



Description of the programme

“An Instrument for Every Child” is a music education initiative for the Ruhr district: All first-year schoolchildren in the entire region should be given the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. This offer is designed to complement music lessons at school and is aimed explicitly at all primary school children, irrespective of their background or the social environment they come from. In order to ensure that different groups can be integrated, there are various reductions and exemptions from fees for children from families with a low income. The instruments are loaned out free of charge. Each music college offers a variety of different instruments from Europe and other parts of the world.

“An Instrument for Every Child” at primary school

The schoolchildren discover at least 16 different instruments in their first year at school. For example, the teachers demonstrate the violin and flute, trombone as well as the horn, mandolin or the Turkish bağlama. The children try out the instruments and also recreate some of them in order to be able to understand the principles of how sound is produced. The lessons include exercises on timing and rhythm as well as singing and dancing. Music college teachers work with their primary school colleagues in tandem to teach a school class.

The children learn to play their musical instrument, which they have chosen beforehand, from their second school year onwards. The instruments which are given to them are loaned for the purpose of teaching and practising at home. Music college teachers teach small groups consisting of five children on average. Even in the first few hours of lessons, the children begin to make music together.

From the third class onwards, the teaching of the instrument is complemented by performances in the “Ensemble Kunterbunt” (a jumbled-up ensemble). Once a week, children from different year groups practise performing as a school orchestra. The key thing here is to provide musical training as well as the experience of having shared objectives and targets outside of traditional school lessons. At the end of each school year, the children perform a major end-of-year concert in front of parents, relatives and friends.



Participation fees

In the first school year, participation in the programme is free of charge. In the second year, the maximum fee for instrument lessons is set at 20 euros a month. In the third and fourth year, an ensemble hour and instrument lessons combined cost no more than 35 euros a month.

Children from families who are receiving German unemployment benefit paid after the first 12-18 months of unemployment, income support or similar social benefits are exempt from the fees. Children whose parents are receiving housing benefit, child support, a training grant or benefits under the German law on benefits for asylum seekers can also be exempted from the participation fees. If two or more children from one family participate in the programme, the full amount is only charged for the first child, and only half the amount needs to be paid for each additional child.

Progressing from a project to a programme for the Ruhr region

The “An Instrument for Every Child” project began in 2003 in Bochum as a cooperation between Bochum Music College, the Foundation for the Future of Education in the GLS Treuhand e.V. and the local primary schools. The idea soon caught on: In 2006, the Federal Culture Foundation and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia decided to team up with the Foundation for the Promotion of Education to extend the project. With a new concept and under the sponsorship of a foundation which was specially set up for this purpose, a programme was created for the entire Ruhr region. “An Instrument for Every Child” was a cooperation project of RUHR.2010, the European Capital of Culture. Following the four-year introduction phase, the Federal Culture Foundation and the Foundation for the Future of Education ended their support, as scheduled, on 31 July 2011. Starting from the school year 2011/12, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia is now the sole external funding body.

Sponsorship

The charitable *An Instrument for Every Child Foundation* is the sponsor of the programme. It makes sure that the programme standards are complied with, controls the financial donations and, with its office in Bochum, it offers a central point of contact for all issues surrounding the programme.

The staff who work for the foundation advise the music colleges on all of the relevant aspects of implementing the programme and they perform tasks at a national level (e.g. conception, communication, further training of the music col-



lege teachers, educational material, academic support). They guarantee the transfer of knowledge to all music colleges in the region, supervise the procurement of instruments and provide support to the colleges on all challenging aspects which go beyond the actual music lessons.

Funding the programme

As from the school year 2011/12, "An Instrument for Every Child" will be funded solely by the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to the tune of approx. €10 million per year. This sum is dedicated to continuing the project in the Ruhr region and developing it further. Therefore, following the implementation phase from 2007 to 2011, the programme can go into permanent operation in the Ruhr. Additionally, a number of pilot projects will also be supported outside the Ruhr.

The funding from the state is passed on to the music schools through the "An Instrument for Every Child" Foundation. Added to this are the fees paid by the parents as well as contributions from the local authorities. This revenue covers the costs for the music school teachers. The local authorities are also responsible for acquiring donations equivalent to 50% of the instrument costs.

The "An Instrument for Every Child" programme was initiated in 2007 by the German Federal Culture Foundation, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Foundation for the Future of Education under the umbrella of GLS Treuhand e.V., with the additional involvement of the local authorities within the Ruhr region, private supporters and the participating families, as a cooperation project of the RUHR.2010 European Capital of Culture. Starting from the school year 2011/12, "An Instrument for Every Child" receives external funding solely from the State of North Rhine-Westphalia.