instrumental Music Teachers and our students, but also seeks the support of everyone concerned with protecting this vital service in challenging the ongoing cuts agenda and championing the cause of instrumental music.





**Kirk Richardson**  
Convener  
EIS Instrumental Music  
Teachers' Network,

Welcome to the updated EIS Charter for Instrumental Music. This publication sets out our vision for the future of instrumental music in Scottish education, at a time when those who care about music education are deeply concerned about what may lie ahead unless concerted efforts are made to defend instrumental music provision in schools.

Music plays an important part in shaping our culture and society, and is more a part of our everyday lives than ever before. Most people listen to the radio; play CDs or vinyl; use streaming services; or attend gigs, concerts and festivals. The Curriculum for Excellence has creativity and self-expression at its heart. Learning how to play an instrument boosts pupils' confidence, mental health, organisational skills, teamwork skills, literacy and numeracy. The benefits are manifold. And yet, the value our education system places on music seems to be diminishing while our enjoyment of it and realisation of its importance increases. This paradox must be challenged.

The provision of instrumental music tuition has suffered deep cuts in recent years; as austerity bites, local authorities cut back on elements of education not protected by statutory requirements. A growing number of local authorities have made or are

planning substantial cuts to their instrumental music service, with the loss of instrumental music teacher posts and fewer opportunities for young people to access instrumental music teaching. The widespread introduction of ever-increasing charges for tuition (as much as £524 per year) sits in stark contrast to the 'excellence and equity' agenda being pursued across the education system.

The Scottish Government must take steps to protect and expand instrumental music in our schools. We urge local authorities to reject further cuts to this service and recognise the inequity of current approaches.

Scottish Instrumental Music Teachers are amongst the best in the world. Their expertise, professionalism and dedication must be recognised, and we must value their contribution to educating our young people. Defending, maintaining and expanding the service is a priority.

On behalf of the Network, thank you for taking the time to read our Charter. We hope that you will lend us your support.

**It's time to Change the Tune  
and invest in Instrumental Music.**



# We call for:

## Equal access to music teaching and an end to 'Who Pays, Plays'

- Instrumental music tuition should be treated as a core element of the curriculum and not regarded as 'extra-curricular'
- Every child in Scotland should be entitled to receive instrumental music provision in a musical instrument or in voice, without charge
- Family income should not be a barrier to accessing music education, and efforts should be made to ensure that provision supports the pursuit of excellence and equity across the education system
- Local authorities should ensure that children's rights to access appropriate music provision are not impeded by their socio economic background, gender, race, disability, or additional support needs
- Provision should enable all pupils to achieve their full potential, regardless of their geographical location.

## Professional support and recognition for IMTs

- The GTCS should remain as the key body which supports teacher professionalism, and continued efforts should be made to support the registration of IMTs
- IMTs should have access to high quality professional learning in order to enhance the quality of instrumental teaching throughout Scotland and enable them to meet the needs of all children
- IMTs' pay & conditions should be clearly linked to those of qualified classroom teachers to reflect the expertise and skill of the profession
- Everyone involved in the delivery of education in Scotland should recognise the value of instrumental music teaching.

## Investment in instrumental music education

- Local and national government should support the principle of free music tuition for all pupils throughout Scotland, in keeping with the Scottish tradition of comprehensive education free at the point of use
- Government funding should be allocated and ringfenced to allow the teaching of instrumental music to continue and develop in all parts of Scotland
- The requisite numbers of skilled, qualified Instrumental Music Teachers should be recruited to meet the ambition of all children and young people, who wish to do so, being able to enjoy the benefits of learning an instrument.



In order to close the poverty related attainment gap Scotland needs to invest in music instruction. Pupils from the age of 5 should be receiving one to one or small group instruction. Music education in Scotland took great strides in the 1980s with the introduction of the Standard Grade Music Course. No longer was music the preserve of the privileged few. I hope that Scotland becomes a beacon to the world through its enhancement of instrumental music provision and recognition of the essential role that music instructors already play in our schools.

**Ian Matheson**

PT Music, Hillhead High School

Music is an important part of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Of all the possible interventions to help raise academic attainment and pupil health and wellbeing, music has the largest body of evidence to support its effectiveness.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS) believes that all children should have access to free music provision throughout their school life. We have a responsibility to make sure all children are treated fairly, which means that the ability to pay should not decide who gets to play an instrument. The CfE states that our children will have “rich opportunities to be creative and to experience inspiration and enjoyment” through music. Every child is entitled to this, so every child should have this opportunity.

**Joanna Murphy**

Chair, National Parent Forum of Scotland



Having over twenty years' experience working in higher education I believe that there is undoubtedly a direct correlation between the qualities and skills nurtured by learning an instrument and those needed to maximise a young person's academic potential. The rigour and discipline involved in maintaining a practice regime, coupled with the high level of concentration and focus needed to perform are exactly the skills necessary to excel at higher education and beyond.

**Dr Elspeth O'Riordan**

Historian



# Why Music Matters

A vast amount of evidence about the value of studying and playing music exists.

Sue Hallam of the University of London's Institute of Education, in a literature review, reports that "engagement with music plays a major role in developing perceptual processing systems which facilitate the encoding and identification of speech sounds and patterns"; she further evidences research on the role of music in facilitating language skills which "contributes to the development of reading skills"; and on how "active engagement with music can improve mathematical performance". She also discusses the positive impact of participation in music on social and personal development.

A 2016 study by Susan Hallam and Kevin Rogers (The impact of instrumental music learning on attainment at age 16: a pilot study) found that young people (aged 11-16) playing an instrument showed

greater progress and better academic outcomes than those not playing, with the greatest impact for those playing the longest.

Dr Rachel Drury of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland reported in her 2015 paper, 'The wider benefits of instrumental music learning in childhood', that "there are wide-ranging benefits of instrumental music education for preschool and school children. Benefits to literacy, numeracy, cognition, spatial-temporal reasoning, fine motor coordination and physical and mental wellbeing, and even the amount of grey matter in the brain, have all been linked with learning to play a musical instrument."

IMT members of the EIS actively contribute to the very wide range of benefits pupils gain from learning a musical instrument, including increased confidence, improved organisational skills, enhanced literacy and numeracy, the development of collaboration skills and increased focus and concentration.

Music is good for pupils' wellbeing and their mental health. Taking part in music making and listening to music are also joyful activities. Enjoyment of learning is a core principle of the Curriculum for Excellence, which envisages young people being active in their learning and having opportunities to develop and demonstrate their creativity. Music is an important means of human expression, which allows children to find their identity, use their voice, and boost their self-esteem. For children from low-income families, music can be a way of helping them to overcome disadvantage.

We believe that the wide range of benefits possible from learning, listening to and playing music have not been fully appreciated by educational policy makers in Scotland, and that music education has been consistently undervalued for many years. This must change.



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Receiving music tuition has boosted my confidence through performing and engaging with fellow musicians; taught me responsibility both as an individual working to perfect my own skills and in an ensemble working with others to reach a common goal; and given me the experience of reward and accomplishment after working hard. This has instilled a work ethic in me that has enabled me to attain academically, more so than I could have without music tuition.

**Imesha Alawattage**

Former Pupil of Portlethen Primary/Academy

Having instrumental teaching in my education curriculum was hugely beneficial. I gained confidence that I would never have obtained from sitting at desks learning other subjects, and built my social skills; it taught me a huge amount of self-discipline as well as giving a bigger sense of achievement than any other activity/subject in school. Although I did not pursue a career directly in music, I worked in theatre and benefited time and time again from what I'd learned.

**Heather Brown**

Former Pupil of Mackie Academy

# CONFIDENCE

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS TEAMWORK LITERACY NUMERACY



# Value Instrumental Music Teachers

Instrumental Music Teachers are highly skilled and qualified professionals who deliver the highest standards of instrumental teaching in the Scottish education system. There are 537 FTE dedicated Instrumental Music Teachers in Scotland who deliver:

- Curriculum based learning on a wide variety of musical instruments and in voice
- Teaching which supports each of the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence
- A structured course of study suited to each pupil's individual ability
- Extensive preparation for SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) and other exam bodies' exams
- Information for parents of children receiving tuition, including regular reports
- A wide range of out of school learning activities such as bands and orchestras, which give pupils the opportunity to play alongside others and realise their full potential
- Invaluable and lifelong learning and social skills
- An appreciation of aesthetic and cultural values
- Opportunities for pupils to perform locally, nationally and internationally, showcasing their talent and learning from others.

**Headteachers hugely value instrumental music, because we know it develops pupils' confidence but it also makes them happy! They learn new skills and gain so much from working together in groups and in bands. The whole school community enjoys hearing what pupils who've had instrumental tuition have achieved when they share their learning at assemblies, concerts and church services. Music contributes greatly to children's wellbeing and teaches a huge range of transferable skills too. It should be equally accessible to all children.**

**Lorraine McBride**

Headteacher, Greenhill Primary School, Coatbridge





Instrumental Music Teachers deliver education during the school day, and play a key role in supporting young people to achieve National Qualifications in Music. For some courses e.g. Higher Music, performance constitutes 60% of the assessment. Pupils perform their examinable instrumental pieces best with input from highly skilled, professional IMTs. IMTs also contribute to SQA qualifications by, for example, sourcing and researching materials; accompanying learners in rehearsals/exams; and composing, arranging and transposing music for use during lessons, performances, and examinations.

**If we truly value music education, we must value Instrumental Music Teachers.**



# Challenges & Opportunities

The Scottish Government wants to 'Get it Right for Every Child'. It wants Scotland to be 'the best place in the world to grow up', and the Scottish education system to deliver excellence and equity for all.

These policies and approaches, and the many initiatives stemming from them, create opportunities to recognise the current inequitable provision of instrumental music education and to enhance provision so that all young people can benefit equally.

**However, the challenges facing music services are many, and significant.**

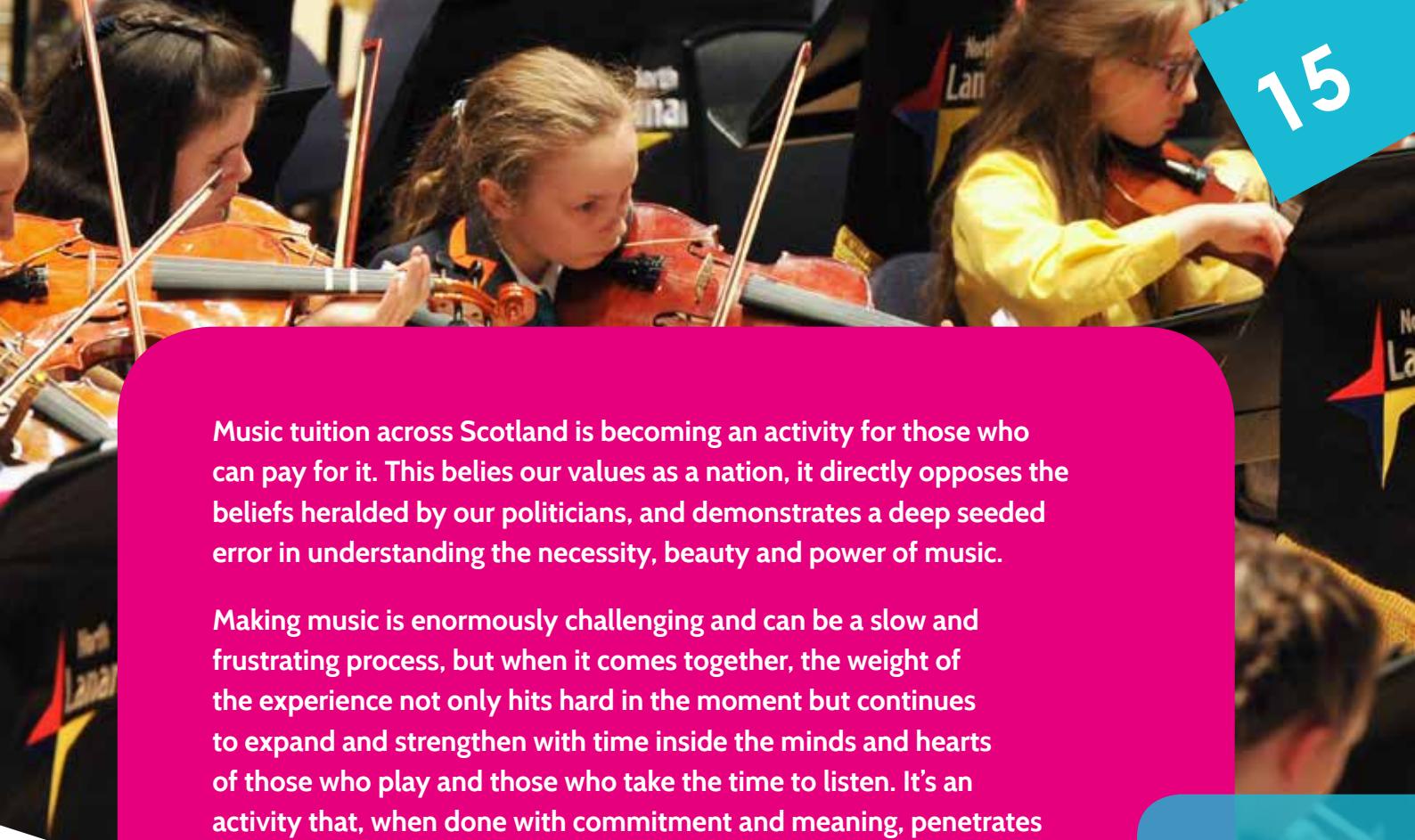
**They include:**

- Cuts to music service budgets
- Charging regimes which deter pupils from taking part
- Cuts to IMT numbers
- Increasing workload and stress for IMTs
- Insecurity, as services are perpetually under threat

- Diminishing stocks of resources including instruments, past exam papers and sheet music
- Inadequate accommodation for lessons
- More pupils with additional support needs and a deficit in specialised support and professional learning on meeting these needs
- Undervaluing of music education
- Instrumental music being seen as 'extra-curricular' rather than core.

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**Investment is crucial to overcoming these challenges.**



Music tuition across Scotland is becoming an activity for those who can pay for it. This belies our values as a nation, it directly opposes the beliefs heralded by our politicians, and demonstrates a deep seeded error in understanding the necessity, beauty and power of music.

Making music is enormously challenging and can be a slow and frustrating process, but when it comes together, the weight of the experience not only hits hard in the moment but continues to expand and strengthen with time inside the minds and hearts of those who play and those who take the time to listen. It's an activity that, when done with commitment and meaning, penetrates deeper than words, communicates something of complexity and wholesomeness, takes us all away from one screen or another, and genuinely brings people together.

No one can deny the tough financial times ahead, but a life without a collective experience that provides us with energy, uplift, beauty, and a greater sense of our community is a lot less than when we do have that experience. We must stand apart from the crowd and not allow music making to disappear from the heartland Scotland. Let's nurture and take care of the soul of this country. Without it, who are we?

### Nicola Benedetti MBE

World renowned concert violinist, supporter of music education, and winner of the Queen's Medal for Music (2017)

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# DEDICATION





The infrastructure of Scotland's music education is as fragile as our eco system. The symbioses between all the elements that form our musical pathway through our educational experience are all incredibly significant and tied together. Without Scotland's instrumental music teachers, our country faces a loss of a magnitude that will be felt throughout the field of pedagogy, our nation's music, and our economy.

**Tommy Smith**

Leading European jazz saxophonist, composer and educator

[There is] a strong case for the benefits of active engagement with music throughout the lifespan. In early childhood there seem to be benefits for the development of perceptual skills which effect learning language subsequently impacting on literacy...Fine motor co-ordination is improved through learning to play an instrument. Music also seems to improve spatial reasoning, one aspect of general intelligence which is related to some of the skills required in mathematics...Group music making is also beneficial to the development of social skills and can contribute to health and well-being throughout the lifespan and can therefore contribute to community cohesion providing benefits to society as a whole.

**Professor Susan Hallam**

Emerita Professor of Education and Music Psychology  
at University College London

# Further Reading

Educational Institute of Scotland  
[www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

Musicians' Union  
[www.musiciansunion.org.uk](http://www.musiciansunion.org.uk)

Guidelines for Instrumental Teaching in Scottish Schools  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/03/16937/21256](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/03/16937/21256)

Scottish Association for Music Education  
[www.same.org.uk](http://www.same.org.uk)

International Society for Music Education  
[www.isme.org](http://www.isme.org)

Music Education Online  
[www.childrensmusicworkshop.com](http://www.childrensmusicworkshop.com)

General Teaching Council for Scotland  
[www.gtcs.org.uk/registration/register-of-teachers/instrumental-music-instructors.aspx](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/registration/register-of-teachers/instrumental-music-instructors.aspx)

'The power of music: its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people' Susan Hallam, Institute of Education, University of London  
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0255761410370658>

# Thanks

The EIS wishes to thank the Education Department of North Lanarkshire Council for permission to reproduce the photographs in this Charter.





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