



...teaching music, changing lives!



News Release (for immediate publication)

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Hardship grant will keep the music playing

Berkshire-based music education charity [Berkshire Maestros](#) has launched an appeal for funding for a new hardship fund to support families who are experiencing financial difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This fund aims to support them financially to continue their children's music lessons during the current crisis. The fund has received a fantastic start thanks to a £5,000 grant from local funding organisation [Berkshire Community Foundation](#).

With schools and music centres closed, Berkshire Maestros has rapidly adapted their teaching methods to continue to provide individual instrumental and singing lessons online (and was one of the first music services in the country to achieve this). However, in the present climate some families may struggle to meet the costs of lessons so the new fund will be vital to ensure continuity and improved well-being for their children.

Dawn Wren, CEO for Berkshire Maestros, said:

"I am delighted to have received funding from the BCF at such a difficult time for our families. Our hope is that we can support families to continue activities for their children but also to help our students with their own well-being by bringing some much-needed continuity into their lives. We want to keep the music going and thankfully, BCF has given us the opportunity to enable more people to do just that."

Vanessa Harbutt, Berkshire Maestros Marketing and Funding Officer, added:

"We are so grateful to Berkshire Community Foundation and want to thank them for their grant. We care passionately about ensuring children and young people have access to high quality musical education regardless of circumstance. At such a difficult time for many, we want to do all that we can to enable them to continue their musical learning."

Anyone feeling that they will need financial support for lessons in their current circumstances can request it. And Berkshire Maestros isn't just offering online lessons to existing students – new students (both children and adults) are welcome to sign up for online lessons on a wide range of instruments.

As well as enhancing key cognitive skills, learning to play an instrument or to sing enables children and young people to have fun, and to develop important life skills such as discipline, confidence, self-esteem and time management.

The move to online lessons has been very well received by families, with some very positive feedback:

"My children have just had their [online] lesson, it went splendidly. They even made sure to tidy their study/work area before the lesson...."

Anyone wanting to register for online lessons for the first time can find out more at Berkshire Maestros website: www.berkshiremaestros.org.uk. Berkshire Maestros also welcomes donations from any individuals or organisations who would like to contribute to the hardship fund. Please contact fundraising@berkshiremaestros.org.uk if you'd like to know more about this.



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About Berkshire Maestros

Berkshire Maestros is a long-established children's charity offering musical education opportunities to children and young people across Berkshire, regardless of ability, background or circumstance. We work closely with schools across the county to allow all children access to music and the opportunity to play an instrument. Through our local music centres, we offer people of all ages the chance to sing, play instruments and enhance their life-skills through music. Our choirs, orchestras and ensembles perform at prestigious venues across the county and beyond – helping the children to develop their team-working and communications skills as well as building their confidence.

To download any logos for Berkshire Maestros or the Berkshire Music Hub please go to www.berkshiremaestros.org.uk/press.html

If you would like more information, please email press@berkshiremaestros.org.uk