

Moray Council – Education and Social Care
Instrumental Instruction Service

Report by COSLA, Scottish Govt. and MEPG: Guidance to support local authorities in their decision making in relation to instrumental music tuition policies (Feb 2019)

Based on the report above:

- Policies, procedures or action points in place
- Action points for implementation/discussion to support and strengthen the Instrumental Instruction Service based on COSLA recommendations

Recommendation	Moray Council Instrumental Instruction Service
<p><u>Reviewing Charging and Concessions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COSLA’s Children and Young People Board agreed there should be no charging for students who have entitlement for Free School Meals , and no charging for students who are studying for an SQA qualification in music. 2. Local Authorities should review their charging policies and concessionary schemes to ensure that pupils in their area are not prevented from learning a musical instrument because of their background, location, disability or financial circumstances. 3. Examples of good practice – sharing information between local authorities, engaging with parents/carers, giving full consideration to the potential unintended consequences of changes to charging and concessionary regimes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All current and prospective young people in Moray entitled to Free School Meals are exempt from Instrumental Instruction charges • All young people working towards an SQA qualification in Music (S4 and above) are exempt from Instrumental Instruction charges. • Charges reviewed annually by local elected representatives <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review current tax/benefits and update exemption criteria for New Start Permission Letters ○ Establish yearly MC comparison tables for charging/non-charging ○ Compare figures nationally using Improvement Service Survey (November) ○ Elected representatives to take greater consideration to the potential unintended consequences of changes to charging and concessionary regimes annually.
<p><u>Good Practice for Reviewing Charging and Concessions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Authorities should review their charging policies and concessionary schemes to ensure that pupils in their area are not prevented from learning a musical instrument because of their background, location, disability or financial circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full consideration has always been given to the potential unintended consequences to charging and concession regimes. • Opening up and establishing good connections/relationships with neighbouring local authorities to start work collegiately and share ideas/good practice. • Contributions to National Improvement Survey and use to compare charges and concessions with all other local authorities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equity, Poverty Impact, Children’s Rights, and Wellbeing Impact assessments done to ensure full consideration given when reviewing charges and concessions. ○ Review current tax/benefits and update exemption criteria for New Start Permission Letters ○ Establish Parent Focus Group/Friends of Moray Music Centre and engage appropriately with service users when considering changes to IIS/MMC
<p><u>Concessions and Exemption Practice</u></p> <p>1. Different concessions and exemptions in place across all local authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All young people in Moray entitled to Free School Meals receive free instrumental instruction ● All young people in Moray studying towards and SQA qualification in Music receive free instrumental instruction (S4 onwards) ● Parents/Carers currently offered opportunity to set up direct debit rather than pay full year ● Pupils currently discouraged from taking a second instrument ● Some Moray schools providing music tuition with PEF, little relationship between schools/IIS. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look into concessions for: families receiving benefits, families receiving clothing grant, discounts for siblings, ○ Consider discounts for young people taking a second instrument (look at demand for piano) ○ Consider free provision in initial year of tuition ○ Establish greater payment flexibility for parents/carers – investigate iPay Impact further ○ Consider privately sponsored fund to offer means tested bursary to middle income families ○ Develop framework to support pupils/parents who express cost of lessons an issue – work closely with schools/PT music teacher to minimise impact
<p><u>Sharing Information between Local Authorities</u></p> <p>1. Sharing information with other local authorities can help to support the provision in individual areas by spreading good practice and innovative provision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Little collaborative work with other local authorities prior to appointment of Acting HoS. ● Moray figures included in National Improvement Survey ● Opening up and establishing good connections/relationships with neighbouring local authorities to start work collegiately and share

<p>2. There is an increased emphasis on collaborative working and building good relationships via Regional Improvement Collaboratives.</p>	<p>ideas/good practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Starting to network with various groups focussed on improving instrumental instruction – HITS, YMI, EIS IMT Network ● Establishing and strengthening relationships with neighbouring IIS managers, ACC and Highland. ● Offers of support already coming from various IIS managers from across the county <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to establish new links with other local authorities and strengthen existing connections by offering support and sharing relevant and appropriate information with National Improvement Survey/other local authority IISs. ○ Consider shared in-service/training days – shared cost/networking opportunities for all instructors. (NYCOS) ○ Send interested instructors to national conferences to represent Moray nationally (SAME) ○ Look closer to home and establish/strengthen connections with schools/staff/private music enterprises (Ryan Mack, Gordonstoun, local amateur music groups)
<p><u>Engaging with Parents/Carers and frontline Service Users</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents and Carers should be appropriately engaged when considering the introduction of charging or when making changes to fee levels. 2. Local authorities should avoid issuing invoices to the parents/carers of children receiving tuition without warning and explanation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents/Carers currently informed of changes to charging and fee levels via letter ● MMC Facebook – 763 followers – currently used to update parents/carers ● Pupil Progress Diaries used to keep parents up to date with pupil progress on weekly basis ● Some instructors write annual Pupil Progress Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Friends of Moray Music Centre/IIS Parent Focus Group to be established in August – Parents/Carers to be consult directly regarding changes to IIS/MMS ○ Introduce email as stronger/more direct lines of communication with Parents/Carers ○ Refine and ensure relevance of information shared with Parents/Carers via MMC Facebook page ○ Make Parents/Carers aware of MMC Facebook page – create additional ‘signature’ for letters/emails directing them toward information pages

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Produce a comprehensive Parents Information Booklet/webpage which clearly sets out what is offered by MC IIS/MMC, what the associated fees are, and sets out clear exemption information ○ Establish Parents Information Evening for new start parents/carers
<p><u>Potential Unintended Consequences of Charging Policies</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charges are often introduced by local authorities in an effort to maintain local instrumental music instruction – this however can have unintended consequences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Councillors need to be aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ potential unintended consequences of charging policies, i.e <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reductions in uptake can impact on participation in ensembles and orchestras further reducing income - reductions in uptake can lead to underemployed instructors ▪ uncertainty and reduced moral among music instructors due to decision making and the threat of cuts on a yearly basis.

Desired outcome – Through the sharing of information and good practice, better engagement with parents and carers, and fully considering the consequences of decisions local authority Instrumental Instruction Services will be able to maintain services while maximising access and equal opportunities for children and young people.

Priorities

1. Review charging and concessions for 2019-20 and update Notification of Spaces and New Start Letter
2. Review how charging and concession policies are changed and implemented and establish a parent group for engaging on decision making
3. Consider impact to charging and concession policies on all service users and develop a framework to assess individual circumstances where cost of lessons is an issue
4. Continue to work with instructors, PT music teachers, neighbouring instrumental instruction services and national focus groups to share ideas and good practice
5. Provide councillors with a report which clearly highlights the unintended consequences of charging policies to all associated with the Instrumental Instruction Service, and which clearly outlines the steps being taking by the Instrumental Instruction Service to implement and build upon the policies and procedures outlines by the Guidance produced by COSLA.

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June 2019