



Inclusion - Summary of RMT strategy and Action Plan

Context

The transformative vision of RMT is outlined in our Vision Mission and Values statement. Achievement of the vision requires the embedding of equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of our organisation. We believe that all those who engage with RMT should not only have the opportunity to show and fulfil their potential but also that our provision must have the breadth to use the power of music to potentially change the lives of any child or young person whatever their background, identity or circumstances and whatever their musical needs.

RMT is very well positioned to address the challenges of developing an effective EDI strategy. In particular, our Music Therapy Department, since its inception almost 30 years ago, has been a significant strand of RMT's work, providing life-changing opportunities and support for many disadvantaged groups that other Music Hubs would struggle to accommodate.

From small beginnings, twenty-three highly trained therapists now work with over 250 clients (children and adults) every week in a variety of settings. There is a wide range of needs, including children with autism, young people with learning difficulties, those with physical disabilities, adults and young people with mental health issues and older people with dementia. These groups include many of the most vulnerable in our community. Productive and supportive partnerships have been established with many organisations, for example helping to support children with cancer through the Momentum charity. Work in Care Homes and other settings is in partnership with providers such as Central and Cecil Homes, the Woodville Centre, Sheen Lane Day Centre and Homelink Day Centre.

Not only does our Music Therapy Department add significant breadth and inclusion to our offer, it also has a significant impact on the ethos and culture across our organisation. Offering access and supporting such a wide range of needs and engaging with organisations across the education and healthcare sectors, Music Therapy has embedded RMT in the local community in a unique way, promoting a culture of openness and acceptance. We feel this has had a significant positive impact and is at the heart of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

Although our MT department enables us to engage with many groups that are unrepresented in other music hubs, a comprehensive EDI strategy will of course, have many other strands. Over the coming months we will be continuing to develop our EDI strategy and Policy which will address all areas relevant to RMT's context.

Key Strategic Aims

- Increase diversity and representation in the RMT workforce
- Maintain and further develop fully inclusive provision.
- Increase reach and accessibility of RMT's provision where social/financial barriers exist
- Increase diversity and representation in partnerships
- Ensure all communication and marketing uses inclusive language and imagery
- Work with school leaders to support a diverse school music curriculum
- Increase diversity and representation in our ensemble repertoire, including composers, genres and styles

Strategic Partnerships

In 2019 the South West London Music Education Partnership (SWLMEP, a group of seven Music Hubs) secured funding from Sound Connections for time to consider how diverse and inclusive our organisations were, and to create a toolkit to be used by music services on an ongoing basis. The Diversity-Tool Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit is a guide on how to create a more inclusive practice which ensures that each and every single child is given an equal and accessible opportunity to play and enjoy music.

As part of the process Heads of Service from each of the seven boroughs discussed the mission and values of their organisation and the particular set of challenges in meeting those goals:

- Increasing the diversity of candidates in the recruitment process
- Raise awareness of unconscious bias and how it influences interactions with staff and students
- Improving the service offering to be as inclusive and diverse as possible by reflecting and celebrating the music of the community.
- Amplifying diverse voices in the service and supporting all children equally
- Fostering a sense of belonging for staff and children at each service

The Toolkit was shared with all MEHs. It continues to be used in order to help review and update inclusive practice.

RMT also continues to work as part of the London Region Music Mark group on how MEHs can individually and collectively address diversity, inclusion and representation in music education. Initial research was commissioned in 2020 looking at the question 'How can MEHs instigate real change to become more inclusive, diverse and representative within their governance structure, workforce and the work they do with, and for, children and young people?'. With results showing that the MEH workforce in London remains racially unrepresentative compared with the London population, it is important that this topic remains as a priority across the organisations. As such RMT has signed the Music Mark Talk into Action pledge, showing a commitment to acknowledge and address issues across all areas of EDI. (<https://www.musicmark.org.uk/talkintoaction/>)

Governance

Led by the Chair, an audit of the RMT Board has taken place (Oct 2022). This included completing a skills/experience matrix to identify strengths, weaknesses and any gaps in the Boards capacity to fulfil their role. The extent to which members are representative of the population in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames was also explored.

The Board audit was summarised and generated a set of actions for the Board to address the deficits identified - see [appendix](#).

Remissions policy

We are keen to help families where financial hardship might prevent a child from learning an instrument. RMT's Remission scheme plays a vital role in ensuring access to music provision for disadvantaged children and young people who would otherwise miss out. Our well-funded scheme is generously supported by local charities and provides 70% fee remission to over 10% of our instrumental students. Where possible, instrument loan is also provided free of charge as part of the remission scheme.

The scheme is well-publicised, with information detailed on our website, and is an integral part of the RMT application process. Schools are also made aware of the scheme and asked to inform parents, and information is prominently included in recruitment material distributed by both RMT and schools.

<https://www.richmondmusictrust.org.uk/site/tuition/fees-support/support-with-fees/>

Other donated funding allows for more flexible and discretionary support for children from low income working families.

EDI Action Plan 2023-24:

	Action	Success Indicators	When	Who
1.	Full review and revision of RMT's EDI Policy	Policy addresses all areas of activity and all those who engage with RMT. Approved and signed off by RMT Board (Annually reviewed)	Policy completed by Jan 2024. Implementation ongoing	Board CEO
2.	Develop EDI Workforce Code of Conduct, outlining RMT's position on how employees should respect and embrace other employees and clients with different gender, culture, ethnic, religious background and sexuality	EDI Code of Conduct in place and shared with all RMT staff	From Sept 2023	CEO SMT
3.	Explore creating a working group/forum to address different areas of EDI and support policy implementation	EDI Policy communicated to all staff and embedded across the organisation	From Sept 2023	SMT Team Leaders
4.	Explore additional resources to signpost to schools and RMT staff/students focused on diversity and including music from a wide range of composers and genres	Collated alongside existing library to support access to diverse teaching/solo/chamber repertoire. Increased diversity in repertoire being taught/performed eg representation of black, ethnic, female composers	From Sept 2023	SMT Team Leaders
5.	CPD session(s) for Music Coordinators on Diversity and Inclusion in Primary Music	Feedback indicates raised awareness of EDI in the context of music provision	From Sept 2023	External specialist
6.	RMT Board Diversity and skills audit – results used to inform Trustee recruitment process	Board create successful recruitment process in order to increase number of Trustees and ensure diversity of the Board	From Jan 2024	Chair Board CEO
7.	Update Summary of RMT Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan on website	Published	Completed Sept 2023	CEO