



Supported by



Wiltshire Music Connect

Nick Howdle - Leader

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Andrew Murrison MP
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA

Dear Dr Murrison,

As the DfE funded Music Education Hub for the county, we'd like to update you on the recovery of and developments in music education in Wiltshire - this follows previous correspondence in July and November 2020 and March of this year and your helpful responses and support.

There's still a long way to go with school music – a number of Wiltshire schools are still reluctant to deliver practical music making opportunities for their pupils despite the guidance on safe practice from the DfE and the advice that we have provided. But **progress is being made** and I'm pleased to report that we have recently made School Music Recovery grants to 40 Wiltshire schools to support them to get music activity up and running again for their pupils, and to re-think their music provision in light of Covid-19 and the knock-on effects. These grants will go some way to ensure that the county's children and young people can start to access music education again.

In terms of support for the tutor economy, we've also made **Support Grants to 27 of our Associates (small businesses)** to adapt to and prepare for different working models.

Responding to identified **concerns about the recruitment of new pupils** which has knock-on effects for pupils progression and learning as well as for the tutor economy, we worked with one of our new Expert Groups to develop a [call to action for schools and tutors](#) to **showcase opportunities for pupils ahead of the next academic year**. This has included developing video making resources for tutors and organisations and recognising that video is now very much part of tuition and the presentation of an educational offer in 21st century.
[#DontDropMusic](#)

On Monday **21 June at 2.15pm, thousands of Wiltshire children will be singing "Together"** - a song that we commissioned from composers [Tim Gilvin](#) and [Louise Jordan](#) using words sent in by young people. *"Together"* was written online, and a set of free resources for schools was produced. At time of writing **over 5000 pupils will be singing, in 40 schools** across the county – including Semley CE VA Primary School, Ludwell Primary School and West Ashton Primary School in your constituency – with more schools signing up every day. We encourage you to share and follow information about the event on social media using **#TogetherSongWiltshire**. Schools who have given permission to share names are added to a webpage on a weekly basis [here](#).

In July two of the organisations we support to provide clubs, groups and ensembles for young musicians, [Salisbury Area Young Musicians](#) and [Wiltshire Young Musicians](#) have live concert performances planned.

We're proud to see our efforts, innovation and responsiveness being recognised beyond Wiltshire, including the work we've led around [What Are We Learning](#). As well as invitations to speak at national conferences **we're keen to ensure that the music education sector's innovations are recognised within a broader vision of what a national music education offer can be in 21st century England** and we will be contributing to that with a number of Wiltshire case studies over the coming year which we will also share with you.

We hope you find this update useful and encouraging and that you'll be able to share our news using social media (using #DontDropMusic) and other networks. We will continue to update you in 2021 and, once again, thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Howdle', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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