

REPORT BY THE ADVISORY GROUP FOR 2004/05

Introduction

1. This fifth report¹ of the Advisory Group marks the beginning of a new phase in the development of the Music and Dance Scheme (MDS). Alongside the existing eight independent specialist schools that participate in the MDS Aided Pupil Scheme, new centres for advanced training are being established that will cater for talented children's vocational training needs in out-of-school-hours settings. The new centres are being set up, over time, to serve every region of the country and will complement existing MDS provision. This report provides information about the Group's key achievements over the past academic year, the new centres and work in progress.

2. Tony Hall (Chief Executive at the Royal Opera House) succeeded Roger Lewis (previously MD at Classic fM) as Chairman of the Group at the start of the year in September 2004. A full list of members of the slightly re-constituted Group is annexed to this report. Dame Janet Ritterman retired in August 2005 and has stepped down from the Group. The Group would like to record its heartfelt appreciation for Dame Janet's valuable contribution to music education and training, and for her wisdom and advice over the five years in which she has been a member and we wish her well for the future. The Group also records its congratulations to Christina Coker on receiving the OBE in the 2005 Queen's Birthday honours. Officials from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) have been regular attendees at Group meetings and the DfES Music and Dance Scheme Team has provided the secretariat.

3. During 2004/05, in addition to establishing new centres for advanced training and the new national grants scheme (see paragraphs 5 to 9), the DfES provided Government grant-aid² with the fees at eight independent specialist schools in England for over 800 talented children aged 8 to 19 with exceptional potential in music and dance. Some 80 Choristers were also aided through a block grant allocation³ to the Choir Schools' Association Bursary Trust. MDS schools and an increasing number of choir schools also engaged proactively in a range of stimulating outreach activities that benefited many children and teachers in mainstream schools, as well as those in the wider community.

4. Both before and after the May 2005 General Election, DfES and DCMS Ministers have continued to convey their appreciation for the Group's contribution and commitment to developing music and dance education and training opportunities for some of the country's most highly talented young people.

¹ All the Advisory Group's Reports are available on the DfES website at www.dfes.gov.uk/mds.

² The total estimated cost of the MDS Aided Pupil Scheme in 2004/05 is £15.9 million.

³ £141,000 in 2004/05.

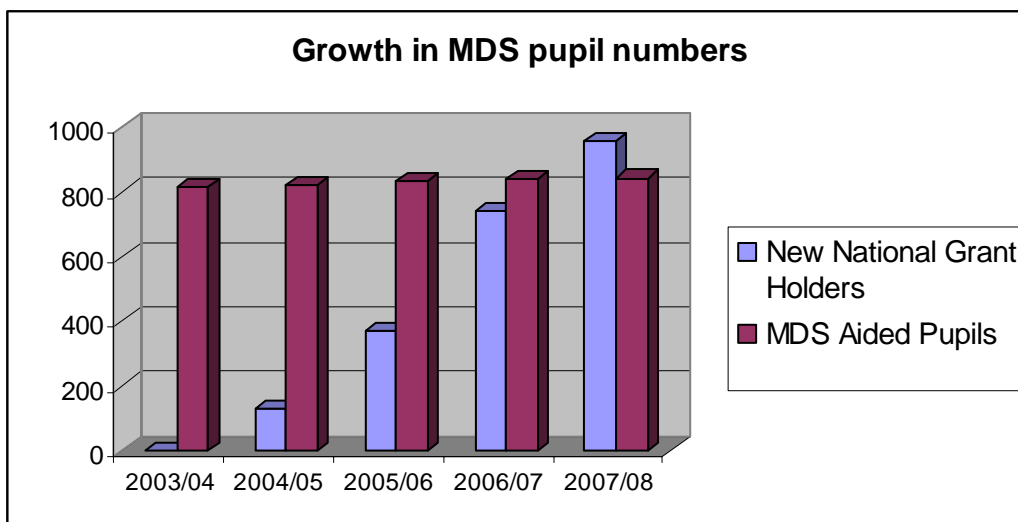
Through the organisations which they represent, as individuals and collectively, the Group has played a key role in promoting those opportunities and advocating sustainable support for the various pathways that need to be taken by talented children, whatever their background and wherever they live.

Key Achievements

Music and Dance Scheme (MDS) Developments

5. The Group's 2003/04 Report set the scene and provided background to the new MDS developments and the establishment, from September 2004, of a new child-centred, means-tested National Grants Scheme for exceptionally talented children to enable them to receive high quality training locally at centres for advanced training (CATs).

6. Alongside the eight residential schools, the number of CATs is expected to grow from ten in 2004/05 to around twenty by 2007/08. The numbers of pupils holding MDS Aided Places in the schools and national grants at the new CATs are anticipated to rise as illustrated below:



7. The ten designated CATs in 2004/05 were the junior departments of all six music conservatoires in England (ie Royal Academy of Music, Royal College of Music, Trinity College of Music, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Birmingham Conservatoire and Royal Northern College of Music); The Sage Gateshead; Yorkshire Young Musicians (based in Leeds and starting in January 2005); Yorkshire Young Dancers (also based in Leeds) and the London Contemporary Dance School. The latter postponed full implementation of the scheme until September 2005. During this first pilot year, 128 children and young people received national grants, over 61% being eligible for the maximum grant of £3,000. As with the children attending the MDS residential schools, these young people would not have been able to access the training available without the benefit of the means-tested grants provided through the scheme.

8. In music, all the main classical instruments (including harp and saxophone)

were catered for, with the addition of the jazz piano, Northumbrian pipes, folk violin and steel pan as examples of other genres being supported. In dance, both classical ballet and contemporary dance genres were catered for.

9. From September 2005, two new dance centres will be coming on stream; the Dance City Academy, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Swindon Dance Academy, Swindon, Wiltshire. A centre for music based in Sheffield is planned to start catering for national grant holders in September 2006. Explorations are also underway for both music and dance centres in the Eastern Region, for another dance centre in Birmingham and in London and, in time, for a music centre serving the South West. The geographical distribution of all the existing MDS schools and new centres is annexed to this report.

10. The Group's view is that the new scheme and these new developments are beginning to make a real impact on improving provision for the most talented children, creating routes for progression that respond to the different needs of today's talented young people and laying the foundations for the future excellence and vitality of the artforms of music and dance. Over time, it is intended that the scheme will continue to address issues of equality of opportunity, geographical spread and progression pathways nationwide.

Support for National Youth Music and Dance Organisations

11. Throughout 2004/05, the Group has continued to support the work of Youth Music⁴ and the recently established Youth Dance England (YDE – which was set up in February 2004 by a unique partnership between the Arts Council England and the DfES (Music and Dance Scheme)). YDE was officially launched on 22 January 2005 at a special event at the Royal Festival Hall, London. A hugely successful National Youth Dance Performance was held on 10 July at the Birmingham Hippodrome for which the Minister, Lord Andrew Adonis, provided a supportive statement.

12. Youth Music, and now YDE, have made an enormous impact on young people in their communities and the Group would like to see both organisations continuing to flourish. Increased and sustainable core funding from Government will be a key factor if both bodies are to provide leadership and direction in the music and dance sectors in the years to come.

Support for MDS Schools

13. The eight independent specialist (boarding) schools in England lie at the heart of the Music and Dance Scheme. The Group has continued to support their activities and provide encouragement and leadership to enable them to engage more fully in the wider performing arts education and training agenda. Modest DfES funding for outreach and partnership activities has enabled MDS schools, and choir schools, to achieve much in this area. The National Association of MDS Schools (NAMDS) is represented on the Group and has continued to play a key

⁴ in relation to the flagship National Youth Music Organisations such as the National Youth Orchestra and National Youth Choirs of Great Britain - see www.youthmusic.org.uk.

role in its deliberations.

14. Elmhurst School for Dance achieved a key milestone in its long history by relocating to Edgbaston, Birmingham. The school now inhabits a new state-of-the-art building and has cemented its association with Birmingham Royal Ballet and with a number of dance organisations in the area. The Royal Ballet School is fully engaged with its significant project to redevelop the Lower School at White Lodge. Other MDS schools have benefited from DfES capital grants and will continue to do so through access to the Targeted Capital Fund⁵. The Group endorses the DfES's much valued support, through such capital grants, of these projects that will enhance schools' capabilities and also benefit the local and wider community by the provision of first-class performance spaces.

15. MDS schools possess a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the training of exceptionally talented children which can be utilised to aid the new centres for advanced training (CATs) and other schools in their own development. MDS schools can deliver support mechanisms such as CPD for instrumental and dance teachers or amateurs. As the scheme develops, it becomes ever more important to ensure that the provision being made available continues to be of the highest standard and efficacy. The Group continues to advocate a holistic approach, the need for proper moderation and robust assessment of provision across the board, and greater clarity in marking out the pathways that young people can follow in developing their talents.

Other developments

16. The Group has continued to support the aims and objectives of the "Music Manifesto" (see www.musicmanifesto.co.uk) Key Aim No 3 of which – 'To identify and nurture our most talented young musicians' – highlights the extension of the MDS to provide even more opportunities for young musicians of potential. The Music Manifesto Report no.1⁶ has just been published. A similar impetus is needed for dance and there are signs that this is now beginning to happen. In its support for Youth Dance England and others in the dance training sector, the Group has, in many respects, been leading the way in this.

17. Members of the Group have also worked, and will continue to work, closely with the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (see www.specialistschools.org.uk), Youth Sport Trust, LEA music services, the National Music Education Forum and those involved in the broader creativity and cultural agenda.

Next steps

18. There are new challenges to meet in order to maintain the momentum of the past five years and help secure the long-term future of the MDS and its place in the new emerging "infrastructure". As a result of the Group's work, the MDS has a higher than ever profile and its benefits are more widely known and available. The

⁵ the fund is one element of the DfES's overarching Schools Capital strategy.

⁶ Written by Rick Rogers and providing a current overview of the diverse elements that make up music education – see www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

website at www.dfes.gov.uk/mds and its links with numerous other websites concerned with the education and training of young musicians and dancers continues to play a key role in the dissemination of knowledge about the scheme and its development.

19. Having laid the foundations for excellent provision, the Group is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, fore-grounding cultural diversity, and ensuring our future music and dance industries truly reflect society. This is the next big challenge.

20. The Group therefore advocates:

- a. sustained funding to enable the existing and newly developed pathways to flourish as this will be crucial to present and future generations of highly talented young musicians and dancers;
- b. ensuring that proper moderation and robust assessment of Music and Dance Scheme provision is undertaken to enable the highest possible standards to be maintained;
- c. strengthening music and dance teacher supply, with training that goes 'with the grain' of professional lives, recognising and raising the status of the teacher-performer;
- d. action to counter the inequality of opportunity geographically (eg the 'postcode lottery' in terms of cost and availability of LEA-provided instrumental tuition); and
- e. raising the importance and status of dance as an artform and in schools, addressing disparities in provision, and promoting an inclusive and integrated 'Dance Manifesto'.

Countries that now have stronger systems than we do at present appear to have the above in better order. If these aspirations can be realised, the quality and international standing of what is on offer in England and throughout the British Isles could soar.

**MEMBERS OF THE MUSIC AND DANCE SCHEME ADVISORY GROUP
(September 2004/05)**

Chairman : Tony Hall, CEO Royal Opera House, London.

Mr John Baxter, consultant, former Headmaster of Wells Cathedral School and former Chairman of the National Association of Music and Dance Schools and the Choir Schools' Association.

Ms Hilary Boulding, Music Director at Arts Council England.

Mr Colin Brackley-Jones, CEO of the Federation of Music Services.

Mr Nicolas Chisholm, Headmaster of the Yehudi Menuhin School, Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey, representing the National Association of Music and Dance Schools.

Ms Christina Coker, CEO of the National Foundation for Youth Music.

Mr Keith Hewson, Director of Music at Egglecliffe School, Stockton-on-Tees, a maintained specialist performing arts college.

Ms Linda Jasper, Director of Youth Dance England (YDE).

Ms Veronica Jobbins, Head of Professional Studies at Laban and Chair of the National Dance Teachers Association (NDTA).

Ms Veronica Lewis, Director of London Contemporary Dance School.

Dame Janet Ritterman, Director of the Royal College of Music, and also representing Conservatoires UK.

Ms Jeanette Siddall, Director of Dance, Arts Council England.

Mr Richard White, Director of Development for the Choir Schools' Association and former Headmaster of Polwhele House School, Truro.

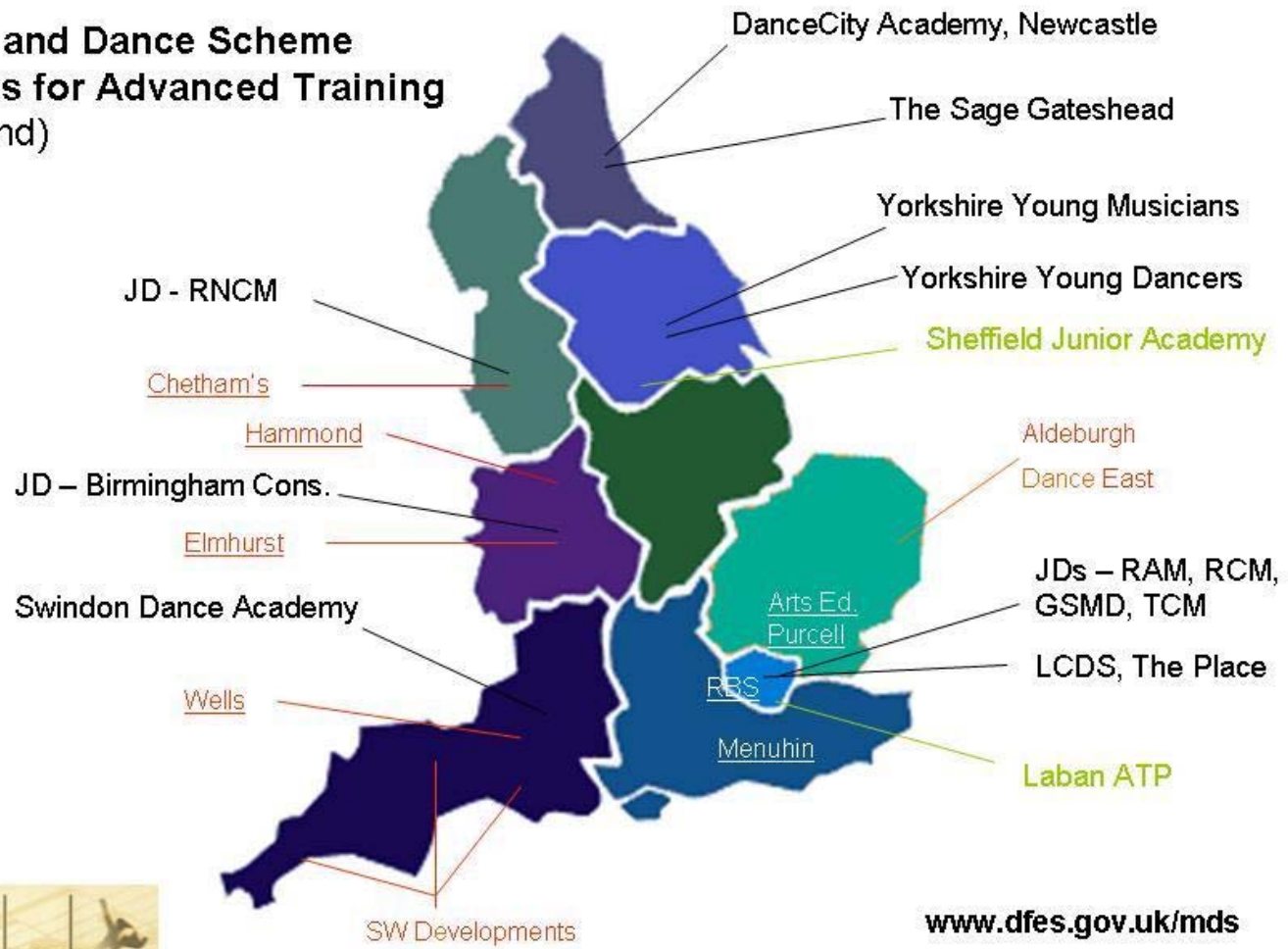
Other attendees:

Mr Richard Hickman, Adviser (and previously CEO of the Federation of Music Services).

Mr David Fitzgerald, Head of Arts Education at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Secretariat: DfES – Robin Kiel, Catherine Evans and Jim Wharton.

**Music and Dance Scheme
Centres for Advanced Training
(England)**



www.dfes.gov.uk/mds