



# Annual Review 2024-25

# west sussex music

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## Our vision

is for West Sussex to be a place where every child and young person can explore the life-changing benefits of music; on their education, their wellbeing, and their future.



# Introduction



Welcome from the Chair of the Trust Board

On behalf of the Trustees, I am pleased to introduce this Annual Review, which reflects on the developments, successes, and challenges we have encountered over 2024-25.

It has been wonderful to look back on a year of expanding opportunities and see the number of young people starting or progressing their musical journey increasing. Last year we saw a significant rise in the number of children and young people and schools actively engaged in singing and joining instrumental ensembles and groups. We had our largest ever number of schools and children involved in our first access classroom instrumental lessons, and we’ve financially supported more learners than ever before through our offer of tuition, instrument loan, music centre membership and holiday activities.

New initiatives such as the opening of two new music centres at Midhurst and Horsham, the expansion of our inclusive SEND music group programme Orchestras Inc., and our rock band offer Play In A Band, have been particularly welcome.

2024-25 saw the start of a fulfilling new partnership with Brighton Dome & Festival Limited (BD&FL), the new lead organisation of Sussex Music Hub, working as a consortium. Together with BD&FL’s Create Music, that delivers music education in Brighton & Hove and East Sussex, we are developing initiatives - such as digital badging, inclusive programmes, and pathways into careers - that are benefitting children and young people across the whole of Sussex.

I am indebted to my fellow trustees, the leadership team and all West Sussex Music staff who have worked tirelessly to create accessible opportunities so young people can explore the life-changing benefits of music on their education, their well-being, and their future.

I would like to add my personal thanks to our CEO James Underwood for his enthusiasm and leadership ensuring WSM is a dynamic and ever developing charity that exists for all children and young people.

**Dr David Skipp**  
Chair of West Sussex Music Trust





# Music Centres

Every week hundreds of young people come together at our Saturday and evening music centres to make music in bands, orchestras, and choirs. These activities offer opportunities for developing musicians at every stage of their musical journey, to meet new friends, take part in concerts, and progress their musical skills and understanding.

For the fourth year we have run our innovative Tomorrow's Orchestra Programme (TOP). Over 155 primary-aged children keen to learn orchestral instruments in an ensemble setting began their musical journeys at Bognor Regis, Chichester, Horsham, Midhurst and Worthing music centres in January. Fewer than six months after receiving their first lesson the TOP25 cohorts from all five centres performed together on stage at Worthing Assembly Hall.

*"April absolutely loved her first session... she couldn't stop smiling when she got home and was so excited to show her family the instrument!"* **TOP25 parent**

Two of our proudest moments of 2024-25 were the opening of new music centres at QM Studios Horsham which hosts a local Play In A Band session every Thursday, and at Midhurst Rother College, where the Midhurst TOP25 programme meets every Tuesday.

*"A big thank you for Saturday's concert - Arthur's first. He looked so*

*anxious when he arrived and so happy when he'd finished. A really big moment."* **TOP25 parent**

*The concert was absolutely amazing - it was clear that so much effort had gone into it. I was so proud to see Daphne performing and enjoying being on the stage. Thank you so much to you and everyone involved for all the support and guidance you've given the girls with their music this year.* **Parent at summer concert**

At the other end of the progression journey, it was very exciting to take 45 students from the West Sussex Youth Orchestra and West Sussex Youth Wind Orchestra on tour to France in July, where they performed three public concerts at impressive venues.

*The programme has been absolutely brilliant and we cannot thank the teachers and organisers enough. They have been so amazing and really inspired and helped the children and we are very grateful.* **WSYO parent**

During the year music centre ensembles had opportunities to perform at a variety of exciting venues such as Brighton Dome, Christ's Hospital, Worthing Assembly Hall, as well as local events for example at Bognor Regis Football Club, Horsham Museum, and New Park Community Centre.

*"Thank you very much to the West Sussex Music team for your brilliant work for all these young musicians! Adrien really enjoyed his time with West Sussex Music, he is now starting a music degree at the University of Southampton."* **Music centre parent**

Looking forward to 2025-26 our music centres will further develop their post-TOP progression routes by creating more junior orchestras.

We also have exciting plans to re-open our Crawley Music Centre as well as further embedding our two Orchestras Inc. SEND music groups.





# Orchestras Inc.

One of the highlights of this year has been the expansion of our Orchestras Inc. (SEND) music programme to two out of school locations. During 2024-25 two Orchestras Inc. music groups have been meeting regularly at Horsham and Worthing Music Centres on Saturdays. This development complements the programme that has been running in special schools for the last six years.

Orchestras Inc. is an inclusive, creative music group for children and young people under 25 with special educational needs or disabilities and is now in its second year of having a music centre presence, as well as a school-based one, enabling parents and carers to get involved to enjoy making music with their children.

*"We can't praise Orchestras Inc. enough; it has had such a positive effect on George. It's such an incredible opportunity for him to learn and join in with the other kids in an inclusive orchestra. The staff are amazing, meeting the kids' needs and each session is fun and engaging. George is always so attentive and keen to join in and learn. He really looks forward to each session, and we would be lost without this amazing group now."*  
**Parent of Orchestras Inc. musician**

This inspiring SEND ensemble is open to all children and young people with additional needs, including those attending special schools, those at mainstream

schools or colleges with additional needs and those who are home schooled.

*"It is such a wonderful group. I was quite nervous before hand as it was an unknown situation, but it was so welcoming and the children loved it. I would highly recommend it. It was so lovely to see the joy the children got out of the group but also a sense of achievement."*  
**Parent of Orchestras Inc. musician**

The Orchestras Inc. team working at the music centre also delivers the programme in special schools as a fully funded free offer and has developed an approach that is centred around core musical principles but tailored to the individual needs of each participant.

*"My son adores music. The beats, rhythms and sounds the instruments make, make him happy, engaging him and helping him to express himself creatively. As a non-speaking child, he thrives in an activity that doesn't actually matter if one can speak or not. He likes to share his singing voice and enjoys*

*learning new skills from his neurotypical peers. A wonderful opportunity for him and a pleasure to attend the sessions."*  
**Parent of Orchestras Inc. musician**

The Orchestras Inc. musicians have performed alongside the other music centre ensembles including joining forces with the West Sussex Youth Orchestra for a one-off performance of Johann Strauss' *Radetzky March* and *Farandole* from Bizet's *L'Arlésienne Suite*.

Something that continues to be a valuable consequence of integrating Orchestras Inc. into our music centre offer has been the growing appreciation and involvement in sessions from other young musicians from the two centres.

*"Orchestras Inc. is great, the fact that the children can get such easy access to music and are able to play together is amazing. I really enjoy it when they come to play along with the youth orchestra, it's such a special moment and quite rewarding when you see how they react to playing in a large ensemble."*  
**Ruby Harte-Stovell, WSYO member**





# WSYO tour

After five days touring in Normandy, the West Sussex Youth Orchestras returned to England with a host of incredible memories. Students from the Youth Orchestra and Youth Wind Orchestra were away from Wednesday 23 to Sunday 27 July.

After a long day of travelling, the students' first night of the tour was spent settling into their fantastic accommodation in the heart of the French countryside – playing pétanque, pool, darts, badminton, or even rehearsing!

As well as giving three brilliant concerts, the students managed to fit in plenty of sightseeing, enjoy an abundance of French food, and fully immerse themselves in the fascinating history and culture of the area.

The orchestras gave three performances. On day one, they performed at the Soirée Illuminée at Château Canon; a magical evening that ended with students roasting marshmallows on an open fire on the château lawns as the sun set.

On day two, they began with a visit to Château Guillaume le Conquérant, where handheld tablets featuring augmented reality technology brought the castle's history to life. Later that day, students enjoyed a four-course dinner at Château Le Kinnor, followed by a very well-attended concert at the

beautiful church next door, L'Église de Fervaques. The evening concluded with an intimate chamber concert in the château's historic music room leaving the château owners emotionally pleading with the orchestra to return next year!

On day three, the ensembles performed as part of the Promenades Musicales de Pays d'Auge summer music festival at Église Notre-Dame d'Estrées, and then had the opportunity to listen to Trio Hélios perform trios by Ravel and Boulanger in the first half, and Shostakovich's *Piano Trio No. 2* in the second.

*"The tour is a real highlight for our students, and we know how much they all look forward to it. The three performances in Normandy were standout moments, and all of us as staff felt so proud watching the students perform for new audiences."* **John Randall, Music Centres Manager**

*"I also just wanted to say thank you to you and the staff at the music centre for the tour. Issy enjoyed every single minute of it. She says this tour was even better than the last. As a teacher who leads residencies, I know exactly how much planning and preparation goes into these trips as well as all the work on the trip. A million thank yous to each and everyone on you for giving this opportunity which I know Issy will never forget."* **Parent**

Between performances, there was also plenty of time to explore – including an emotional visit to the D-Day landing beaches at Arromanches-les-Bains, dinner at Brasserie des Halles, a restaurant overlooking the medieval market hall in central St Pierre-en-Auge, and even a chance to ride on a bobsleigh at an activity centre!

Throughout the tour, senior members of the orchestra took over West Sussex Music's social media accounts, sharing photos, videos, and insights into their adventures abroad.







# Play In A Band

We're always looking to offer musical opportunities to young people in the county that are as wide ranging as possible. This year saw the introduction of the Play In A Band offer, taking place at Worthing Music Centre and Horsham Music Centre.

Play In A Band (Worthing) is based at Northbrook College's state of the art music studios which feature over 20 acoustically designed spaces, including control and live room suites, performance areas, and post-production rooms. Play In A Band (Horsham) is based at QM Studios, a professional recording studio offering three fully equipped rehearsal rooms, control room and recording booth.

The programme has grown through new partnerships with local colleges, community arts organisations, and other musical providers. These collaborations will develop opportunities that give young musicians access to real-world industry practice.

*"Playing in a band builds core skills like discipline, teamwork, communication, and emotional resilience through regular practice. It also develops musical ability, confidence, and transferable life skills such as time management and creative problem-solving. We see remarkable personal growth each term, young people stepping up as leaders, supporting one another and discovering strengths they didn't*

*realise they had."* **Elizabeth Leondaritis, Youth Engagement Manager**

Play In A Band is for young people from age 8 to 16yrs learning drums, guitar, bass, keyboard, and vocals. Alongside their musical training, students benefit from structured skill development, mentoring from experienced tutors, and opportunities to collaborate with peers from other centres.

*"The progress has been incredible. They've not only improved musically but gained so much confidence."* **Parent of band member**

As well as improving their musical skills, Play In A Band provides the opportunity to make new friends, celebrate successes, and support each other throughout.

Each week, our performers work with experienced professionals and like-minded young musicians to explore a wide range of popular songs. They learn how to arrange music together, improve their stage presence, and gain practical experience in live performance.

Sessions are welcoming, creative and collaborative, with the chance to perform to friends and family at the end of each term with neighbouring bands.

*"I love working on real songs, with real drums, and then perform them. Feels like a proper band."* **Play In A Band member**

The end-of-term gigs are an important goal for our young musicians giving them the chance to showcase their progress on a professional stage and experience the excitement of performing to a paying audience. These performances are a highlight for families, friends, and participants, celebrating musical achievement, teamwork and development.

*"Playing at QM Studios is great and I love making music with my band. It's been amazing!"* **Play In A Band member**







# Instrumental and vocal tuition

West Sussex Music's instrumental and vocal tuition is provided by 120 visiting music teachers and independent associate tutors in schools and colleges across the county.

Between us, we teach a huge range of orchestral instruments, including brass, woodwind, string and percussion instruments, contemporary instruments, including guitar, keyboard and drum kit, as well as singing, Indian classical singing and theory. Whether you want to take up piano, a traditional orchestral instrument like the violin, cello or flute, find your jazz groove on the trumpet or saxophone, or rock on the guitar or drums, there is a teacher for you.

*"It's great to hear that Joshua is getting on well in your classes. He really enjoys them and says he appreciates how thorough you are. He feels like he's learning a lot more with you."* **Parent**

Our tutors promote the positive impact of regular music tuition on supporting and developing creativity, memory, confidence, social skills, as well as a life-long skill and love of music.

We've continued to maximise the capacity of teachers to enable as many students as possible to have the opportunity to learn whilst continually looking to build our

teacher numbers and diversify our offer.

Lessons are generally delivered in schools during, or just after, the school day with the school as host and the parent/carer as the payer booking the lessons through West Sussex Music directly. Music Centre members also have the option of accessing tuition as part of their membership on Saturdays or at our evening sessions.

Past students often return to become part of our teaching and support staff. Our alumni are a wonderful reminder of the lasting impact of our work and a valuable resource to help inspire the next generation of musicians and music educators.

*"I started learning the violin with West Sussex Music and found it to be a nurturing and enriching musical environment. I would love the opportunity to gain further experience and pass on this love for music to future students."*

**Recent student leaver**

## Bursary Fund

At West Sussex Music we want to make sure nothing stops children and young people making music, and we're committed to making music accessible for all.

The Bursary Fund uses a proportion of our DfE music grant to support young musicians to offer free group lessons, free instrument hire and free music centre membership for students on benefits-related free school meals, for children in care, for young carers and refugees attending school in West Sussex. We also offered 50% off West Sussex Music prices for families on other state benefits who did not qualify for free school meals.

*"It's been such an amazing opportunity to hire this violin for free. My daughter had never touched a violin before, now she's starting grade 3 and loves music. Thank you so much, it's an incredible thing you're doing."*

**Parent**





# Holiday activities

We have been running holiday activities for three years, since their inception in December 2022. During 2024-25, 15 workshops offered 450 places to young people where they accessed a range of musical opportunities led by music industry experts and received a free midday meal.

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, funded by the Department for Education via West Sussex County Council, covers 50% of the costs of our holiday activity provision.

It supports young people entitled to benefits-related free school meals, enabling them to access free holiday activity clubs and receive a nutritious meal.

The holiday activities took place in Bognor Regis, Crawley, Horsham, Littlehampton and Worthing. Workshops are open to all young people aged 8-16 with half of all places being completely free to families in receipt of free school meals, funded through the HAF scheme and other places being subsidised.

The objective of these activities was to offer high quality music provision and increase participation of young people of these areas and offer a nutritious lunch during the school holidays.

*"Excellent, inclusive and understanding."* **Participant**

Activities that were run included Music Production & DJ-ing, Rap & Lyric Writing, Play In A Band, and Interactive Cinema Soundtrack Creation.

Attendees made valuable friendships, improved their lyric and songwriting, learned how to produce a song, recorded music using digital audio workstations, played as part of a band, mixed music using midi DJ controllers, and developed performance skills. The social connections and bonds have been a huge aspect of these activities. There were great collaborations and an inevitable integration of technology to help with learning.

*"My daughter had lots of different parts allowing her continuous engagement which she normally doesn't get. Due to her disabilities she's normally overlooked, this was definitely not the case. I thank the team so much for understanding her and including her."* **Parent of participant**

At the core of this, is our community engagement – creating links with local councils, community music providers, industry experts, arts educators, and offering access to music at a grassroots level.

In 2024 we trialled the issuing of digital badges to holiday activity participants. Digital badges are a modern credentialing tool that recognise and celebrate young people's musical journey that can be shared with colleges and employers.

We're indebted to our visiting music teachers, our associates and Hub partners for their leadership and creativity in developing the programme during the year.

*"My son loved the teachers, the activity itself and the fact that they could perform for the parents at the end."* **Parent of participant**



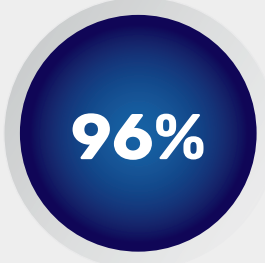




# Our year in numbers



Students involved in activities



Schools engaged with WSM



Schools engaged in CIL



Students engaged in CIL



Students in tuition



Students financially supported



Students at live music performances



Students engaged in singing



Digital badges awarded



Students in ensembles



Holiday activity attendees



Teacher training attendees

## Our mission is to:

- Encourage and develop the musical potential of all children and young people with opportunities for them to progress as musicians and as people.
- Support young people and those who work with them to improve social, personal and wellbeing outcomes through music.
- Work collaboratively in partnership with and for children and young people to develop and signpost, high quality, accessible and diverse musical learning opportunities for them.
- Increase the music provision available for all children and young people in West Sussex





# Partner projects

West Sussex Music is able to expand and diversify the musical opportunities for children and young people through our hub partnerships. In 2024-25 we strengthened our collaboration with five of our key national partners to offer exciting projects that increased engagement for young people at all stages of their musical learning.

## The Sixteen

We were delighted in 2024-25 to develop a new collaboration with The Sixteen to support our singing strategy for secondary schools. Their learning and participation programme delivered by alumni of the Genesis Sixteen Young Artist programme kickstarted our Sings Live! programme in October. The Sixteen ran two inspirational massed singing workshops at Hazelwick School, Crawley and at St Oscar Romero Catholic School, Worthing involving 14 schools and 329 students. Additionally, 28 teachers benefitted from valuable professional development.

## Glyndebourne

Throughout the autumn term musicians from Glyndebourne visited three Crawley schools – St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, St. Wilfrid's Catholic School, and Waterfield Primary School – on a composing and singing project that involved learning songs by JS Bach and Vivaldi as well as spirituals. The Crawley Singing Schools project involved 146 students and culminated

in a performance for friends and families at Worth Abbey, near Crawley. The event, on Thursday 5 December, also featured the Glyndebourne Chorus and the Glyndebourne Sinfonia.

## Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

54 children and young people took part in two free creative music workshops which were held at The Mill Primary Academy. In the morning children local to Crawley aged 8 to 11 yrs old took part in a collaborative and fun workshop with musicians from the RPO who continued to weave their musical magic with the afternoon workshop aimed at SEND young people aged 8 to 25 year olds and their families. The next day all participants had the opportunity to watch the full RPO in rehearsal at The Hawth and meet individual players.

## London Philharmonic Orchestra

The LPO Junior Artists Overture Day for young instrumentalists aged 10 to 15 yrs took place at Worthing High School on 17 April. The 48 young musicians sat alongside members of the LPO to rehearse repertoire later

performed, at the end of the day, to families and friends. As well as the Overture Day LPO provides opportunities for young musicians to get behind the scenes at their rehearsals at Brighton Dome, to watch the orchestra perform as well as providing pre-concert performance opportunities for West Sussex Music chamber groups.

## English Touring Opera

In 2024-25 West Sussex Music developed a partnership with ETO which enabled the Burgess Hill Alternative Provision College students to benefit from a songwriting project in the summer term. Students took part in 10 creative sessions over the summer term, exploring songwriting and music-making through activities such as keyboard playing, singing and guitar. Led by professional artists, the project encouraged self-expression, built confidence, and supported literacy development.







# Curriculum support and CPD

West Sussex Music offers a wide range of free curriculum advice for schools and leads continuing professional development sessions for music teachers. This support is via a programme of face-to-face and online opportunities and culminated in two music education conferences in the summer term.

Our CPD covered topics such as Ofsted “Deep Dives”, updates on the National Plan for Music Education and the Model Music Curriculum, advice on school music development plans, music theory, singing for the curriculum, composition, Key Stages 4 and 5 exam moderation sessions, strategies to support first access classroom instrumental lessons, and support for new music leads. Schools were supported to connect with the wider music education sector through free Music Mark membership which also offered a CPD and networking programme.

*“Thank you for the brilliant CPD – I had great feedback from the rest of the staff. A couple of teachers have already planned a sequence based on your ideas. That’s a win in my book!”* **Jill Dinsdale, Music Lead at West Chiltington Community Primary School**

Schools were brought together through two music education conferences. The Sussex Secondary Music Conference developed in partnership with Create Music

and the University of Sussex welcomed over 90 music teachers from secondary schools across Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, West Sussex, and University of Sussex partner schools.

Keynote speakers and workshops focused on a wide range of subjects, such as changing the culture of singing in the classroom, the role of assessment, diversifying the curriculum, the role of AI in music education, and growing a thriving musical eco system in your school.

The West Sussex Primary & SEND Music Conference welcomed 100 delegates from primary and SEN(D) schools as well as Hub partners, visiting music teachers, and associate tutors. Ben Sellers, one of the guest speakers, inspired conference delegates with his insights into creative music making with iPads, technology in the classroom and much more.

*“What a wonderfully musical day, jam-packed with ideas for all children.”* **Rachel Coysh, music lead at Milton Mount Primary School**

There were also workshops that included ‘Zero to hero’ instrumental sessions covering learning to play and teach the djembe supported by partners African Night Fever, the recorder, and the ukulele as well as singing, composition and conducting.

*“This was a really useful introduction to the djembe, a great way to get started and fun too. I feel I could try leading a whole class session with my class.”* **Stephanie Bowen, Assistant Headteacher at The Meads Primary School**





# Singing

There are so many reasons to start singing. We are committed to enabling all children and young people to access high quality singing opportunities by providing a comprehensive programme of massed singing events and teacher training to develop vibrant choirs in schools.

2024-25 saw the expansion of our massed singing programme for schools with a total of 106 schools, 10,186 children and young people, and 583 teachers participating. Our Schools' Singing Leader curated an offer of locality massed singing events for all primary schools - Big Sings (KS2) and Little Big Sings (KS1) - and all secondary schools via Sings Live!

In the spring term three Sings Live! massed secondary school choral events were arranged at public venues across West Sussex; The Drill Hall Horsham, The Hawth Crawley, and Worthing Assembly Hall. The format consisted of an afternoon workshop followed by an evening public performance. Participation in Sings Live! was free for the participating schools and was supported by a CPD programme for teachers including school-based workshops in the October with The Sixteen introducing the repertoire.

*"Thank you for your great leadership and organisation of the singing festival on Tuesday. It was a wonderful event and great to see*

*so many students across seven schools working together."*  
**Headteacher at Oak Grove College**

In addition to the Sings Live! concerts we ran a further five workshops involving 133 pupils for schools that could not participate in one of the public performances.

*"Sings Live! is so professionally led by Rachel and the West Sussex Music team. Our students enjoy getting involved each year and engage with the performance opportunities with confidence and enthusiasm."* **Head of Music at Hazlewick School**

In the summer term we led 21 massed singing events for primary aged pupils, bringing together multiple schools at a host school for a half-day singing workshop, led by one of our specialist singing leaders.

48 schools, 3554 pupils and 190 teachers took part in Little Big Sings, our Key Stage 1 singing offer for 4-7 year olds. Our Big Sings for Key Stage 2, were attended by 57 schools, 4168 pupils and 205 teachers.

These events launched with a free CPD session to explore the repertoire and share singing warm-ups. Schools were provided with resources for two songs to rehearse and perform as a massed choir on the day and invited to perform a song of their choice.

*"I just wanted to email and say a massive thank you for running the Little Big Sing, the children from Downview had the most wonderful morning of singing and you were so engaging and uplifting. We all had a fabulous time (teachers included!) I look forward to seeing you and working with you again in the future."*  
**Kara Luckin, Downview Primary School**







# Classroom instrument lessons

Free instrumental music lessons have been enjoyed by thousands of primary school children in West Sussex for over two decades, thanks to our subsidised whole-class programmes. Learning an instrument is a fantastic experience with a wealth of educational, personal, and social benefits.

Our classroom instrumental lessons (CIL) programmes offer pupils a fantastic free musical opportunity, and are designed to enrich a school's music curriculum, and through the supporting resources and CPD give the opportunity for class teachers to learn new skills. Schools may choose from either 1Term2Learn, for one term, or Key2Music (key stage 2) or GetIn2Music (key stage 1) for a year.

*I can't believe how far the children have come with their understanding of tempo / pitch and being able to follow a 'conductor' as an ensemble.*  
**Headteacher at Singleton Primary School**

The ten-week 1Term2Learn whole-class sessions run across one term. They include the free loan of instruments, free CPD for the class teacher with weekly sessions led by West Sussex Music approved staff, supported by the class teacher. We have delivered lessons in clarinet, cornet, djembe drums, glockenspiel, guitar, keyboard, recorder, tenor horn, trumpet, ukulele, and violin with singing, musical games, and fun at their core.

During 2024-25 we used Hub funding to offer a subsidised 1Term2Learn CIL programme for all Year 4 classes, as well as free programmes for schools in Adur, Arun, south Chichester, and Worthing which have previously had lower school engagement in CIL.

We successfully increased school engagement with 140 schools running CIL, up from 130 in 2023-24, and increased the number of pupils engaged in CIL by 5% to 10,105 pupils up from 9659. The coverage was 59% of all key stage 2 schools. Feedback from school staff and pupils has been positive.

*"This has been Inspiring for pupils - quite a few now want to learn clarinet going forward. There has been a great buzz around both year groups of Thursday mornings - children were engaged and keen to practise in their own time. From absolute novices to being able to produce a sound and play a few notes. This has increased our music offer that we can provide in school hugely."*  
**Class teacher at Birchwood Grove Primary School**

Schools that had wanted to offer music lessons in some form to its children but did not have funds for a music teacher used CIL to provide lessons so all children in the class could benefit, as well as supporting the school's teachers.

*"An amazing experience, which has built the confidence of the children and school's Music Co-ordinator. The children's confidence grew in many ways (not just their musical confidence), especially performing to other children in our school. The children have thoroughly enjoyed this wonderful experience. It has strengthened their love of music further. We hope this will lead to more children wishing to learn an instrument in the future."*  
**Class teacher from North Lancing Primary School**







## Edelyn's journey

Recent student leaver Edelyn Spina reflects on her musical journey over the last 10 years. A quest, it seems, that has only just begun....

I will greatly miss Saturdays at music centre as I have been a member of your ensembles since I was 8 years old. I remember playing *Aeroplanes* on violin, a piece consisting of open strings only and finishing this summer with leading the West Sussex Youth Orchestra in the summer concert. When I was invited to move up to WSYO from Chichester Youth Orchestra, which I was leading, my friend and I said that maybe one day we would lead the youth orchestra, this wish came true as we both had a seat in front desk strings and I am so grateful for the opportunity!

Playing in WSYO and WSYSO has contributed so much towards my playing, performance confidence and ensemble playing, especially in this last year as co-principal first violin and leader. It has given me the confidence to audition for and play in the National Youth Wind Orchestra, English Schools Orchestra, National Scouting and Guiding Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble and audition for the National Youth Orchestra. I could not have played in, or even auditioned for, any of these if it was not for starting violin on a West Sussex Music instrument with a WSM teacher and joining WSM ensembles.

Secondly, I started clarinet in 2022 with the first ever Tomorrow's Orchestra Programme (TOP22) and recently achieved a Distinction in my ABRSM diploma. I am applying to conservatoires this term on clarinet with violin (hopefully) as second study, am principal clarinet in South-East Hampshire Youth Orchestra with whom I played a concertino and play in numerous chamber ensembles, all because of starting clarinet in your TOP programme.

I also had my first viola lessons with your viola programme, I played viola in WSYO at Symphony Hall, with Havant Symphony Orchestra, with the National Scouting and Guiding Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble and at the Horse Guards Chapel in London. I would not have started viola if it was not for that opportunity to learn with Morven at Horsham Music Centre.

I have met so many people through the orchestra, many of whom I play duets, clarinet quintets and string quartets often. From WSYO members Luke and Tabitha and Ben I formed my string quartet The Martlet Quartet. We regularly play together and have performed in Christmas concerts and in a successful fundraiser for Ben's Tanzania trip. Even though three of us have left WSM, we will still meet up to

rehearse and are planning a concert in Horsham this term! The West Sussex Youth String Quartet has given me the chance to play at a private event, be part of a recording session and play in the interval at the summer concert, all of which I have valued and enjoyed. I have also enjoyed my time on the Youth Advisory Board, doing the social media takeover on tour, making a fun video for Instagram and getting to lead meetings on rotation!

What cannot be forgotten are the Germany and France tours! This year it was amazing to play outdoors twice, see many lovely buildings, explore the accommodation grounds, go bobsledding, see the Canadian D-Day landings and do many more things I have not mentioned! Both tours were enjoyable and well planned and I love my tour hoodies too. I particularly enjoyed playing in the chamber concert with The Martlet Quartet and the clarinet solo and duet, these experiences will feature in my conservatoire application.

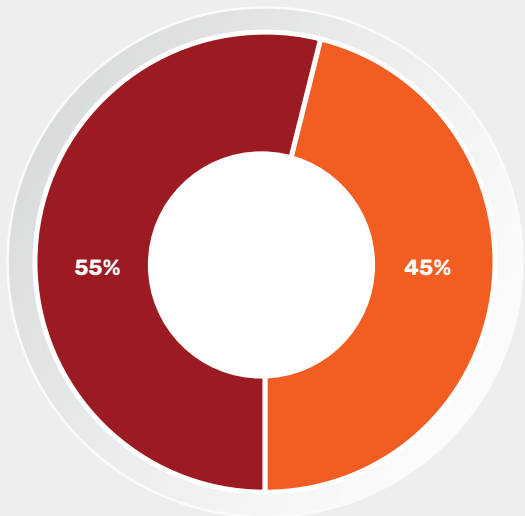
For all of these experiences and opportunities, and for making me a confident performer, I cannot thank the West Sussex Music staff enough! I would not be in the position to audition for NYO and conservatoires if it was not for all of this.





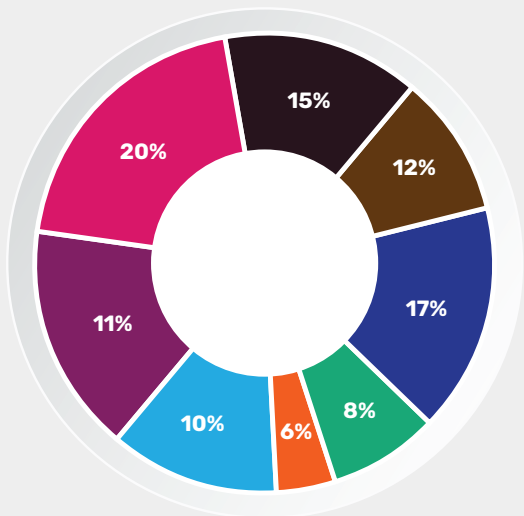
# Finance

During 2024-25 West Sussex Music benefitted from Sussex Music Hub funding from the Department for Education, administered by Arts Council England, to deliver the National Plan for Music Education in West Sussex. Additionally, West Sussex Music has traded income from its provision to students and schools, as well as other grants and charitable fundraising.



West Sussex Music income 2024-25

■ DfE Hub Grant
 ■ Traded income and other grants



Use of the DfE Hub grant 2024-25

The chart above demonstrates how the Hub funding was used to support the seven objectives of the National Plan for Music Education and the proportion allowed for overheads.

■ Bursaries
 ■ Ensembles  
■ Concerts
 ■ Instruments  
■ CIL
 ■ Overheads  
■ CPD
 ■ Projects

# Looking forward

2024-25 heralded a new era for music education in England following a government review and reorganisation of Department for Education funding mechanisms. From September 2024, music education funding was distributed to 43 larger regional music hubs, rather than the previous 118 music education hubs. West Sussex Music is a consortium partner, with Create Music, of Sussex Music Hub with DfE funding now being administered by lead organisation Brighton Dome & Festival Ltd.

I would like to use this opportunity to pay a special tribute to the teams at both West Sussex Music and Create Music for their invaluable hard work in preparing for this change and in the ongoing development of Sussex-wide programmes that support the new Hub's strategy. The previous music education hub boards of both organisations were invited to create a new Sussex Music Hub board, and I'm delighted that many members chose to continue on this new advisory group.

As we work with our partners to develop a cohesive vision across the region, overseen by the two consortium partners, our programmes of activity to kickstart new opportunities for children and young people and to better support schools will be further developed through 2025-26. This will include the following exciting initiatives:

- A new cohort of beginner instrumentalists for the Tomorrow's Orchestra Programme (TOP26) will be recruited for a January start at six music centres.
- A new music centre will be re-established in Crawley in January.
- Expansion of large group instrumental projects will be expanded in secondary schools to promote recruitment.
- Creation of a Sussex-wide instrument library and online resources for schools to use.
- A new massed choral project for secondary schools and County Ensembles *The Water Diviner's Tale*.
- Embedding digital badging across our activities.

I look forward next year to reporting on the success of these initiatives and our other achievements in 2025-26.

**James Underwood**  
 Chief Executive, West Sussex Music





# Staff and governance

## West Sussex Music

James Underwood	Chief Executive
Lee Hume	Head of Finance
Lou Pickett	Head of Operations
Alison Sutton	Head of Learning
Paul Smyth	Head of Participation
Jane Swindells	Primary Curriculum Manager
John Randall	Music Centres Manager
Christie Goatley	Office & Accounts Manager
Elizabeth Leondaritis	Youth Engagement Manager
Mike Hart	Stock Control Manager
Heather Downie	Arts Administrator
Abi Holdcroft	Arts Administrator
Jo Anderson	Schools Administrator
Hope Hemmings	Schools Administrator
Shelley Young	Schools Administrator
Billy Crook	Customer Accounts Administrator
Mandy Gibbard	Customer Accounts Administrator
Maddie Maddison	Customer Accounts Administrator

## Trust Board

David Skipp - Chair
Claudia Golden - Vice Chair
Margaret Evans
Susie Harris
Tim Riches



# 2024-25 Hub partners

