

Inclusion Strategy

Inclusion is at the heart of Music Partnership North's Core Purpose, Values and Mission. values and mission. This inclusion strategy covers the period September 2023 to August 2024.

The strategy is designed to ensure that we operate in line with these and the updated National Plan for Music Education, published in June 2022 which has as one of its five strategic functions:

“Inclusion: Drive broad access to music education, so every child has the opportunity to participate, irrespective of their circumstances, background, where they live or their SEND.”

We recognise the need for a holistic and proactive approach to building our hub's organisational resilience, ensuring that provision is inclusive and equitable, and that equity, diversity and inclusion are embedded at the heart of the hub.

This strategy is a live document which is reviewed termly by a working group, including representatives from each strategic partner organisation. The working group monitors progress against our planned activity and refreshes the strategy as appropriate. The strategy briefly covers our progress on inclusion so far, before going into detail on our commitments to future change.

The strategy will be published on hub websites by December 2023, ensuring that we can be held to account by, stakeholders, funders, partner organisations and most importantly the communities we serve.

Methodology

This strategy has been informed by:

- Our Needs Analysis, updated in June 2023
- Arts Council guidance 2023
- Youth Music's EDI self-assessment tool
- Youth Music's IDEA framework
- Music Mark's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Report 2021

- Involvement in Hertfordshire Music Hub's Changing Tracks programme
- The Youth Music funded Changemakers project, in partnership with Sunderland and North Tyneside Music Education Hubs
- Peer networking with regional music hubs and colleagues at Lewisham Music Hub
- Discussions with Local Authority Inclusion and SEND Leads

Organisational Context

Music Partnership North is the Music Education Hub covering Newcastle and Northumberland. The hub is made up of the two local authority music services, with Sage Gateshead as a strategic partner. Music Partnership North-Northumberland is the lead organisation of the hub and is part of Northumberland County Council. As lead organisation, MPN-Northumberland receives DfE funding (through Arts Council England) to facilitate music education in the area in line with aims and objectives of the National Plan for Music Education. There are currently 261 schools in the hub area.

Demographics – Northumberland

- Northumberland is home to 316,000 people and covers an area of 5,013km²
- 97% of its area classed as rural, the county is sparsely populated with 63 people per km²
- Half of the county's population live in 3% of urban land found in the south-east of the county
- 23.6% of residents are over 65 years old
- Life expectancy at birth for males is 79.0 years and 82.2 years for females
- 76.5% of the adult population are economically active
- Four-fifths of residents own their own home
- Unemployment levels are higher than the national average
- 7.2% of the Northumberland school-age population are from a minority ethnic background (2022/23)
- What percentage 2.7% of the Northumberland school-age population have English as a second language (2022/23)
- 18.2% of the Northumberland school-age population have Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (2022/23)
- 22.2% of the Northumberland school-age population are eligible for Free school Meals

Demographics – Newcastle

- Newcastle Upon Tyne Local Authority is home to 298, 300 people (2021) and covers an area of 113.5 sq. km

- Newcastle Upon Tyne is classed as Urban with Major Conurbation (2011) and has a population of density 2,669 people per sq. km (2019). Population profiles
- LG Inform states 'As of 2021, Newcastle upon Tyne is ranked 2 out of the 12 local authority areas in the North East for population density, with around 26.46 persons per hectare of land. The population density for the North East is 3.09 persons per hectare and for England it is 4.34 persons per hectare'
- 15% (44,860) of residents are aged 65 or over (2021)
- Life expectancy at birth is 77.3 for males and 81.6 for females. Time period between 2018-20.
- 71.4% of the adult population are economically active. Time period (Apr 2022-Mar 2023)
- Just over half (54.2%) of residents own their own home (2021)
- Current unemployment levels of 4.6% are higher than the national average 3.6% Time period Apr-2022-Mar 2023
- 7915 (16.9%) of children and young people (0-25 year olds) have Special Education Needs and/or a Disability (2022/23)
- In Newcastle Upon Tyne 25.71% of people live in areas within the 10% most deprived LSOAs in England - overall ranking of 40 out of 317 English LAs
- 25.5% of Newcastle's total population are BAME (37% among school-age children)

Progress to date...

Following participation in the Hertfordshire Music Hub's Youth Music-funded Changing Tracks programme, a working group was set up, including representatives from all strategic partner organisations. The working group conducted a self-assessment audit and devised an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan, with input from all strategic partners. The Action Plan covered four key themes and action to date on these areas includes:

Governance/Leadership

- Recruitment processes were reviewed and updated.
- Recruitment adverts were amended to ensure they included statements regarding EDI policy. Reasonable adjustments are now made clear in adverts.
- Review of job descriptions, carried out in conjunction with HR. Inclusion knowledge and skills are included in 'desirable' sections of role description.
- Interview questions regarding EDI are formulated and included in all interviews.

- School SENCOs and parents/carers of children with SEND surveyed to identify additional support requirements
- Discussions took place with Local Authority SEND Leads to agree a method of sharing information with hub staff on what interventions might be needed to ensure each child gets the support they need
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Workforce

- All staff receive inclusion training as part of their induction. Inclusion training was refreshed in January 2022 and is a regular and ongoing process for all hub staff
- Staff are given any necessary equipment to support their needs. Staff are supported with flexible working conditions
- Staff can access Health and Wellbeing support through the intranet and are aware of the organisation's Health and Wellbeing Champion and Mental Health first aider
- Volunteers made aware of access to expenses for travel, as this could be a barrier for some individuals
- 'Do, Review, Improve' training was delivered to staff as a way of monitoring inclusive practise, and staff are encouraged to engage with it

Young People

- Youth Voice representative(s) recruited to the Hub Board
- Monitoring visits to ensure that Youth Voice is embedded in all hub activities

Organisational Development

- Website updated/adapted to be accessible to all

[Inclusion Strategy Objectives for 2023-24](#)

Following an organisational audit using Youth Music's IDEA self-assessment survey, the following objectives have been identified. There are also objectives arising from our own Needs Analysis, along with the Arts Council's new Performance Framework. Progress against these objectives will be monitored by our EDI working group, meeting at least once per term. The objectives are clustered into the 8 themes from Youth Music's IDEA framework:

- Organisational values, culture, and strategy

- People and Culture
- Key Policies
- Reach and Engagement
- Youth Voice
- Communications
- Partnerships and Advocacy

Theme	Actions and Outputs	Responsibility	Status
Organisational values, culture, and strategy	1.1 IDEA-related topics will be on the agenda at senior leadership and board meetings at least quarterly, by November 2023 1.2 New board member(s) will be recruited by April 2024, ideally including parent voice, Newcastle secondary school and community leadership representation	Lead Officer/Hub Lead Chair, supported by Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service	

	<p>1.3 When setting service budgets, funding will be ring-fenced to directly support IDEA work and/or additional funding or support will be sought from Local Authority (Eat/Sleep/Play/Learn or Poverty & Hardship fund) partners or external agencies by April 2024</p>	<p>Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service with Business Development Officer</p>	
<p>People and Culture</p>	<p>2.1 Broaden annual workforce/governance Equal Opportunities data collection beyond that which is required by major funders. Additional data such as caring responsibilities, neurodiversity and socio-economic background will be collected by October 2023</p> <p>2.2 Workforce/governance diversity data will be published on hub websites by December 2023</p> <p>2.3 Cross reference our workforce/governance diversity data with our demographics data to ascertain if our music leaders have similar lived experience/s to the young people we work with. If not, identify gaps that would be advantageous to fill by April 2024</p> <p>2.3 Essential and desirable criteria on person specifications will be reviewed to attract candidates from more diverse backgrounds by April 2024</p> <p>2.4 Expand our recruitment channels to target specific communities, when vacant posts are advertised by April 2024</p> <p>2.5 Work with Virtual School across both Local Authority areas to ensure access to musical activities is available to all children by July 2024</p>	<p>Business Development Officer</p> <p>Business Development Officer</p> <p>Business Development Officer</p> <p>Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service</p> <p>HR/Recruitment Advisor(s) plus Senior Admin Officer</p> <p>Lead Officer and Senior Specialist,</p>	

		Music Service, supported by Musical Opportunities Development Officer	
	2.6 Create formal employee 'voice' mechanisms across both Local Authority teams so staff can communicate their views and have a voice on matters that affect them at work by July 2024	Musical Opportunities Development Officer & Senior Specialist, Music Service	
Key Policies	3.1 Create a Learner access policy or equivalent by April 2024	Musical Opportunities Development Officer	
	3.2 Audit all key policies to ensure that they have been updated within the last three years and are accessible via Local Authority & Hub websites by July 2024	Business Development Officer	
Reach and Engagement	4.1 Monitor demographic data in relation to attendance, retention and achievement/progression by July 2024	Business Development Officer	
	4.2 Take action to support progression for young people facing barriers beyond first access or beginner levels, in conjunction with Local Authority partners, resulting in at least one new partnership project in each Local Authority area by July 2024	Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service, supported by Musical Opportunities Development Officer	

Musical Offer	<p>5.1 Deliver Youth Voice training for all hub staff by December 2023, using the Youth Music toolkit, and monitor its impact through quality assurance visits to ensure that co-creation and shared ownership is at the heart of the way we deliver music as a hub.</p> <p>5.2 Undertake an access/inclusion audit on the spaces we use for music centre/ensemble/performance activities by April 2024. Examples include whether the building is accessible, whether it is well served by public transport, or whether it has gender-neutral toilets etc.</p> <p>5.3 Ensure that support is available and publicised for children and young people to access accessible or adapted instruments by April 2024</p> <p>5.4 Ensure that opportunities for children and young people to develop composition (including songwriting), music production and self-directed bands, collectives or other groups are available across the hub area by April 2024</p> <p>5.5 Ensure that hub staff consider diverse representation when choosing repertoire so that it showcases a diverse range of composers by December 2024 (e.g., women, people of the global majority, LGBTQ+ and disabled people).</p>	<p>Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service</p> <p>Business Development Officer</p> <p>Musical Opportunities Development Officer</p> <p>Musical Opportunities Development Officer, with Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service</p> <p>Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service</p>	
Youth Voice	<p>6.1 Complete a Youth Voice consultation in an out of school setting (e.g. Youth Group) in each Local Authority area by April 2024</p> <p>6.2 Complete a Youth Voice consultation in an alternate provider (PRU/Special School) in each Local Authority area by April 2024</p>	<p>Musical Opportunities Development Officer</p> <p>Musical Opportunities Development Officer</p>	

	<p>6.3 Conduct a parent/youth voice online survey in both Local Authority areas by July 2024</p> <p>6.4 Provide opportunities for youth-led programming (e.g., of gigs or performances) in hub ensembles by July 2024</p> <p>6.5 Create at least one video case study to highlight good practice in working with diverse communities to co-create music provision through parent/youth voice by July 2024</p>	<p>Musical Opportunities Development Officer</p> <p>Deputy Lead Officer and Ensemble Leaders</p> <p>Musical Opportunities Development Officer, with Senior Specialist, Music Service</p>	
Communications	<p>7.1 Seek training for our team in how to make content more inclusive, diverse, accessible or equitable by April 2024</p>	<p>Business Development Officer</p>	
Partnerships and Advocacy	<p>8.1 Share our IDEA priorities and/or action plan with all current and new partners and advocate with our partners for better IDEA practices across the sector by April 2024</p> <p>8.2 Potential new partners contacted with a view to a new partnership project in each LA area, by December 2023</p>	<p>Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service</p> <p>Lead Officer and Senior Specialist, Music Service, with Musical Opportunities Development Officer</p>	

	8.3 Work with SEND champion schools to share best practice regarding musical activities for children with SEND by April 2024	Musical Opportunities Development Officer with Deputy Lead Officer	
	8.4 Secure specialist support and advice/CPD for special schools (e.g. Music and SEND network meetings) by April 2024	Senior Specialist, Music Service	
	8.5 EDI working group to meet termly to monitor progress against EDI Action Plan – termly and ongoing	Musical Opportunities Development Officer	

Specific Support

In collaboration with schools and Local Authority partners, we ensure that specific support is made available for children and young people who are eligible for Pupil Premium, looked-after children and/or those who are care experienced, and those who have an identified special educational need or disability (SEND).

Schools are advised that Pupil Premium can and should be used to ensure that children in receipt of this support are able to access music tuition. Parents are encouraged to enquire with their child's school about this. Many schools choose to partially or fully subsidise tuition to remove barriers to access. Looked-after children are entitled to a 100% remission in fees, as outlined in our Charging/Remissions Policy.

We recognise that the interventions needed to best support children with SEND are varied. To ensure that each child receives appropriate support, we ask tutors and schools to discuss what adjustments are most appropriate for each child. This may include reference to a child's Pupil Profile/Pupil Passport, detailing the approaches that the child finds most helpful to aid their learning. In addition, adapted instruments and other supporting equipment may be sought, to ensure all children can fully participate in hub activities.

Inclusion Lead

The role of Inclusion Lead is undertaken by our Musical Opportunities Development Officer. As Inclusion Lead this member of staff will:

- Provide leadership, support and direction for the Hub's inclusion strategy
- Ensure equitable access and progression for children and young people facing additional and/or complex barriers to participation
- Work with senior leaders to drive cultural change across the Hub partnership through their advocacy and practical support for inclusive practice and structural change

The Inclusion Lead will be appropriately trained and experienced and will provide support to Hub teams and services to understand and deliver using inclusive approaches and practices. They will ensure that provision is accessible:

- In specialist settings, including special schools and alternative provision settings and those settings that have not historically engaged with the Hub
- For children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in mainstream settings
- For children and young people who are looked-after, including working with the Virtual School in both Local Authority areas
- With specialist resources or equipment where appropriate, including accessible and adapted/adaptive instruments

The Inclusion Lead will also be expected to connect with the relevant National Music Hub Centres of Excellence to support and implement best practice.

The Inclusion Lead will convene termly meetings of the EDI Working Group to monitor progress against this Inclusion Strategy

Music Partnership North Charging/Remission of Fees Policy

Published: March 2023 Policy to be reviewed: February 2024

Music Partnership North (MPN) is funded by a DfE grant via Arts Council England.

Under the terms of the grant, students living or attending school in Northumberland or Newcastle, may be eligible for financial support of their instrumental and vocal lessons with Music Partnership North teachers.

Schools are advised that Pupil Premium can and should be used to ensure that children in receipt of this support are able to access music tuition. Parents are encouraged to enquire with their child's school about this.

Who can apply?

A 50% remission of fees for instrumental / vocal lessons can be applied to applications that meet the following criteria: Applicants must satisfy both points 1 and 2 of the list below and at least one other:

1. Students must live in Northumberland/Newcastle or attend a Northumberland/Newcastle school.
2. Students must be in reception-year – year 13 and in full time education
3. Families are on Income Support
4. Families are in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance
5. Families are in receipt of State Pension Credit
6. Families are in receipt of Child Tax Credit but no element of Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenues and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190
7. Families are in receipt of Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (£616.67 per month)).
8. Asylum Seekers with Leave to Remain status in the UK

A 100% remission of fees can be applied to applications that meet the following criteria:

1. Asylum Seekers with no recourse to public funds and Refugees.
2. Children in Care (LAC).

Who can't apply? Remission of fees will not be applied:

1. If the student has instrumental and / or vocal lessons with an independent provider
2. If the student attends an independent school outside of Northumberland/Newcastle
3. If the student is younger than 5 years or over 18 years of age
4. On a second instrument / vocal lesson.

How to apply

Parents need to confirm they are entitled to Pupil Premium. MPN will either contact the school to verify the claim or we may ask for additional evidence.

Supporting evidence

You may be asked to provide evidence to support your application. The following are acceptable sources of evidence:

Employment and Support allowance

Free School Meals Award

HMRC Tax credits*

Housing Benefit

Income Support

Job Seekers Allowance

Self-Assessment Tax Calculation*

Universal Credit*

*** *These must include annual household income***

Please provide the most recent evidence. Screen captures are accepted but evidence must be dated and include the name of the parent and guardian.

Evidence that is more than 12 months old must be supported by a recent bank statement confirming that you are still in receipt of the benefit.

Period of support

The remission of fees is reviewed annually. Parents must inform the school / Music Partnership North immediately if your entitlement to benefit changes.