



Arts Council England's response to the Department for Education's funding the education sector for teacher pensions increases consultation

February 2019

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts, museums and libraries in England. Our mission is 'great art and culture for everyone' and we work to achieve this by championing, developing and investing in arts and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives.

Response

Introduction

1 What is your name?

2 What is your email address?

3 What is your organisation?

Questions on the Department for Education's current proposal

4 Which sector do you represent? (If more than one please select the sector which you work with/represent most closely)

Other (please specify)

Public sector (non-departmental public body)

5 What is your role? (If more than one please select your primary role):

Other (please specify)



6 Do you agree with the proposal to fund schools (as defined in 4.6) for these increased costs?

Yes. We particularly support the inclusion of Local Authority Central Employed Teachers and Music Education Hubs (MEHs) in this proposal.

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts, museums and libraries in England. Our mission is 'great art and culture for everyone' and we work to achieve this by championing, developing and investing in arts and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We are a large, wide-ranging funder, supporting a portfolio of organisations through core funding, individuals and non-portfolio organisations through Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants, and a range of targeted development programmes. We also deliver funding from the Department of Education to MEHs each year. In the 18/19 financial year, this amounts to £75million across 120 hubs.

MEHs are critical to the success of the Government's National Plan for Music Education. 70-80% of MEHs have signalled they employ teachers who are in the TPS. We estimate that these increased costs could have a substantial impact on MEH's expenditure – for some Hubs the increased costs could result in an as much as £100,000 additional expenditure in 2019/20 alone. As the average annual grant amount for MEHs is £620,000, an additional cost of this size would have a seriously negative impact on their work. For example, £100,000 could fund 200 pupils to have intensive private music lessons for a year; provide vital equipment; or support thousands of pupils through events and whole class provision. Without the additional government support outlined, funding is likely to be diverted away from front-line delivery, remissions for lower income pupils and inclusion programmes intended to engage those from harder to reach communities.

MEHs are also highly dependent on incomes from schools; they work with schools to support and enhance the curriculum offer. As such they are reliant on schools' ability to buy in services, teaching and expertise, with schools accounting for roughly one-third of MEH's income (MEHs reported a total income of £65million against total funds of £214.6million in 2016/17). If schools do not have support for these increased costs, there is a risk that they may need to reduce or end their financial relationship with MEHs. This would significantly impact on the 1 million pupils that MEHs reach through lessons and whole class teaching each year.

We remain concerned about the long-term and how MEHs will cope with any increases to TPS in future years, and therefore welcome the proposal for government support to fund the costs of these initial changes.

7 Do you agree with the proposal to fund FE colleges and other public-funded training organisations for these increased costs?

Yes. It is important to support all organisations with teachers on the TPS given the strain the increase will put on budgets. Without support, savings would have to be found elsewhere, potentially placing creative subjects and talent pathways (including those for music) at risk.

8 Please provide any additional evidence relating to the impact on all sectors, which you think the Department should consider considering these proposals.

Contribution increases to other pension schemes that are not part of TPS are also of concern to us and MEHs, as these also have the clear potential to impact on front line delivery, and prices for schools and parents. Accordingly, we would welcome Government attention to and support for any similar future cost increases in other schools/education pension schemes.

We are aware that Music Education Hubs themselves, and the Music Mark membership organisation, also plan to submit responses to this consultation, and we support the additional information and evidence that they are able to provide.

9 To what extent will this proposal have an impact on people with one or more protected characteristics?

The Arts Council considers socio-economic factors alongside the legally protected characteristics. There is a risk that price increases may be implemented to cover the increased pensions costs, and these would unfairly disadvantage pupils in areas of higher socio-economic disadvantage, challenging circumstances or deprivation. This could have consequences beyond the narrowing of opportunities for music-making, as there is an established and growing evidence base for the impact of music-making on pupil attainment; social and emotional wellbeing; and even upon school performance as a whole.

10 Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

No