

Policy 2026-27

Purpose:

To ensure that all provisions and opportunities offered by Hampshire Music Service / Hampshire Music Education Hub are fully accessible and affordable to all children and young people in Hampshire. These provisions include:

- Instrument hire
- County and area ensemble membership
- School-based activity, such as instrumental/vocal tuition and our range of SEND and alternative provisions
- Out-of-school provisions such as online tuition and holiday activities

Policy Statement:

Hampshire Music Service is committed to ensuring that its range of provision and opportunities are equitably available to all children and young people. We strive to remove the barriers and financial challenges that prevent participation in music education by offering reduced fees for instrument hire, ensemble memberships, and music lessons to eligible families based on income criteria.

Scope:

This policy applies to all children and young people who live or attend school in Hampshire and who participate in Hampshire Music Service provisions and opportunities.

Eligibility:

The Financial Assistance Policy applies to children and young people who fit the following eligibility criteria:

- **Free School Meals:** Government-provided meals for children from low-income families.
- **Universal Credit:** A government benefit for individuals and families with low income or unemployment.
- **Children in Care & Previously Looked after Children (CIC & PLAC):** Children who are under the care of the local authority.
- **Refugee Status:** Children and Young People who have Refugee Status will receive full financial assistance for a maximum of two years, or until parental employment is secured, whichever is earliest. After this, the usual eligibility criteria are applied.

Responsibilities:

- **Hampshire Music Service:** Responsible for implementing the Financial Assistance policy and ensuring affordability is not a barrier to access.

- **Schools:** Responsible for having their own Financial Assistance policy in place for in-school instrumental lessons using Pupil Premium, for example, and proactively working with HMS to ensure accessibility for all.

Types of Support:

1. **Instrument Hire:**
 - Up to 50% reduction in termly fees.
2. **County and Area Ensembles:**
 - Up to 50% reduction in termly fees.
 - This Financial Assistance policy does not include financial assistance for trips and tours, which are managed through the ensemble's own budget for their activities.
3. **Music Lessons:**
 - Schools must have a Financial Assistance policy for in-school lessons.
4. **Children in Care (CIC) including CYP with refugee status:**
 - Up to 100% reduction in all fees.
5. **Additional Financial Assistance:**
 - Holiday Activities (not including ensemble activities): Sliding scale from 10% to 50% reduction based on parental income.

Process:

If you feel that this applies to you then please contact your provision administrator or email music.service@hants.gov.uk for a sensitive first conversation. A Financial Assistance Form will be provided which must be completed and returned. Any applications that meet the criteria will go through our mean testing process and final review, before approval from the Senior Leadership Team.

Compliance:

Adherence to this policy will be monitored through regular reviews of financial assistance applications and audits of fee reductions.

Review and Revision:

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure continued accessibility and affordability.

Approval: Approved by Jonathan Cranston, (Acting Head of Service), on 2 February 2026