

Inclusion Strategy for Nottingham Music Hub

Vision

Nottingham Music Hub are committed to fostering a vibrant and inclusive musical community, where every individual has the opportunity to access, participate in, and contribute to a world-class music education. Our aim is to support young people to become their very best, fostering joy, self-worth, and achievement through inspirational music opportunities which are open to and enjoyed by all Nottingham City children.

Recognising individuals from diverse cultures, perspectives and experiences is at the heart of the way we work. To this aim we will deliver our service guided by the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and seek to actively address discrimination and barriers often experienced by those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation)

Mission

Our mission is to provide outstanding music education for all young people, irrespective of their background, ability, or circumstances. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment that promotes equity, diversity, and opportunity. Through innovative programmes, collaborative partnerships, and a dedication to breaking down barriers, we strive to make music accessible to all.

Overview of the area in which we operate

Nottingham Music Service (NMS) operates in the local authority area of Nottingham City which has a population of 323,700 with a total school age population of 49,600 (ONS 2021). Nottingham is the 11th most deprived district in the country and has the lowest disposable household income in England (ONS 2021). Child poverty is a major issue in the city with 59% of children living in families where no adults work or where the household income is low enough to receive tax credits (compared to the national average of 37%) and 34% of children are classed as being affected by severe income deprivation (IMD 2021). The 2021 Census shows 42.7% of the population as being from BME groups; an increase from 35% in 2011. Of the largest population groups of school age children: 40.7% identify as White British, 19% Asian or Asian British, 12.3% Black or Black British and 13.8% British Mixed. Of the total school age population 50.9% identify as 'non white British'. (2021 Census)

Over 20 different languages are spoken in Nottingham with English, Polish, Urdu, Punjabi and Arabic being the most prevalent. The majority of the population in Nottingham, 41.3%, identify as being not religious, with 34.7% identifying as Christian, 12.3% as Muslim and 1.7% as Hindu. (2011 census)

Delivery

Nottingham Music Hub (NMEH) employ's a dedicated team of teachers who are committed to providing young people with the chance to experience the advantages of a high-quality music education. Whilst progressing on their instruments students also benefit from cultural, social and personal growth through being exposed to different venues, experiences, people, repertoire and events.

We have established clear progression routes for students to continue their music education journey into adulthood. These progression routes are designed to bolster their musical development, facilitate their engagement in an expanding array of activities and events, encompassing various music genres.

Working together with schools, NMEH designs and delivers bespoke music provision. Activities are designed and delivered in a manner that is accessible and tailored to meet both the schools and individual student's needs, with additional resource or support where appropriate.

An example of this is where we offer an initial session to schools where our staff work with just the SEND children to ease them into the lessons, allowing the children to explore the instrument freely and for staff to form an understanding of their needs.

We also offer a variety of services to SEND, SEMH and PRU schools including bespoke lessons on instruments, including whole class bands, orchestras and choirs and partner with DJ specialists Noise Academy.

We partner with OHMI (One-Handed Instrument Trust) to identify any barriers to learning through physical disability in mainstream primaries to ensure all children attend and receive parity in their WCET education. We have built up a stock of adapted instruments and where existing stocks are not suitable for any pupil, we work with OHMI to create adapted instruments which suit pupils specific, individual need.

Through our work with SEND pupils and schools we have identified the need for an inclusive choir and ensemble and have partnered with MEHEM's Inclusive Choir to provide online / in person choir sessions with SEND students across the East Midlands. We are currently exploring how we can successfully begin an inclusive ensemble, as trialled in Oak Field SEND school, which we hope to open out more widely. Our recent Great Big Orchestra Project was a highly successful interactive concert featuring our Robin Hood Youth Orchestra and SEND students from across City SEND, SEMH schools and SEND students from mainstream primaries.

Through our involvement with MEHEM's UpRising initiative, our core team has increased their knowledge and skills through their professional development. This CPD has enabled them to acquire invaluable expertise in three key areas: Inclusive Instrumental Teaching, Managing Behaviours That Challenge, and

effectively Working With Trauma. Two members of our teaching staff have been actively engaged as UpRising representatives since its inception becoming Inclusion Champions within the staff team.

Furthermore, our Inclusion Champions have undergone specialised training in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) teaching. This specialised knowledge equips them with the skills and insights necessary to address the unique needs of SEND students. They have held a number of CDP sessions that disseminates their learning to the wider staff team thus ensuring that inclusivity is embedded across the hub.

Our Charging, Remissions and Subsidy Policy (See appendices) highlights the financial support offered to those students in receipt of pupils premium/free school meals and families in receipt of income support/universal credit. The policy outlines our commitment to making our activities as inclusive and accessible as possible by offering discounted rates and support for pupils/families who wish to access our ensembles or attend our events. There is also the option to apply for financial support from NMEH towards instrument hire costs, tour fees and ensemble fees.

We recognise that, although we are making significant changes in the way we work to include EDI principles, in order to become a fully inclusive music service, we need to continue to respond to the needs of Nottingham City students and parents. To this end we have identified four key area of focus within the service:

1. Student Engagement
2. Teaching, Rehearsals and Events
3. Role Models
4. Workforce and Hub Governance

1. Student Engagement

We recognise that engaging students in music education within Nottingham City comes with inherent Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) barriers. Firstly, socioeconomic disparities can limit access to progression routes, instruments and events/tours. Additionally, there can be cultural and linguistic barriers, as Nottingham City is home to a diverse population, and not all students may feel a strong connection to the repertoire or instruments being taught.

Furthermore, ensuring that our delivery and events are inclusive of students with disabilities is a challenge. We are developing events that aim to make music experiences accessible to all, regardless of physical or cognitive differences. Lastly, gender stereotypes can also play a role in deterring some students from engaging with learning certain instruments, particularly if they are traditionally associated with one gender. These are some examples of the wide the ranging barriers and as such requires a consistency across all points of access to our service to make music education in Nottingham City truly inclusive and equitable for all students. To meet this aim in regards to student engagement we have outlined the following future plans for the service:

Aspiration	Current Situation	Future Plans
<p>Ensuring that the demographic of children who access in-school-teaching and out of school ensembles continues to be fully reflective of the demographic of the city</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently RHYO identifies as 52% non-white British which is representative of Nottingham City. • However we recognise that the current situation needs continual monitoring as RHYO interconnect is not as diverse as RHYO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to advertise ensembles to all students in schools to ensure diverse student engagement • Ensure diversity of repertoire
<p>Identifying and seeking ways to overcome any barriers that prevent any young person from continuing to engage with musical activities in the city</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and partner organisations are consistently identifying barriers to accessing learning and progression routes. • YP panel of ex-RHYO students help to identify and refine programmes to support students' needs and eliminate barriers • We have a simple subsidy application process which is available on our website for financial support for all our ensembles and instrument hire. • We offer discounts for all ensembles, events, tours and instrument hire to all pupil premium students • Schools are actively encouraged to set aside a proportion of pupil premium funding to promote inclusive access to teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively identify barriers through our communication with schools and partners. • Utilise student feedback to refine service offer • Review our financial support application process to ensure it remains applicable • Produce marketing in different languages • Continue our work with OHMI and explore further areas where they can support access
<p>Ensuring that equity, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of all our planning when developing new services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We review our service and events regularly to identify ways in which EDI principles can be embedded into their access and delivery. • We have a dedicated, named EDI lead within the organisation (Michael Aspinall) who is involved in all aspects of service planning. • We are involved with MEHEM UpRising, a Youth Music funded project working across the East Midlands to develop equitable music provision for pupils who are disabled and/or have additional learning needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to use the learning from UpRising to plan services • Include YP in the planning of our services • CPD for staff around EDI principles (see Quality Framework section of the Music Plan for further information) • Continue to develop specific events or ways in which SEND students can be involved

Teaching, Rehearsals and Events

As outlined above our aim is to deliver teaching provision where all young people can thrive despite the differences that may exist between them. Music Hub staff deliver engaging and varied teaching that caters for all learners, supplemented with a range of supporting resources to overcome potential barriers to learning, such as EAL or SEND.

To foster a truly inclusive environment for our rehearsals and events, it is essential that we promote a diverse range of musical genres and styles that reflect the city's multicultural makeup. Additionally, we aim to create safe spaces where children of all identities feel respected and valued which is vital for fostering an environment where students want to attend and learn their instrument. Breaking down these EDI barriers not only enriches the musical experiences of children but also contributes to a more inclusive and harmonious environment for audience members attending our events. Our aspirations to support equitable teaching, rehearsals and events include:

Aspiration	Current Situation	Future Plans
Continuing to ensure that the musical learning NMS provides reflects diverse cultures and communities, both in the actual music used and in the variety of methodologies used in teaching, learning and performing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much use of music from African and Latin American countries at early levels - fairly easy to adapt and make accessible if carefully chosen and where 'loop-based' • At early levels much music learned by ear - enabling YP to learn and perform music with rhythms that are easy to pick up by ear (as is the case in so many musical cultures) but would look intimidating when notated. • Backing tracks made available so that students can learn from sound (and all the subtleties that can carry) as well as notation, supporting different learning styles 	Continue to identify pieces via suggestions from students and staff
Celebrating the diversity of the music, composers and methodologies used, especially in performance situations including music, musicians and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have been approached by a number of communities which has resulted in 'crossover' pieces being performed at events. This can be time consuming as it involves transcribing by ear from aural musical cultures as very little diverse music is 	Forge links with other communities to investigate joint pieces that could be performed

composers outside of 'mainstream' Western classical and popular traditions	published or notated. These pieces include Chaudary performed by Ranjan and the Dream Rockers and RHYO and the Nottingham Asian Arts Council which resulted in a piece called 'Firetrack' Based on 'Suti' by Indian composers Salim-Sulaiman, this fusion of Indian and Western musical styles was regularly performed at events. <i>*See case study below</i>	
Involving SEND students in our mainstream concerts.	**See case study below re. SEND event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include SEND students in a greater number of our mainstream performances • Diversify the methods we use to teach students outside of mainstream education Develop a series of events for SEND students to perform at.

***Example of students choosing diverse repertoire:**

Older students were asked to suggest pieces from their own/family musical backgrounds/interests that they would like to play with the ensembles they play in. We reviewed the suggestions and where possible, arranged and adapted to make them accessible for the majority of NMS ensembles to use.

When the arrangement is complete in draft, it is sent to the student who suggested it to ensure that they are happy with how it feels when translated for the NMS ensemble and that it has retained authenticity. This approach has also surfaced previously unknown skills and interests among young people in our ensembles. This has led to Turkish folk music, with a student playing a Baglama; a student with family from Bulgaria teaching orchestral players a Bulgarian wedding dance in 11/16 to enable them to internalise rhythms and play Bulgarian music with understanding. We are also currently working on a Chinese piece for Pipa and orchestra suggested by two students who play that instrument.

****Case Study of our SEND 'The Great Big Orchestra Project' concert**

The Great Big Orchestra Project (GBOP) was a collaborative project with Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust, through our partnership with MEHEM's Uprising Project. It was inspired by the Great Orchestra Experiment, one of our flagship events for mainstream primary schools, which inspires children who are at the start of their musical journey by watching, participating, and performing alongside the Robin Hood Youth Orchestra (RHYO). The ethos of GBOP was similar - giving SEND children and young people the opportunity to watch RHYO and play with them in an inspiring concert at the Albert Hall. Some learnt instrumental parts during their lessons with our SEND specialist, which they then performed with RHYO. Some formed a choir and sang and

signed with the orchestra and singers from a City secondary school. Every piece was meaningfully interactive and inclusive, however we realised early on that not all SEND students would be able to attend the concert, so for one day we went to them and held a smaller version in Oak Field School, a school with a large number of students in wheelchairs and many who have Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). Again, all pupils were invited to interact with RHYO and it was a truly joyous occasion. At both concerts we also featured sensory and sensory rooms so those who experience music in a more sensory way could participate in ways meaningful to them. We are delighted to have GBOP on our calendar again for this year, and to be supported once more by Uprising.

Role models

Role models play a pivotal role in the aspirations of NMEH’s service delivery. We know that by having diverse role models in music education it can inspire children from various backgrounds to pursue their musical interests. Nottingham is a city of cultural diversity, and having staff, Board members and volunteers who reflect this diversity can send a powerful message to students that music is an inclusive and welcoming environment. When students can see themselves represented in their teachers and play music they recognise from their background, they are more likely to feel a sense of belonging, encouraging greater participation and retention in our ensembles.

By showcasing individuals from different genders, ethnicities, and backgrounds through staff role models and repertoire, NMEH can break down preconceived notions about who can be a musician or composer. This not only fosters a more inclusive environment but also equips students with a broader perspective on the possibilities within the world of music. Ultimately, diverse role models can serve as living proof that music is a universal language, accessible to all, regardless of their background or identity, aligning with the EDI principles central to NMEH’s commitment to fostering an inclusive music education landscape. We plan to achieve this by meeting the following aspiration regarding role models:

Aspiration	Current Situation	Future Plans
Provide and promote role models for young people that reflect the characteristics highlighted in the Equalities Act, including staff, students, composers and performers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In January 2023 the Board undertook a skills audit that highlighted areas for improvement. One of the main needs identified is that the Board does not reflect the demographic of Nottingham City, particularly with respect to ethnicity and gender. We are currently advertising for a paid internship aimed at supporting students who have learnt music through either Nottingham Music Service’s In Harmony or RHYO programme and are aged between 18 – 21. The intern will be working alongside our teaching and administrative staff. The purpose of the role is to provide a role model for other students and the opportunity to expand the interns musical knowledge and develop work place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct further Board recruitment in 2023/24, with a focus on increasing diversity and representation of the demographics of Nottingham City To ensure the continuation of the internship and to expand the offer we need to fundraise for it.

	<p>skills including communication, teamwork and project management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have formed a YP board made up from ex students who are involved in the design of events and programmes. Nominated members of the YP's board also attend Hub Board meetings to feedback to trustees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake a refresh of the YP board to ensure it has a diverse and vibrant membership.
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In conclusion, NMEH firmly believes that music is a universal language that transcends boundaries and that every child in Nottingham City should have equal access to its transformative potential. Our EDI strategy outlines our aspirations and future plans of working towards a more equitable and diverse musical landscape in which all children can find their voices, explore their talents, and thrive in an environment that celebrates their unique identities.

As we move forward, we will continue to listen, work with and represent the diverse voices of our community, learning from their experiences, and adapting our strategies to ensure that we remove the barriers that stand in the way of a child's musical journey. We aim to create a service where every child can find their place in the symphony of life, and where our city's rich cultural tapestry is reflected and celebrated in every note. Nottingham Music Hub's EDI strategy is not just a vision; it's a promise to our community, and together, we will make that promise a harmonious reality.