

Five Years of Change

Redefining music teacher training
through Musicians of Change (PGCEi)



Delivered in partnership with



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

“Dedicated courses such as Music Masters’ Musicians for Change (PGCEi) are crucial in supporting and developing reflective, resilient, and creative musicians who advocate for and have the skills to deliver a high-quality music education for all young people. We have seen the benefit of this in the commitment of our own In Harmony Liverpool musicians, the majority of whom have or are currently participating in or mentor for Musicians of Change.”

– Alexandra Dunn, In Harmony Liverpool Deputy Artistic Director, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

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In support of music educators

Jane Parry, a dedicated music teacher who has spent the majority of her career serving schools in rural North Wales, sums up the experience of many music teachers:

“I became a peripatetic teacher upon graduating from university and after a half day induction session I was left with little guidance regarding pedagogy, resources and with no opportunity to observe effective practitioners or to be observed in order to develop my practice.”

In our many years of working with music teachers like Jane, we’ve repeatedly heard how a lack of preparation, training and professional development for musicians who teach – those fulfilling one of the most inspiring but challenging jobs in our society – leaves them ill-equipped, under-resourced and feeling undervalued. We’ve heard endlessly of the extraordinary self-sufficiency required by individuals working in music education to actually do their job.

In 2019, Music Masters imagined what it would look like if these musicians, already so committed to making change in their communities, could access a programme which provided them with cutting edge training, a supportive community of like-minded peers and a qualification which validated their skills and elevated their confidence in the classroom. The untapped potential of these socially minded musicians was obvious and the need for high quality music education in state schools ever increasing. As such, we launched Musicians of Change, a one-year, Masters’ level teacher training programme that earns music teachers an international PGCE qualification

(PGCEi), in partnership with Birmingham City University. We specifically pitched our course at postgraduate level so that specialist music teachers could be confident of a level of training that matched that of classroom teachers.

But why Music Masters? Through our award-winning Flagship Schools Programme – bringing exceptional, inclusive music teaching into underserved state primary schools – we’d experienced first-hand the importance of cultivating a strong teaching community. Many teachers came to us confident in teaching music to individual pupils but felt unprepared to lead a group, work in a classroom setting or indeed navigate the unique environment, language and challenges of state schools. So, well-resourced with regular, inspirational learning and development opportunities and protected time for professional dialogue, these teachers became empowered to provide a consistent, inclusive and high-quality educational environment in which every pupil could thrive. In turn, this consistency encouraged highly positive and sustained relationships with school staff and families. We knew then that the benefit of supporting teachers travelled far beyond the teachers themselves.

Group instrumental teaching has been a key focus of our Flagship Schools Programme from day one. We’ve always believed in its ability to enhance both the musical and social aspects of instrumental learning and, when

harnessed effectively, in fostering a school’s musical culture. It’s also a widespread vehicle for music provision in state primary schools across the UK. With programmes such as Whole Class Instrumental or Ensemble Teaching (WCET hereafter) and First Experiences (Wales) continually endorsed by the government through its National Plans for Music Education¹, we felt passionate about sharing our experiences of delivering effective group instrumental teaching. Perhaps one of the most unique aspects of Musicians of Change (PGCEi) is the ‘all areas’ access to our own Flagship Schools Programme. Our partner schools welcome teachers up and down the UK to witness the benefits of group teaching in action, and visiting teachers have the opportunity to learn alongside highly experienced and inspiring teachers, school leaders, experts and mentors. To date, no other teacher training qualification or programme for teaching musicians offers such open access to on-the-ground, day-to-day teaching.

We know that a successful learning environment - one which enables each and every child to thrive through music – cannot rely solely on great music teachers. From buy-in from school governors and leadership to engagement with class teachers, parents and carers, it’s essential that specialist music teachers aren’t operating in a silo if music is to be accessible to a whole school community. However, music teachers of today often need to take on an additional role – one of musical advocate. They are uniquely placed not only to champion music for music’s sake, but to reveal the many skills, opportunities and avenues that can be unlocked through learning music. This role, however, requires energy from and support for teachers who are often already over-stretched, dipping into schools for short periods² with little ability to grow roots from which to champion music’s value and build it into the culture of a school. Conversely, the potential of a music teacher is often severely underestimated by busy school leaders.

Our programme aims to develop and empower specialist music teachers, helping them to take a step back and really think about who they are not only as a teacher, but as a musician, and as a person. We help them to gain wider perspective on their role, to use their influence and identify as leaders and change-makers in their own communities.

In short, to become a Musician of Change.

We hope you find this report enlightening and feel moved to join us in making high quality professional development for specialist music teachers an expectation, not a nice-to-have.



Katrina Damigos

Course Leader, Musicians of Change (PGCEi) & Head of Teacher Training Programmes



The group learning landscape

The economic and social benefits of children learning and making music together have made group instrumental teaching a popular approach to music learning in schools.

In a Musicians' Union survey of 2019, just 26.1% of responding instrumental teachers reported teaching individual lessons only, with the remainder reporting also delivering other types of teaching including whole classes, groups, ensembles or a combination of these³. The popularity of whole class instrumental / ensemble tuition (WCET hereafter) programmes in schools had steadily been increasing⁴ since the publication of England's first National Plan for Music Education (NPME hereafter) in 2011, which announced the ambition that every child in primary school should have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument⁵. To deliver this, a network of Music Education Hubs was established to improve access to and the quality of music education across England, including the

provision of whole class instrumental learning programmes to schools. Group learning brought with it obvious economic benefits, enabling many children to learn together at the same time as opposed to the more costly approach of one-to-one tuition.

England's 2022 NPME reaffirmed the government's support for instrumental learning, stating: "It is our ambition, captured in the national curriculum, that every child should have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument."⁶ Later in 2022, Wales published its first NPME, with a particular commitment to whole class and large group instrumental teaching through "First Experiences", an initiative rolled out across all Welsh primary schools.



Promises and pressures: a workforce under strain

While access to instrumental learning is often cited as important by the government, the teachers tasked with delivering it are too often unsupported, undertrained, and working in increasingly challenging conditions. This section explores the urgent issues facing the music education workforce today.

An under-supported workforce

"It is crucial that staff feel that their development needs are met and that they have opportunities to improve their practice and specialisms. Music education is only as good as the specialists working every day with children and young people."
– DEMOS, 2025, p.25⁷

Whilst the ambitions stated within the aforementioned National Plans for Music Education certainly feel optimistic, they exist against a financially-strained backdrop of music services closures or significant restructures and reduced pay, terms and conditions and casualisation for specialist music teachers. This inevitably results in a lack of career progression and professional development opportunities available. Furthermore, specialist skill, knowledge and experience is required to equip teachers to deliver the type of large group or whole class instrumental teaching often required of them such as effective planning, behaviour management and differentiation to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners. In a recent report by DEMOS, the majority of surveyed Music Education Hubs felt concerned

about their ability to meet training and development costs for their teachers in 2025-26, with potentially higher specialist training needs emerging to ensure effective musical delivery to the Early Years Foundation Stage (an addition in England's most recent NPME), alongside more developed inclusion strategies which better support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)⁸. Without appropriate training opportunities for the teachers delivering it, the sustainability and quality of inclusive teaching remains highly questionable.

In a recent report by ISM, 71% of teachers said that their mental health had been damaged by working on insecure contracts and 85% had considered leaving the sector, with the main factor being job insecurity⁹. The Covid-19 pandemic had a particularly devastating impact on music education in schools. Many schools that had offered instrumental teaching previously were unable to do so during this time, with a severe impact on the livelihoods and wellbeing of specialist music teachers¹⁰.

Anecdotally, numerous Music Education Hubs have shared their concerns around being able to recruit and retain good teachers – a trend mirrored in schools with the government meeting just 27% of its recruitment target for

secondary music teachers in 2023¹¹. Within this landscape, professional development can be seen as a secondary concern, as opposed to a crucial intervention to aid recruitment and retention and support teacher wellbeing.

The loneliness behind the lessons

We've heard firsthand from instrumental teachers about the sense of isolation and mental health issues they experience as a result of their working environments and conditions. Samantha Brown, a graduate of our 2022 Musicians of Change (PGCEi) cohort, commented: "I feel like with a lot of music services closing down and losing funding, we're losing that sense of (community) - why we all get into it in the first place." As such, cultivating a community of educators that could support and champion one another to sustain their passion and energy for teaching has been a key priority since the beginning of Musicians of Change (PGCEi). Many teachers cite the lack of pastoral care and mental health support in their work places as a common issue¹² and suffer from professional isolation either as the sole teacher acting in their music department or working with non-specialist primary teachers who have little to no music teaching experience or training¹³. We hear endlessly of teachers expected to set up a class set of instruments and resources, deliver a quality lesson with no support, and pack down again in 45 minutes – only to rush off to another school and repeat. To meet the needs of pressurised school environments and to feel able to raise concerns and challenge problems, instrumental teachers require additional confidence, resilience and leadership skills.

This, coupled with research which more broadly points to musicians being at higher risk of mental health issues than other professionals¹⁴ has led us to conclude that musicians working in education need more support than ever. If we are to retain a resilient and healthy teaching workforce so necessary for providing a high-quality music education, we must urgently commit to nurturing the teaching workforce in order to ensure that the children in their care are properly nurtured also.

Unprecedented challenges facing schools

It's not just the lack of development opportunities, job security or wellbeing support causing significant pressure on music teachers. In the current UK state education sector, there are a number of unprecedented challenges facing schools. These range from the ongoing recovery from Covid-19 disruptions, the cost of living crisis affecting families and schools to international instability creating anxiety and uncertainty amongst children and families. Data collected in 2023 suggests rising mental health needs and SEND diagnoses among children with 1 in 5 young people aged between 8-16 being reported as having a probable mental health disorder¹⁵. In 2024 18.4% of pupils were identified with SEND, up from 17.3% in 2023, this represents an increase of over 100,000 children¹⁶.

Stress levels for teachers and senior leaders are also significantly higher than in other professions with 53% suffering from stress related health issues, anxiety and depression¹⁷. These factors combine to create a demanding environment for all stakeholders and organisations in educational environments necessitating enhanced support systems.

Where are the role models?

According to the Arts Council relationship framework Music Education Hubs should employ a 'highly skilled, experienced and diverse workforce' and as a condition of their funding they are required to commit to 'ensuring recruitment of a diverse work force representative of the communities and stakeholders they are working with and aiming to reach'¹⁸. However, data suggests particularly in terms of race and disability that the music teaching workforce is still unrepresentative. For example, in a report on race and ethnicity in the Music Education Hubs in London,

under a quarter of the workforce identified as Black, Asian, Mixed or a person of colour from the global majority. This compared to 43% of the London population¹⁹. The available evidence for people with disabilities and long-term health conditions similarly showed significant underrepresentation in the workforce also according to data from Arts Council England²⁰. With Black and Disabled musicians still underrepresented in the UK junior conservatoires and higher education music institutions it is essential that there are role models in the classroom and opportunities for mentoring from teachers who share similar lived experiences.



"I no longer feel isolated in my teaching"

Helen, Musicians of Change (PGCEi) student

Teacher training: reimagined

Musicians of Change (PGCEi) is a year-long programme for musicians committed to transforming music education. It's open to educators of any instrument, including voice, teachable in groups in primary, secondary and community settings. Uniquely, it focusses on nurturing and building teachers' ability to deliver excellent, inclusive group and ensemble teaching that reflects the diversity of society and champions the musical lives and futures of young people in schools across the UK.

Delivered in partnership with Birmingham City University's College of Education and Social Work – a global centre of teaching and learning, Musicians of Change (PGCEi) provides students with a broad range of professional, practical and academic experiences supported by a world class team of practitioners, academics and leaders.

Students gain an internationally recognised level 7 qualification and teaching certificate: PGCEi in Group Instrument Learning.

The course is designed to meet the needs of busy educators, many of whom have portfolio careers that balance teaching, performance and more. The course is structured to enable

teachers to study alongside their other demands and commitments, and apply their learning to their work in real time. Average cohort sizes of 20 enable focused, personal support and nurture the culture of community. Participants are taught through a range of formats including lecture and workshops throughout the induction and teaching weekends, and in-school observations particularly within Music Masters' Flagship Primary Schools in London, which play a key role in supporting participants' learning. This is underpinned by group study sessions, access to a virtual learning environment with a wide range of tried and tested resources, social events and on-tap check-ins with the course team, and personal mentoring with a carefully chosen mentor. Music Masters favours a coaching approach to mentoring which sees mentors inspire mentees to develop their own solutions through active listening and thoughtful use of questions. This encourages independent, critical and collaborative thinking, which mirrors a core aspect of our work with young people also.

Musicians of Change (PGCEi) comprises four modules earning participants 60 credits. Topics covered across the modules include 'from subject expert to educator' – a deep-dive into teachers' individual experience,

knowledge and expertise as musicians and how this translates into their work as educators, learning in context including the barriers children may experience to learning, pedagogy and practical teaching skills for inclusive group teaching, repertoire diversification, professional conduct and much more. Participants are supported to develop their skills in reflective practice, enabling them to consider how their learning translates into and continues to inform their own work.

Through supporting employees to undertake this course, we have seen employers successfully incentivise recruitment and retention of staff, creating a community of enthusiastic, supported and confident professionals. Likewise, feedback from schools recognises the positive impact of Musicians of Change-trained teachers on their communities. School leaders and classroom teachers have noted graduates' specific skills in delivering inclusive group teaching and praised their contextual understanding of and integration into the school environment, aiding the recognition of specialist music teachers as valuable and impactful team members, and helping to secure music's integral place in the school curriculum.



Ongoing study

Musicians of Change (PGCEi) can prepare teachers for routes to further study and qualifications including an MMus in Performance at Royal Welsh Conservatoire of Music and Drama or an Assessment Only Route leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) at Birmingham City University providing all additional criteria for accessing these routes are met.

Musicians of Change (PGCE): Reach & Impact 2019-24

Over five years, Musicians of Change (PGCEi) has demonstrated that when music teachers are well supported, their influence reaches far beyond the classroom. Here we explore how our programme equips educators with the tools to meet children's needs, elevate the quality of music teaching in their workplaces, lead change across the sector, and help build a more representative and resilient workforce for the future.

Meeting the needs of children and young people

Inclusion is more than a value of Musicians of Change (PGCEi) – it's a driving force. Every single graduate (100%) has reported a greater confidence in delivering inclusive music teaching as a result of studying with Music Masters. This powerful outcome speaks to the depth and impact of this training, which aims to equip educators with a wide toolkit of skills, knowledge and inclusive teaching strategies. Graduates highlight how their participation in Musicians of Change (PGCEi) has motivated them to explore and interrogate the definition of inclusivity in their teaching contexts, and report an enhanced ability to understand and respond to the diverse needs of the children and young people with whom they work.

Annual programme evaluations reveal that teachers who complete the programme feel more competent in classroom management, lesson planning, differentiation, integrating child and youth voice, facilitating creativity and using music for emotional regulation.

Raye Harvey (2021 cohort) explained that she didn't previously have much experience of working in SEND settings, but through the programme learned a significant amount about how to make her teaching more inclusive for different abilities. With a notable increase of children and young people with SEND in recent years²¹, training that enables music teachers not only to better support children with special educational needs and disabilities but also to nurture their individual progression can have an enormous impact on children whose potential may otherwise have been overlooked.

This theme of supporting individual potential was also clear in a lesson observation of Jane Parry (2024 cohort), made by a class teacher at Ysgol Tregarth Primary School in Gwynedd: "He's quite a low-in-confidence child and he performed today in front of everyone. There's quite a few of them like who wouldn't usually fancy it, who wouldn't want you to read their story or look at their maths answer or something, but today he went "I'll do it" because he knew he could do it, and he was just keen to show everyone."



of graduates feel more confident demonstrating best practices in inclusive music teaching.

"This year has made me realise that I am good at what I do and there is always space for me to grow and develop to be an even better teacher. I can differentiate effectively and include youth voice to facilitate more creativity in the lessons through composition and improvising, as well as listening tasks. I could go on forever, I have taken so much away from this course, it's been incredible!"

- Amrit Sohal, 2024 Cohort

"It was very inspirational, very motivational, just to meet and talk to lots of other music educators, the course leaders and the fellow students, and feel like you're part of that team of people trying to do things a bit differently, trying to make a difference, and trying to sort of really drive things forward in music education."

- Isobel Mortimer, 2023 Cohort

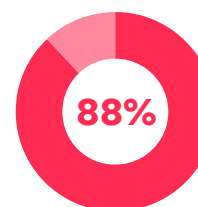
Excelling in the workplace

Music organisations that our graduates work with have observed the many ways in which their enhanced knowledge, skills and confidence are being applied to make learning experiences for children and young people more engaging and inclusive. Graduates have demonstrated significant growth in diversifying their teaching content, applying innovative methods, delivering lessons with improved pace and clarity, while embodying the ethos of lifelong reflection on their practice.

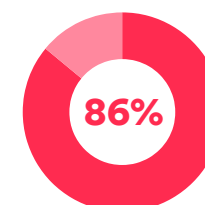
Alison Howells of the Cardiff County & Vale of Glamorgan Youth Orchestra noticed this significant change in her colleague Tabitha Selley (2023 cohort), stating "The way she's developed, coming up with fantastic lesson plans, bringing her own ideas and suggestions... and also wanting to help other staff with what she's learned. It's been absolutely fantastic for her." Tabitha's employers reported how her increased confidence, knowledge and motivation to provide diverse music-making opportunities for children and young people led her to identify a gap in offering chamber music within her music service. To address this gap, Tabitha piloted a new course which was well-received and later integrated into the service's programming.

"I will always be grateful to Music Masters. Since graduating from the PGCEi, I have secured a full-time role coordinating creative learning programmes in the North East for young people and I am LOVING it! This wouldn't have been possible without the knowledge, skills and confidence I developed during the course."

- Samantha Hung, 2024 Cohort



of graduates feel less isolated following the programme.



of graduates feel the benefit of a wider, more national professional network.

Supporting teaching peers

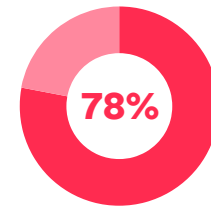
In response to the challenges of isolation and lack of professional development opportunities in the workforce, our graduates are actively supporting and strengthening the wider teaching community. Many have taken on mentoring roles and are guiding new teachers, sharing knowledge and skills developed through the programme. Additionally, graduates are fostering collaboration and motivating other colleagues, contributing to creating a more connected and resilient workforce.

This was clearly demonstrated when, during her time on the course, Phaedra Nicholls (2023 cohort) was invited by her employer, Wolverhampton Music Service, to lead a joint training session with Dudley Music Service. Reflecting on the session, her employer highlighted Phaedra's well-structured, confident and pedagogically sound delivery, linking her growth to her participation in Musicians of Change (PGCEi). They also noted that Phaedra's leadership had the potential to inspire other colleagues to explore and implement new practices themselves.

14 graduates have now become mentors on Musicians of Change (PGCEi), supporting teachers in subsequent cohorts.

“Colleagues of mine saw that I was now approaching my learning differently and saw more confidence in my CPD delivery with far more theoretical knowledge. I am sure it was that change in me that sparked others to explore the options around training with Music Masters and indeed one other staff member took the opportunity to complete the course after me. Tameside Music Service have employed another graduate of the course recently and have done so with confidence that the tutor will fit in with the growth mindset culture we try to build at Tameside. The skills I am continuing to build on as a mentor on the course are being used in my role of line managing and continue to have a positive impact.”

– Chris Jolly, 2022 Cohort and now mentor on Musicians of Change (PGCEi)

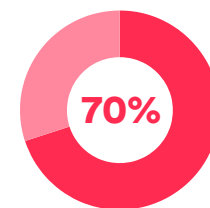


of graduates are now coaching, mentoring or supporting other music educators.

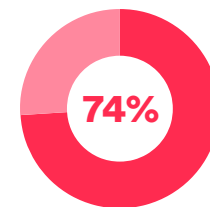
Leading the Change

With increased awareness of the challenges facing the sector and improved confidence in the role they can play in facilitating change, many graduates have taken up leadership roles and feel that Musicians of Change (PGCEi) has played a part in supporting this career progression.

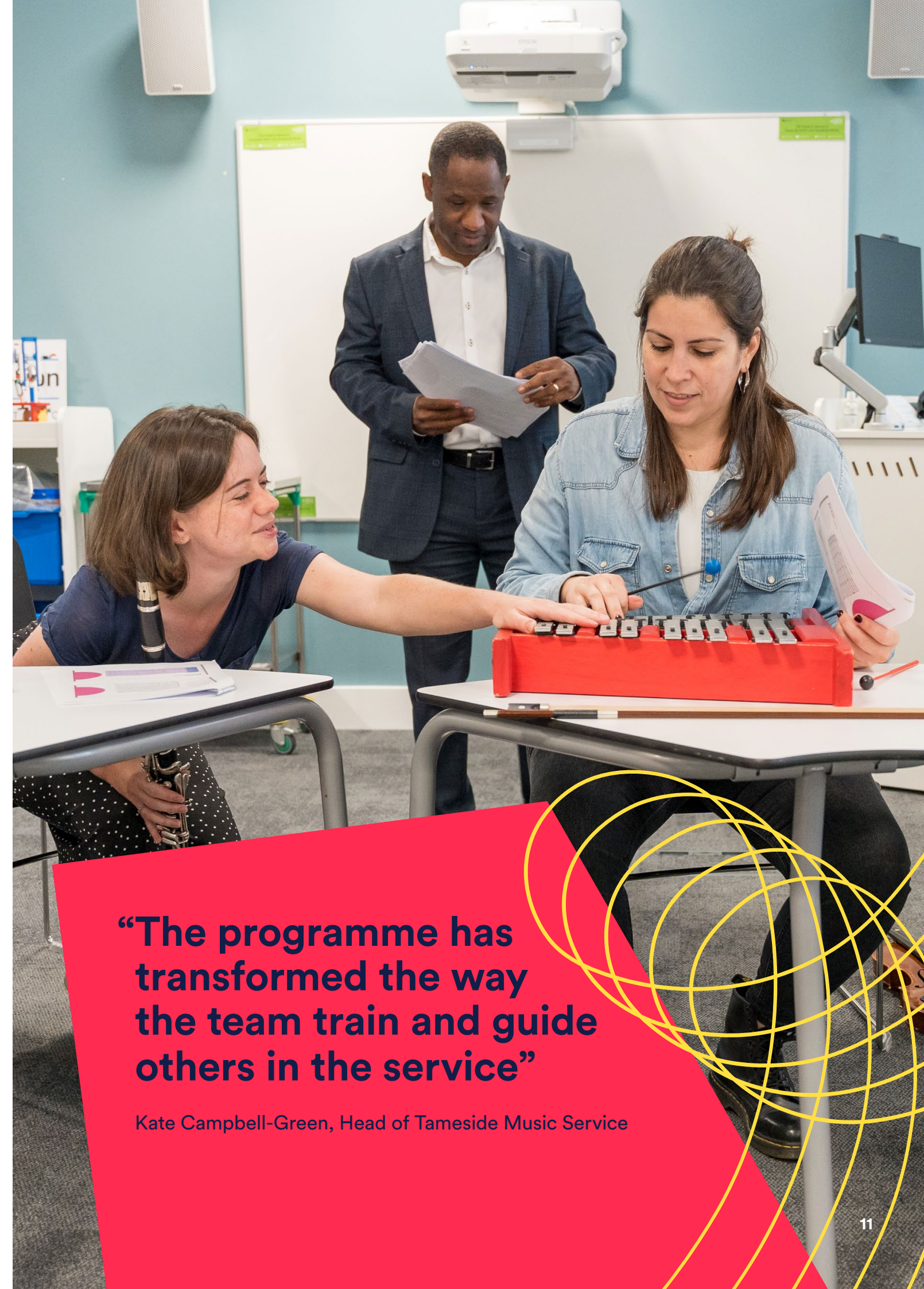
Graduates are actively advancing conversations around Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in their workplaces, sharing their insights with colleagues and initiating new projects. Together, this trickle-down impact is not only improving the learning experience of children and young people today but also helping build a more representative music education workforce that supports future generations.



of graduates have accepted job offers in lead or managerial positions within the music, education and charity sectors.



of graduates have initiated, designed or co-led new projects and partnerships within or outside their regular teaching workplace.



“The programme has transformed the way the team train and guide others in the service”

Kate Campbell-Green, Head of Tameside Music Service



Change stories



Alix Shepherd 2023 Graduate

Alix Shepherd, a graduate from our 2023 cohort has transitioned into a Training Manager Role at The Glasshouse International Center for Music in Gateshead. As a result of doing the course, Alix had an increased awareness around key elements of training and practice, especially its intersection with EDI. In his new role, he hopes to enhance the quality of training opportunities being offered to teachers and advance his organisation's EDI journey.

"Having done the course, you become more aware of elements of training and practice and certainly the EDI thing is huge for me.... It's something that I feel like I can add some weight to in this [new] role and continue the conversation about what we're doing and how we're doing it."



Isobel Mortimer 2023 Graduate

Isobel attributed participation in Musicians of Change (PGCEi) to taking up the role of Inclusion Lead role at the Cumbria Music Hub. This also marked a transition for her from classroom teaching to a management-level position. She highlighted how collaborating with other like-minded music educators and course leaders, who are all striving to drive change in music education, gave her a sense of much-needed belonging and inspiration.

"My participation on the course is one of the things that contributed to being able to apply for that inclusion lead role. So, it has helped pave the way from classroom teacher to that first step into a management level job"



Hannah Taylor 2024 Graduate

Hannah, now the Senior Service Lead at Tri-borough Music Hub, stated that the programme transformed her understanding of high-quality music education and equipped her to support and mentor teachers more effectively.

"My responsibilities for the Hub include a large number of supporting visits to tutors and I feel much better equipped to help them understand how they can better their practice as educators, and to problem solve any challenges. I have a bigger toolkit of ideas for teaching-not to mention a network of brilliant peers who also took part in the course to connect with when needed!"

Her employer, Stuart Whatmore also pointed to how Hannah's enhanced knowledge and skills have had an impact on the wider team.

"The course has had a significantly positive impact on Hannah which has led to direct dissemination from her to the wider team and the tutor workforce, so this is a real win across the board. To access high-quality pedagogic training is important for the workforce so they can better serve the needs of all learners. The Musicians of Change programme meets this need, and the Tri-borough Music Hub would happily support other team members to access this in the future."

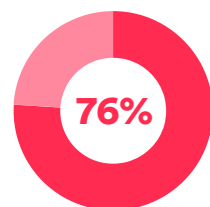


Theatre Clwyd Mold

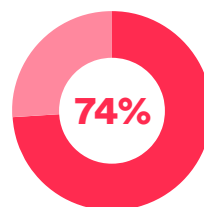
For Theatre Clwyd, an arts and theatre center based in Northeast Wales, the Musicians of Change programme has been instrumental in supporting their focus on equity, diversity and inclusion. Several staff members have enrolled on the programme over the last few years advancing their knowledge and understanding in this area. One of the organisation's former leaders highlighted how graduates have shared their gained insights within the team advancing the organisation's EDI strategy.

Committing to state music education

An unexpected but incredibly important outcome of our first five years of Musicians of Change (PGCEi) is its impact on teacher retention in the state sector. Against a challenging landscape for music teacher recruitment, the vast majority of our graduates report that their participation in Musicians of Change (PGCEi) has played a role in their retention in the state education sector, with most continuing to teach in state schools for at least three years after completing the programme. Graduates report feeling invested in, more aware of their teaching context and ready to commit to making change in the communities that most need high quality, inclusive provision.



of graduates state that MoC has contributed to them continuing to teach in state schools.



of graduates responded "yes" when asked if they continue to teach in state schools at least three years after completing the programme

"This course has made me feel invested in and invigorated in my practice. It has shown me that what I do really does matter, whereas before it was sometimes easy to slip into disillusionment due to lack of interest from managers and schools. It has reassured me that my basic instincts and teaching techniques are good, but shown me so many more ways that I can expand from here."

– Anonymous, 2023 cohort

The statistics below do not include graduates that have transitioned from teaching to other leadership roles, still playing an active and important role in the music education sector.

Removing financial barriers to ensure representation

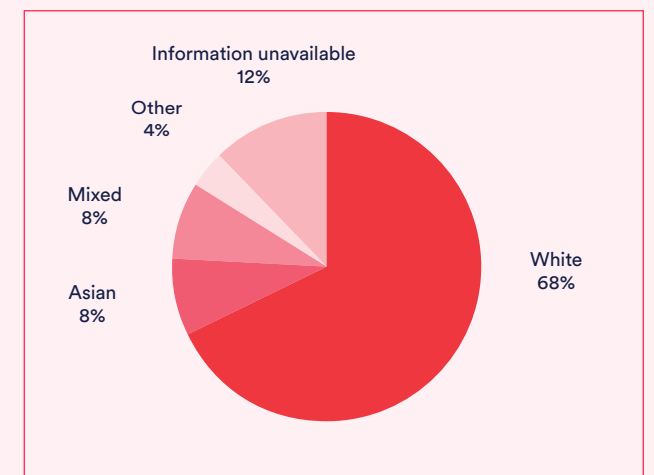
If the workforce is ever to become representative of the communities being taught it is crucial that teacher training and professional development is affordable. We understand very well that many teachers – particularly those working in the state sector – do not have significant disposable income. Between 2019-2024 we received restricted funding of £839,000 from like-minded funders towards Musicians of Change (PGCEi). Their commitment to investing in the music education workforce enabled us to subsidise every course place by at least 80%, giving access to this high-level training to those for whom it may otherwise be unaffordable. In addition, for two years during the Covid-19 pandemic, all course places were fully funded in recognition of the pandemic's impact on music teachers' livelihoods.

Further, to address workforce underrepresentation and promote the importance of diverse role models for children and young people, between 2019-2024 we offered 14 participants (16% of graduates) targeted bursaries specifically to support Global Majority and Disabled music educators, meaning that their course places were fully funded.

"It has been wonderful meeting other teachers but most importantly teachers that look like me. It is crucial to institutional development to have teachers of different backgrounds. It's important to demonstrate diversity in workspaces, so people who look like me do not get boxed into only doing certain things. The only reason why this happens is due to lack of access, it is wrong and unfair and completely unreasonable under all circumstances, particularly in 2023"

– Samantha Brown, 2023 cohort

In our 2023-24 cohort, participants with Asian, Mixed and Other Ethnicity formed at least 20% of the cohort with 12% of participants on the cohort identified as having SEND. This is higher than the national average for students on higher education (HE) music programmes as reported by data across HE between 2016-20.



Ethnic split of Musicians of Change (PGCEi)
23-24 Cohort

Additional bursary support has been provided music educators at early stages in their career and those with caring responsibilities. Finally, to ensure that resources are being prioritised to make the biggest difference, where possible bursaries are also provided for educators working in areas of particular socio-economic deprivation.

Significant financial subsidy and bursary support has enabled access to the programme for a broad mix of participants at different career stages, from recent undergraduate to seasoned teachers. Participating teachers reported that these diverse perspectives further enrich the learning environment, allowing them to learn from each other's unique insights and challenges. While experienced educators might find renewed energy and fresh approaches to their teaching, newer teachers develop practical skills and confidence that can immediately elevate their overall practice in schools.

"I had been teaching for 12 years already, I when I came to do this course. So, I think it's just given me a new lease of life, I suppose, and new ways of looking at things. And as well, making sure, as we move forward, to be more inclusive as well in the way that we teach"

– Phaedra Nicholls, 2023 Cohort

Musicians of Change (PGCEi): Teacher and pupil reach

Musicians of Change (PGCEi) graduates work in diverse locations spread across the United Kingdom, from Aberdeen in the north to Penzance in southwest, from rural communities in North Wales to urban centers in the English Midlands. They work with children and young people in some of the most deprived and underserved areas in the country, improving access to quality music education.

Between 2019-2024

84 music teachers

graduated from Musicians of Change (PGCEi)

Over 28,000 state school pupils

have been taught by our graduates so far

70% of our graduates

work in 30% of most deprived areas in England, Scotland and Wales

“ I love that (the course) feels very current and in step with our ever-changing world!... It helps to shape one's world view – not only in terms of music education but in terms of the role of music in society ”

– Musicians of Change (PGCEi) graduate

Participants work or have worked with:

In Harmony Liverpool
Sistema Scotland
Wolverhampton Music Service
Nucleo, London
Tameside Music Service
Services for Education, Birmingham
Theatr Cylwd Music
Gwasanaeth Cerdd Ysgolion
Benedetti Foundation
Cardiff Music Service
Codi'r To
Merton Music Foundation
Lewisham Music
Artforms, Leeds
The Glasshouse, Gateshead
In Harmony Newcastle
Orchestras For All
Pembrokeshire Music Service
Swansea Music
Bristol Beacon
Hull Music Service
Sheffield Music Hub
Music In Secondary Schools Trust (MISST)
MusicAbility CIC
National Music Service Wales
North Lincolnshire Music
Shropshire Music Service
Milton Keynes Music Service (BLMK Music Hub)
Triborough Music Hub

Key

● Musicians of Change (PGCEi) student locations

Supported teachers are empowered teachers

The influence of Musicians of Change (PGCEi) on the confidence, wellbeing and significantly increased knowledge and skills of its graduates makes the case clear for specialist music teacher training as both greatly needed and widely impactful. Shouldn't we all be asking: **How can more teachers access this programme?**

From the nationwide spread of music teachers we have trained through this programme, we've been able to demonstrate the relevance and suitability of this programme for music teachers. We've correlated graduates' personal progression through Musicians of Change (PGCEi) with the impact on their school communities and beyond this seen a crucial connection with retention within the profession and the state education sector. There are thousands more music educators who could benefit from this programme, and we urge you to work in partnership with us to make this happen.

For musicians considering a career involving teaching, or seasoned musicians with an active interest in community and education work, we understand that a year-long, teaching-specific course may not quite suit. In the coming years we expect to launch a suite of short courses for a range of musician career profiles, schedules and budgets. Through doing so we aim to attract more diverse musicians to the world of education, build a broader community of experience and provide a stepping stone into Musicians of Change (PGCEi) for those that aspire to undertake this highly respected qualification. We will continue to nurture our growing network of Musicians of Change

(PGCEi) graduates, in particular through supporting them to become mentors, coaches and facilitators ready to inspire other musicians on their journeys as educators.

With our eye closely on the aftermath of the recent Music Education Hub restructure, the impact of an identified £161.4m shortfall in funding for music education²², a highly uncertain financial landscape for charities like Music Masters, and ongoing funding challenges facing schools, we're constantly seeking ways to financially support and incentivise our training programmes regardless of how educators are paid or contracted. Our programmes are designed to support and enhance existing music education infrastructure and engage music teachers and communities who could most benefit, as opposed to those able to afford professional development. Alongside seeking new funding avenues, we'll be exploring more accessible online training and virtual learning platforms as a means to reaching more teachers and improving the quality of music education at scale.

Finally, we want to raise the profile of specialist music teachers as an essential part of the music education and broader education

landscape; we know and have seen over many years the impact that these dedicated individuals can have on school communities. As such we strongly believe that specialist training at the level and depth of Musicians of Change (PGCEi) should result in teachers' pay and conditions being no lower than that

of non-specialist classroom teachers. Currently, this is rarely the case. Without a substantial attitudinal shift from policy-makers in the value of teacher training with real financial consequences, the quality and future of education will continue to remain uncertain.

What you can do

If you're a teaching musician working in the state sector, join our community of empowered change-making educators. Find out more about Musicians of Change (PGCEi), register your interest if you'd like to observe teaching in our award-winning Flagship Schools Programme or find out more about our short courses, and follow us on social media for teaching opportunities.

If you contract or employ music teachers, reach out to us about how we can help provide highly subsidised access to training and support that can significantly enhance your school or organisation.

If you're a school, federation or Multi-Academy Trust that wants to improve its musical offer to pupils, join the list to be amongst the first to hear about our developing national schools' support offer and the chance to be involved with its pilot.

If you are involved with music education policy, we desperately need your help to advocate and ensure funding is available for specialist teachers please email our CEO, Roz De Vile. If the government is serious about delivering a high quality, equitable and inclusive music education for all children, specialist music teachers must be better valued, supported, and compensated.

If you have the means to join us in funding Musicians of Change (PGCEi) at any level, email our Development Director Pippa Johnson to find out how you can help. Your support could be transformational for future change-making graduates and their pupils.



Data Sources and Methodology

In late 2024, a detailed survey was sent to Musicians of Change (PGCEi) graduates asking them to reflect on the impact of the course on their professional journeys and current perceptions, years after graduating. Since the aim was to understand long-term outcomes of the programme, the survey was sent out to educators from cohorts 1-4 (2019-2023) who had graduated at least one year prior. The response rate was 71% with 48 out of 64 graduates completing the survey.

Building on the survey results, we followed up with some of these graduates and their workplaces to gather qualitative insights regarding the programme's impact. These findings were further corroborated with quantitative and qualitative evaluation data collected over the past five years. Pupil data from our most recent graduating cohort (2023-24) helped to build a wider picture of reach in the five year period 2019-24.

Our Funders

Without ongoing funding from dedicated individuals, organisations, trusts and foundations that understand the importance of high quality, inclusive teaching in state education, our work would not be possible. We are endlessly grateful for their belief in our work and in the ability for music teachers to change lives, which we see happen every single day.

With particular thanks to the following funders who specifically funded Musicians of Change (PGCEi) during 2019-2024:

- The Karlsson Jativa Charitable Foundation
- The Linbury Trust
- The Albert and Eugenie Frost Music Trust
- Thriplow Charitable Trust
- The Rachel Baker Memorial Charity
- The Emmanuel Kaye Foundation
- A donor choosing to remain anonymous

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