

## Submission to the Parliamentary Enquiry on Music Education

This submission makes specific reference to the importance of Instrumental Music Tuition, which usually takes the form of a regular teaching and learning session between one experienced, professional music teacher and an individual student, or a small group of students. I have worked as a teacher of Singing in an Instrumental or Sessional capacity for many years, at both Independent and Government sector schools.

The value of these lessons, delivered in the format that they are, cannot be overstated. Music education in a general classroom setting allows a large group of students to experience some aspects of music theory, performance and history; Music education in a small group is the only setting in which students can genuinely grow to become competent musicians and performers.

Quite simply, this is due to the nature of the teaching. Music Instrumental teachers develop a detailed, intimate and specific understanding of each student's techniques, abilities, and weaknesses, and the teaching and learning strategies are tailored precisely to individual student's needs. There are precious few areas in our education system where teachers have the opportunity to assist students to succeed with such accuracy. Every single one of the students I have taught has had their material chosen specifically for them with the sole aim of improving their learning outcome in all areas of musicianship and performance. No student has ever been required to learn a generic set of skills, simply because the group demands it.

One of the most common side-effects of teachers' close knowledge of students is the development of healthy, productive teaching and learning relationships. Instrumental teachers know their students in ways that other teachers are simply not able to. The trust, honesty and goodwill that exists between instrumental teachers and students flows through into other areas of a student's school and personal life, and into the culture of the school itself.

In my recent work at Cobram Secondary College, I have interacted with many students from low SE backgrounds. Many of these students have had little or no exposure to music education; some of them demonstrated a significant capacity to grow as performers and musicians. I have seen these students grow in confidence, self-awareness, motivation, ambition and commitment to detail because of the work they have done in singing, and teachers and parents regularly comment on the positive effects singing and performance has on the rest of their child's life and outlook.

As well as these specific examples of the importance of Instrumental Music, the study of music in general remains one of those areas which contributes positively to students' general success in literacy and numeracy. Simply, students who participate in formal music lessons achieve more highly than the rest of their cohort, and I firmly believe that students who participate in music also achieve more highly than they would have if they did not have these musical opportunities.

Instrumental Music Lessons cannot become something accessible only to privileged students in the private education sector. The benefits are immense and far-reaching, and every student deserves this opportunity.

Mrs Emily Bibby, BMusHons, BA (Hons), GradDipEd