



Music Partnership North Northumberland

Ensembles Policy

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MISSION STATEMENT

“Music Partnership North is committed to enriching the lives of all children and young people through engagement and participation in quality music activities; enabling progression to excellence through a variety of musical pathways”

Aims

- To provide a wide range of high quality musical activities for all children and young people, including those in challenging circumstances
- To support and develop progression routes for all students to enable them to achieve their full potential
- To be a progressive music delivery provider within Northumberland, working with local communities and educational establishments to support and enrich musical opportunities for all
- To support the aims of The Importance of Music: A National Plan for Music Education, ensuring that every child aged 5-18 years:
 - has the opportunity to sing and learn a musical instrument
 - has the opportunity to perform as part of an ensemble or choir
 - has the opportunity to progress and take their talent to the next level
- To provide continuing professional development and training to both school based and Music Partnership North (MPN) staff to ensure consistent standards of access are achieved
- To be committed to the support of musical activities in early years settings

Organisation of Ensembles

The management team are responsible for the overview of all County Ensembles in collaboration with the music co-ordinators and the EVC.

This will include:

- Ensuring that a well balanced band, made up of the appropriate instruments and a suitable level of ability is in place and that regular rehearsals are held in a suitable environment for all students to access
- Ensuring that spreadsheets for each ensemble are in place and up to date and that they are carefully monitored throughout the year in order to avoid over spending
- Ensuring that ensemble staff are allocated, taking into consideration the relevant ages of pupils, the qualifications and experience of the tutor and the genre of music. Also ensuring there are correct staff:pupil ratios and male/female staff where needed and that all staff have had relevant training in Child Protection and H & S and key staff have First Aid training
- Ensuring that the ensembles booklet and application form is produced and available early in the Summer term and that it is available to all pupils throughout the county
- Ensuring that auditions are carried out in accordance with MPN guidelines and that all places are offered on a fair and transparent basis
- Keeping an overview on the repertoire of each ensemble and ensuring that it is appropriate for the level of the ensemble while seeking to maintain high standards of performance and to ensure pupil progression
- Looking for a wide range of performance opportunities e.g. festivals, concerts and competitions to help develop the performance skills for each ensemble

Educational Visits Co-ordinator

MPN will adhere to Northumberland's 'safe management of educational off-site visits health and safety policy '.

The EVC, working with the LOE will ensure:

- Educational visits follow the policies and procedures of the LA and the establishment
- The site has been visited, if possible, prior to the event and an appropriate risk assessment has been created
- Evolve has been completed and approved for each activity
- Staff have access to advice and information
- A checklist has been completed and discussed with the course leader prior to the activity and evidence of public liability cover has been seen
- Leaders and staff meet identified standards and are competent to lead and support practical visits and activities
- Relevant training, induction and other continuous professional development opportunities are provided
- Any external providers have given written confirmation that they hold public liability, professional indemnity cover and DBS clearance and have provided copies of these documents
- Procedures are in place to inform parents and for them to give consent
- Emergency arrangements are in place for visits and off-site activities
- There is a system to keep and review records of visits, accident and incident reports
- Systems are monitored and reviewed

The EVC has a duty to advise and assist the management team in the authorisation of visits taking place

Course Leader/Assistant Course Leader

The course leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity and should be approved by the EVC and Lead Officer.

In particular the course leader should:

- Get approval from the LO and the EVC before any off-site visit or activity takes place
- Follow policy guidelines and regulations of the LA
- Complete a planning checklist to ensure all procedures are in place and are being followed
- Ensure that clear targets and educational needs have been identified and are measurable
- Ensure Evolve has been completed and approved for each activity within the timelines stated by NCC
- Inform students of areas of concern at the venue and give instructions for their behaviour. Reassess risk while the visit or activity takes place and act on that assessment
- Complete registers and pupil headcounts
- Hold the ensemble H&S file (Red File)
- Ensure that a parental consent form (SV5) is held at the central office and a copy in the red file for each pupil attending. Pupils will not be allowed to stay at events without a completed SV5
- Take note of paperwork (medical needs and pick up times)
- Deal with enquiries from parents before and during events
- Direct staff in conjunction with the musical director

The Assistant Course Leader should be available to take over from the Course Leader if they are unavailable for any reason.

Additional Staff Members

Additional members of staff should:

- Assist the course leader to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all young people and adults on the visit
- Be clear about their roles and responsibilities while taking part in a visit or activity and carry out that role in an appropriate manner

Ensemble staff will receive a list of dates they are requested to attend throughout the year. Once these dates have been agreed then attendance is expected. In smaller ensembles both the course leader and musical director may be the same individual. In this situation an assistant course leader may be identified.

Musical Director

The Musical Director of each ensemble will be responsible for:

- Layout and positioning of students in ensemble in collaboration with other staff members
- Programming, including choosing the repertoire, arranging performance opportunities and entering festivals and competitions where appropriate
- Discussing and selecting staff with the LO and the course leader
- Ensuring that instruments and equipment have been requested well in advance of the day required in order to organise delivery.
- Prepare projected costs for the year, and then present a termly spreadsheet of running costs to the LO
- Be aware of county's child protection policy, H&S and teachers guidelines

Applications

An ensembles booklet and application form will be produced in the summer term which outlines the ensembles on offer for the coming year.

All students must re-apply each year to join an ensemble even if they are currently a member of that ensemble.

Upon receipt of a completed application form students will be issued with details of an audition, if appropriate.

Auditions will be held during July and students should ensure that they are available during the given audition week when applying. Students will only be auditioned in September if they cannot attend the scheduled audition week due to illness or previously booked holiday commitments. This will be carried out at the discretion of MPN.

Audition procedure

- Auditions will be held once a year, usually in July, at a central venue
- Auditions staff (2 for each audition) shall be selected by the LO according to expertise and experience
- Ensemble lists will be compiled by the LO according to audition results
- If audition results do not provide a clear result with respect to a particular place in an ensemble, consideration should then be given to past attendance, commitment, proven ability and age
- If agreement over the entry of a particular pupil into an ensemble cannot be reached through discussion the LO's decision will be final.
- Each candidate's performance will be assessed by staff with comments and marks being recorded on a standard mark sheet
- An audition report for each candidate will be filed centrally

Ensemble Acceptance

In September notification of ensemble places will be issued along with an acceptance form, parental consent form, parent guidelines and a full list of rehearsal dates and venues. Payment will be requested at this time. We ask students to review their workload for the coming year prior to accepting their ensemble place.

It is expected that if a place is offered and accepted, the commitment to the ensemble will be for the whole year and every effort should be made to attend all rehearsals and events. No refunds will be given if a student cannot attend rehearsals once a place has been accepted and paid for.

Successful applicants will be allocated places depending on numbers of places available and indicated preference. If an applicant's first choice ensemble does not have a place available, s/he may be offered a place in an alternative ensemble. It is MPN policy to encourage students to support their school ensembles.

The actual costs of all ensembles are supported by the Music Education Grant and membership fees are kept to a minimum..

If insufficient applications are received or places accepted in ensembles then it may not be financially viable to run that particular ensemble.

In the event that an applicant was not successful, parents can seek information as to why, and advice can be given as to what improvements may be needed for future auditions.

Membership places being offered later in the year will be at the LO's discretion and students will be expected to pay the outstanding costs on a pro rata basis.

Evaluation forms for each ensemble will be issued in May. This information is then used to assist in the development of the ensembles in the coming year. Any parents who have concerns or grievances with regards to the running of the ensembles can write to the LO in confidence.

Musical Tours/ Residential Courses

MPN recognise the importance of pastoral care and where at all possible the staff attending these activities will be known by the students and will have worked with them before. Parents will have the opportunity to meet the staff at either parents meetings or previous rehearsals.

A new parental consent form will always be requested for musical tours and a detailed itinerary forwarded to parents prior to the tour which will include emergency contact details for the course leader and the accommodation.

Health and Safety

All our ensemble activities are run under strict H & S guidelines. Before any event can take place the visit is recorded on Evolve – the County Educational Visit Approval System. This involves the submission of copies of registers, contact details, risk assessments and schedules for the event. Copies of the risk assessments will be held both centrally and by the course leader. Home and mobile contact details are listed for 2 members of staff (not at the event) in the case of an emergency. For a residential course these 2 members of staff will hold a complete list of names and contact details for all attendees. Once the activity has been recorded on Evolve it is approved both by the EVC and a member of senior management.

During the event the course leader is responsible for the safety and well being of all students. If at any time the LO or EVC feel that the safety of the students is not being adhered to they have the authority to stop the event and take control from the course leader.

Spot checks can and may take place at any time by the LO or EVC to ensure that systems are being adhered to.