Individual music lessons ‘make children sharper’

Children who learn to play a musical instrument in one-to-one lessons with a professional teacher develop better motor skills and improve their problem-solving, a study has found. Dawn Rose, a researcher in psychology at the University of Hertfordshire, compared children aged between seven and nine who received individual private lessons with those who learnt to play in a group, such as a school music class.

The results, which were adjusted for the children’s backgrounds, found that those who had individual lessons scored higher on measures of “fluid intelligence” — the ability to solve unseen problems, use logic in new situations and identify patterns. They were also found to be less anxious.