

Victoria Moore

From: Victoria Moore
Sent: 12 March 2021 10:47
To: michelle.donelan.mp@parliament.uk
Cc: Nick Howdle; spath@btinternet.com
Subject: Urgent: funds for music in Wiltshire still unconfirmed

Sent on behalf of Nick Howdle, Leader Wiltshire Music Connect:



Supported by



Wiltshire Music Connect

Nick Howdle - Leader

nick.howdle@wiltshiremusicconnect.org.uk

www.wiltshiremusicconnect.org.uk

11.03.2021

Michelle Donelan MP
61 New Road,
Chippenham, SN15 1ES

Dear Michelle,

Following our Chair's letters to you dated 14 July and 1 December 2020, I write to request your help in relation to Department for Education funding for Wiltshire Music Connect Music Education Hub from 1 April 2021. **Three weeks from the end of the Financial Year, we have not had evidence of confirmation of funding for work from April 2021 onwards.**

In July the UK Association for Music Education, Music Mark wrote to the Secretary of State for Education and Minister of State for School Standards to highlight the need for ongoing funding for Music Education Hubs in England. In the response received in December from the Rt Hon. Nick Gibb MP, he assured their CEO, Bridget Whyte, that:

"The Government remains committed to continued support for music education, and following the one year spending review settlement, partner organisations will soon be updated on funding for the 2021-22 financial year."

We are now just 3 short weeks from the end of the Financial Year and we have not had evidence of that commitment with confirmation of funding for work from April 2021 onwards. No organisation should be expected to operate on such short timescales at any time, but especially during the current pandemic which has had such an adverse effect on our ability to maintain our services to the children and young people of Wiltshire. Indeed, I am sure you will appreciate that it has been an extremely challenging year, but as you'll be aware from our previous updates, Wiltshire Music Connect has provided services to schools and young people throughout, including recent 'music recovery' grants to 40 different schools.

At the time of writing to you, the Department for Education have not yet given the final funding information to Arts Council England who administer the Music Education Hub grants on their behalf. Thus, in turn they are unable to offer us a funding agreement from 1st April.

As a result of the above, work we have scheduled - including grants, training and subsidy for disadvantaged pupils is jeopardised. This will affect 1000's of young people, alongside putting at risk 5 employed and over 100 self-employed people.

I ask you to urge the Secretary of State to make an urgent decision to avert this situation. If this Government is, as it says, committed to music education, how can it justify the impact that delaying funding will have on Music Education Hubs' ability to maintain services at a time when schools and the nation's young people need significant support to address learning and wellbeing?

We'll continue to update you in 2021 and thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely



Leader for **Wiltshire Music Connect** Music Education Hub

07926 607447

www.wiltshiremusicconnect.org.uk

Part of Wiltshire Council's Education and Skills Directorate

nick.howdle@wiltshiremusicconnect.org.uk

CC: Tony Spath - Chair of Wiltshire Music Connect Stakeholder Board and Director of Music Connect CIC

Victoria Moore

Administrator

Wiltshire Music Connect

07788 326800



Part of Wiltshire Council's Education and Skills Directorate

Please support our [#DontDropMusic](#) campaign