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Instrumental Music Services

Results from the IMS Survey 2023



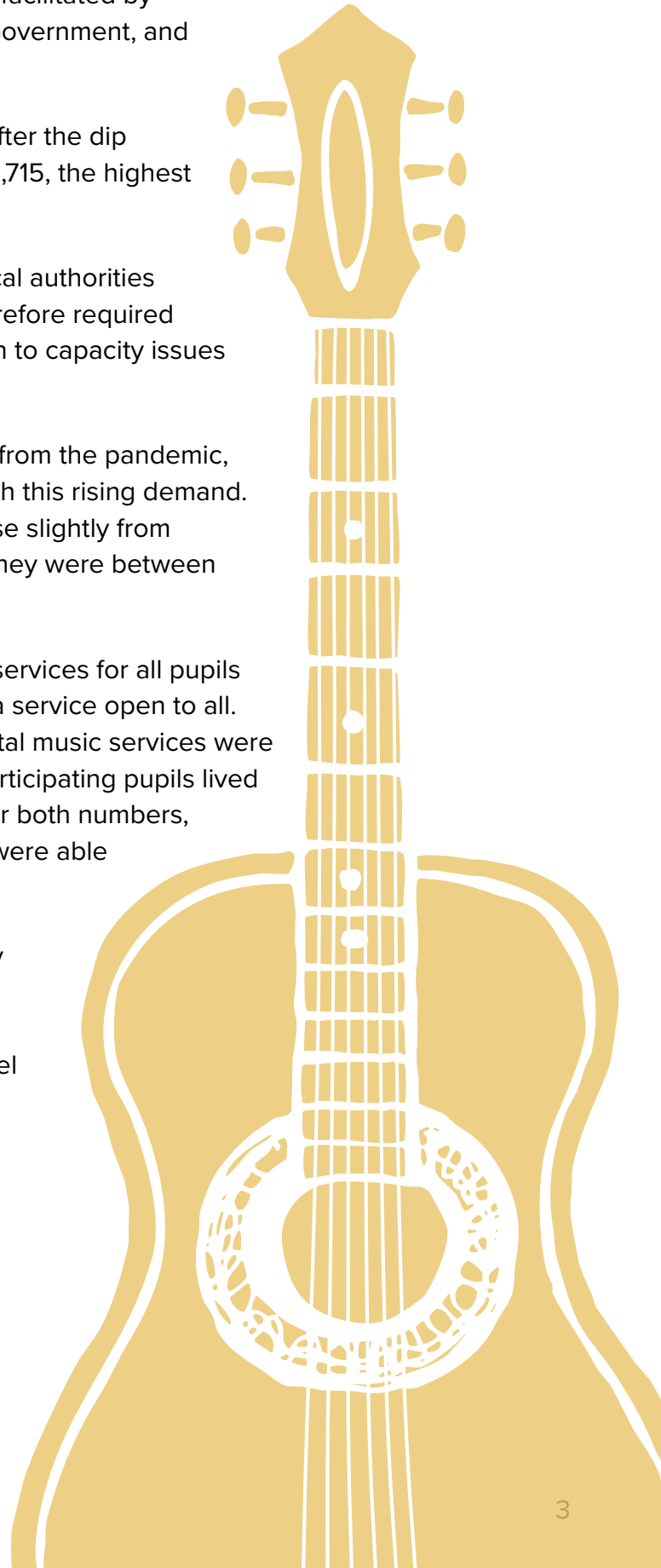
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Key Points

- For the second year, no local authorities charged for tuition in instrumental music services, or for instrument hire. This was facilitated by agreement between COSLA and the Scottish Government, and funding was provided to all local authorities.
- Pupil numbers have rebounded very strongly after the dip during the pandemic in 2020/21 and were at 61,715, the highest on record since this survey began.
- Although participation is very high, very few local authorities can provide to all interested pupils and are therefore required to operate waiting lists. This was primarily down to capacity issues caused by available staff and accommodation.
- While pupil numbers have rebounded strongly from the pandemic, the number of instructors has not kept pace with this rising demand. Although the number of FTEs for instructors rose slightly from 2021/22, they remain substantially lower than they were between 2013/14 and 2017/18.
- Local authorities continue to provide inclusive services for all pupils and continue to take several steps to develop a service open to all. Around 12% of pupils participating in instrumental music services were in receipt of free school meals, while 27% of participating pupils lived in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. For both numbers, it should be noted that not all local authorities were able to provide figures.
- The cost of delivering services was significantly higher than in 2021/22, rising by 10.6%. This may reflect the increasing number of pupils participating in services, as well as the high level of inflation in this period.

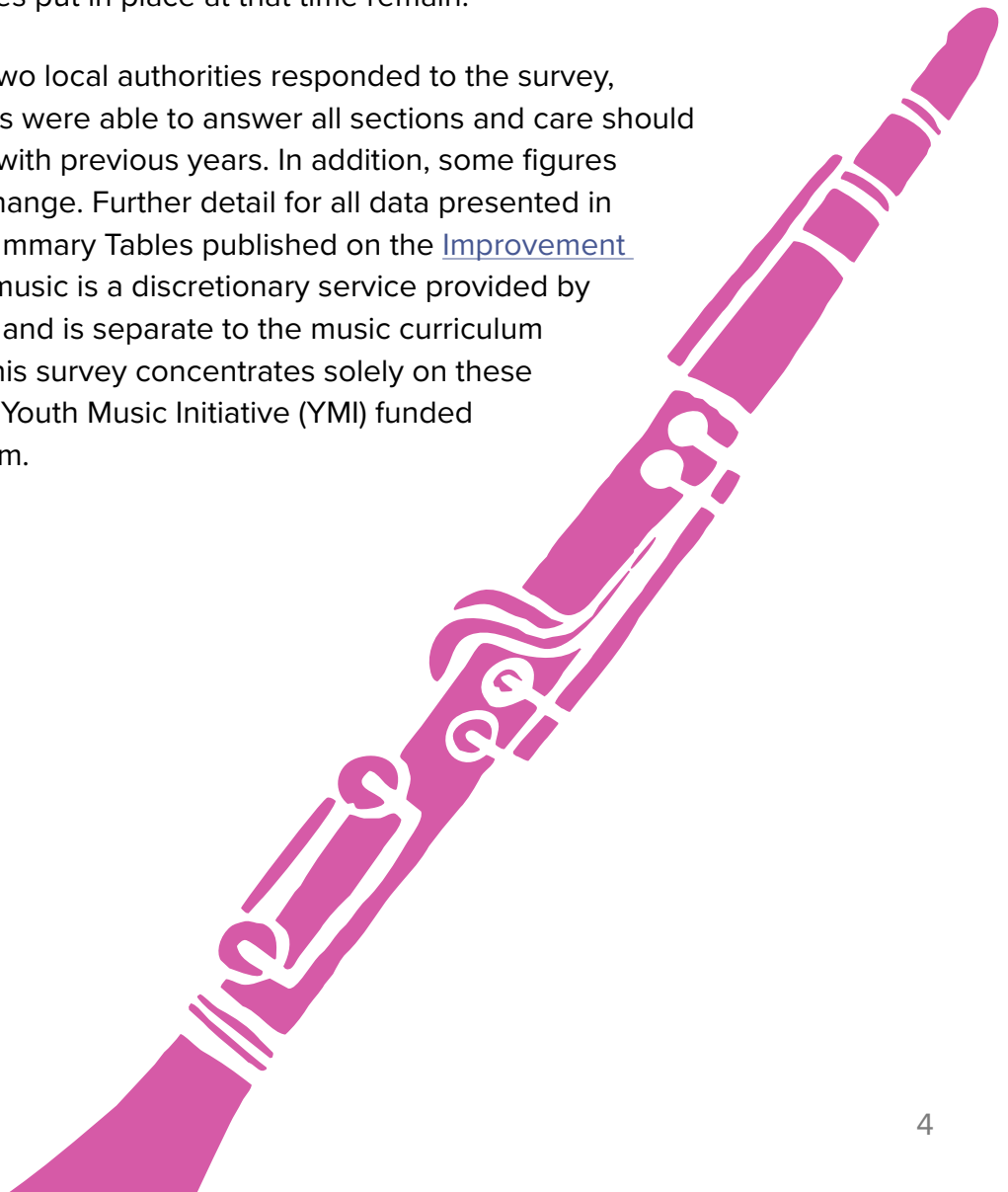


Introduction

This report includes detailed discussion of the eleventh annual Instrumental Music Survey carried out between July and October 2023, and covering results for the academic year 2022/23. The survey is completed each year by Instrumental Music Leads in all thirty two of Scotland's local authorities. Questions relate to all aspects of these services, including fees and charges, participation numbers, concessions and inclusivity, instrument uptake, instructor and tutor numbers, service delivery costs, and extra-curricular activities. Each year, the survey is carried out by the Improvement Service on behalf of Heads of Instrumental Tuition Scotland (HITS) as a means of sharing a national picture of instrumental music services (IMS) and best practice within these services.

This is the second year of the survey where tuition fees were not charged following agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA. It also represents a greater return to "normal" service provision within the instrumental music sector, and in education settings more generally, following the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic. As is outlined in the report, the effects of the pandemic are still felt, and several changes put in place at that time remain.

As in previous years, all thirty two local authorities responded to the survey, however not all local authorities were able to answer all sections and care should be taken in comparing figures with previous years. In addition, some figures are estimates and subject to change. Further detail for all data presented in the report is available in the Summary Tables published on the [Improvement Service website](#). Instrumental music is a discretionary service provided by all local authorities in Scotland and is separate to the music curriculum taught within the classroom. This survey concentrates solely on these discretionary services, outwith Youth Music Initiative (YMI) funded tuition, and the music curriculum.

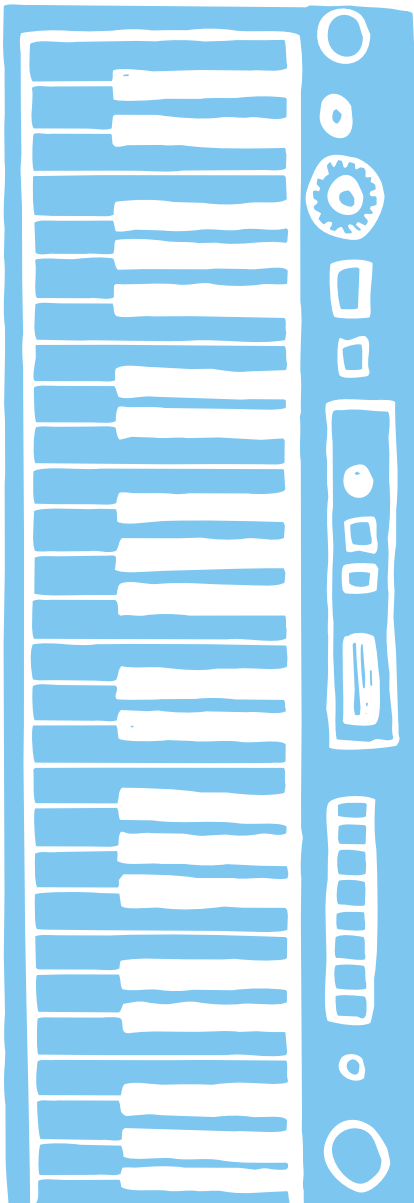


Charging Policy

As a result of the agreement reached between COSLA and the Scottish Government in 2021, no fees were charged for any instrumental music lessons in any council in the academic year 2022/23. This was the second year of this policy, and some local authorities noted that it has led to increased interest in and demand for the service.

In 2022/23 the Scottish Government provided £12m to cover the cost of the removal of fees, with a further £12m allocated within the 2023/24 budget. As the cost of providing these services has risen significantly this year, this will represent a real terms cut for future years.

Prior to 2021/22 the majority of local authorities charged fees for instrumental music provision. Historic charges can be seen in the Summary Tables.



Hiring Policy

As was the case in 2021/22, and as committed to by the Scottish Government, no local authority charged pupils who took part in instrumental music lessons for the hire or loan of an instrument. All local authorities were able to provide instruments to pupils for the duration of their studies, albeit with some restrictions or limitations. These included the range of available instruments, with larger instruments, such as drumkit or piano, unavailable for hire or loan in some authorities, while some local authorities noted that they had a limited number of instruments available for hire. Others offered loans only for a fixed period of time, although this was usually not enforced so that the ability to purchase an instrument was not a barrier to any pupil.

In some local authorities, pupils may be encouraged to purchase their own instrument if financially viable, particularly as they progress in ability. This was not enforced, however, and instruments were available to loan should a pupil choose to do so. Some local authorities, including Fife Council and Perth and Kinross Council have VAT free purchase schemes to support access to instruments.

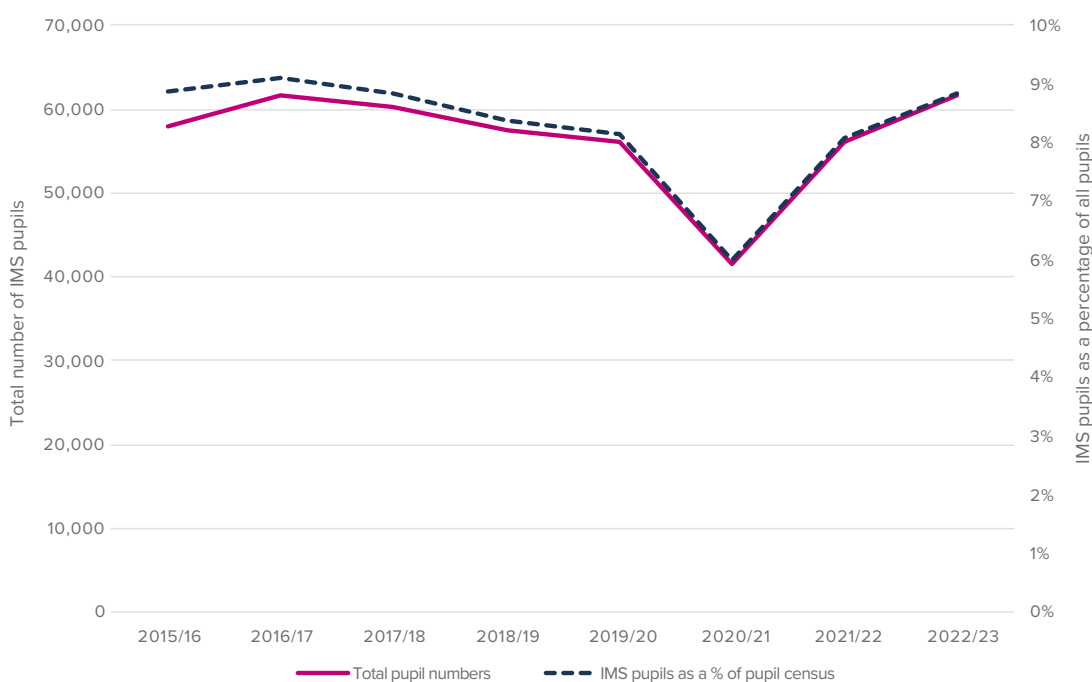


Pupil Numbers

In 2022/23 61,715 pupils participated in instrumental music lessons, the highest number since this survey began. This represented a 7% increase since 2021/22 and a 48% increase since the low point of 2020/21. This uptake also represents the highest proportion of the school roll participating in IMS since 2017 at 8.9%. This compares with 8.1% in 2021/22 and 6% in 2020/21. These changes are displayed in Figure 1. As a proportion of pupils in Primary 5 and above the 2022/23 figures represented almost 13%, an increase from 11% in 2021/22.

These high pupil numbers reflect continued recovery from the Covid pandemic and could reflect the impact of the removal of fees. Removing fees has likely removed a financial barrier for some pupils and will therefore have increased demand. As reported below, most local authorities are unable to provide for all interested pupils and the extent of any unmet demand is difficult to assess. The increase in numbers may also reflect changes in the number of available places. This could have been impacted by funding or tutor numbers, but also changes in practice, some of which may have been introduced as a result of the pandemic. Some local authorities highlighted the resumption of face-to-face lessons as improving uptake, for example. Further research is required to understand the extent to which the removal of fees has impacted demand.

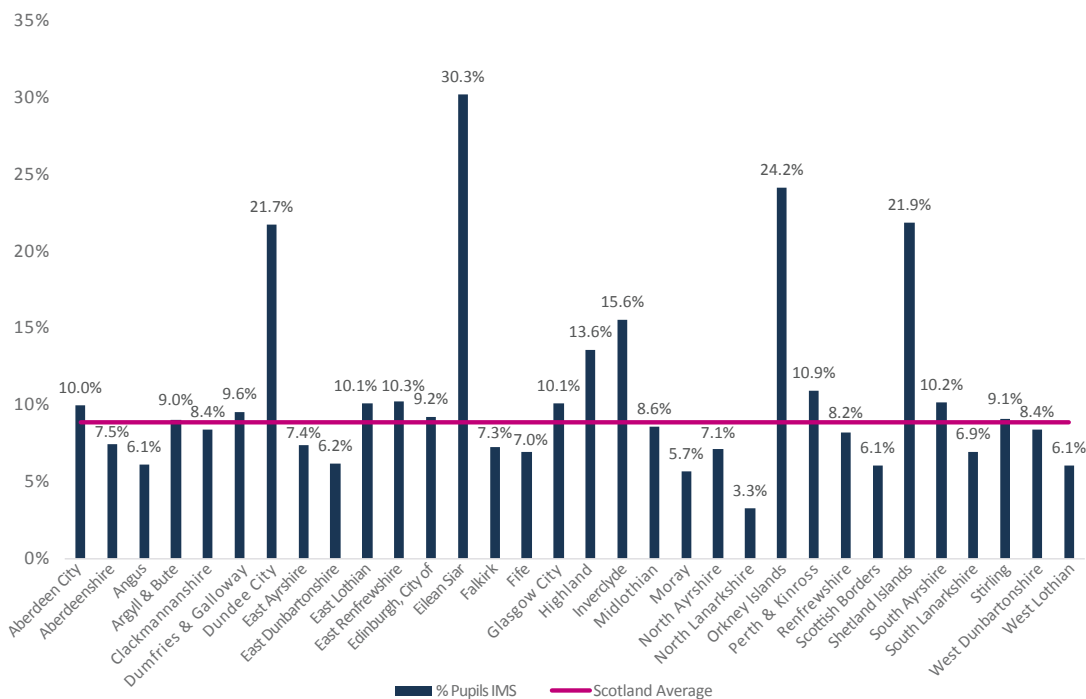
Figure 1 - Number and proportion of pupils that participated in instrumental music lessons 2015/16 – 2022/23



At an individual local authority level there is considerable variation in uptake of instrumental music lessons. In North Lanarkshire Council 3% of pupils participated in lessons in 2022/23, while this was 30% in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, not including Gaelic Singing lessons which is offered to all pupils in Primary School. These percentages are displayed in Figure 2.

Seven local authorities saw small declines in the proportion of pupils participating in lessons, with the largest of these a 4.5 percentage point decline in Shetland Islands Council.

Figure 2 - Proportion of pupils taking instrumental music lessons, 2022/23

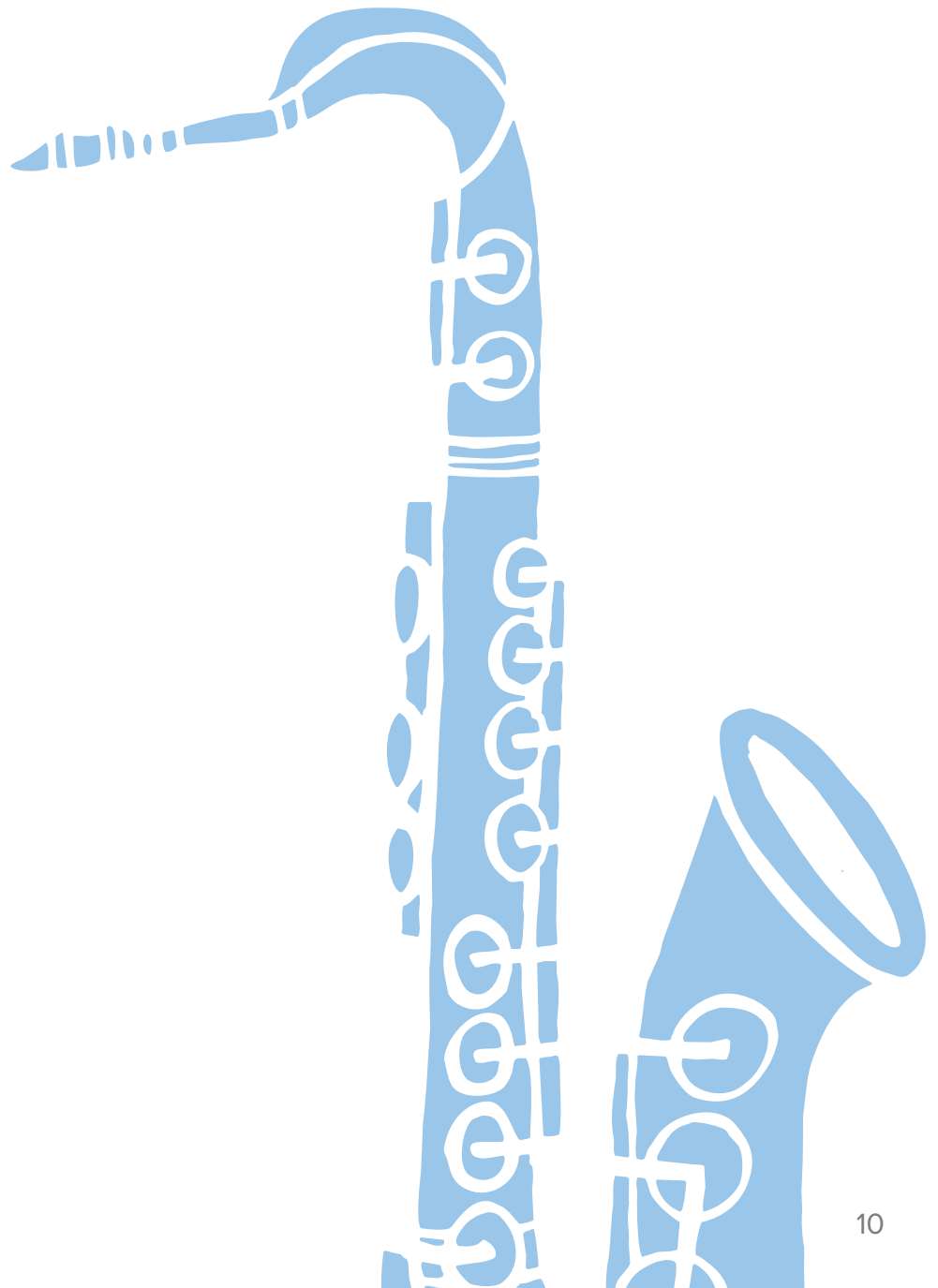


The number of participating pupils per local authority from 2015/16 to 2022/23 is shown below in Table 1. Most local authorities saw an increase in pupil numbers between 2021/22 and 2022/23 with only eight decreasing. In seven local authorities pupil numbers remain lower than pre-pandemic 2019/20 numbers, most notably in North Lanarkshire, which remains over 800 pupils lower. These figures and years prior to 2015/16 are available in the Summary Tables.

Table 1 - Number of Instrumental Music Pupils

Local Authority	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Aberdeen City	2500	3371	3300	1700	2224	1431	1821	2504
Aberdeenshire	2576	3060	3171	2965	2888	1636	2001	2734
Angus	1146	932	954	950	1052	696	920	918
Argyll & Bute	1226	1141	1056	1185	1017	534	976	898
Clackmannanshire	444	392	432	309	299	303	586	553
Dumfries & Galloway	1294	1166	809	750	735	537	1070	1774
Dundee City	3538	3677	3793	3987	3619	4181	3674	3954
East Ayrshire	1002	1242	1194	1214	976	738	961	1165
East Dunbartonshire	1586	1382	1191	1226	1147	691	1032	1070
East Lothian	1331	1341	1245	1119	1022	857	1358	1525
East Renfrewshire	2010	1732	1596	1705	1648	904	1553	1798
Edinburgh, City of	5100	5089	5084	5089	5071	3245	4116	4893
Eilean Siar	766	540	868	496	400	210	912	990
Falkirk	1950	2057	1854	1925	1852	892	1180	1562
Fife	4415	4434	3365	3645	3232	2431	3134	3443
Glasgow City	4597	4919	5448	5876	6300	5225	6567	7043
Highland	3450	3100	2900	3600	3700	2530	4050	4137
Inverclyde	1388	958	1298	1297	1326	1104	1412	1470
Midlothian	1312	1302	1321	994	924	633	1088	1188
Moray	910	815	800	594	643	536	815	698
North Ayrshire	1487	1555	1432	1304	1184	750	1137	1249
North Lanarkshire	3599	3409	2941	2646	2437	1048	1809	1575
Orkney Islands	581	646	663	695	646	668	731	676
Perth & Kinross	1711	1762	1716	1564	1359	804	1933	1966
Renfrewshire	1546	1532	1949	1981	1945	1369	1865	1948
Scottish Borders	995	906	907	878	848	686	892	868
Shetland Islands	724	721	722	779	712	646	877	721
South Ayrshire	1126	1266	1197	1133	1125	899	1287	1432
South Lanarkshire	3050	2990	2900	2850	2850	2850	2815	3142
Stirling	898	950	940	1030	989	648	1000	1161
West Dunbartonshire	926	1034	1102	813	897	844	994	1006
West Lothian	2397	2194	2178	1197	1131	1068	1572	1654
Scotland	61581	61615	60326	57496	56198	41594	56138	61715

In this 2022/23 survey local authorities were also asked to provide pupil numbers per instrument, the second year this question has been included. 31 local authorities were able to provide this information in 2022/23. The proportions of pupils participating in lessons for each instrument was very similar to 2021/22, with string instruments the most commonly played, accounting for almost a third of all pupils (29%). This was followed by woodwind (15%), brass (14%), and guitar (13%). At a local authority level, strings were the most commonly taught instrument in twenty areas. In Argyll and Bute Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, traditional instruments such as bagpipes and chanter were the most commonly played, not including Gaelic Singing in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Similarly, brass instruments were most commonly taught in Midlothian Council and North Ayrshire Council. Full details of the number of pupils by instrument within each local authority are included within the Summary Tables.



Selection and Coverage

Waiting Lists and Oversubscription

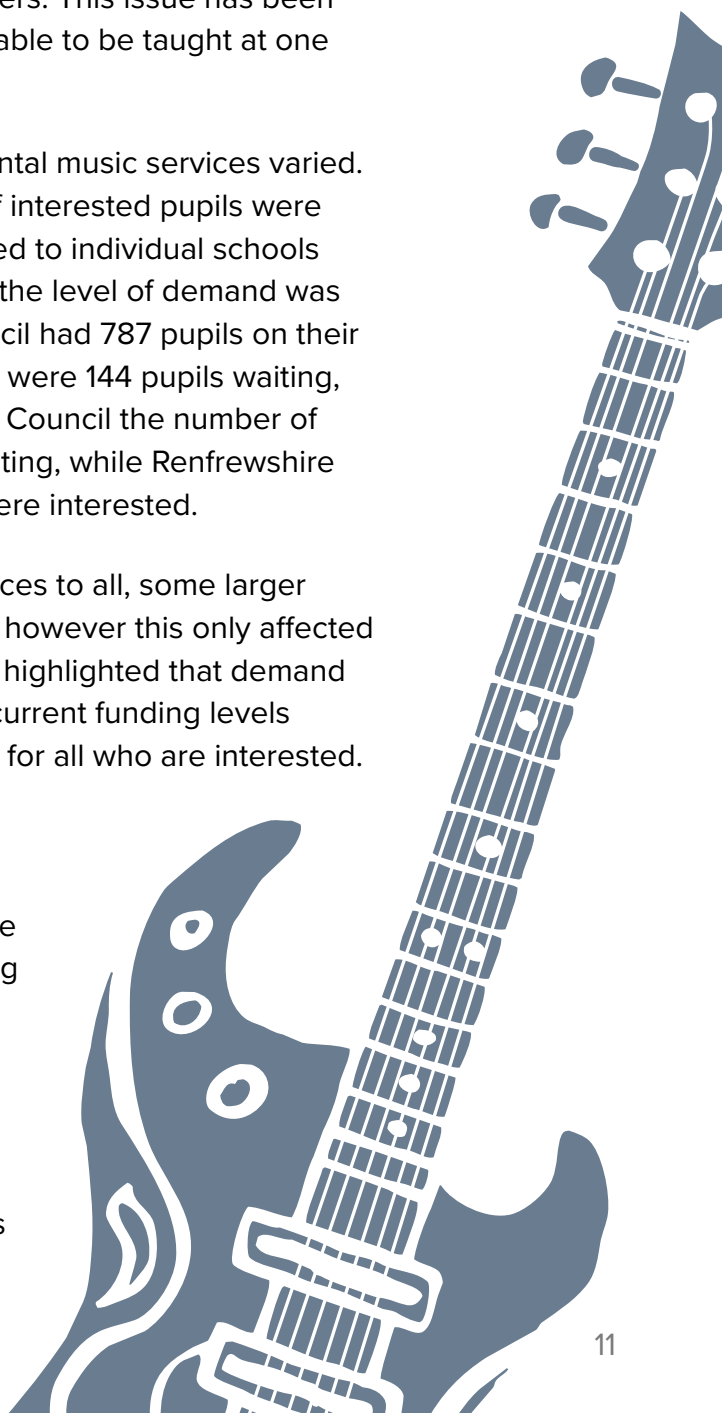
Only five local authorities could offer places in instrumental music lessons for all pupils who were interested. For the other twenty-seven, waiting lists are in place, as the number of interested pupils outstrips their ability to provide lessons. All local authorities do their best to accommodate as many interested pupils as possible, with Falkirk Council noting that they are currently operating at 162% of their standard staff capacity. Most local authorities highlighted that they are experiencing staffing issues, with a limited number of instructors, particularly for certain instruments, as well as issues with accommodation for lessons. The sections below support this and show that there was only a small increase in instructor FTEs, despite a very large rise in pupil numbers. This issue has been exacerbated since the pandemic, with smaller groups able to be taught at one time.

The number of pupils unable to participate in instrumental music services varied. Some local authorities said that only a small number of interested pupils were placed on a waiting list, and often this could be confined to individual schools that may be more remote, for example. In other areas, the level of demand was vastly larger than supply. Dumfries and Galloway Council had 787 pupils on their waiting list, North Lanarkshire Council noted that there were 144 pupils waiting, while in Angus Council this was 260. In South Ayrshire Council the number of interested pupils was three times the number participating, while Renfrewshire Council could accommodate one third of those who were interested.

Even within those five areas that were able to offer places to all, some larger schools or individual tutors may have had waiting lists, however this only affected a very small number of pupils. One local authority also highlighted that demand has increased since charges were removed, and that current funding levels would not be sufficient to sustain the offer of provision for all who are interested.

Selection Procedures

As demand outstrips supply, most local authorities have in place some form of selection procedure for assigning places within instrumental music services. The form and use of selection procedures varies depending on the local authority, and often instructors within a local authority will have their own selection criteria or procedures. In most local authorities selection procedures may also only apply for certain instruments where demand is higher than available spaces. The



procedures themselves might include simple rhythm games, an opportunity to try out different instruments, compatibility tests, or be based on pupils' attitude and willingness to learn. Often the professional judgement of instructors will be a key deciding factor in selection.

In some local authorities there is an element of self-selection, with short trial periods of a few weeks allowing children to try an instrument and decide whether they wish to continue with tuition. In previous years tuition fees may have acted as a further motive for self-selection.

Coverage

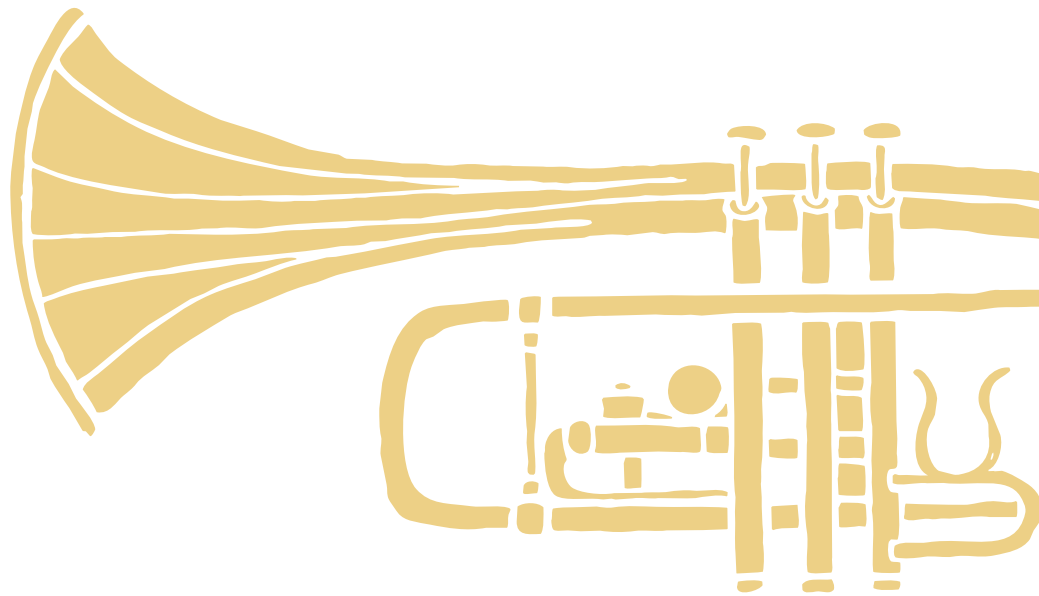
In most local authorities, instrumental tuition is first offered to pupils when they reach Primary 4, although in some areas lessons begin in Primary 1, and ten local authorities do not offer lessons until Primary 5. In most local authorities, only certain instruments are offered in primary school and tuition in other instruments is generally not offered until later stages in the pupil's school career. String instruments are most commonly offered at the earliest age, whilst tuition in percussion instruments is generally offered later.

The vast majority of local authorities allow pupils to apply for instrumental music tuition in more than one instrument, however twenty one local authorities only allow lessons in a second instrument in special circumstances. Permitting circumstances often include pupils who need tuition in a second instrument as part of their SQA Music course, or pupils who plan to continue further education in music. In most cases, however, tuition in a second instrument tends to only take place where resources permit, and not at the expense of another pupil receiving tuition in their first instrument. Five local authorities did not offer tuition in a second instrument.

The length of instrumental music lessons also varies amongst local authorities. On average, most pupils receive a minimum of twenty five minutes tuition per instrument per week, but lessons range from a minimum of fifteen minutes to a maximum of one hour. Generally, lessons last half of a school period for secondary school pupils, which can vary between schools. Longer lessons are most common in larger group lessons or for secondary pupils who are more likely to be sitting exams.

Most local authorities allow individual lessons, and lessons are sometimes taught in small groups. This year's data reflected a further return to conditions similar to those prior to Covid-19, during which many local authorities were only able to offer individual lessons or in restricted groups. On average, the maximum group size amongst local authorities in 2022/23 was eleven pupils, a substantial increase from 2021/22, and reflective of this easing of the Covid restrictions. Pupils on average receive as a minimum thirty four weeks of lessons per year, but the service guaranteed minimum varies across local authorities. Many

local authorities offer more lessons than their service minimum, depending on resources, and may offer a greater number of weeks tuition for more advanced learners. Further details of these policies can be found in the Summary Tables.



Free School Meals, Scottish Index of Deprivation, and Inclusivity

Free School Meals

Free School Meals (FSM) are offered to all pupils in Primary 1-4 and to those in Primary 5 since January 2022. The planned extension of the offer to all P6 and P7s in August 2022 has been delayed and is not yet in place. Therefore, for pupils in P6 and P7, and those in secondary school, receipt of FSM applies where parents or guardians are in receipt of a range of qualifying benefits. In previous years, pupils in receipt of FSM had been exempt from tuition fees; as all tuition fees have now been removed these changes will not affect the data collected in this survey.

Not all instrumental music services hold accurate records of the number of FSM pupils participating in tuition, and due to the removal of fees, several do not record this data at all. Seventeen local authorities were able to provide data for the number of pupils receiving free school meals in session 2022/23. Where this data was available, 3208 pupils were in receipt of FSM within instrumental music services in 2022/23. This was just under 12% of the 27,095 IMS pupils in those local authorities where data was provided. In total, amongst all pupils, a total of 80,265 in Primary 6 and above received FSM, 19.4% of the P6+ school roll.¹ These figures would suggest that pupils registered for FSM are under-represented within instrumental music services in comparison to the overall school population, however this comparison is not based on returns from all 32 local authorities and therefore does not provide a complete picture of how representative IMS lessons are.

At an individual local authority IMS level, where figures for FSM registered and eligible pupils were provided, the proportion registered for FSM ranged from 5% to 28%. Again, care should be taken in using these figures, as not all local authorities were able to provide accurate figures for the reasons outlined above.

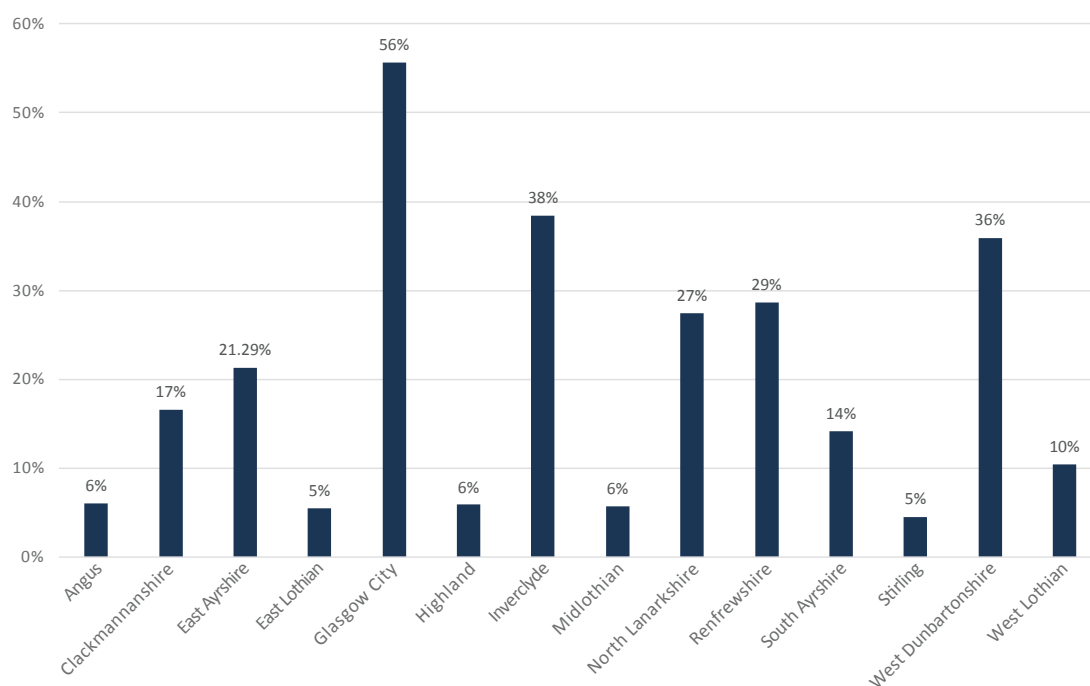
Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

In this year's survey, local authorities were also asked to provide information on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) ranking for the data zones in which IMS pupils were resident. This provides an additional picture of how well represented pupils from the most deprived areas are within instrumental music services. Not all local authorities were able to provide this data, with fourteen councils able to provide a percentage. Compared to the free school meals data,

¹ Healthy Living Survey, 2022. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/school-healthy-living-survey-statistics-2022/documents/> Accessed 8th Nov. 2023

this showed more engagement with services by pupils from more deprived backgrounds. At a national level, 27% of IMS pupils were resident in the 20% most deprived areas, compared with 19.5% of the population. This was heavily influenced by Glasgow where 56% of pupils were from these areas. Within Glasgow pupils from deprived areas were over-represented with 44% of the population living in those areas. Renfrewshire also had over-representation from its most deprived communities at 29% of IMS pupils compared to 24% of its total population. In the remaining 12 local authorities who were able to provide this data, pupils from the most deprived areas were under-represented by between 1% and 10%. As this is the first year of reporting this data, not all local authorities were in a position to provide this information. We will continue to work with HITS colleagues to ensure a full and consistent approach in future years. The breakdown by local authority is available in Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Proportion of IMS pupils resident in two most deprived SIMD deciles

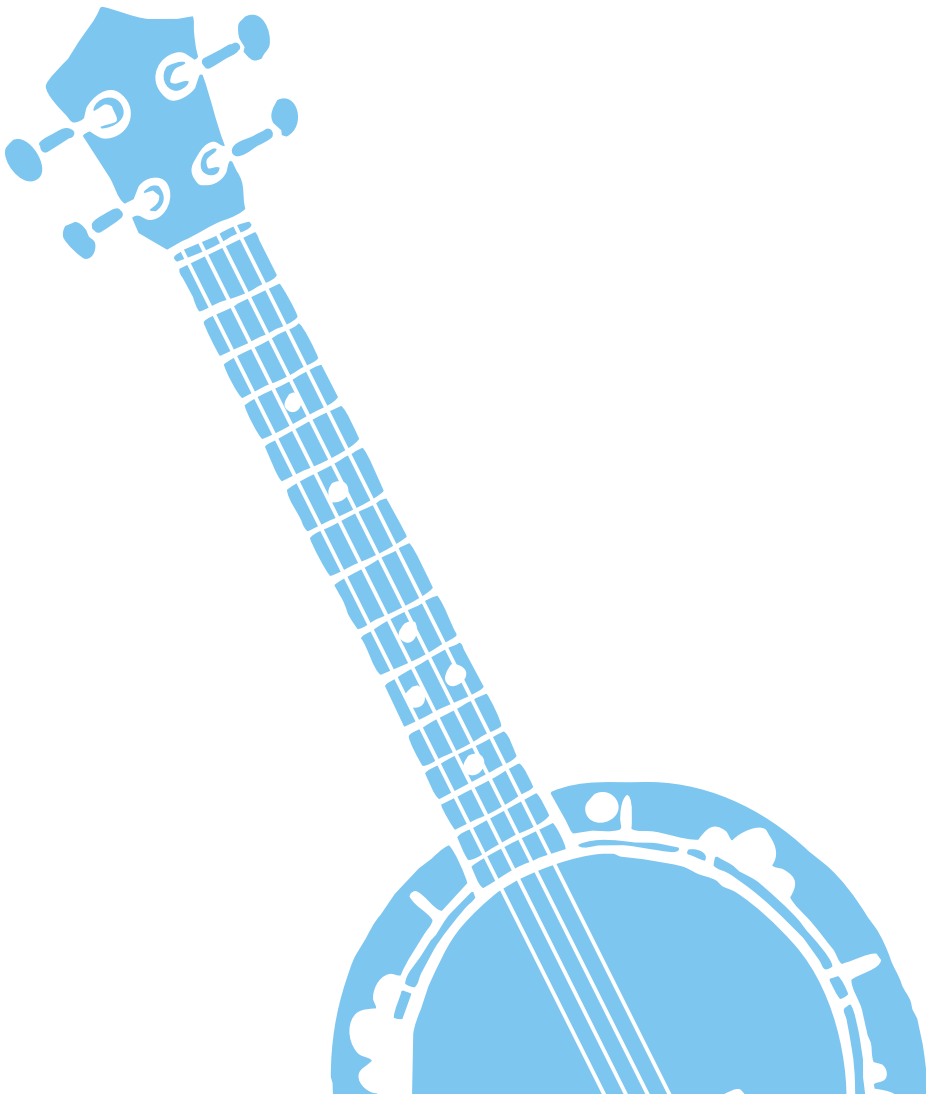


All local authorities make considerable efforts to encourage participation in lessons for all pupils, including those from more deprived areas. There were a wide range of actions in place to promote diversity and inclusion including ensuring accessibility of sign-up options, providing the opportunity to take part in bands and ensembles, tracking recruitment and uptake across the local authority area, targeting recruitment at under-represented areas and groups, and providing demonstrations and whole class activities to sell the service. What was notable was the positive and encouraging use of data and evidence across local authorities in promoting their services. Some specific examples of actions to promote participation for all pupils were:

- Aberdeen City Council has a targeted approach for schools in the most deprived areas where whole class wind band projects are delivered.

These provide all pupils an opportunity to participate in lessons as part of the school day. Pupils can then opt into further lessons. The Council has also trialled delivering lessons alongside parents to promote parent engagement.

- Dundee City Council offers lessons at times to suit working parents, including the early evening, and provides transport to the music centre if required.
- East Lothian Council ensures that ensembles and band performances are delivered throughout the council area. By doing this, the Council IMS engages with communities directly to promote shared ownership of the groups and to break down barriers to participation.
- Perth and Kinross Council runs the Follow the Band project, which is designed to kindle interest in music tuition particularly in schools with higher levels of deprivation.
- South Ayrshire Council identified several schools with low uptake in deprived areas and delivered whole class lessons as an opportunity to experience the service and to sign up.



Instructor Numbers

Local authority instrumental music services provide a wide range of instrumental instruction including tuition in strings, woodwind, brass, guitar, percussion, and traditional instruments, such as bagpipes. Tuition in strings has continually taken the greatest resource with the largest number of full time equivalent (FTE) instructors hired in this discipline across Scotland. This number rose significantly between 2021/22 and 2022/23, while other FTEs have remained relatively stable. This can be seen in Table 2 which displays the number of FTE instructors hired in each discipline across Scotland between 2013/14 and 2022/23. A breakdown of FTE instructors within each local authority in 2022/23 is available in the Summary Tables.

Table 2 - Instructor FTE by discipline, 2013/14 - 2022/23²

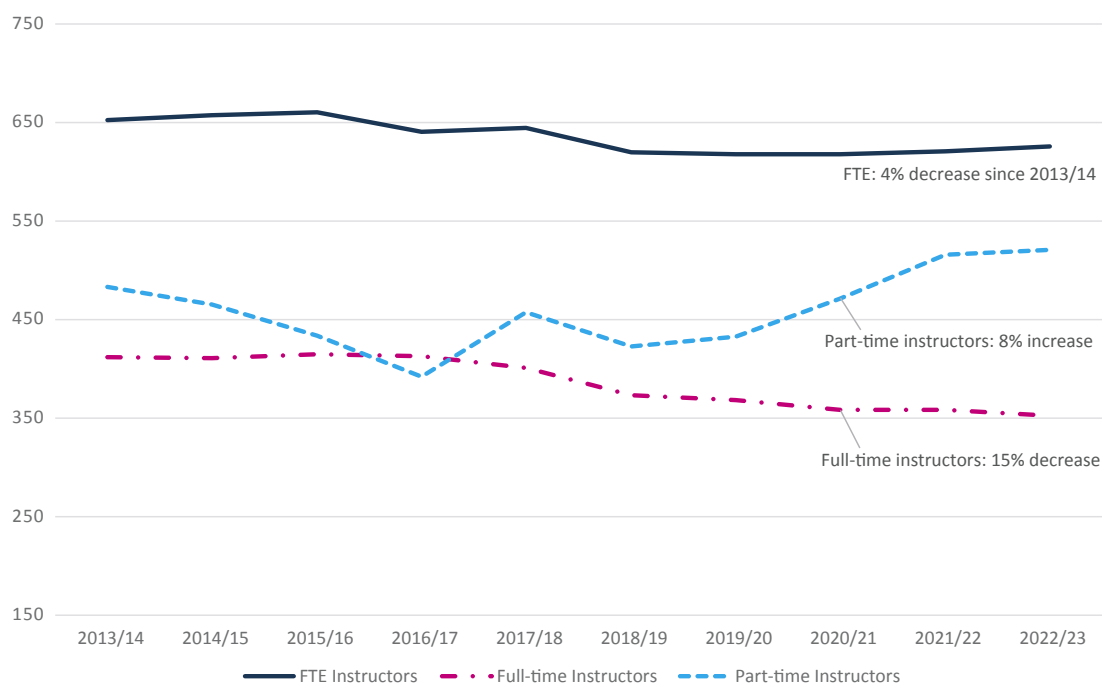
	2013/ 14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Strings	180.3	175.3	174	168.2	166.5	162.0	159.6	156.4	152.4	212.47
Woodwind	124.5	123.3	123.5	119.6	122.2	114.6	112.6	107.6	112.0	112.677
Brass	120.8	125.2	123.1	119.8	118.1	111.8	111.5	104.7	106.3	108.616
Percussion/Drum Kit	64.4	62.2	64.4	64.7	64.9	64.6	65.2	57.6	63.6	63.26
Guitar	56.8	60.6	61.1	58.9	58.9	59.6	58.6	56.5	63.8	65.46
Traditional Instruments (exc. Piping & Highland Drumming)			9.3	7.5	6.51	7.07	8.07	7.7	2.2	8.4
Bagpipes/ Chanter			33.1	34.8	37.1	38	37.3	38.2	37.9	37
Highland Drumming			4.6	5.1	4.7	8.6	8.6	9.5	11.3	11
Traditional Instruments (inc. Piping & Highland Drumming)	37.5	46.5	47.0	47.4	48.3	53.7	54.0	55.4	51.4	56.4
Voice	17.8	19.3	21.5	27.4	20.4	21.3	21.9	24.3	20.9	26.25
Piano/Keyboard	43.6	41.8	43.7	41.3	42.6	35.9	34.2	34.7	36.8	32.07
Other:	4.8	2.4	7.3	6.0	6.6	8.86	8.4	6.8	11.9	6.4

Local authority teaching capacity for instrumental music tuition has been under pressure for several years and, despite the very large increase in pupil numbers, this continues to be the case. As reported previously, FTE numbers saw a large decrease in 2018/19 and continued to slowly decline until 2020/21 when FTE

² Please note – not all local authorities could provide this data in 2020/21 or 2022/23, and missing values have been filled forward from 2019/20 and 2021/22 respectively.

numbers reached their lowest recorded figure. In 2021/22 and 2022/23, FTE numbers saw small increases, but remain lower than in 2017/18. Since 2013/14 instructor FTEs have fallen by 4%. These trends are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Instructor numbers and FTE, 2013/14 to 2022/23



In addition, the number of instructors employed full-time has been declining over the last ten years of the survey, which has been accompanied by an increase in instructors working part-time. Despite the small increase in FTEs in 2022/23, this trend has continued, and full-time instructor numbers are at their lowest on record, while part-time numbers have continued to rise. This trend may have been driven in part by shifting work and service delivery patterns as a result of Covid-19. The full breakdown is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 - Total Instructor Numbers 2013/14 - 2022/23³

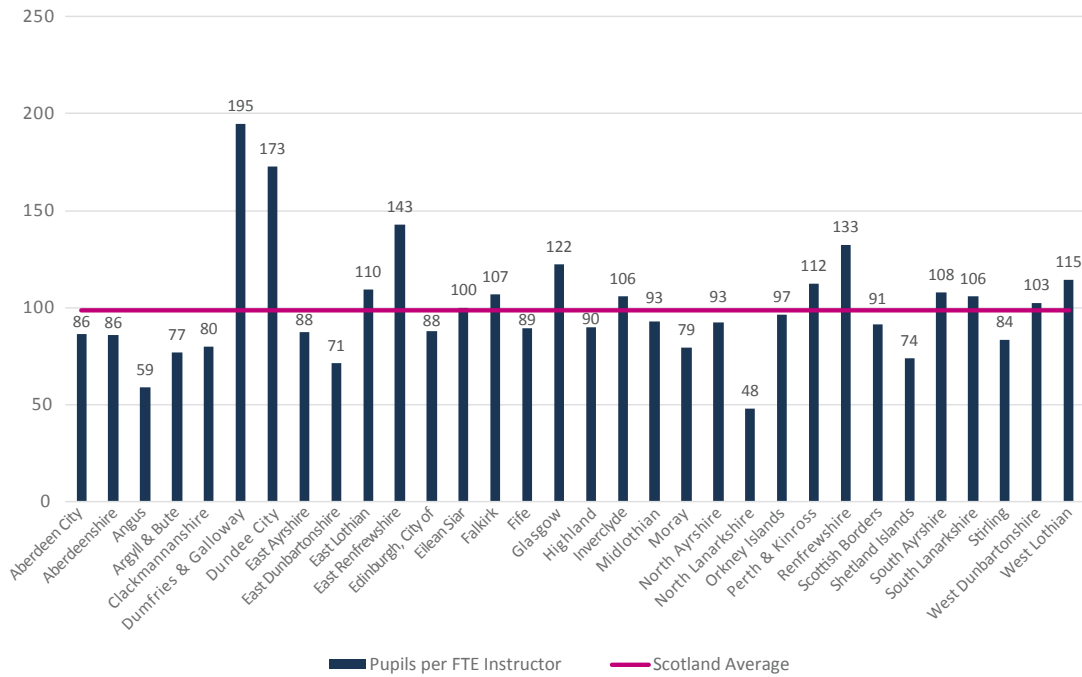
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
FTE	651.9	657.2	660.3	640.6	644.1	620.0	617.8	617.5	620.1	625.463
Full-Time	412	411	415	413	401	373	368	357	358	352
Part-Time	483	465	433	392	457.4	422.1	432.6	471.4	516	520.9

As discussed above, the number of pupils participating in instrumental music lessons as a proportion of all school pupils varies by local authority. The ratio of pupils per instructor also varies at a local authority level. While the Scotland average sits at just under ninety nine pupils per instructor, this ranges from forty eight per instructor in North Lanarkshire to 195 per instructor in

³ Please note – not all local authorities could provide this data in 2020/21 or 2022/23, and missing values have been filled forward from 2019/20 and 2021/22 respectively.

Clackmannanshire. These figures are displayed in Figure 5. Compared with previous years, instructors are providing a greater number of pupils with tuition. Compared to 2021/22, where the average number of pupils per instructor was under ninety one, this year has seen a 9% increase in pupils per instructor. This reflects the growing number of pupils in the service, while instructor numbers are relatively level. It may also reflect the roll-out of all-class provision in many local authorities.

Figure 5 - IMS pupils per FTE instructor



Additional and Extra-Curricular Activities

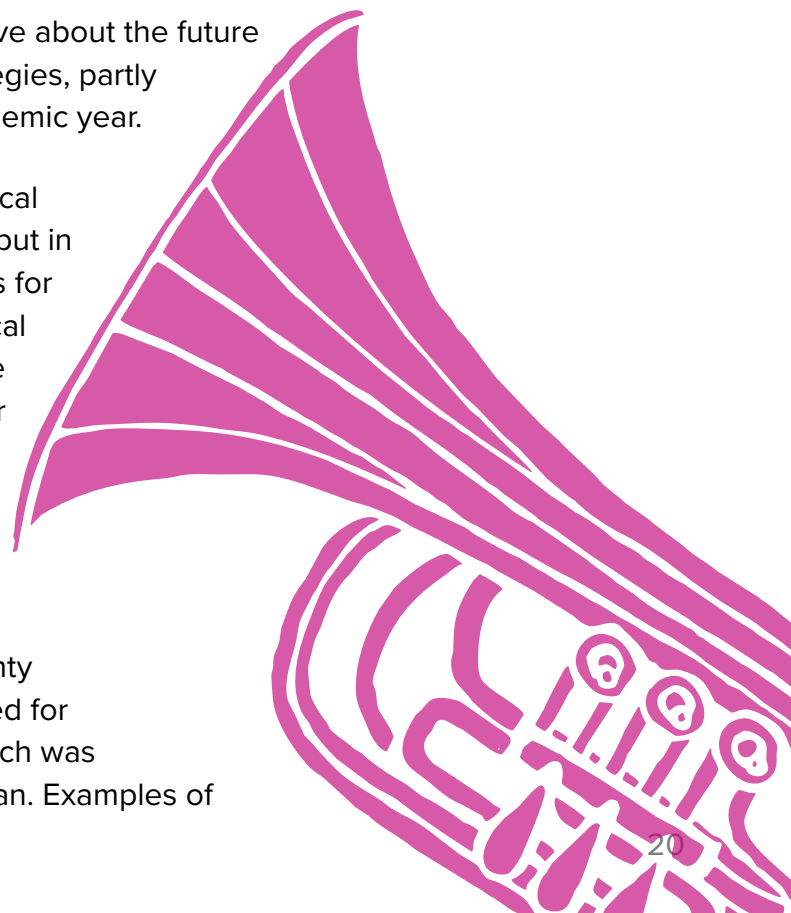
In most years local authorities also offer some additional activities outwith regular tuition. These activities include groups, bands and ensembles which offer pupils the opportunity to play their instruments in a group setting, often with the opportunity to participate in concerts. In some cases, these additional activities come with an additional charge, but are often provided for free and are run through subsidy from the local authority, with IMS staff often volunteering or working overtime to run these activities.

As a result of Covid-19 restrictions, the number of pupils participating in these additional activities was lower than normal for many local authorities in 2021/22 but appears to have rebounded strongly in 2022/23. In 2021/22, just over 10,329 pupils participated in these activities, with the latest figures showing a rise to almost 16,000.

Most local authorities noted that Covid-19 no longer impacts on their additional offerings, but some authorities noted that there has been a continued effect. Some councils noted smaller numbers in their older age groups, due to reduced recruitment in those years, as well as an ongoing impact on the ability level of these pupils, due to the disruption over those two academic years. Others noted ongoing recruitment issues due to reduced confidence and increased anxiety amongst some pupils.

Despite this, local authority IMS leads were positive about the future and ongoing success of recovery plans and strategies, partly thanks to the high uptake in the most recent academic year.

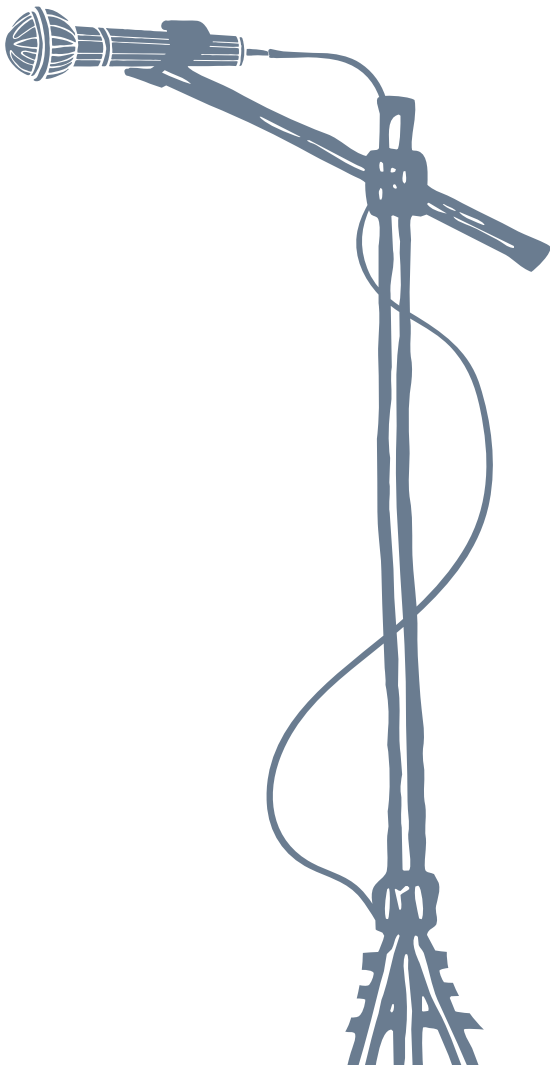
The cost of these additional activities varied by local authority. Although the Scottish Government has put in place funding to remove fees for lessons, charges for additional activities are at the discretion of the local authority. Six local authorities did charge for some of these activities, although this was often only for residential placements where there were travel and accommodation costs. In many cases this was subsidised by the local authority. As an example of the fees charged, Aberdeenshire Council charged £6 per session per pupil and the Moray Council charged £4.85 a week for twenty two weeks. Similarly, the Highland Council charged for its Highland Young Musicians Groups at £130, which was highly subsidised as part of its Covid Recovery Plan. Examples of



charges for residential places were Angus Council where the cost was £135 and Glasgow City Council where £280, or a discounted fee of £90, was paid to cover accommodation and travel.

Fife Council noted that the additional Scottish Government funding had meant costs for additional activities could be removed, and East Dunbartonshire also used some Scottish Government resource to reduce the cost of their ensembles.

Local authorities manage the delivery in primary schools of the Youth Music Initiative (YMI). YMI is a Creative Scotland programme, funded by the Scottish Government that was introduced in 2003 with the aim of giving every child access to high quality music making opportunities. This has been a stimulus to demand as children progress to secondary schools which has kept the instrumental teaching workforce at full stretch. The numbers of children reached in this manner when added to the numbers taught at secondary level paint a most positive national picture of instrumental teaching in Scotland. The latest YMI report can be accessed here: [YMI Downloads | Creative Scotland](#)



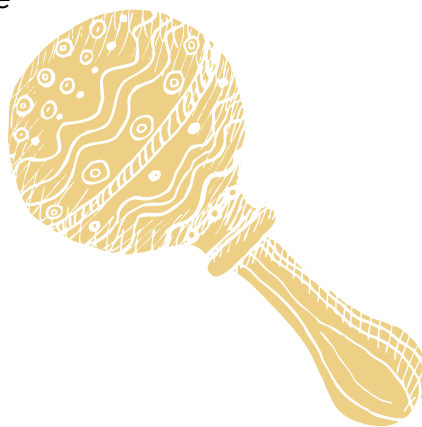
Costs and Income

The cost of running instrumental music services in 2022/23 was £35.1 million. This does not include data for all local authorities, as only thirty could provide this. This running cost was the highest on record in any year of this survey, which reflects increased participation as well as inflationary costs, including salaries, equipment, and maintenance costs. Compared to 2021/22 for the thirty local authorities able to provide data in both years, costs rose by 10.6% (£3.4 million). When accounting for inflation the rise was 3.8% in real terms.

On an individual local authority basis, twenty seven of the thirty local authorities reported an increase in costs, with an average change of just under 10%. It should be noted that the previous year's data was likely to be heavily impacted by the pandemic, which reduced capacity and pupil numbers, and therefore may have reduced costs.,

A handful of local authorities reported some small sponsorships to help cover costs or provide additional places including:

- The Argyllshire Gathering Trust donate £50,000 each year to support piping tuition in Argyll and Bute Council.
- £25,000 per year for three years has been received by Inverclyde Council from Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust and The Beatrice Foundation to develop pipes and drums.
- In partnership with the Scottish Schools Piping and Drumming Trust (SSPDT), Carrick Futures Small Grants, and YMI Access to Music Making an additional twenty three pupils received tuition in bagpipes/chanter and forty two pupils received tuition in Highland Drumming as part of the Girvan Youth Pipe Band project in South Ayrshire Council.



Future Plans

As recovery from Covid-19 and the removal of fees continues to be implemented, 2022/23 and future years promise to be times of continuing change for instrumental music services in Scotland. Local authorities were asked to give their future plans, including how they are planning to develop their service. There were a number of different areas covered, all of which can be found in the Summary Tables. Some examples and common themes were:

Improving participation featured strongly, with a large number of local authorities noting their intention to continue to take steps to embed inclusion and equity in service provision and ensure that pupils from deprived areas and more disadvantaged backgrounds have an equal opportunity to take part in music services. Some specific actions included East Lothian Council where two permanent FTE posts have been recruited to maximise opportunities for young people in the council area, and Moray Council where instrumental music services will work alongside education colleagues to contribute towards raising attainment. South Ayrshire Council plan to continue using additional enhancement monies from the Scottish Government to offer more opportunities in the early stages of instrumental instruction in primary school.

In order to support this expansion in participation, many local authorities plan to increase instructor and instrument resource. Some councils reported that additional Scottish Government funding had allowed this to take place. In Angus Council, for example, recruitment of new instructors forms part of the service's Covid recovery ambitions, with Scottish Government funding making this possible. In Fife Council parent and carer feedback said that additional choice was needed for instruments in Primary 5 and 6 when pupils first enter the service. To meet this demand a new Saturday Music Service is planned, which will provide access to a greater number of instruments.

Many councils also noted their ambition to develop and deliver new concerts and ensembles. This will promote the service and give pupils further opportunity to make use of their skills. In Aberdeen City Council this will be partly supported by a new team of senior music instructors, who have a remit of quality improvement, as well as organising a range of events and initiatives. This has led to increased management capacity, as well as further opportunities for pupils.

Another area where councils are focusing is the transition from primary to secondary school. As an example, East Lothian Council reported that they will continue to focus on this transition in order to improve pupil retention. This will include work towards re-establishing a more sustainable balance between primary and secondary provision, with current service disproportionately focused on primary schools.

Many councils reported that future plans will be heavily influenced by available finances. Despite the availability of Scottish Government funding, services remain under financial pressure, which means that some will have to reduce their instructor numbers. The Highland Council, for example, noted that service development is difficult, as budgets are taken up by pay awards and instrument maintenance. As a result, the service cannot deliver to all interested pupils. In Aberdeenshire Council, partly due to these funding challenges and the ambition to expand their reach to geographically challenging schools, more lessons will be delivered online. These lessons are designed to increase opportunity and delivery, but no school will be offered exclusively online service delivery. Similarly, Argyll and Bute Council noted its high running costs, partly due to its geography, with many remote schools incurring significant travel costs for instructors.



Reviewing Services

There are a variety of procedures and policies for reviewing, engaging, and sharing information across instrumental music services in Scotland. Examples of these procedures are available in the Summary Tables. In the past, local authorities have had a range of policies and procedures for reviewing and changing charges and fees for tuition. Currently this will not be required, as the Scottish Government has agreed to remove fees. There are, however, ongoing reviews in how services operate and are delivered going forward, including in response to the removal of fees. These seek to ensure that services operate effectively and provide an inclusive service for all. Some examples of reviewing policies and activities include:

- Aberdeen City Council launched a review of staffing across the Council in response to the removal of tuition fees. This was designed to ensure more deprived areas of the city are adequately resourced. In addition, in response to the anticipated increase in demand “whole class projects” were launched to improve capacity and widen access.
- Several local authorities, including Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee City Council, and Glasgow City Council, noted that they meet with Heads of Services and other colleagues from across the Council, including from education and community development, to ensure that services are aligned and that access is as wide as possible.
- Aberdeenshire Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, City of Edinburgh Council, Fife Council, the Moray Council, and West Dunbartonshire Council all regularly gather feedback from schools, pupils, and parents. This includes via surveys.
- Monitoring of recruitment and uptake data, and targeted recruitment to improve this is in place in East Lothian Council, City of Edinburgh Council, and Stirling Council.
- Many local authorities also hold annual service reviews or quality assurance exercises. In Midlothian Council a service review is about to be completed, which was targeted to “understand what we do, what are the areas that we could improve on and how can we best deliver a modern and equitable and sustainable service, learning from the changes we had to make during the pandemic”. Councils with annual reviews included North Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, and South Lanarkshire Council, as well as several others.

Summary

2022/23 has seen further change within Instrumental Music Services, following the major disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The impact of the removal of fees also continues to feed through following their removal in 2021/22. As the data outlined in this report shows, services remain very popular, with provision at its highest level. The increase in pupil numbers to 61,715, almost 9% of all pupils, was a record high, demonstrating the continued value that young people see in taking part in IMS. This high level of uptake also reflects the huge amount of work that local authorities have put into promoting their services and taking steps to remove barriers to participation for all pupils.

Although services are increasingly popular, the survey data also reflects a number of challenges. Although local authorities have made efforts to allow as many pupils to participate as possible, only a small number could provide lessons to all, meaning that there remains a level of unmet demand. This is also reflected in the level of full-time equivalent instructor numbers that have not risen at the same rate as pupil numbers, and the increasing costs of delivering these services over the past year. As Scottish Government funding for the services is budgeted at the same level for the next academic year this will place further pressure on budgets and IMS capacity to deliver lessons to all interested pupils.

Future surveys will continue to track these services and how they change and respond to changing funding models and new demand. The impact of these changes will be recorded in future Instrumental Music Surveys and will provide an important source of information against which to assess how these services are affected.



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