



## PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### TRANSFORMATIONAL SINGING SCHOOL PROGRAMME WINS NATIONAL MUSIC TEACHING AWARD

*Partnership between David Ross Education Trust and the Voices Foundation  
recognised for transforming students' lives*

**23 February 2018:** A pioneering Singing Schools programme devised by the [Voices Foundation](#) in collaboration with the [David Ross Education Trust](#) has won the 'Excellence in Primary/Early Years Music' Award at last night's 2018 Music Teachers Awards for Excellence, held at the Sheraton Grand London Park Lane Hotel in Mayfair.

Dubbed 'the Oscars of the arts education sector', the prestigious national awards have been created by the [Music and Drama Education Expo](#) to recognise and celebrate excellence in Music and Performing Arts Education.

The judges commended the winner "for establishing a culture and creating something sustainable, which could be replicated in schools everywhere. Despite choosing a cost-effective medium, the scheme recognises that skills development is extremely important, and places an emphasis on expertise and sharing knowledge."

The Singing Schools programme, delivered in partnership with the Voices Foundation and the David Ross Education Trust, has been nothing short of transformational. The winning entry involving the Trust's [Kings Heath Primary Academy](#) in Northampton, has seen an increase in Year 6 SATs results from 31% combined (reading, writing and Maths), to 64% combined.

Following this success, and thanks to the vision and ambition of the David Ross Education Trust together with the Voices Foundation, the programme has expanded with a further four David Ross Education Trust primary academies now taking part in the Singing Schools programme: [The Arbours Primary Academy](#) in Northampton, [Edward Heneage Primary Academy](#) in Grimsby, [Ingoldsby Academy](#) near Grantham and [Rockingham Primary School](#) in Corby.

Through an extensive teacher development strand delivered by trainers from the Voices Foundation, the programme develops the skills and confidence of school staff to empower them to lead a high quality and effective singing-based music curriculum. Pupils and staff also receive regular visits from a dedicated choral

director from the Voices Foundation who works directly with the children to develop their singing and choral technique.

Simon Toyne, Executive Director of Music at the David Ross Education Trust, said: “Music is central to our Trust’s vision of a well-rounded education. The Singing Schools programme is about transforming lives through enabling all children to sing and to engage with high-quality choral music.

“As part of the programme, every child, and every adult, sings daily, with the repertoire ranging from simple catchy melodies to more complex part-singing. Alongside this is a series of Year Group choirs, with an auditioned choir, Kings Heath Voices, becoming the proud, outward-looking face of the school. Their engagement is wonderful to see, and the enthusiasm with which students and staff have engaged with the programme is infectious.

“The correlation between an ambitious music programme and whole school achievement is there for all to see; we aim to spread this programme across all 22 of our primary schools over the coming years. Above all, children and adults relish broadening their horizons and engaging with musical excellence.”

Rebecca Le Brocq, Chief Executive of the Voices Foundation, said: “We are honoured to have secured this award in partnership with the David Ross Education Trust. At the Voices Foundation, we believe passionately that music and singing should be at the heart of education. It is a privilege to work in collaboration with the David Ross Education Trust whose vision resonates closely with ours in this regard.

“The significant increase in SATs results at Kings Heath last year bears witness to the transformational power of the Singing School programme, and we’re thrilled that it has been recognised through this award. Voices Foundation is now rolling out this programme to further schools in areas of disadvantage and we look forward to seeing the results.”

## **OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES**

This incredible opportunity, which has been made possible by the David Ross Education Trust’s partnership with the Voices Foundation, is one of many opportunities made available through the Trust’s pioneering enrichment programme. Helping pupils to discover their talents, the David Ross Education Trust’s enrichment programme is among the very best that can be found in both the state and independent education sectors.

Both organisations share a passionate belief that music should be central to school life, and that music acts as a significant agent for school improvement.

**ENDS**

**Note to editors:**

The David Ross Education Trust is a network of unique and diverse academies, committed to becoming the top performing multi-academy trust in the country. The Trust works with 34 primary and secondary academies across the East Midlands, Yorkshire and the East of England. Our schools range from smaller rural primaries with around 50 children, to much larger secondary schools in the centre of more urban areas.

Further information about the David Ross Education Trust is available at [www.dret.co.uk](http://www.dret.co.uk)

To watch the Trust's new film about life at our schools, click [here](#).

The Voices Foundation has been working since 1993 to help schools, academies, Music Education Hubs and other partners across the UK to establish sustainable and effective music education in their settings. Everyone has a voice, and singing is a powerful way for children to become proficient musicians.

For more information, please visit [www.voices.org.uk](http://www.voices.org.uk)

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