Working with Hubs
Musical inclusion guidance

A simple guide to developing a more musically inclusive hub

Making sure that all children and young people have access to music education requires all partners in a Music Education Hub to understand, make time for, and strategically embed musically inclusive approaches into its work.

This document outlines how you can tell if yours is a musically inclusive hub; how you might go about assessing how well you're doing; and some of the ingredients for success. It is based on evaluation findings from work funded by Youth Music [1].

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1. What is musically inclusive practice?

Musically inclusive practice ensures that all children and young people who want to can make music. It can only happen by embracing a wide range of genres and styles, supporting participants to achieve social and personal outcomes as well as musical ones, and having a music education workforce which can work with young people of all backgrounds, needs and interests. 'All children and young people' means not just those who are 'extremely vulnerable' or 'gifted and talented', but the full diversity of all young people. The practitioners who support them need to be able to work together to signpost young people to suitable provision and progression routes.

There is a growing body of work which shows the importance of a more holistic approach to music education.

Sound Sense's evaluation of Youth Music's Musical Inclusion programme [2], found strong related links between musical development

and socio-personal development. This reinforces findings in Communities of Music Education[3] (Saunders & Welch, commissioned by Youth Music, 2012), which compared the features of excellent out-of-school music provision with Ofsted guidelines for music in school.

This more holistic (musical, social, personal) approach is particularly important for young people at risk of low attainment, disengagement or educational exclusion. These young people often suffer from a negative sense of who they are and what they are capable of. They often feel unable to do things that others can do, and become disengaged from their own ability to learn and achieve. They may find it hard to function well in a group and behave in a challenging way. All of this can act as a self fulfilling prophecy and lead to poor quality engagement and consequently poor musical outcomes.

A quality music education

experience for these young people can be transformational, resulting in increased motivation not only in achieving quality in music-making, but also in the rest of their education – the 'intrinsic motivation' that is so critical to learning.

Part of being musically inclusive may therefore involve challenging our ideas of what music is for, who music is for, and what role it can have in all our lives. (See 'Further reading' for 'What is quality in musically inclusive practice?')

2. What does a musically inclusive hub look like?

A musically inclusive hub (or school):

• identifies and works to break down any barriers to music-making that young people face

• puts the voices of children and young people at the heart of work which is relevant to their needs and interests

• places emphasis on young people's self-expression and musical creativity

• supports a diversity of high-quality music-making across a wide range of genres and musical activities

• actively works to create understanding among all those involved in music education of the different approaches to teaching and learning

• does all this through all areas of its work: making inclusion a central factor in funding and resource allocation; strategy and planning; programming/ curriculum; staffing and professional development

3. How do you know how you're doing?

Those involved in hubs - practitioners, managers, strategists, policy makers and funders - might find it useful to carry out a self-assessment exercise using the **McKinsey 7S Framework** to look at the degree to which musical inclusivity is integrated into a hub. It proposes seven internal aspects of an organisation (or in the case of hubs, a network) that need to be accepted, understood and acted upon if it is to

be successful.

Central to the framework is the idea of **superordinate goals**, where two or more people or groups need to be involved in order to achieve them (taking the idea of 'shared values' one step further). The diagram also shows that all elements are interconnected.

Structure

Strategy

Systems

Shared Values/ Superordinate goals

Skills

Style

Staff
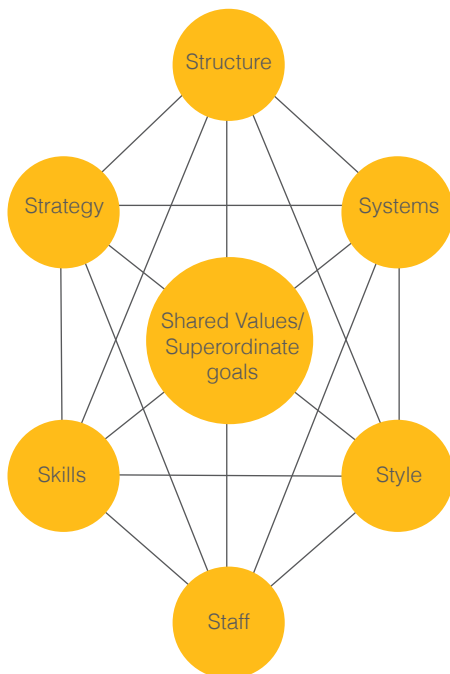
How to use this model

For each of the 'S's, agree with those involved in the exercise a prompt question; use the italicised prompts listed in the box as a starter. Then, on the scale from 0 (non-existent) to 10 (the best ever) plot both where you are now and where you want to get to.

You might ask questions such as: what would it look like if we were to score ourselves at 10 on Staffing? What would be the 'ideal' degree of integration (these will differ for each hub)? With some of the 'S's, aiming for 10 may not be feasible or desirable but you may want to ask questions such as: *'If we're aiming for seven and assess ourselves now at three, what will it take to get from three to seven within two years?'*

A major benefit of the 7S is the conversations which are part of:

• agreeing who takes part in the exercise

• getting those people to engage with the exercise

• setting the 'right' prompt question

• trying to answer the prompt question

• the range of responses to where the two points should be plotted, which may well lead you back to re-assessing the questions, or maybe even rethinking the list of those involved

Perhaps of least importance is where you plot your points.

7s inclusion questions for hubs

1 Shared values

What are or might be these values or goals? Is 'every child should have access to a high quality music education' too vague or too prescriptive? What might be the manifestations of shared values/superordinate goals?

2 Strategy

How are shared values/ superordinate goals followed through into strategy? Does the hub have a unified and written strategy which includes musical inclusion work? Or is there another mechanism which gives musical inclusion work parity of esteem?

3 Structure

Does the structure of the hub reflect the values and is musical inclusion represented in the senior management of the hub?

4 Systems

A hub's systems might include anything from funding through quality assurance to programme development. Are the shared values reflected in the design and operation of these systems? Do these individually and together treat inclusivity work with equal esteem or in the same way as mainstream work?

5 Staffing

Are the staff members addressing the strategy: sufficient in number; sufficiently qualified; well deployed to deliver all parts of the strategy?

6 Skills

Is the overall awareness and skillset of the collective hub staff sufficient to deliver the strategy?

7 Style

This refers to leadership and management style, and evident in activity: where the money is deployed, the attitudes of the managers, what work is talked about in what terms, what work is visited. To what extent does this reflect the shared values/ superordinate goals?

4. How do you get better at integrating inclusion in your hub?

For all partners:

- **Be open-minded**: be prepared to change your assumptions about what hub partners do and what they're about. Have open conversations with the needs of children, young people and schools at the centre, rather than those of your own organisation.

- **Translate your messages**: use the terminology those you need to influence are comfortable with. Avoid jargon and acronyms and make sure you explain the terms you use. Terms specific to the education, formal music education or non formal music education sector may not be understood by everyone.

- **Keep it real**: don't overemphasise your values/philosophy, talk in terms of the benefits to your audience.

- **Find allies**: build relationships with Arts Council England relationship managers, other hub leads or music education providers, and make time to talk about musical inclusion to increase yours and others' understanding.

For those who are not strategic partners or hub leads:

- **Walk a mile in your hub lead's shoes**: seek to (deeply) understand what makes the hub lead tick and what their priorities and challenges are. This may be rational, or emotional (i.e. fear of being out-of-control if working in partnerships). Also find out who they're answerable to, and is that a route to influence? How much overlap is there between their agenda and yours, and how can that overlap be maximised?

- **Offer help and support even where there's no obvious gain to you**: e.g. putting people in touch with each other, brokering partnerships, sharing information. This may mark you out as different from those who simply want a slice of hub funding

- **Avoid focusing on delivery opportunities**: talk about the bigger picture, and when you do get to offering activities make sure they're welcome and don't be so persistent that you'll put people off

• Sharpen your tools and keep them sharpened: Study principled negotiation, and learn the art of motivational storytelling

• Give it time: recognise these things can't be rushed or forced. Partnerships require relationships and trust, and these take time: research suggests that organisations with a ten-year track record are the most effective in partnership working and embedding inclusion

5. Further reading

• **Integrating inclusion into the work of hubs** - interview with Debra King, Director of Brighter Sound, Manchester - strategic partner in four hubs encompassing 18 music services. http://network.youthmusic. org.uk/groups/musical-inclusion/ discussions/integrating-inclusion-work-hubs-interview-debra-king-brighter-s

• **How integrated is musical inclusivity in the work of your hub?** - blog by Rob Hunter http://network.youthmusic. org.uk/groups/musical-inclusion/ discussions/how-integrated-musical-inclusivity-work-your-hub

• XxXXXXname of Musical Inclusion final evaluation report & hyperlink XXXXX

• **Communities of Music Education**, Saunders & Welch, commissioned by Youth Music, 2012 http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/ resources/research/communities-music-education

• **All about musical inclusion** – section on the Youth Music Network with information and resources, including 'What is quality in musically inclusive practice?' http://network.youthmusic. org.uk/learning/musical-inclusion

References

[1] *The evaluation and networking module funded as part of of the Musical Inclusion programme, see XXXname of final evaluation report and hyperlink to itXXX.*

[2] *See above*

[3] *Communities of Music Education, Saunders & Welch, commissioned by Youth Music, 2012*

[4] *See above*

The voice of community music