

Wiltshire Music Connect Inclusion Strategy

For the start of AY 23-24 we have appointed Sophie Amstell as Acting Inclusion Lead pending a longer-term confirmation of HLO status.

What do we mean by Inclusion?

Whilst Wiltshire is a relatively affluent county, its younger population includes those living and learning in challenging circumstances and who face a range of barriers to participation. These include rural isolation, social and economic deprivation, special educational needs and disability, emotional, behavioural, and mental health issues, and looked after children and young people. We also recognise an evolving demographic including ethnic minorities and refugees.

Within our means, we want to help level the playing field for all young people and ensure that wherever possible a child's circumstances or background do not mean they prevented from accessing musical opportunities including opportunities to progress and achieve their musical potential.

- We want to be able to support children and young people to achieve musically and through music so as to ensure the best possible future for themselves.
- We recognise that we will need to develop skills and understanding within the county's workforce to do this.
- We recognise that the effort and costs associated with reaching and benefiting young people with particular needs and challenges may be greater than for the 'mainstream'.
- If inclusion is to be successful in Wiltshire's Music Education Hub then we also need to consider and anticipate new ways to support access and the progression of young people's musical skills and interests and not assume they will choose the same 'routes' as others.

Our approach

We see Inclusion as a responsibility that is shared across stakeholder groups and with which we provide support, encouragement and challenge. Obviously, it's important that we ourselves do and demonstrate things but shared responsibility is commensurate with our hub model and longer-term sustainability & 'ownership'. All partners have the potential to contribute to the strategy but not all need to attempt to address it all.

Inclusion is increasingly embedded across all areas of our work. From Associate recruitment, through funding / commissioning briefs, school music education planning template, instrument hire pool, remissions and awards. We need to continue to build expertise and confidence across stakeholder groups – in small village schools as well as large urban or special school/s. For individual Associates working in mainstream education as well as those specialising in more specific SEN or disability work.

Celebrating, sharing and modelling from examples of good practice within and beyond Wiltshire this includes an Inclusion Award as one of the Wiltshire Music Education Awards.

In the longer term we will probably need to identify a strategic Inclusion Partner with the vision and scope to look across our landscape and the new HLO future may offer a more realistic way to address this.

Resourcing our Inclusion Work

“We recognise that the effort and costs associated with reaching and benefiting young people with particular needs and challenges may be greater than for the mainstream.”

We have allocated budgets for:

- Tuition subsidies in and out of school (see Charging and Remissions section)
- Remission for instrument hire (see Charging and Remissions section)
- An inclusion network open to both Associates and schools
- Curriculum support for Special Schools
- Library of adaptive instrument

In addition, we are:

- emphasising the need to consider Inclusion in School Music Education planning
- developing our pool of Associates to increase the number who have identified skills / experience in supporting pupils with diverse needs and who themselves have diverse backgrounds (refer to Associate badge for IMA.)

Action Plan

Following stakeholder consultation sessions in 2022-23, and working with staff and board, we identified five development areas (although these will naturally be cross cutting in many areas)

- 1. Associate workforce development**
- 2. Professional development and training (CPD) – schools and Associates**
- 3. Youth Voice**
- 4. Diverse musical offer: Genres (young people, schools, and ensembles)**
- 5. Disadvantaged Learners including SEND**

We also recognise that Rurality / Digital / Composition & Expanded Musical Opportunities runs through all 5 in one form or another.

In addition, we recognise that we need to address language, representation and accessibility of all communications including our website, which will be managed under our Comms strategy.

We have a working document for staff and contractors to monitor progress against our Action Plan.
