

# Summary of THAMES Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

## Overview

The Tower Hamlets Arts & Music Education Service (THAMES) leads the Tower Hamlets and City of London Music Education Hub. It is part of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council.

Working with schools and cultural organisations THAMES provides music and arts opportunities for all children and young people who live or go to school in Tower Hamlets.

THAMES believes that there should be no barriers to accessing music and arts education and that all children and young people should be able to take part irrespective of circumstance.

## Our Aims

- Enhance pupil achievement and attainment through music and the arts
- Widen access to music and the arts for all young people
- Encourage and develop all pupils' potential, enjoyment and creativity through participation in the arts
- Develop pupils' confidence, motivation, self-discipline and self-awareness
- Provide arts and music support for schools, teachers and pupils

Equality, diversity and inclusion are values which are fundamental to THAMES & Tower Hamlets Council. It is our ambition that these values are placed at the core of our organisational policies, processes, practices and culture.

Valuing diversity is one of the four core values of Tower Hamlets Council. We will promote diversity and equality in everything we do to improve the quality of life for everyone living, working and visiting Tower Hamlets. The borough's diversity is one of its greatest strengths and assets. We will build upon this to provide an accessible and responsive service that enables everyone to take part in the social, cultural and economic wealth of the borough.

Our commitment is supported by a number of legal duties that require us to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. These provide important tools to help further embed diversity and equality in the culture of the organisation. We believe we have a strong moral and social duty to do everything we can to challenge prejudice and discrimination and promote better understanding and respect. At the same time, we recognise that discrimination takes place and tensions can sometimes exist between

different communities.

## **Tower Hamlets Council Aims and Values**

### **As a service provider we will:**

- Promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in the planning and delivery of our services in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status;
- Promote good relations between communities and address negative stereotyping of any groups;
- Ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process; and
- Tackle harassment relating to a person's age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, health and income status.

### **As an employer we will:**

- Develop, review and promote policies and practices that ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination for our workforce in all areas of employment (including recruitment, retention, learning and development, promotion, grievance, disciplinary and retirement); and
- Ensure that our workforce reflects the diverse nature of the borough.

### **We will comply with:**

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Disability Discrimination Act (Amendment) 2005
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006
- the Equality Act 2010 (supersedes majority of previous legislation)

## Inclusive Music Strategy

The Tower Hamlets Inclusive Music Strategy 2021-2025, commissioned in 2019-20, sets out a series of recommendations intended to broaden the range of children with whom we engage, particularly those children in challenging circumstances, and will enable THAMES to identify and put in place those things that will enable us to make our provision more inclusive.

Our Strategic Priorities:

- Cultures, policies and procedures will support inclusion and ensure that appropriate and continuing resources are put in place to enable the inclusion strategy to succeed
- An advocacy programme will continue to embed the importance of musical inclusion across the Hub area with cultural partner organisations, families and individuals
- All staff (including Music Education Hub staff, generalist and specialist school music teachers, frontline volunteers and other Hub providers) will have the skills to deliver more musically inclusive practice. In addition, the Hub will have, within the workforce, individuals with the skills necessary to engage all children in the region, most notably including those children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and children with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMHD)
- The Hub will engage, in sustainable ways, with groups of children in challenging circumstances. A broad range of musical styles and genres will be available to all learners
- The Hub will further develop inclusive ensemble work building on the success of Soundbox
- The Hub workforce, and any governing/advisory bodies where possible, will more closely reflect the diversity of Tower Hamlets
- Data, particularly on the level of engagement, retention and progression of children in challenging circumstances, will be used as a driver for inclusion and influence future strategy

We will work with all cultural partner organisations, THAMES tutors, schools, families, individuals, and teams within Tower Hamlets Council to realise these priorities alongside our continuing commitment to musical inclusion across East London as part of our membership of the East London Music Alliance (ELMA).

This Strategy will be under constant review.