

Kick Start Ensembles

Q. What is a Kick Start Ensemble?

A. 'Kick Start Ensembles' are an EMS initiative in which we provide up to a year's worth of funding to schools who wish to start a new instrumental ensemble in their school.

The introduction of a Kick Start Ensemble is the perfect way to get ensemble playing going in your school. EMS can provide funding for a brand new ensemble for up to one year (30 weeks) to help 'kick start' you schools instrumental players in to playing music together.

Q. What does the funding include?

A. The funding will cover the cost of an EMS Ensemble Leader (most probably an instrumental teacher already working in your school), who will run the ensemble for 30 weeks of the school's year - in line with their teaching weeks at the school. EMS also has an expansive music library that our teachers have access to, meaning the school doesn't need to worry about purchasing music.

Q. Why should there be ensembles in our schools?

A. Ensemble playing is a fantastic way to support and enhance the music provision in your school. Pupils improve their playing more effectively when playing an ensemble, as well as it is improving their playing confidence, sight reading and general musicianship skills. On top of these (and many more great benefits), playing in an ensemble is loads of fun!

Q. When will the ensemble take place?

A. Where possible, ensemble rehearsals will take place after school. There will be an average of 10 rehearsals per term - 30 per year - and weeks must be agreed in advance with the school via an EMS202 (Teacher Timetable).

Q. What is the school expected to provide?

A. The most important thing we need from schools is to support the running of the ensemble. We expect the school to be able to provide a suitable space for the ensemble rehearsals to take place in, music stands, access to a photocopier (for the EMS teacher), to help promote the ensemble within their school and to be encouraging towards the pupils taking part. The school is also expected to provide performance opportunities throughout the school year (assemblies, Christmas/Summer Fair etc.). If the Ensemble Leader is required for a performance outside of regular rehearsal time, this must be requested via an EMS103e (New or Ad Hoc Provision) form. The school must also provide a named contact for the EMS teacher to maintain good communication with throughout the duration of their deployment within the school.

Q. What if we need extra instruments in our ensemble that the school doesn't own?

A. We understand that not all schools will have access to a full Samba Kit or 30 djembes therefore, any equipment needs should be discussed with the Ensemble Development Lead and EMS can hire out equipment free of charge to school. Please keep in mind that if provision is cancelled the school will be charged for any equipment that they have belonging to EMS – for a cost breakdown of this please see our [Service Level Agreement](#).

Q. How will the ensemble be monitored?

A. The EMS Ensemble Leader will keep a weekly register and, with the help of the school, chase any absences. Any repeated, unexplained absences may lead to pupils losing their place in the ensemble.

‘Ensemble Support Visits’ are undertaken by the EMS Ensemble Development Lead, in which school ensembles are observed to ensure that high quality, inclusive music making is taking place. This also gives the Ensemble Leader an opportunity to seek support if and where needed. Follow up visits may also be requested.

Q. What happens if a rehearsal has to be cancelled?

A. If the school needs to cancel a rehearsal (eg. because of an INSET day), they must give 10 school days’ notice (in line with our [Service Level Agreement](#)). If schools are unable to provide 10 schools days’ notice then they will be invoiced for the time and the teacher will be paid for the missed rehearsal. If the EMS Ensemble Leader has to cancel a rehearsal (eg. if they call in sick) then they must inform EMS and the school before 8:30am on the day of the rehearsal. The school must then inform the parents of the ensemble members and the rehearsal will be made up in line with the [SLA](#).

Q. What happens after the funding ends?

A. When your schools year of funding is coming to an end, EMS will get in touch and present three options:

- 1) The school opens up the opportunity to pupils from neighbouring schools, which will then turn the ensemble from a ‘Kick Start’ in to a ‘Tutti’ Ensemble. EMS will continue to fund the ensemble; please see (LINK) for more details.
- 2) The school can decide to fund the ensemble themselves at the cost of higher rate EMS provision (see [SLA](#)). This may involve charging parents for their children to be members of the ensemble to cover the costs.
- 3) The school can cancel the provision by filling in an EMS102e form (available on our website). Provision should be cancelled by the deadline for the following term, or the school will be charged according to the [SLA](#).

Q. I’d like to start a Kick Start Ensemble in my school. How do I get the ball rolling?

To discuss starting a Kick Start Ensemble in your school, please contact Caroline Swan (Ensemble Development Lead) - SwanC@ealing.gov.uk

For the full Terms & Conditions of all Ealing Music Service provision – please refer to our [Service Level Agreement](#).