

First Access and Continuation Grants: Frequently Asked Questions

What is First Access?

First Access is the name given to whole-class instrumental teaching. It is also known as Wider Opportunities. The Arts Council monitor all music education hubs (MEHs) in England to ensure that they fulfil eight key objectives. First Access is one of those eight objectives. Every MEH must:

“Ensure that every child aged five to 18 has the opportunity to learn a musical instrument (other than voice) through whole-class ensemble teaching programmes for ideally a year (but for a minimum of a term) of weekly tuition on the same instrument.”

We define First Access as a programme that:

- gives all children in at least one year group the opportunity to learn a musical instrument
- runs for a minimum of a ten consecutive weeks
- gives children the practical use of their own musical instrument for the duration of each session

What is Continuation?

Continuation is another of the eight objectives of MEHs. Specifically, MEHs must:

“Ensure that clear progression routes are available and affordable to all young people.”

If you would like to find out more about the core and extension roles of music education hubs, including how they are funded and scrutinised, please visit <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/music-education/music-education-hubs>.

Our criteria for continuation funding is a little more flexible (see guidelines overleaf) but we are happy to consider all proposals that genuinely support as many children as possible to carry on with their instrumental learning.

Will our school need to purchase instruments?

No. The Love Music Trust makes instruments available at no cost to any Cheshire East school for use on a First Access programme. However, so that we can ensure we have the necessary stock, we must receive your grant application - detailing instrument requirements - by Friday 24th May 2019.

Do we need to purchase external provision?

No. Most schools do utilise an external provider or independent specialist, but some find that they already have an ‘in-school’ programme which fulfils the criteria for First Access (see overleaf) e.g. a whole class recorder programme.

If we do purchase external provision, does it have to be from the Love Music Trust?

No. The Love Music Trust do provide tuition services but, unlike most music education hubs, we give schools the choice as to who delivers their tuition.

Guidance notes: Primary School Music Engagement Grants 2021/22

- a) The **First Access Grant** is available to all primary schools, and:
 - i. must support a programme which gives pupils in at least one year group/cohort the opportunity to learn a musical instrument.
 - ii. must support learning which takes place for a minimum of ten consecutive weeks (notwithstanding staff illness, school closures, trips etc.)
 - iii. must support sessions of a minimum of 40 minutes duration. Where a group contains 15 pupils or fewer, the minimum session length may be 30 minutes.
 - iv. For the duration of each session, every pupil should have practical use of their own instrument (i.e. not sharing use of an instrument with another pupil, unless appropriate e.g. keyboard).
- b) The **Continuation Grant** is available to all primary schools, and:
 - i. must go support pupils who have previously participated in a First Access programme to continue to learn an instrument.
 - ii. may support a continuation project which runs within that same academic year. Where a school runs a one- or two-term first access programme which concludes before the end of the academic year, the funding.
 - iii. must be spent on provision which a school provides itself or purchases from an external provider makes itself and cannot be claimed where parents/carers pay a third party directly for tuition.
 - iv. may be applied to offset the cost of your First Access (Wider Opportunities) programme where the provision purchased is delivered to two (or more) year groups/cohorts.
- c) the **Music Engagement Grant** is available to secondary and special schools to develop new musical activity. In order to claim the grant, you must submit a short online application, detailing what the funding will go towards.
- d) All schools must complete the annual Arts Council England / Department for Education Data Return. This is a reflective survey regarding overall musical activity and engagement in school during the 2020/21 academic year and must be completed by **Wednesday 30th June 2021**. This can be accessed at <https://lovemusictrust.com/schools/gateway/>.
- e) Where schools enter into a grant funding agreement, it is understood that this constitutes the school working as a partner of the music education hub for Cheshire East.
- f) Your school will agree to follow the Cheshire East Framework for the Quality Assurance of Music Education. This can be viewed at <https://lovemusictrust.com/schools/gateway/> and is subject to annual review by the hub steering group. In accordance with the framework, LMT may organise a quality assurance visit or visits for which timetabling information must be provided.
- g) Other than for tuition delivered by the Love Music Trust, copy invoices / statements will need to be provided to show that the total grant given has not exceeded the amount spent by a school.
- h) Applications requiring the free loan of instruments for First Access tuition must be received by **Friday 28th May 2021** to ensure stock availability.
- i) Payment will be made to your school via credit note if your school purchases provision from the Love Music Trust or direct bank transfer if your school does not purchase provision from LMT.
- j) In an effort to support pupils to continue to learn following their First Access experience, instruments can be hired for £3.00 per month for the first twelve months (this rises to £6.00, the standard rate, thereafter). This is dependent on stock availability and parents/schools will hire these directly from the Love Music Trust.
- k) 2021/22 grant funding which remains unclaimed at the end of July 2021 may be re-allocated to alternative educational initiatives as deemed appropriate by the Trust's management, steering group and trustees.