Written Question

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education what consideration he has given to the merits of including music in the English Baccalaureate.

Nick Gibb (Minister of State (Schools), Education)

We are concerned that the number of pupils, especially those in disadvantaged areas, who receive a broad education in core academic subjects is far too small. We want to encourage more pupils to take these core subjects and to bring about greater fairness of opportunity.

The English Baccalaureate does not include all the subjects worthy of study. We recognise that study in other subjects will be just as valuable to pupils and we will encourage all pupils to study non-English Baccalaureate subjects alongside the English Baccalaureate in order to benefit from a well rounded education. This is why we have kept the number of core subjects small enough to allow wider study. Subjects, such as music, which do not count towards the English Baccalaureate, can and will play a part in a well rounded, rigorous education. Achievement in these subjects, as with all GCSEs, will continue to be recognised in the performance tables as part of the A*-C measure, which will remain the basis for secondary school floor standards.

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