

# Multi-million-pound culture boost for children in schools

Thousands more children will be able to learn instruments and play in orchestras or choirs thanks to a further £80million investment by the Government in music hubs.

Alongside this investment, charities that help young people learn about different styles of music are also set to receive a further £1 million next year to support the next generation of musicians.

Pupils will also have more opportunities to put their film making skills to the test, explore museums or take to the stage, as a series of other cultural education programmes receive an additional £4 million funding boost next year.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb has announced this multi-million-pound package today (Friday 3 January) alongside a manifesto commitment to offer an 'arts premium' to secondary schools to allow young people to learn creative skills and widen their horizons.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Music, arts and culture play an essential role in enriching pupils' education, and we want to give as many young people as possible the opportunity to learn an instrument or perform in a choir or a band.

Our continued investment will play an important role in helping young people widen their horizons and access all the opportunities that learning a musical instrument can provide – whether that be playing for pleasure or performing.

The curriculum schemes that will receive a total of £85 million for 2020/21 are as follows:

- Music Education Hubs
- In Harmony
- National Youth Music Organisations (NYMOs) and Music for Youth; and
- Cultural education (Heritage Schools, BFI Film Academy, Museums and Schools, ACE Bridge Network, National Youth Dance Company, Saturday Art and Design Clubs).

Music education hubs, which are organisations that give pupils access to instruments and support whole classes to play together, have transformed the teaching of music in schools through subsidised instrument lessons and ensembles.

These hubs have been supported by £300million between 2016 and 2020, which

forms part of an overall investment of £500million in the arts during that period, making it the second highest funded element of the curriculum behind PE.

Hannah Fouracre, Director Music Education, Arts Council England said:

We're delighted that this funding from the Department for Education has been confirmed.

These programmes support a creative, diverse and inclusive music education for children and young people across England.

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## [Housing Secretary pledges new funding to crackdown on criminal landlords](#)

- More than £4 million of funding for councils to tackle criminal landlords across England.
- Move to empower councils to stamp out exploitative landlords and enable good landlords to thrive.
- Builds on strong action already taken by government to drive up standards in the rental sector.

More than 100 councils across England have been awarded a share of over £4 million to crack down on criminal landlords and letting agents, Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick MP has announced today (3 January 2020).

The majority of landlords provide decent homes for their tenants, but a small minority persist in breaking the law, making tenants' lives a misery by offering inadequate or unsafe housing.

The new funding will be used by councils to take enforcement action against these landlords, and advise tenants of their housing rights.

This action will continue the government's ongoing work to make the private rented sector fairer and stamp out criminal practices for good.

Among the councils to benefit from the funding are:

- 21 councils across Yorkshire and Humberside – to train over 100 enforcement officers across the region to ensure standards are being met by landlords
- Northampton – to create a 'Special Operations Unit' to enforce against the very worst landlords responsible for over 100 homes in the town
- Thurrock – to work with the care service to ensure the most vulnerable

- young tenants are in decent, well-maintained homes
- Greenwich – to trial new technology to identify particularly cold homes to ensure renters are warm over the winter period

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

This government will deliver a better deal for renters. It's completely unacceptable that a minority of unscrupulous landlords continue to break the law and provide homes which fall short of the standards we rightly expect – making lives difficult for hard-working tenants who just want to get on with their lives.

Everyone deserves to live in a home that is safe and secure and the funding announced today will strengthen councils' powers to crack down on poor landlords and drive up standards in the private rented sector for renters across the country.

Councils already have strong powers to force landlords to make necessary improvements to a property through use of a range of measures, including civil penalties and banning orders for the worst offenders.

The grants will support a range of projects to enable councils to make the best use of these powers. This will include trialling innovative ideas, sharing best practice and targeted enforcement where we know landlords shirk their responsibilities.

Today's announcement demonstrates government's commitment to helping good landlords to thrive, and hard-working tenants across the country get the homes they deserve – creating a housing market that works for everyone.

This government has committed to delivering a fairer deal for renters and empower them whilst also giving greater peace of mind.

We will end no fault evictions, so that landlords can't remove tenants without good reason, and introduce Lifetime Rental Deposits so renters don't have to save up for a new deposit while their money is tied up in an old one.

There are more than 4.5 million households in the private rented sector in England, with recent statistics showing that 82% of private renters are satisfied with their accommodation.

The fund will help councils take on the most common challenges that stand in the way of tackling poor standards in the private rented sector, including:

- encouraging positive landlord/tenant/local authority relationships, particularly with vulnerable groups such as care leavers
- the need for better information – on housing stock, and on landlords and agents operating in their areas
- data sharing between authorities and agencies – identifying and bringing together different data sets to enable better enforcement targeting which protects the most vulnerable tenants

- internal 'ways of working' – improving housing-specific legal expertise, in-house communication between teams, and tools and strategies to effectively implement policy
- innovative software – for enforcement officers to record their findings, gather evidence and streamline the enforcement process

A summary of funding for PRS Innovation and Enforcement Grant projects can be viewed here:

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## [HRH Duke of Cambridge and football legends champion mental health](#)

In an historic first, all 32 Emirates FA Cup third round fixtures this weekend will be delayed by one minute. A new film narrated by His Royal Highness, The Duke of Cambridge will be played before the matches, encouraging football fans to 'Take A Minute' to start taking action to look after their mental health and that of their family and friends.

The powerful one minute film features current and former players, pundits, managers and fans including Frank Lampard, Harry Maguire, Alex Scott, Dele Alli, Jordan Pickford, Callum Hudson-Odoi, Son Heung-Min, Hamza Choudhury and Slaven Bilic. The film will play across stadiums, online and broadcasters, reaching millions of football fans across England.

The film has been released as a collaboration between Public Health England's (PHE) Every Mind Matters and The Football Association (The FA) and Heads Together's Heads Up campaign, who have teamed up to raise awareness of the simple actions we can all take to look after our mental health.

While the collaboration is aimed at everyone including players, supporters, friends and families, it's widely recognised that football can be a powerful way to reach men in particular. There are over 15 million football fans in England, 69% of whom are men.

A YouGov survey commissioned by PHE shows that men in England are less likely than women to seek help or take self-care actions for early signs of common mental health concerns. It showed:

- of the 78% of men who have experienced early signs of mental health concerns in the last year, just under half (45%) said they'd never taken self-care actions to manage their mental health (compared to 31% of women)
- of those men that did take steps to manage or improve their mental health, over three quarters (73%) wished they'd taken action sooner
- men were also less likely to take self-care actions every day, with 18% of men doing so compared to one in four (24%) women

Heads Up is a season long partnership between The FA and Heads Together, and spearheaded by HRH The Duke of Cambridge, which uses the popularity of football as a vehicle to generate the biggest ever conversation around mental health. For the Third Round, the campaign is now partnering with Every Mind Matters, a groundbreaking mental health platform from Public Health England. Together, the initiative will encourage football fans to look after their own mental health, and support friends and family who may be struggling. They can start this by completing a 'Mind Plan', a quick and free tool from Every Mind Matters that has already been completed over one million times.

By taking a minute to answer a few questions about how they are feeling, fans will get their own personalised action plan. Clinically assured by the NHS, the plan recommends a range of evidence based self-care actions for each individual, which are designed to deal with stress, boost their mood, improve sleep and feel more in control – preventing these common mental health concerns escalating into more serious, clinical conditions.

Duncan Selbie, chief executive of PHE, said:

As every fan knows, football has its highs and lows – and so does life. This is a fantastic opportunity to bring the football community together in an important conversation about how we can all take care of our mental health, starting with a few simple actions.

Godric Smith, chair of the Heads Up campaign, comments:

Football is already doing some great work on mental health but it is really encouraging to see the whole game uniting around the Heads Up campaign in 2020 starting with the Emirates FA Cup Third Round. Support your team. Support your mates. And support yourself. The Every Mind Matters website is a great place to start. We all have mental health and we can all take a minute to think more about it and take simple, positive steps.

Frank Lampard, current manager of Chelsea F.C.:

It's hugely important for men to think about their mental health and take action where they can. I came from a family where we bottled up a lot of emotions, feelings and sometimes anxieties. I think a huge thing now is the great campaigns that are going on encouraging people to speak openly about looking after your mental health and not feel bad about how you feel inside. I think as men, sometimes we can think that it's a weakness but it certainly isn't. It's a huge strength.

Mark Bullingham, The FA's Chief Executive, said:

We hope that the symbolic 60 second delay to all Emirates FA Cup Third Round fixtures will be the start of a journey for better mental health for the millions who will be watching one of English football's most famous weekends. We're delighted to have an association with Public Health England for this Round and to signpost fans to their 'Every Mind Matters' website, one of the simple steps that is readily available to drive change.

Dele Alli, current player for Tottenham Hotspur F.C.:

It's very important to me to be a part of this campaign because I feel a lot of people like to try and deal with their problems by themselves and can feel like they sometimes haven't got people they can talk to, or that there's nothing they can do about it. There are so many people struggling with their mental health, so I want to help people understand that they don't have to deal with it alone. There are a lot of people out there that can help and there are steps you can take to make sure your mental wellbeing is the best it can be.

Dr Hilary Jones, comments:

Most of us experience some sort of mental health difficulty during our lives and we know that men in particular struggle with acknowledging and acting on any problems. We hope this new partnership will be able to reach men and women in a way that helps them to take action to look after their mental health.

The Emirates FA Cup Third Round kicks-off on Saturday 4 January 2020 at 12.31pm with games taking place across the weekend.

Fans can search Every Mind Matters to create their own personal mental health action plan or visit [www.everymindmatters.co.uk](http://www.everymindmatters.co.uk).

Those in need of immediate support can text 'HeadsUp' to 85258 to be

connected to a trained crisis counsellor. This service is available 24/7, and free to text from most mobile networks.

In conjunction with Heads Up charity partners Mind, CALM, Heads Together and Sporting Chance, fans will also be provided with helpful tips and advice on [The FA website](#) on how they can approach managing their mental health.

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## [Iraq: UK condemns attack on US Embassy in Baghdad](#)

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## [South Sudan: Troika statement, 2 January 2020](#)

The Troika remains committed to the people of South Sudan, and at this important point, we call upon all parties to meet their commitments to deliver lasting peace. With less than six weeks remaining to meet the extended deadline to form a Transitional Government of National Unity, South Sudan's leaders have a clear duty to their citizens to deliver. We commend the leadership of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in its continued efforts to mediate among the parties, and we commit to work with the region to ensure that the parties deliver progress.

We welcome the recent meetings between leaders of key parties and their public commitment to form a government of national unity by the February deadline. We urge all sides to build on this, to continue dialogue, and to ensure meaningful progress. We call on all sides to further demonstrate that they possess the political will to deliver peace. We also remind all parties to uphold, and affirm publicly, their commitment to the permanent ceasefire,

and to instruct their forces to exercise restraint. Each delay in implementation worsens the urgent humanitarian crisis and shakes the people's confidence in their leaders.

Ending reliance on military force and creating political space for a diverse range of voices from all political parties, civil society, and the media is essential to creating a durable peace and an inclusive government that represents the interests of all parties to the agreement.

We echo the voices of South Sudan's civil society leaders, who have called on the government to fund the peace process transparently, and we encourage all signatories to demonstrate measurable progress on the issues of states and boundaries and on the implementation of pre-transitional security arrangements. We encourage South Sudan's recommitment to the inclusion of at least 35 percent of women in every level of government as decided by all the parties.

The people of South Sudan deserve a government that respects human rights and leaders who make necessary compromises for the greater good of the country. We urge the signatories to the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) to fulfill their obligations to represent the interests of all South Sudanese, do all that is required to form an inclusive national unity government, and lay the foundations for the next steps of South Sudan's peace process and political transition.