The concept is a simple one: schools are where every child should be able to have a good basic musical education. Schools are funded to provide this and to ensure their own staff have the knowledge, skills and expertise to deliver.

For first access, whole class ensemble programmes to slot meaningfully into the school’s own music curriculum, there needs to be a dialogue about what comes before first access and what comes afterwards. If this raises questions regarding the content or quality of the school’s own music curriculum, the opportunity is created to do something about it. How else can hubs ensure that they are providing value for money and a quality experience with the limited funds at their disposal?

The funding for first access, whole class ensemble programmes can come from the hub and/or from the school. But this is not the only priority for hub funds. There are four core activities.

For young people to benefit from the life-changing power of music they need to be able to access more than just the school music curriculum and to have more than just first access. They need to experience a range of instruments and musical styles and to have the opportunity to **progress** through to **excellence**. Available and affordable progression routes are as important as first access. Potential routes are too varied and diverse for any one individual or organisation to meet these needs for all young people. The ability to play in **ensembles** with others and for some, progressing through to national ensembles is equally essential, as is the opportunity to **sing**. This is why hubs were created.

Those who continue to engage in music beyond their school music curriculum may well be a minority of young people, but who continues should not be determined by ability to pay. Hubs, working in partnership with schools, local organisations and individual teachers are the answer and, in many cases they are succeeding. Passionate and committed teachers up and down the country daily inspire and motivate many young people to achieve great success. We need to continue to share and build on the excellent practice that exists.

The National Plan for Music Education provides a vision through to 2020. The needs analysis and business plan for each hub sets out the first steps towards this vision with the limited funding available for the first 3 years to 2015. By using this money well the arguments for no further cuts and, indeed, as the economy picks up, increased funding become all the stronger.