

Pupils to be offered pipes and drums tuition after funding boost

More youngsters across Edinburgh are to be offered the opportunity to learn pipes and drums as the council prepares to hire full-time instructors for the first time.

It comes following a funding boost from the Scottish Government and music charity the Schools Piping and Drumming Trust (SSPDT).

The council will recruit one bagpipe teacher and one snare drum teacher to its instrumental music service in time for the new term after the summer holidays if plans are approved by the education committee on Tuesday, June 11.

Previously only those undertaking SQA music programmes have had the option to have lessons provided in school.

Since additional funding for music education was announced by the Scottish Government in 2022 Edinburgh Council has opted to use it to purchase new instruments to support more pupils, particularly those from low-income families.

This has resulted in “more pupils being able to learn and practice at home without the need to share an instrument” and increased participation in school orchestras, a report said.

However now the money, alongside a new £120k grant from SSPDT, will be used to bolster pipes and drums tuition – giving all

P6 to S6 pupils across the capital the chance to learn Scotland's national instruments.

The report said the two new posts could be filled "over the summer to begin offering piping and drumming tuition from August 2024".

It said: "Each year the pay uplift will need to be covered by the council using Scot Gov funding. Should Scot Gov funding cease the council would need to cover the salary costs.

"Scot Gov funding will need to also purchase chanters, pipes and drums for pupils."

The instructors would be "deployed to those schools/learning communities where the impact could be maximised," it added.

"[Instrumental music service] managers, schools and the new instructors will work closely to ensure timetables are filled and all young people in the allocated schools are given the opportunity to learn and participate with all cost barriers removed."

By Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter