

## **CHOIRQUEST – a project for primary school choirs**

**CHOIRQUEST** is a new innovative project from THAMES for KS2 school choirs. It has been devised by THAMES Vocal Consultant Jessica Summers and will run over six sessions in the choir's usual rehearsal time.

**CHOIRQUEST** will provide a new toolkit for primary school choirs to facilitate thought and discussion around the role and **identity** of their school choir.

### **Youth voice and leadership**

The choir will go on a quest or journey to find out what kind of choir they are and what they could be; its future is shaped by the children. It is hoped that this will give a sense of ownership and responsibility and bring the concept of **youth voice** to the fore. Underpinning this toolkit are three central ideas:

- i) that children have the right for their voice and opinions to be heard
- ii) that children can be highly creative thinkers and can offer insights where adults can't
- iii) that such a process will be unifying and give a sense of ownership and responsibility to the children

The toolkit will include a **CHOIRQUEST** Journey Board and cards and will be played at the start of each session. On each card is a question that the choir has to answer collectively. As each card is added to the board over the six weeks, an overview of how the children would like their choir to be will emerge. By the end of the project, the **OUR CHOIR** section on the board should contain a future strategy for the choir, formulated by the children themselves.

### **Raising the status of singing**

The project would also seek to raise the status of the choir within the school by encouraging the children to be proactive in contributing to the identity of the choir. Asking the children to invest in its running will create a sense of ownership and pride in their singing group and may in turn encourage their peers to participate.

### **Musical development**

In addition to exploring the role of their choir, the project aims to raise the overall musical standard of the choir through learning songs in parts/harmonies, developing vocal technique such as vocal range and breathing, and demystifying musical notation by introducing musical score. Sessions will also promote and encourage a sense of (musical) listening, ensemble and team work and develop performance skills.

### **Teacher support and development**

The teacher/choir leader would be an active musical leader in the project. It is crucial that the teacher or choir leader not only feels confident in leading their choir but also has an ongoing plan for the choir and a sense of direction.

They will be offered a short pre-project meeting to discuss their choir leadership skills and how they would like to develop and take the choir forward and further brief meetings in session 3 and 6. Recommendations and further suggestions would follow post project.

### **Timescale**

The project can happen in the spring or summer term.

### **Cost**

The project is mostly funded by THAMES. However, we do ask for a small contribution from each participating school of £100.

### **How to apply**

Email [alison.porter@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:alison.porter@towerhamlets.gov.uk) to express your interest. We will then set-up a short Zoom meeting to discuss the project.