

Review of Kent Music's Survey undertaken in 2010.

Kent Music undertook a survey in April 2010 to assess the success of what they are currently doing and to look towards the future and see where Kent Music can improve or strengthen their services.

Around 7,000 surveys were sent out and there were 531 respondents which represents around a 7% return which is considered good for this type of survey. Of the respondents the majority were parents (470 respondents) with a fairly even split of male and female respondents. The majority of those who answered said their child attended music lessons at either a music centre (40%) or at their local school (55%). The majority of instruments played by the children surveyed were: piano, violin and guitar

As the major music provider in the County we were interested in the overall confidence of children who learn instruments, interestingly 85% of parents say that their child's self esteem has improved since learning an instrument, with over a third of the same group saying that their self esteem has 'improved considerably'. In terms of music making having a beneficial effect on the pupil's whole education, 94% of respondents said that it had a positive effect.

Most people heard about Kent Music through friends (27%) and teachers (56%)

Action: concentrate on getting our current users to promote us and working with teachers to increase booking

We asked about Kent Music's website and how much use is made of it by respondents; this was a disappointing question with 43% of people saying they had never used it. However since the questionnaire has gone out website hits has grown which may be an indication that people were unaware of the website prior to the survey.

Action: more website promotion needed by the marketing department

A number of respondents attend a Kent Music group at least once a week but over 50% of respondents never attend a Kent Music group although they may be taking lessons with us.

Action: promote membership of local music centres and offer incentives to join

We then asked questions about our administration. Although there were a few comments about slow administration the majority of respondents (74%) said that the administration was very good or excellent with the majority of people saying that contact with their administrator was satisfactory or better with 75% of people agreeing that the accuracy of invoicing was good or excellent.

Action: improve administration and accuracy of invoicing to 85% within one year

Our teaching staff then came under the spotlight. The quality of teaching was rated extremely highly with 87% of people saying that teaching was very good or excellent. However the availability of contact with the teacher was only rated as 59%.

Action: improve liaison between teachers and parents

Kent Music is currently reviewing the provision of service in its Music Centres so we needed to know if what we were currently providing was what people wanted or if there was room for improvement. Only 52% of people thought that the service was good or excellent which clearly shows that plans for making improvements are needed.

Action: develop plans for improving our Music Centres and ensure that this is rolled out to the public

Our County Groups have long been regarded as the flagship of Kent Music and this was born out by the respondents who felt that the experience was good or excellent however only 124 people answered this question so we know the majority of respondents are not part of County Groups.

Again there were only 160 respondents for the question on the efficiency of instrument hire however 130 of those respondents said they thought it was good or excellent.

There were then a series of four questions asking about future developments and what people would like to see:

Purchasing Concert Tickets Online: only 50% of people were interested

Work in Local Communities: 54% of people were interested

Development of new County Groups: only 44% of people were interested

A website for children: 65% of people were interested

Action: concentrate on setting up a website for children by 2011 with other future developments needing to be reviewed

Over 77% of people are likely to recommend Kent Music to others which is a positive figure however Kent Music would like to see that figure raised to at least 90%

Action: work to raise the number of people who would recommend Kent Music to 90%

The survey also included the opportunity for people to write comments about Kent Music and there were three main areas of concern:

1/ Tuition

The majority of comments from parents concentrated on the lack of interaction with teacher and about lack of progress reports:

'A contact book would be a good idea for the teacher to record progress, encouragement etc, for each lesson'

'Do the teacher's do reports on children's progress?'

Action: Kent Music to research ways of improving liaison between parents and teachers and to offer a more formalised style of feedback including an end of term report

There were also a number of complaints about the amount of tuition received i.e. parents want some written confirmation of the amount of tuition their child has had (33)

'A system should be in place to ensure the full tuition time is given and that parents are given an accurate list of the dates tuition is given/forfeited so the 33 lessons are given'

Action: to confirm on all invoices the number of lessons given in the previous term

2/ Communication

This seems to be an issue when teachers are away from lessons (sickness absence)

'Would like clarity on sickness'

'Lessons frequently cancelled on the day'

'Music teacher often seems to miss lessons'

Action: to inform parents and schools at the earliest opportunity of any unexpected teacher absence

3/ Cost of tuition

There were some concerns that Kent Music's fees are more expensive than private tutors

Action: to explain why Kent Music's fees are set as they are and to make clear the checks all our teachers undergo and their continual professional development

As well as some negative comments Kent Music received a great deal of praise with comments such as:

'I have been very impressed with the efficiency and politeness of the staff at Kent Music'

'An excellent facility'

'Teacher fantastic'

'We love the atmosphere'

'Standard of teaching is superb'

In addition the survey showed that people want the following from Kent Music:

More info on County Groups and Kent Music Academy

Work with children with Special Educational Needs

Choir for informal singing

Better quality pianos

More communication about events and concerts

Action: to undertake a review of requirements from the survey and to implement any requests that are achievable