



Sept 2022 Newsletter

Roundup from

Phil Castang

Chair's welcome

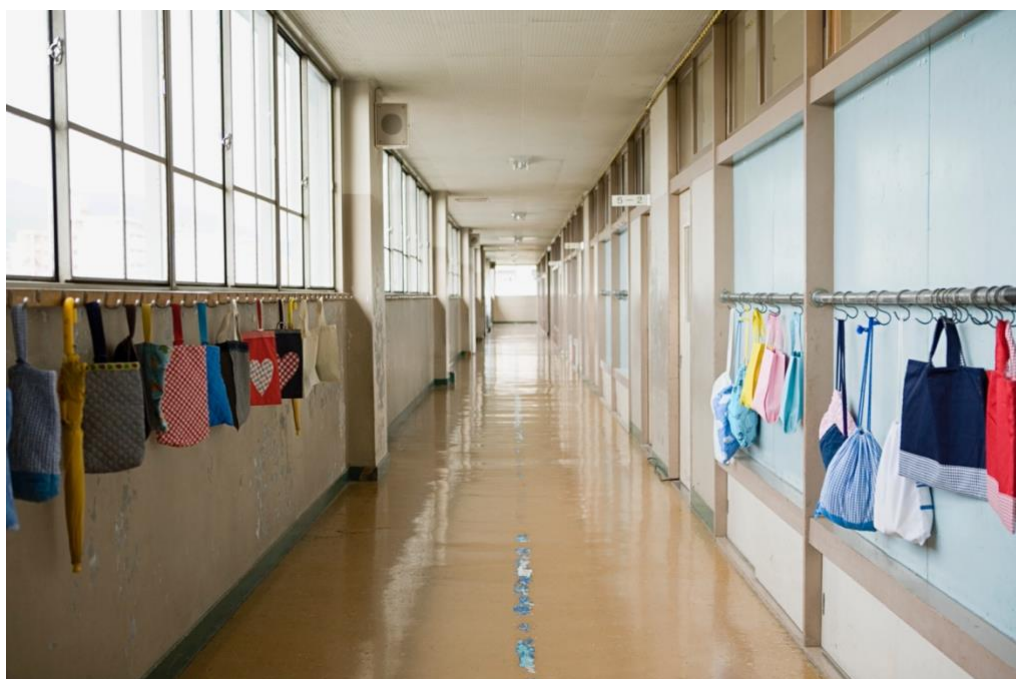
"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times". The Cost of Living Crisis, the pandemic and a range of other societal problems have had a devastating impact on children and young people directly and on the resources we have available for student engagement.

Although the refreshed NPME in England was generally well received and many of us working in music are purposefully preparing for its implementation, there is a storm on the horizon which I have helpfully christened 'The Cost of Schooling Crisis'. This storm is potentially problematic for music and the arts, particularly enrichment and extra-curriculum activities.

Schools are highlighting that although the Government has increased funding, this increase represents a return to 2010 levels. An analysis of the data published in the TES has shown that the increase would be 3% short of even the 2010 amount.

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/school-funding-will-barely-increase-next-3-years-inflation>

Add to this the predicted increase in energy costs, and notwithstanding the government's energy support package, many schools are going to find a significant budgeting hole running into several hundreds of thousands.



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Therefore, schools are going to have to make cuts. Having to choose between heating, staffing or music lessons is not an ideal environmental condition to launch a refreshed vision and effort for music education.

The economic climate also looks challenging for arts organisations, with many concert venues being partially or completely closed to the public on quiet days, and we can be confident that difficult programme choices are coming down the track. It's hard to believe some of our greatest arts institutions which are a place of public realm and receive millions in public funding are having to right-size opening times. These were likely to be the times at which school trips would have taken place.

The Cost of Schooling Crisis is likely to have the deepest impact on the children that would benefit most from a rich musical culture in school and from experiencing music played by our world-class orchestras, at our greatest cultural institutions.

Although we have got better at inclusive practice and most organisations are doing their moral and ethical duty to provide all children with access to music. The pool of children that need additional support is widening and therefore how we think about, and plan inclusion needs to evolve.

Accessibility and diversity both fall under the 'doing' word, *inclusion* i.e, diversity is what we have, inclusion is what we do.

Currently, we find inclusion sits as a separate thinking process and a separate and additional area of expertise which is why it has been a bit of a bolt on and so incurs additional costs.

There needs to be an evolution in how we think about inclusion. Now is the time to move away from the idea that 'Inclusion' is out of the ordinary or an exceptional way to work with children with differences or challenges. Inclusion is simply best practice in student engagement and teaching. We need to support music practitioners and those working in music education more broadly, to refresh their skills, pedagogy, methodology and engagement efforts, so that inclusive practice becomes a normal part of the music teaching tool kit.

This won't happen overnight, but the refreshed NPME makes inclusion one of the 5 functions of music hubs and introduces a number of important measures that firmly set us on the right path.

We know the magic money tree doesn't produce fruit for music education, so how do we ensure that no child is left behind, when there is clearly a resource gap between what we need and what we have.

My recommendation is partnership through Collective Impact. I have advocated for collective impact since around 2014. It is simply a set of 5 principles for organizing partnerships between different sizes and types of organisations. It breaks down counterproductive territorial attitudes and allows mixed resources to solve complex problems. And that is what we need right now.

In my role as chair of the Music Education Council many colleagues across the music sector contact me to support or comment on their strategic plans for music education. The launch of the refreshed NPME has provided new impetus and some brilliant and innovative partnerships are forming to help solve this 'Cost of Schooling Crisis'. I hope we can all get behind these and make sure we have a more joined-up effort so that all children can benefit from a high-quality music education, at school, at home and in the community.

We would be grateful if you could respond to this article and let us know about your plans and experience of inclusive practice. Send your responses to admin@mec.org.uk.

*Role of music in
royal occasions:
Chrissy Kinsella*

The Queen: A Life in Music

Music has a long tradition of playing a significant part in Royal occasions; from weddings, to funerals, christenings, and coronations in between.

It is not known what music was performed (if any) at the Queen's own christening in May 1926, though it has been said that Royal babies have often been Christened in the music room at Buckingham Palace! As a child, the Queen had instruction in music, taking lessons in piano and theory, both at Buckingham Palace, and later, at Windsor Castle. During World War II, the Young Elizabeth and her beloved sister Margaret were sent to stay at Windsor Castle, as the threat of bombing to London increased. Sir William Harris, then Director of Music at St George's Chapel, became music teacher to the two sisters, teaching them piano, and encouraging them to join the choristers in their weekly madrigal practice.



Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret at the piano. Classic Image / Alamy Stock Photo

In 1947, she married Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten at Westminster Abbey. The entrance of the bride was accompanied by the Bridal March by CHH Parry. The Director of Music, William McKie, wrote the beautiful 'We Wait for Thy Loving Kindness' for the occasion. McKie also directed the music six years later at the coronation, as she became Queen Elizabeth II. A long history of commissioning new works for such occasions (for example, Handel's famous and much-beloved 'Coronation Anthems' was originally commissioned for the coronation of George II of Great Britain in 1727; Parry's 'I Was Glad' – a favourite at Royal Weddings – for the coronation of Edward VII in 1902.), the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II brought us a number of new commissions, from William Walton, Herbert Howells, Healey Willian, and the contemplative 'O Taste and See' from Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Queen Elizabeth II had a long and dedicated commitment to the arts, which continued throughout her long life, becoming patron of a significant number of institutions, including the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Help Musicians UK and the Philharmonia Orchestra. She received two honorary degrees in Music (awarded before she ascended the throne) – a Bachelor of Music (BMus) from the University of London and a Doctor of Music (DMus) from the University of Wales. In 2005 she instigated the ‘Queen’s Medal for Music’, awarded to those deemed to have made a significant contribution to the musical life of Great Britain. Previous recipients include Sir Colin Davies, Dame Emma Kirkby and Nicola Benedetti. But don’t be fooled into thinking it’s just for individuals - the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain also received this prestigious accolade in 2012.

On Monday 19 September the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II took place, watched by millions around the world. And, not surprisingly, music played an extraordinary part.

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Much has been written about the music, so I will just touch on a few moments here. The first service of the day, the State Funeral, took place at Westminster Abbey (the place of the Queen’s own wedding and coronation), with music provided by the Choirs of both Westminster Abbey, and The Choir of His Majesty’s Chapel Royal, the Abbey’s Sub-Organist, Peter Holder, and Assistant Organist, Matthew Jorysz, conducted by James O’Donnell. Other musicians included the State Trumpeters of the Household Cavalry playing The Last Post, the Fanfare Team of the Household Division Bands, Household Division Bands, and the Queen’s Piper, Warrant Officer Class 1 (Pipe Major) Paul Burns, who played out the service.

The arrival of the coffin was accompanied by Croft’s haunting Funeral Sentences. Who can forget the heart-breaking images we saw in April 2021 as the Queen sat alone at her beloved husband’s funeral, as a quartet of solo voices accompanied his entrance to St George’s Windsor. Understandably there was a commission from Dame Judith Weir, the first female ‘Master’ of the Queen’s Music, appointed in 2014 (Like as the Hart’, is an unaccompanied musical setting of Psalm 42). This role dates back to 1626 and includes Edward Elgar, Arthur Bliss and most recently Sir Peter Maxwell-Davies. In addition we heard a new commission from the Scottish Composer Sir James MacMillan. ‘O Taste and See’, noted above, was also performed – perfect in its simplicity. There were also moments of celebration, not least in the uplifting descant heard in the first hymn, ‘The Day Thou Gavest Lord is Ended’, accompanied by soaring trumpets.

The procession of the hearse through London, and later Windsor, was accompanied by funeral marches of Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Chopin.

The second service at St George’s Windsor was more subdued, somehow – less ‘state funeral’ and more ‘family occasion’. Again, the music was chosen perfectly to accompany the service; the opening psalm, Walford Davies’ ‘I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes’ performed exquisitely by the Choir of St George’s Windsor (including its first ever female Lay Clerk, alto Joy Sutcliffe – and as girls are now being accepted into the choir school at St George’s, she won’t be the last). William Harris, who taught the Queen and Princess Margaret during the war, provided the exquisite ‘Bring Us O Lord God’, a setting of the John Donne poem.

At the last moments, though, as the symbols of monarchy were finally removed from the coffin, the Lord Chamberlain broke his wand of office, and the coffin slowly descended into the crypt at St George’s, for the Queen’s final burial, there was only silence. Music, for me, was significant in its absence at these powerful moments. That perhaps there was, in fact, music within the silence; that the impact of the final moments taking place with no accompaniment, defined the importance and emotion of previous contributions.

Many people have commented about how music has played such a significant role in these events, and many others, and that if we wish to preserve the future of our musical heritage, we need to ensure that music is fully and properly funded in school, and throughout

education. Of course, this is hugely important. But my take on it is slightly different. We shouldn't argue that music must be funded for every child because a tiny percentage of them *might* end up at the highest level of performance in future. But we should ensure that every single child is able to discover the beauty, wonder, joy, peace and emotion that we witnessed through music on Monday. It was, without comparison, an emotional farewell, contemplation of a lifetime of service, and a celebration of a life well-lived.

*Upcoming
Events*

Next MEC Seminar: Funding Music Education: 3rd November 2022

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

Thursday 3rd November 11-12pm online Sign up at [EventBrite](#).

Free seminar

We know the magic money tree doesn't produce fruit for music education, so how do we ensure that no child is left behind, when there is clearly a resource gap between what we need and what we have.

Following recent changes in music education strategy across Scotland, England, and Wales, we speak to colleagues working in trusts, foundations, and other strategic funding bodies to find out their thoughts on the current state of fundraising and income generation. Where is the innovation? What about partnerships? Gifted & Talented or inclusion?

Join MEC for a special session chaired by Chrissy Kinsella, MEC Trustee and CEO of the London Music Fund, and a panel of guests from organisations including: Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Creative Scotland, Quartet Foundation, Youth Music and others.

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