

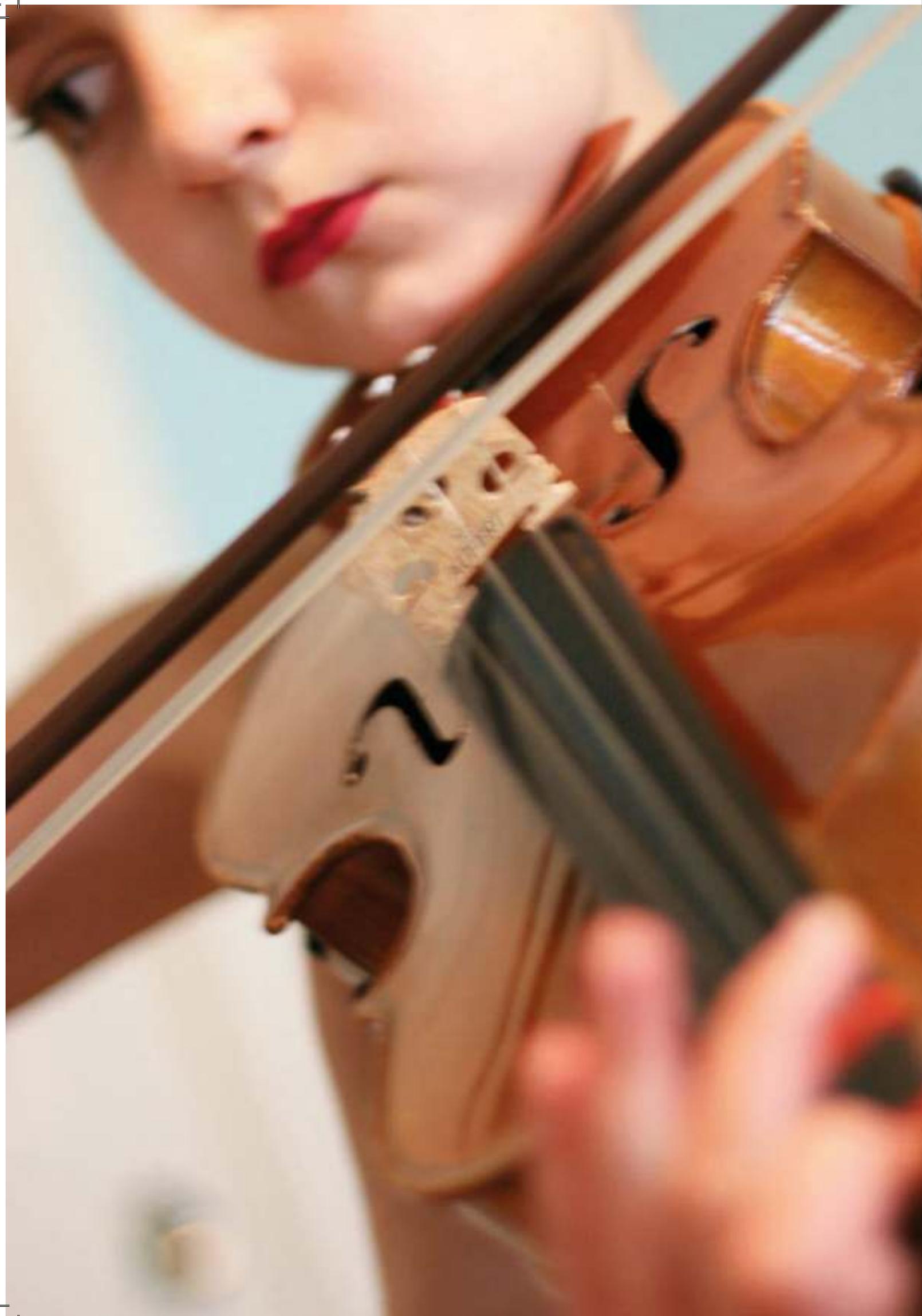
Transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 in Music Education

A Soundhub Resource.

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Introduction

This booklet aims to set the scene in relation to pupils' transition from Key Stage 2 to 3 in music education in Kent. It will allow you to consider some of the major issues surrounding transition in music education and it will give some suggestions about how these might be addressed.



Setting the scene

It can be argued that life is one long transition, with humans constantly facing change and having to adapt.

In this booklet the word transition will be used very broadly. For instance, in educational contexts, there is a distinction between transfer and transition but in this booklet the word transition will encompass transfer. In educational terms, the word transfer applies to the physical movement of pupils to a new school or learning environment.

In Kent, almost all pupils move from a primary school to a secondary school at the end of Year 6 when they are aged 11. There are only a few exceptions to this with some academies, free schools, independent schools and special schools being 'through schools', some accommodating pupils aged from 3 years to 18 years, which alleviates a major transition for these pupils. It is interesting that pupils in England attended 'through schools' when universal elementary education was established in 1870, with many pupils staying on in their elementary schools until the age of 12, 13 or even 14. However, once secondary education in England became available to all in the early twentieth century, separate secondary schools were recommended, for instance in the Hadow Report:

"We therefore propose that all children should be transferred, at the age of eleven or twelve, from the junior or primary school either to schools of the type now called secondary...central, or to senior and separate departments of existing elementary schools." Hadow (1926)

Subsequently, the 1944 Education Act went further in suggesting that at age 11 all pupils should move on from their elementary schools to secondary schools of three different types, suited to the pupils' needs and aptitudes, namely grammar schools, technical schools and secondary modern schools. This transfer to a secondary school when pupils are aged 11 is not universally replicated in education systems across the world and it is interesting to debate whether this is the most appropriate age to face pupils with such a major transition. Of course, in Kent, the transition is exacerbated by pupils still transferring to different types of school in light of their Kent Test (11 Plus) results. This is a very different situation to that encountered by pupils in many other areas of England who will transfer, with their peers from their primary school, to a local 'comprehensive' school. Thus, transfer at the end of Key Stage 2 is a major transition issue for pupils in Kent.

► Task 1

Whether you are a Key Stage 2 or a Key Stage 3 teacher, list the ways in which your Year 6 pupils are currently prepared for transfer to their secondary school, both generally and in music e.g. a visit by Year 6 pupils to their secondary school, a performance by secondary school pupils for Year 6 pupils etc.



The word transition encompasses much more than this physical transfer. As Nigel Marshall and David Hargreaves suggest:

“The term ‘transition’ is used to cover a broader set of experiences...This term can include the process by which pupils adapt emotionally and intellectually to more frequent changes such as the move between Key Stage; the move from one year group to the next; changes that might occur in teacher or style of teaching; and even the physical process of growing up.” Marshall and Hargreaves (2007)

Ensuring that teachers are aware of what pupils know and can do by the end of Key Stage 2



It is clearly imperative for secondary curriculum music teachers to find out what their Year 7 pupils already know, understand and can do in music. This has been an ongoing issue for decades. For instance, in 1993 Ofsted reported that Year 7 curriculum music lessons:

"...were often marred by the teachers' under-estimation of the pupils' musical abilities and skills. The teachers had very little knowledge of the pupils' previous musical experience, and sometimes set tasks lacking in challenge so that the pupils could not show the same standard of achievement as observed by HMI in the primary schools from which they were drawn. Singing was a frequent casualty...Conceptual development was often addressed in a manner which lacked common sense. Pupils found themselves being 'introduced' to the concept of loud – soft through dynamic differences of considerable naivety." Ofsted (1993)

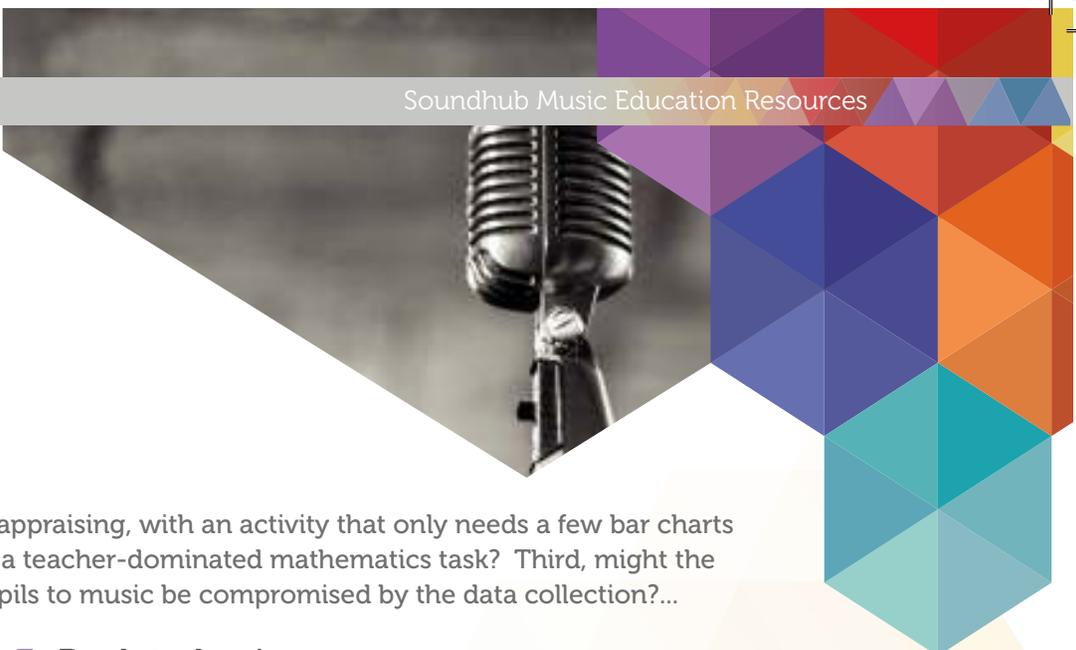
In 1996 Janet Mills, who visited many schools across England in her role as an HMI for Music, suggested that she had seen five approaches to secondary music teaching which led to an unsuccessful start to secondary music education for many Year 7 pupils:

"Approach 1: Sheep and goats

The basis of this approach is that pupils are divided into hierarchical groups on the strength of a test for some (often very narrow) form of musical ability...

Approach 2: They do nothing at primary school...

Many secondary music teachers use part of the first lesson with a new class to try and find out what the pupils have done before...However, the practice of attempting to collect this information orally or in writing in the first lesson raises several issues...First, how reliable is the information that pupils give...Opportunities to assess pupils' achievement practically are frequently missed. Second, what impression of music at secondary school is this data collection giving the pupils?...First impressions are important. Does it make sense to introduce pupils to the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum in music, which is about performing, composing,



listening and appraising, with an activity that only needs a few bar charts to turn it into a teacher-dominated mathematics task? Third, might the attitude of pupils to music be compromised by the data collection?...

Approach 3: Back to basics

This approach is based on the notion that 11 year olds are empty vessels waiting to be filled. Not only have they done nothing at primary school, they have done nothing musical at all outside primary school for the first 11 years of their life...

Approach 4: Praise them regardless

Clearly, it is appropriate for teachers to praise pupils when they make significant effort or display significant achievement. In praise them regardless lessons, praise is dispensed so freely that it loses its meaning and leads eventually to a lowering of pupils' expectations of themselves...

Approach 5: No keyboards before Christmas...

The specialist resources of the school are withheld...Meanwhile, the pupils are set activities that barely pass for music...Particularly popular taming activities include projects on instruments of the orchestra...The melodies CABBAGE and BAGGAGE are frequently introduced into no keyboards before Christmas lessons. But the pupils do not get to hear what they sound like: they just decode the staff notation to produce words." Mills (1996)

You might think that things must have improved over the last two decades but in the Ofsted report *Music in schools: wider still and wider* (2012) it was reported that:

"Where the secondary schools visited had made baseline assessments in music, these were most usually in the form of written tests and / or questionnaires of students' factual knowledge about music, rather than assessments of their musical understanding through practical performance and creative tasks." Ofsted (2012)

An effective baseline assessment in music of pupils at the start of Year 7 cannot be carried out through one short test being undertaken in one lesson. This would not allow pupils to demonstrate the enormous range of what they already know, understand and can do in music, such as their singing and instrumental skills, their grasp of different forms of notation, their contextual understanding (e.g. of styles and genres) and their creativity, as well as their inherent musical aptitude.



An effective baseline assessment in music will:

- Cover a number of lessons or a whole 'unit of work'
- Allow pupils to demonstrate the wide range of musical skills that they have already developed within and beyond school, as well as their inherent musical aptitude (e.g. the ability to maintain a pulse, sing in tune etc.)
- Allow pupils to demonstrate their creativity through engaging in musical and open-ended tasks

Effective baseline assessment by music teachers at the start of Year 7 will allow them to really get to know their pupils, what they know, understand and can do and what musical experiences, within and beyond school, they bring with them and can be built upon.



► Task 2

Wherever possible, carry out this task with both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 music teachers working together. Devise a baseline assessment for your Year 7 pupils that allows the pupils to demonstrate “their musical understanding through practical performance and creative tasks”, as Ofsted (2012) recommend, and which builds on their prior experience. Ensure that the baseline assessment addresses the points listed above and that it really does allow the assessment of what your pupils know, understand and can do.



Building on singing and instrumental learning initiatives in the primary school

In the same Ofsted report, *Music in schools: wider still, and wider* (2012), it was noted that “when asked about their knowledge of the whole-class instrumental programmes and primary singing initiatives, few secondary music teachers had detailed understanding of this work or, more significantly, how these initiatives had impacted on their students.”

Singing is an important and intrinsic part of growing up and pupils will have sung with their parents and carers, in the playground, on the terraces of football matches, in choirs, shows and churches, as well as singing along to their favourite artists. In the *Music Manifesto Report no. 2, Making Every Child’s Music Matter*, it is suggested that:

“Singing...is where most children’s musical journey begins.” DfES (2006)

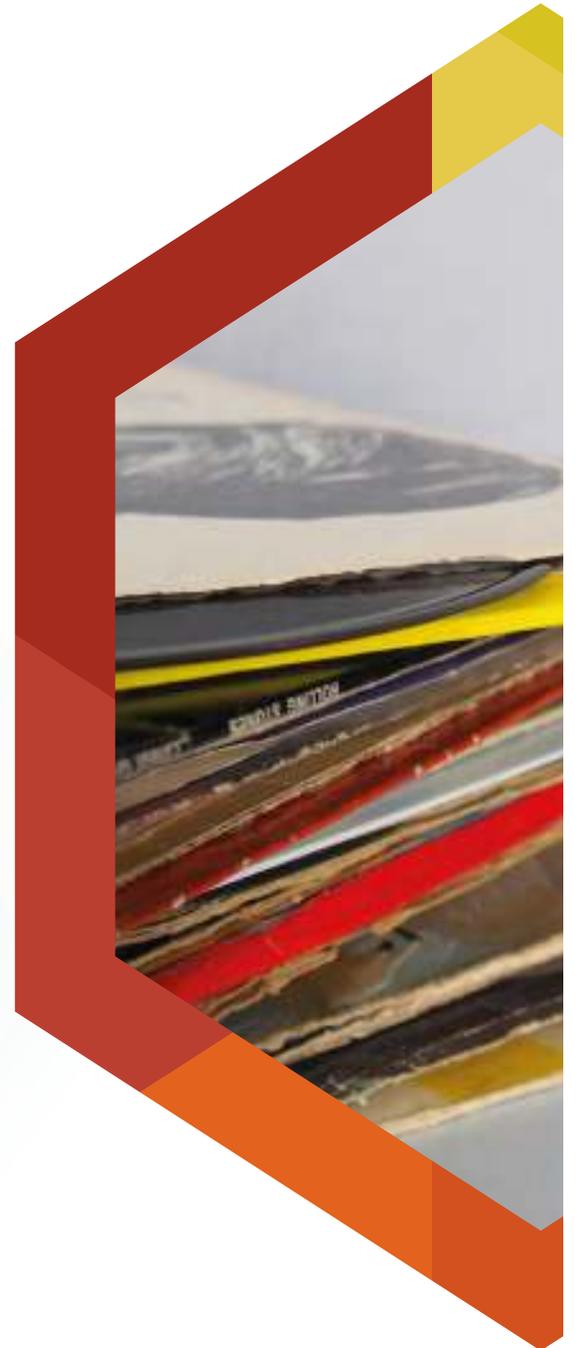
Subsequently, the government funded a major initiative to try and develop ‘a singing nation’. Sing Up is a national programme of singing activity for primary school children which aims to ensure that good-quality singing is central to young children’s lives in primary schools, in the home and the wider community. Although schools now have to pay a small amount to access most of the Sing Up resources, whereas the resources could initially be accessed for free, the initiative has had a huge impact on the amount of singing carried out in primary schools. Songs are available to support learning across the curriculum, to match the season of the year, for specific festivals etc.

Sing Up resources are available at: www.singup.org. Ten songs can be accessed for free as a trial.

Pupils will have carried out a large amount of singing in most primary schools, partly as a direct result of this important initiative, and it is hugely important for secondary music teachers to build on this prior experience. Janet Mills pointed out that secondary music teachers do not always do this:

“Pupils drawn from primary schools where Year 6 pupils sang in parts with enthusiasm and expression, found themselves in singing lessons which commenced with half-hearted attempts to sing unstimulating lyrics, and degenerated into raucous sing-songs.” Mills (1996)

However, despite primary pupils having carried out a large amount of singing, the quality of singing in primary schools is



perhaps not always good. Ofsted found that:

“Singing was no better than satisfactory in two thirds of the primary schools visited.” Ofsted (2012)

Therefore, it is important for primary music teachers to develop the quality of pupils’ singing. This includes pupils developing secure intonation, clear diction, effective phrasing, appropriate dynamic ranges etc.

For decades pupils have had the opportunity to receive instrumental tuition in schools but up until the beginning of this century this remained, disappointingly, at approximately just 8% of the school population. In 2001 the government pledged to ensure that “over time, all primary pupils who want to will be able to learn a musical instrument.” DfES (2001)

Wider Opportunities programmes were instigated which were intended to give as many pupils as possible access to specialist instrumental tuition during KS2 for a trial period. Subsequently, primary pupils across England have learnt to play instruments in whole classes or large groups. Anne Bamford and Paul Glinowski carried out an impact evaluation of Wider Opportunities Programmes in Music at Key Stage Two (2009) and they reported that, by 2011, programmes would be in place that would result in every child having this opportunity during their time in primary school.

In Kent, these ‘first access’ whole class and large group instrumental learning opportunities have been entitled *MusicPlus*. The outcomes of *MusicPlus* programmes go beyond simply developing instrumental skills. It is suggested that pupils should:

- Learn to play a pitched instrument that is conducive to progression
- Sing
- Play and perform formally and informally in ensemble contexts
- Be engaged and participating
- Learn from peers
- All be included
- Develop the ability to read notations

How can secondary music teachers find out what singing and instrumental learning experiences their Year 7 pupils have already had? It has already been suggested that an extended practical and creative baseline assessment will allow pupils to demonstrate their musical understanding. It is clearly important to try and gain additional information



and the best way to do this may not be to ask the pupils themselves. Marshall and Hargreaves reported that, when pupils were questioned about their prior musical experiences:

“Many pupils...were anxious not to discuss the music they took part in out of school, preferring to keep their musical activities ‘out of school’ and their music ‘in school’ quite separate...Quite often, musically active children can appear to be very inactive when questioned in this way.” Marshall and Hargreaves (2007)

Soundhub is going to support secondary music teachers in Kent in this area by facilitating the passing on of information about the instrumental teaching that has taken place in feeder primary schools to secondary schools. This is a strong starting point but this information will not include details about pupils’ informal musical learning nor their engagement in musical activities such as instrumental ensembles, choirs and shows, within and beyond the school. It will also not reveal how successful the pupils’ musical learning has been. One way that this rich additional information could be gathered might be through some kind of ‘musical passport’. A simple musical passport could be set up at the start of Key Stage 2 and could be contributed to by primary teachers, primary music coordinators and the pupils themselves throughout Years 3 to 6 to provide a much more comprehensive overview of pupils’ musical experiences and achievements. Complete Task 3 opposite on page 13.

Secondary music teachers need to build on pupils’ prior experience of singing and instrumental learning. Remember that every child transferring from a state maintained primary school should have had the opportunity to sing and learn to play a musical instrument in Key Stage 2. Continuing pupils’ experiences of singing within the Key Stage 3 curriculum is an area of particular concern. In the Ofsted report published in 2012 entitled *Music in schools: wider still and wider* inspectors stated that:

“One of inspectors’ biggest concerns...was about the paucity of singing observed in secondary schools. Singing was inadequate – or simply not happening at all – in 41 of the 90 schools inspected. Typically, the school might offer a choir or other extra-curricular vocal group, but singing work of note was rarely observed in curriculum lessons. Despite the keen interest of many young people in song (particularly in popular styles) and the statutory National Curriculum requirement to teach vocal work as part of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, vocal work was good or outstanding in just 17 of the 90 schools.” Ofsted (2012)

This is a sad state of affairs since singing requires minimal resourcing, can be carried out anywhere and is something that pupils engage in widely in their own time. Secondary music teachers can build in singing as a regular activity, not restricted to particular units of work. In some units of work the use of singing may be obvious (e.g. a unit of work on song-writing) but it is important to include singing even when its use may seem less obvious. For example, in a unit of work



► Task 3

Wherever possible, carry out this task with both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 music teachers working together. Devise a musical passport for Key Stage 2 pupils to support their transition from Key Stage 2 to 3.

Think about what you might want to include within the passport. You might ask:

- What musical opportunities has the pupil had within the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 curriculum?
- What instrument(s) has the pupil learnt to play within or beyond their primary school?
- In what singing activities has the pupil taken part within or beyond their primary school?
- Has the pupil gained any grades or other recognition (e.g. Music Medals, Arts Award etc.) for their instrumental or vocal learning?
- Does the pupil wish to begin or continue instrumental or vocal tuition at their secondary school?

Add other questions that are relevant to your pupils.

Think about how an audio / video portfolio of examples of the pupils' musical experiences and achievements could form part of this musical passport.

about dissonance, pupils can learn very effectively about the sound of intervals through vocalising them.

Building on pupils' prior instrumental learning experiences will mean making more individual choices depending on factors such as the secondary teachers' own skills, departmental resources, the range of visiting teachers and the number and variety of ensembles available within and beyond the school. It is important to build on pupils' prior instrumental learning experiences but this need not mean offering instrumental lessons on every instrument that pupils have learnt, for instance, in their *MusicPlus* lessons. Some secondary schools have more than 50 feeder primary schools and this would be unfeasible. What is important to remember is that all of your pupils have developed musical skills through their instrumental learning. In addition to instrument specific skills the pupils have also developed generic musical skills such as:

- Ensemble skills
- Aural learning skills
- Notational skills
- Improvisational and compositional skills
- Self and peer assessment skills

At the start of Year 7 some pupils may be keen to continue learning an instrument that they have already learnt but some pupils may not have enjoyed learning that particular instrument and may be keen to learn a different instrument. Individual instrumental lessons can be expensive and a solitary experience for pupils who have previously learnt to play in whole classes or large groups. Secondary music teachers might think about how whole class or group teaching can be continued or established in their school.



Case Study

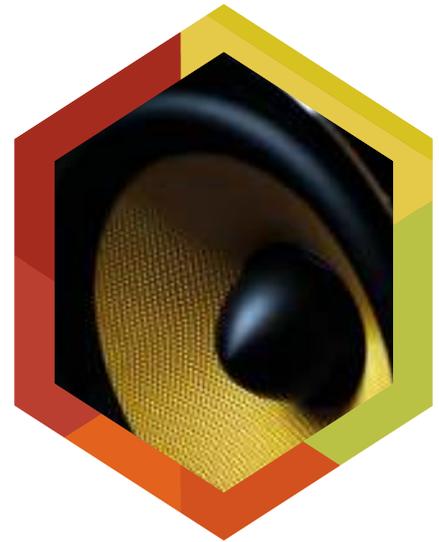
A secondary music teacher has moved to a post in a school where there has always been reasonable take up for individual instrumental lessons but where no group lessons have been offered. She is aware that many more of her pupils would benefit from developing instrumental skills that can be used in curriculum music lessons and that this might allow more pupils to feel confident about eventually following a GCSE Music course. She is a brass and string player and has some prior experience of the 'band system' that is used widely in American schools. She has made the decision to change her Year 7 curriculum to allow all pupils to learn to play either a brass instrument or a string instrument in their curriculum lessons throughout Year 7. This instrumental learning encompasses singing and composing activities, building on pupils' prior *MusicPlus* learning. Instruments are hired from Kent Music.

Benefits of such an approach are that all pupils are developing meaningful instrumental skills. This has already alleviated the problem of pupils struggling to perform and compose on the ubiquitous classroom keyboards, which demand a high level of dexterity and which cannot be the instrument of choice for all pupils. Pupils have been given some choice about which instruments they learn, either brass or string, and pupils have welcomed this. All aspects of the National Curriculum can be addressed through this whole class instrumental learning.



The band method is already used by a number of instrumental teachers in Kent. The resources are devised to allow the learning of a range of different instruments simultaneously and good quality pupil books and backing tracks are provided. It would not be a big step to move this kind of instrumental learning into the curriculum. Kjos Music Company are one example of a company that provides band method resources, such as the Standard of Excellence: www.kjos.com

Curriculum continuity and progression in music from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3



As well as ensuring that they build on pupils' experiences of singing and instrumental learning it is obvious that secondary music teachers need to build on pupils' musical learning within the curriculum. In theory, this should be a fairly straightforward task since music has been included as a subject within the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 since 1992. As Marshall and Hargreaves suggest:

"During the introduction of the National Curriculum in England, it was suggested that the linear structure of the new curriculum would aid progression and facilitate the transfer of pupils not only between phases of school education, but also between and within schools." Marshall and Hargreaves (2007)

However, this seamless progression is not always evident between key stages. The most recent Music programmes of study for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 (2014) have a common 'Purpose of study', 'Aims' and 'Attainment targets'. There has also clearly been an attempt to write 'Subject content' that builds from Key Stage 1 to 2 to 3 but the statements are so broad and open to interpretation by individual schools and teachers that any idea of a common music curriculum entitlement for pupils is negated.

► Task 4

Wherever possible, carry out this task with both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 music teachers working together. Consider this one strand of the 'Subject content' of the National Curriculum Music programmes of study for Key Stages 2 and 3 (2014):

Key Stage 2:

Pupils should be taught to use and understand staff and other musical notations

Key Stage 3:

Pupils should be taught to use staff and other relevant notations appropriately and accurately in a range of musical styles, genres and traditions

1. Decide what the two statements actually mean
2. Outline what your pupils have been taught to do (the National Curriculum's emphasis) in this area in their Key Stage 2 curriculum music lessons
3. Decide how secondary teachers could build on this knowledge and understanding throughout Key Stage 3



In the Ofsted report *Music in schools: wider still and wider* (2012) it is stated that:

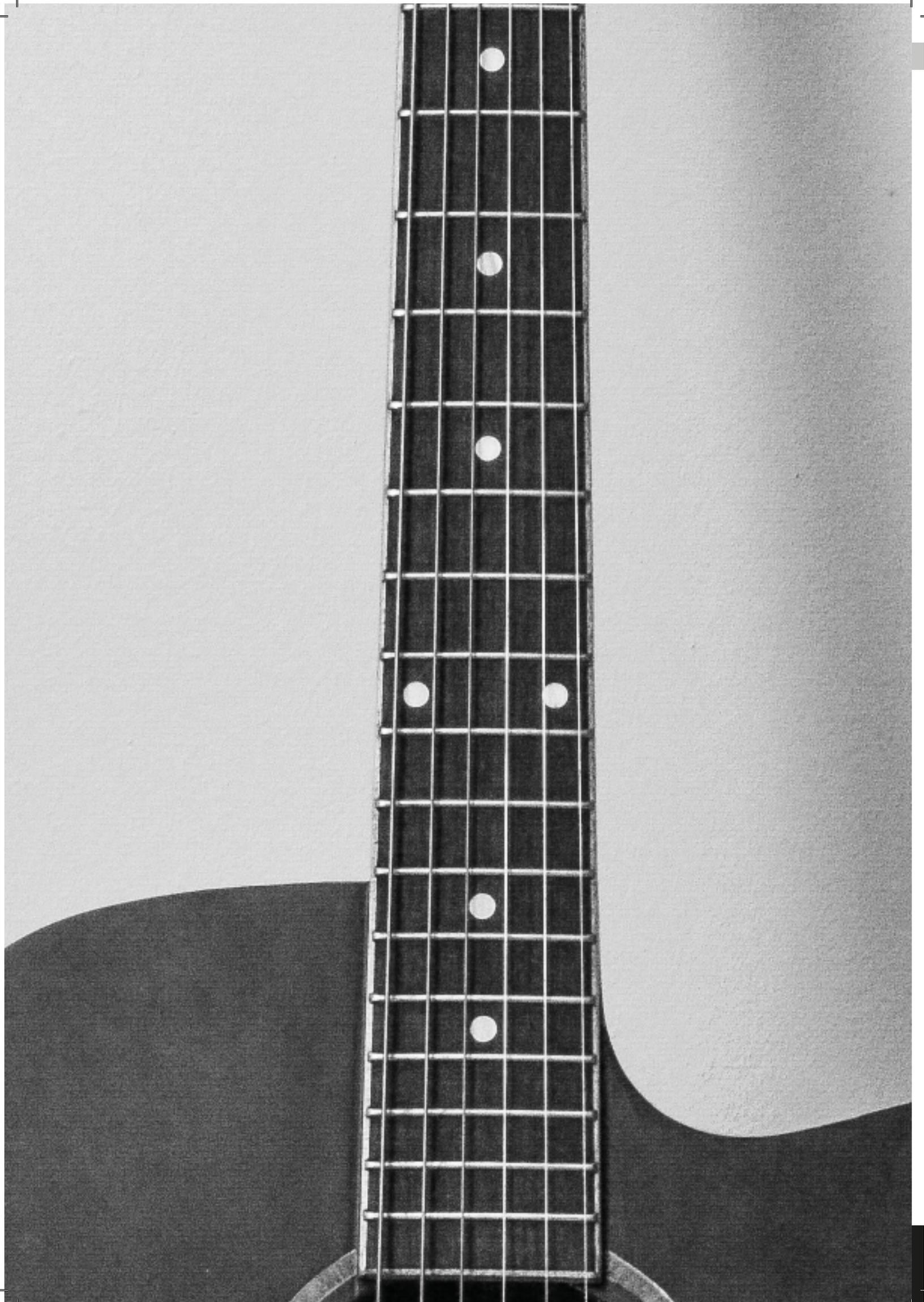
“The National Curriculum orders define musical progression as ‘progression in demand, progression in range, and progression in quality’. Planning for such progression was identified as a key area for improvement in nearly half of all the schools visited. Most schools were able to show the different activities or topics that would be covered in each year and key stage, but far fewer were able to articulate a clear rationale for the overall organisation or order of these projects to show how pupils should progress musically.” Ofsted (2012)

The report suggests that the ‘typical’ scheme of work overviews that they saw during the three year survey (e.g. *The Elements of Music*, *Instruments of the Orchestra*, *Programme Music*, *Theme and Variations*, *Stomp* etc.) allowed a range of musical styles, traditions and genres to be covered over time but that teachers could not explain:

“how students’ understanding of melodic and rhythmic textures, harmony, structure, and overall musicality should be developed progressively through aural training, composing work, playing instruments, and the use of music technology.” Ofsted (2012)

In the report, it is suggested that teachers might consider a simpler model of curriculum planning across Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. What is recommended is a model of curriculum planning that is determined by progression in musical syntax and understanding. This “clear expectation of pupils’ increasingly complex musical syntax and their increasingly sophisticated musical responses” allows teachers to vary the repertoire used, year on year, with the expectations for musical progression remaining constant. It is suggested that

“in this way, the evolving enthusiasms and varying specialist skills or interests of teachers, students and the community can be emphasised alongside a broader range of content, including recognised art-music ‘classics’, popular music, and world music traditions.” Ofsted (2012)



► Task 5

Wherever possible, carry out this task with both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 music teachers working together.

Plan a scheme of work overview for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, underpinned by pupils' progression in musical syntax and understanding.

For example, this table shows an example of progression in relation to structure in music in Years 1 to 6:

Year 1	Beginnings and endings
Year 2	Simple repeated patterns
Year 3	Question and answer
Year 4	Contrasting sections
Year 5	Verse and chorus
Year 6	Rhythmic and melodic ostinati
Year 7	
Year 8	
Year 9	

These 'expectations for musical progression' can apply across styles, genres and traditions. Discuss and decide how pupils' musical syntax and understanding in terms of structure could progress in Years 7 to 9. Your choices will be dependent on the needs of your pupils, your resources and your own skills and passions.

You need to decide what musical syntax and understanding you wish your pupils to develop in other areas and then plan for progression across Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, in a similar way to the model above.

A shared pedagogy across Key Stages 2 and 3

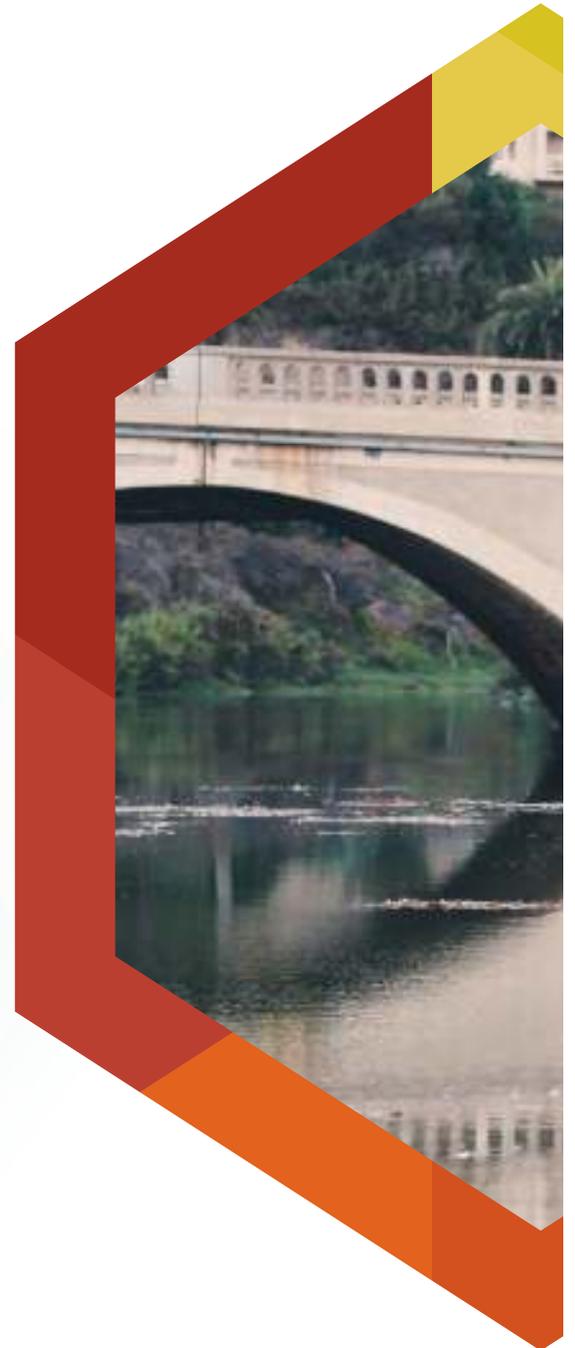
Many reports and authors talk about 'bridging the gap' between Key Stages 2 and 3 and Maurice Galton, John Gray and Jean Ruddock (1999) suggested that five bridges can be identified:

- The bureaucratic bridge
- The social bridge
- The curriculum bridge
- The pedagogical bridge
- The management-of-learning bridge

The pedagogical bridge is one that often appears to be ignored. For instance, the Rose Report (2009) recommends that good pedagogical practice is to improve "continuity in teaching and classroom practice between Year 6 and Year 7."

It is generally recognised that pupils benefit from being taught in a similar way at the start of Key Stage 3 to how they were taught at Key Stage 2 with Marshall and Hargreaves (2007) reflecting that "pupils appeared to benefit from being allowed to return temporarily to a more primary environment with primary activities and teaching styles." This might contradict some approaches adopted by Key Stage 3 teachers who make a deliberate change for their pupils in their music lessons at the start of Year 7.

In order for continuity in teaching and classroom practice to be developed, Key Stage 2 and 3 teachers actually need to observe each other teaching. This will help to allow them to cross what Steed and Sudworth (1985) described thirty years ago as the 'humpback bridge' between primary and secondary schools. They suggested that it is not possible for individuals on either side to see across the humpback bridge, meaning that any judgements or impressions made

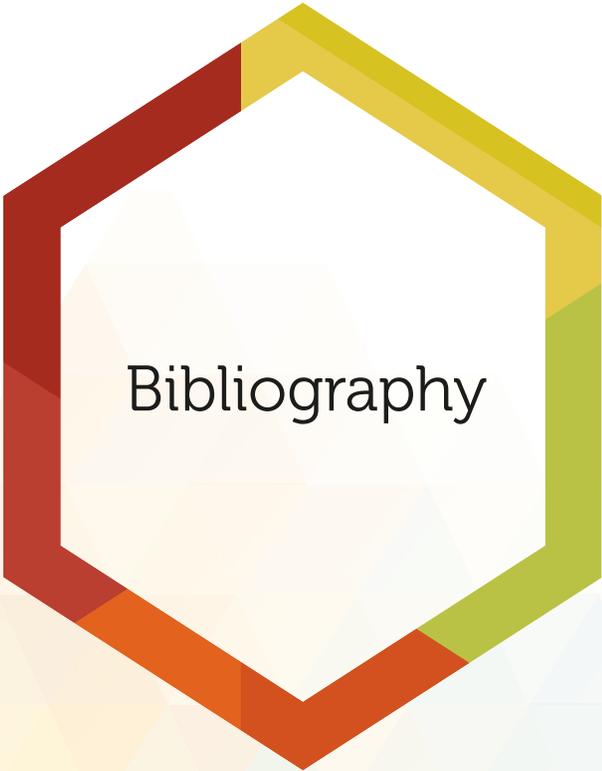




about conditions on the other side are, by default, based on conjecture and imagination.

Therefore, a final challenge from this booklet is for Key Stage 3 music teachers to actually visit some of their feeder primary schools to observe the pedagogical practice of their colleagues and for Key Stage 2 teachers to visit the secondary schools to which their pupils transfer. This will allow for important conversations to be carried out about all aspects of pupils' transfer and transition in music education.

"The child, after all, is the continuity; children like everyone else, carry their learning with them." Glover and Young (1999)



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Weblinks:

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KJOS: <http://www.kjos.com>

National Curriculum: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-music-programmes-of-study>

Soundhub MusicPlus framework: <http://soundhubkent.com/school/key-stage-2/>

