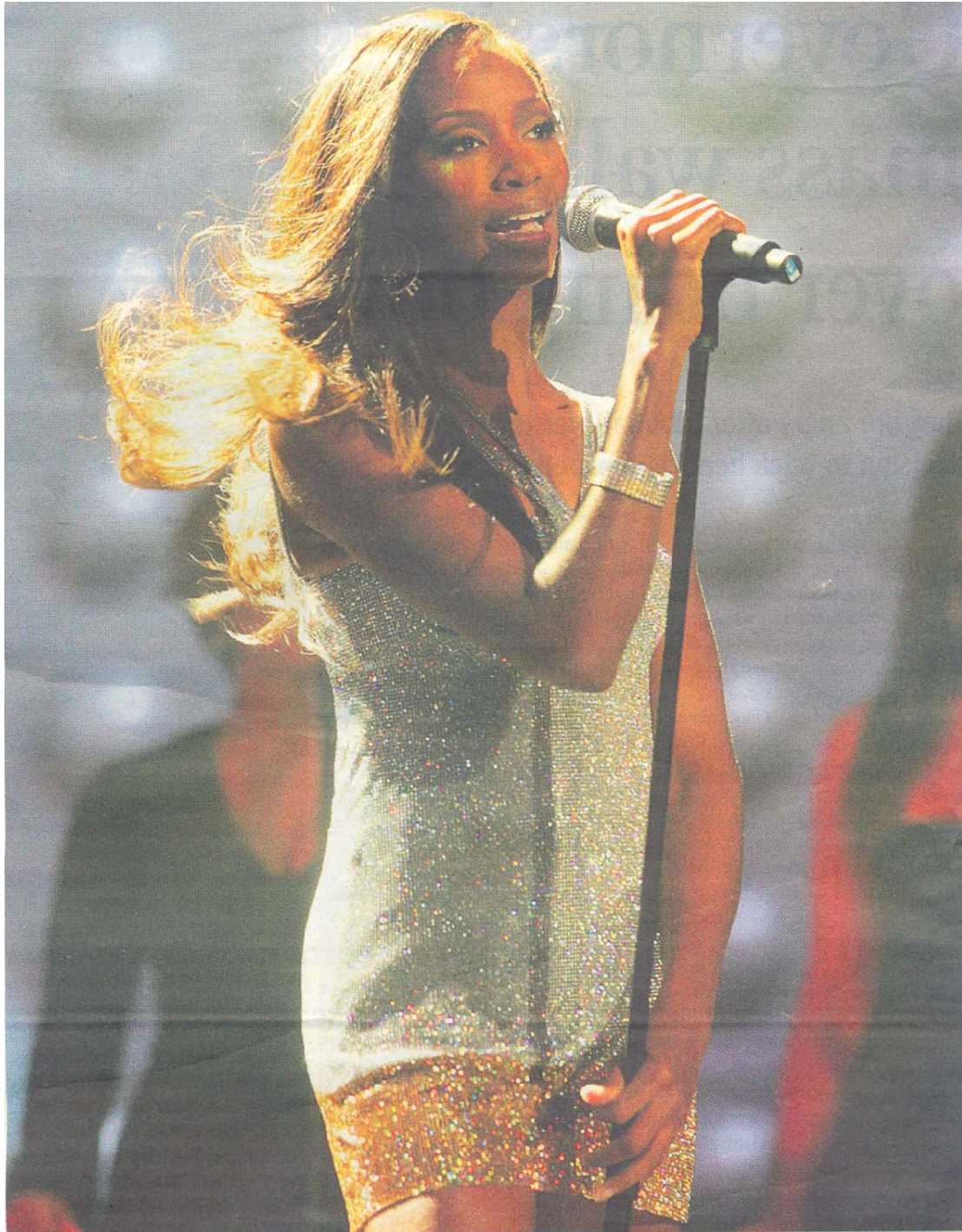


TES

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Pop star Jamelia backs a new scheme to bring out the diva in primary pupils. Photograph: Dave Hogan/Getty Images

Millions for primary music

By David Marley

PRIMARY SCHOOLS will receive more than £330 million to invest in music lessons, instruments and choirs, the Government has announced.

All children will receive a year's free music tuition, with ministers hoping that at least half will continue with lessons after that.

Pilot schemes will be run in deprived areas based on El Sistema, the innovative Venezuelan youth project that encourages young people from poor backgrounds to join orchestras and play classical music.

As well as receiving money for tuition, primary schools will be given £40m over the next three years to buy instruments and another £40m will be put into the Sing Up programme,

which aims to encourage more singing.

Ed Balls, the Children, Schools and Families Secretary, said: "Everyone should get behind our efforts to make music a key part of the school day."

Pop star Jamelia and composer Howard Goodall launched the Sing Up scheme, which will include extra training for teachers involved in leading singing lessons.

There will also be a termly singing magazine and a website to provide teachers with backing tracks, song lyrics and lesson plans.

Jamelia, whose hits include *Superstar*, said: "Singing in class helped to build up my confidence and taught me how to better express myself.

"It's crucial that kids today learn how to find their voice and realise

how much fun they can have."

But John Witchell, from the Federation of Music Services, which will be distributing the money for instruments, gave the increased funding only a qualified welcome.

He said that there were continuing problems with funds, which meant that some areas received more money than others.

Meanwhile, research by London's Institute of Education has found that the guitar is set to eclipse the violin as the most popular instrument taught in schools.

Children are turning away from traditional classical music and towards learning guitar and drums, as primary pupils try to emulate their favourite bands, the study found.

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