

Wokingham Children in Care are entitled to free instrumental or vocal specialist music tuition.



What Children in Care are entitled to

- Wokingham Children in Care are entitled to free instrumental or vocal specialist music tuition if they request it. Care Leavers that are actively engaging with some form of continuing education also have the same entitlement.
- The tuition can be on most common instruments such as flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, violin, cello, guitar or keyboard/piano. It can also be vocal (singing) lessons.
- Lessons are usually provided with other children in a group, but individual lessons are also available.
- As well as instrumental tuition, other musical activities can also be accessed. These include bands, choirs and orchestras as well as other workshops and events.
- Children who learn musical instruments often really enjoy playing as well as the social aspect of meeting others who are learning the same instrument. Learning a musical instrument can help to boost self-confidence and lots of studies show that it helps pupils to achieve better in other areas as well.

What you need to do

1. If you are interested in having instrumental or vocal music tuition, talk to people you know about which instrument you might choose and when the best time might be for you to start.
2. Once you have decided, contact someone from the Virtual School to formally request tuition, fill in the special application form that is available on the website. It is simplest if you send the form to the Virtual School for them to approve and send on to Berkshire Maestros.
3. Once Berkshire Maestros receive the tuition request, they will aim to find a suitable teacher within half a term. Note that depending on the tuition being requested, Berkshire Maestros may not have a suitable teacher available and there will be a longer wait before lessons can start. In this case Maestros operate a system of waiting lists.

Responsibilities

- The cost of music tuition will be funded, together with the hire costs for an instrument if required.
- Berkshire Maestros will normally provide music tuition as they are the main provider of Music Services in Wokingham as part of the 'Berkshire Music Hub' arrangements. If Maestros are unable to provide the requested tuition, or there are other special circumstances, it may be possible to fund another music tuition provider.

- The Child in Care is expected to practise regularly and to look after any musical instrument that is loaned to them.
- Foster carers can help by encouraging the Child to practise, as well as by ensuring the Child is able to get to lessons, etc.

More information

- Children in Care will have National Curriculum Music lessons while they are in primary school and secondary school, usually up to age 14. Some may then go on to study it optionally at GCSE and A Level.
- As part of primary school music, typically during Key Stage 2, all children will also be provided with a free period of music tuition as part of a government funded programme called 'First Access' or 'Wider Opportunities'.
- Primary aged Children in Care who want to learn an instrument may want to consider waiting until their period of free 'First Access' learning in Key Stage 2 and then start with other pupils. They will then be able to continue learning free of charge after the period of free learning finishes.
- Secondary aged Children in Care and Sixth Form students who want to learn an instrument can request tuition at any time. This applies whether or not they have already had a period of learning as part of First Access.



Wokingham Children in Care who live in other areas

- For Wokingham Children placed in other Authorities, the Local Music Service/Music Hub or school should usually provide the tuition.
- In some cases that Music Service will pay for tuition, but where this is not the case, arrangements can usually be made to pay for tuition from funds held on Wokingham's behalf by Berkshire Maestros in a special fund. This may involve paying direct or reimbursing at a later date as appropriate.

How do I find out more?

For more information, you can contact the music teacher or headteacher at your local school or the Virtual School. The school staff can then contact either the Chief Executive of Berkshire Maestros, Lynne Ellis, or David Congdon, ICT in Schools Commissioning Manager in Wokingham Children's Services.

- Berkshire Maestros (Local Music Service Provider) www.berkshiremaestros.org.uk/
- Lynne Ellis – Chief Executive, Berkshire Maestros: 0118 901 2361
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- David Congdon – ICT Commissioning Manager, Wokingham Children's Services: 07795 062247
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