

# All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education

## Report launch meeting

17:00, Monday 4 February 2019, Boothroyd Room, Portcullis House

**1. Welcome: Diana Johnson MP**, MP for Kingston upon Hull North, and Co-chair & Registered Contact of the APPG for Music Education.

Diana Johnson MP welcomed attendees to the launch of the APPG for Music Education's Report entitled *Music Education: State of the Nation*, written by Dr Ally Daubney, Gary Spruce and the ISM.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Johnson stated that there is increasing concern in connection with music declining in primary schools and secondary schools. The Report challenges the notion that music is 'broadly stable' at GCSE and sets out 18 recommendations.

**2. Deborah Annetts**, Chief Executive of Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM)

Ms. Annetts revealed the Report's findings and paid tribute to the Report's authors, who had drilled into DfE data and other research about the broader education landscape and workforce.

Ms. Annetts noted the contribution that music makes to the UK economy (£4.5 billion GVA), as well as to cultural life and wellbeing, and stated that we need an education system that equips students for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Ms. Annetts stated that the EBacc had not only caused a decline in uptake of music and creative subjects at GCSE, but that it is also failing in its own terms. Contrary to the Schools Minister's statement in December 2018 that uptake of music at GCSE is 'broadly stable', in fact when adjusted for cohort size the fall in music GCSE is 16.7% since 2014/2015.

The Report also shows how the take-up and achievement of the EBacc is well below DfE targets. The DfE target for take-up is 90% by 2025 and 75% by 2022; however, take-up of the EBacc has been at 38% since 2013/14 and attainment of the EBacc was just 16.7%. Hence the EBacc is failing in its own terms while at the same time causing immense harm to creative subjects in our secondary schools.

Ms. Annetts noted that academies are not obliged to follow the National Curriculum. According to statistics from the National Audit Office, in January 2018, 72% of secondary schools and 27% of primary schools were academies or free schools, and were therefore not required to follow the National Curriculum. Ms. Annetts also commented that the new model music curriculum would not prevent music disappearing from our schools, which is largely driven by a number of issues including academisation, funding, teacher shortages and

accountability measures.

### **3. Duncan Mackrill, Senior Teaching Fellow in Education, University of Sussex**

Mr. Mackrill took up from p. 16 of the Report to demonstrate the wider negative impact of the accountability measures on young people's access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes music. Mr. Mackrill reported that students from highly deprived backgrounds are less likely to take music GCSE because they are encouraged to focus on subjects included in the EBacc. Music provision at Key Stage 3 in many state schools has reduced dramatically and been removed completely in some cases. The number of school music teachers fell by 1000 (13.3%) from 2010 to 2017. Mr. Mackrill referenced research by ASCL that revealed music to be the fastest disappearing subject at A level.

Mr. Mackrill reported on problems with under-recruitment and retention of specialist music teachers in schools, and the 'uberisation' of the workforce in Music Education Hubs.

Mr. Mackrill highlighted a number of concerns raised in the Report about Ofsted, principally the proposed new Ofsted framework which puts the EBacc at the centre of their inspections, which is at odds with their commitment to a broad and rich curriculum.

### **4. Carl Ward, (Immediate Past President of the Association of School and College Leaders and Chief Executive of the City Learning Trust)**

Reflecting on his recent trip to Singapore, Mr. Ward advocated a move away from a knowledge-rich curriculum towards one focusing on knowledge, skills and values. He stated that the UK's high stakes accountability measures, knowledge-rich curriculum, funding pressures, and teacher recruitment & retention crisis were detrimental to a broad and balanced curriculum that students deserve.

### **5. Xhosa Cole, BBC Young Jazz Musician of the Year 2018**

Mr. Cole gave a heartfelt speech about his experience of music education, urging for the decline in provision to be halted. He emphasised the benefits of music to mental health and wellbeing, and social skills, as well as its role in social mobility.

### **6. Questions**

The APPG Report was well-received by parliamentarians and those from the music sector. Questions were predominantly around how to move forward the Report's findings and ensure the recommendations were taken on board by government, as well as practical steps of how to proceed.

### **7. Deborah Annetts – Concluding remarks**

Ms Annetts thanked the speakers and encouraged the sector to use the Report as an advocacy tool as well as joining the ISM's Bacc for the Future campaign.