

Inquiry: Funding for and access to music education

Committee Visit to Lewis School Pengam

Assembly Members in attendance:	Officials in attendance:
Bethan Jenkins (Chair)	Sian Hughes, Research Advisor
Dawn Bowden	Adam Vaughan, Second Clerk
Dai Lloyd	Lowri Harries, Deputy Clerk
Neil Hamilton	Rhea James, Team Support

Following the Committee meeting on 18 May 2017 Members attended Lewis School Pengam as part of their inquiry. The Committee were met by the Head Teacher, Chris Parry and the Head of Music, Beth Jenkins.

Members visited the Music Department and were given a series of performances by the school's pupils, playing and recording a variety of different instruments.

After these performances/discussions the Head of Music delivered a presentation to the Committee. Beth informed Members of the variety of techniques taught at the school and gave some examples of the pupils who have progressed to lead very successful careers due to the skills they acquired at Lewis School Pengam.

A copy of the presentation is attached for Members who were unable to attend. Beth Jenkins highlighted some of the key issues facing Music Education within her presentation which the Members found very interesting.

Some of the topics covered in the presentation included:

- Young Vision, a collective of six form students, collaborated to produce an EP in order to raise funds for the Teenage Cancer Trust;
- The Amy Wadge Scholarship allowed the school's students to be taught song writing skills and was facilitated by the equipment provided to the school by Caerphilly Arts, a local authority music service;



- Lewis School Pengam has benefitted greatly from the (not genre specific) Forte Project, a project set up by the (UK wide) PRS Foundation and part funded by the Arts Council for Wales:

“Brought to you by the minds behind the Young Promoters Network, in co-ordination with SONIG Youth Music, Arts Connect and Arts Council of Wales, the Forté Project aims to take ten emerging artists from regions which span across the areas of Rhondda Cynon Taff, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan, collectively known as Arts Connect.”¹

- The school runs song writing workshops for the more able and talented (MAT) pupils in years 9, 10 and 11;
- The BBC’s Ten Pieces Initiative, an initiative which “aims to open up classical music to a new generation of children and inspire them to develop their own creative responses to music through a range of art forms”² has been used by the school as a collaborative venture between them and their feeder primary school, Ystrad Mynach.

“The results were outstanding and they were picked up by the BBC and now feature on the BBC’s Ten Pieces homepage.”³

- Artists from Lewis School Pengam have performed, and had much success, in competitions such as:

Caerphilly Contemporary Young Musician (an annual competition held at the Caerphilly Music Service’s Performing Arts Studio in Pontllanfraith); and

Bath and Mid Somerset Festival (the Festival is a registered charity and is administered entirely by volunteers);

The Music for Youth Festival – “Music for Youth is a national youth music charity working to provide young people aged 21 and under across the UK with free, life-changing performance and progression opportunities, regardless of background or musical style.”⁴

¹ <http://www.forteproject.co.uk/about/>

² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01vs08w>

³ Annexe

⁴ <http://www.mfy.org.uk/about/our-work/>



– The school’s visions for the future, which include:

“Academy for Rock and Pop pupils for 11+ that matches the tuition offered at RWCMD for classical musicians;

National ensembles/songwriting opportunities in Rock and Pop;

Competitions to match classical competitions;

Ability for pupils to trace careers and jobs in the Rock and Pop Industries – Creative Scotland.”⁵

– Here are some photos from the visit.



⁵ Annexe