Music Education Islington
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Hub Vision
All children and young people will receive a fair share of high quality music education and progression opportunities irrespective of their background.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Aim
We aim to create and maintain equity of music education provision for all children and young people in Islington, embedding equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of all delivery to ensure that MEI is delivering consistently a fully inclusive provision with a fully accessible service, relevant to the needs of Islington's children and young people.

Demographic Context
The Islington CYP population aged 0 to 18 is very diverse: 49.8% are White ethnicities, 16.1% of Mixed ethnicities, 10% Asian ethnicities, 19.6% Black ethnicities, 4.5% Arab and Other ethnicities.[1]

Islington ranks 10th highest for the proportion of children living in income deprived households in the country (an improvement from 3rd in the country in 2015), but also now ranks the highest for London.[2]

28% of the borough's children under the age of 16 live in low income households[3], and 20% of Islington children under 16 live in households receiving out-of-work benefits.[4]

Children growing up in BAME households in Islington are more likely to be living in poverty in comparison to White children.[5]

In 2022/23, 46% of primary school pupils and 53% of secondary school pupils in Islington's schools were classified for Pupil Premium (PP).[6] Secondary PP levels have reduced by 8% since 2020/21.

42.7% of primary school pupils (5,411) and 45.7% (3,401) of secondary school pupils (Yrs 7-11) were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). The levels of primary and secondary FSM have dropped by 9% since 2020/21 but are still significantly higher than the national and London averages.

22.5% of Islington school pupils have either an Education Health Plan or receive SEN support. This has increased by 2.5% since 2020/21 and is higher than the national and London averages.

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[1] GLA Local authority population projections – Housing-led ethnic group projections (2017)

[2] English Indices of Deprivation – statistical release (2019)

[3] English Indices of Deprivation – statistical release (2019)

[4] Children in out of work benefits households, DWP (May 2017)

[5] Vulnerable Children's Needs Assessment, ILBC (2014)

[6] Department for Education – Pupil level data (2022)

Background

This strategy has been developed using two assessments of equality, diversity and inclusion within MEI: 1) I'M IN Inclusive Music Index Report 2021, 2) Dame Alice Owen Foundation Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Evaluation Report 2022.

I'M IN Inclusive Music Index Report 2021

In the Autumn term 2020, MEI engaged in the "I'M IN Inclusive Music Index" diversity and inclusion (DI) self-evaluation programme. Representatives from MEI governance, leadership and management participated in this initial pilot.

The I'M IN Index assessment report summarised that MEI faced the following **two major challenges** in terms of establishing diversity and inclusion at every level of MEI:

- Governance and staffing are not representative of the diversity of the local demographic profile.
- Voices of young people are not included or marginalised by governance.

The report notes:
- DI is a valued principle across the organisation from creative and organisational resilience perspective, but that DI needs to become an effective and central driving force that can be clearly evidenced.
- MEI leaders need to understand the value of DI to both business and creative outputs and should aim for several leaders to have high levels of DI competency undergoing specific training.
- MEI is attempting to build an inclusive culture and there is some awareness of organisational DI goals amongst stakeholders, but there is a need for diversity to be welcomed for the benefits it brings to the organisation

Dame Alice Owen Foundation - EDI Evaluation Report 2022

DAOF beneficiaries show a willingness to improve EDI in its programming, representation, leadership and governance, but would benefit considerably from a clear set of EDI based KPI's. They would need to be based on better outcomes for children and young people (CYP), rather than meeting any organisational goals around EDI. It is imperative for the DAOF and Islington Borough Council (LBI) to be clear on what embedding EDI solves and what opportunity it provides for CYP.

Based on the data that was collected through surveys, interviews and desk research, the key recommendations are as follows:

- A more unified approach to EDI between the beneficiaries, overseen by LBI, to instill accountability at all levels
- Creating a shared language for EDI and priority protected characteristics based on borough data for all beneficiaries
- Unified data collection management processes
- Targets and timelines set to improve workforce and board representation through effective recruitment practice for DAOF advisory board, LBI and all four beneficiaries.
- Compulsory EDI training for leadership and governance, that is based on the needs and priorities of the borough and explores the intersections of priority characteristics, to create criteria and principles that all beneficiaries adhere to, to enhance the outcomes for CYP's in Islington
- Compliance and attendance as a group of beneficiaries for training, knowledge sharing sessions, planning, data collection and reporting should be linked more

closely to the award of funding by DAOF ensure that the impact of the funding is maximised.

- Wellbeing and safeguarding needs to be considered and should be embedded in EDI policy, recruitment and retention of staff considered to be diverse.

MEI EDI Objectives

Using the recommendations of the I'M IN and DAOF EDI reports, we have devised 8 Objectives:

1. Align EDI principles, language, data collection, monitoring and reporting with framework set for DAOF beneficiaries by Islington Council
2. Plan to achieve and maintain demographic representation at all levels of MEI through:
   a) Governance Group commitment to review and update Governance Group recruitment processes
   b) Conduct DI audit of the workforce
   c) Devise and regularly review recruitment principles and practices for MEI workforce
   d) Provide work placements, paid internships and mentoring with people in communities under-represented in your current workforce
   e) Recruit staff from diverse backgrounds into more fluid parts of workforce
   f) Embed wellbeing and safeguarding needs into MEI EDI policy, recruitment and retention of diverse staff
3. Build accountability for progress with all stakeholder groups:
   a) Governance Group – through monitoring and regular review of EDI KPIs
   b) Partner organisations – through shared goals/frameworks
   c) Parents, children, teachers – regular communication of intentions and celebration of EDI achievements
   d) Music Education Hub peers – publicising goals and progress
4. Build a training programme that uses resources available via Islington and City of London
5. Leverage the diversity of schools, stakeholders and partners to broaden diversity of provision
6. Modify evaluation tools to increase understanding of the different ways people from diverse groups experience MEI services
7. Foster opportunities for workforce to experience the diversity of music being made in the local community, nationally and globally
8. Unify approach to internal communications and communications plan for DI content and messaging

*Islington CYP Demographic

42% White
8% Asian
23% Black
18% Mixed
9% Other and unknown
21% SEND

MEI EDI Action Plan

		Oct-Dec 22	Jan-Mar 23	Apr-Jun 23	Jul-Sep 23	Oct-Dec 23
	All EDI actions will be aligned with the LBI EDI framework					
1. Organisational representation and workforce management	DI audit of governance and workforce	■				
	Create MEI recruitment policy for governance and workforce		■			
	Board approval of recruitment policy		■			
	Create inclusive workplace policy			■		
	Carry out governance skills audit	■				
	Set interim milestones for recruitment to Governance Group and workforce	■				
	Create intern, apprentice, work placements, mentoring plan				■	
	<mark>Milestones: Each year, governance and workforce are progressively more representative of Islington demographic of CYP</mark>					
2. Monitoring and celebrating progress	GG approves EDI KPIs to monitor annually	■				■
	Create EDI monitoring and evaluation framework		■			
	GG approves shared goals and frameworks for partners		■			
	Islington Council communicates EDI strategy to service users			■		
	Islington Council reports on progress					■
	GG member organisations advocate to sector	Ongoing				
3. Training and CPD - Cultural competency	All GG members attend minimum 1 session per year	Ongoing				
	All workforce attend minimum 1 session per year	Ongoing				
4. Diversity of offer	Minimum 1 new partner organisation widening diversity per year					
	Annual review of partner organisations				■	
	Minimum 1 new guest music leader/artist widening diversity per year					
	Annual review of guest music leaders/artists				■	
	Music traditions from all 4 major ethnic groups will feature minimum every 2 years	Ongoing				