



# LEWISHAM MUSIC

## EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

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## General principles

Lewisham Music celebrates the diverse cultures, communities and environments that make up our society and the multitude of dimensions which characterise our diversity including race, ability, sexuality, gender, age, religion and other beliefs.

Lewisham Music believes:

- that all people have a right to social justice and to participate in decisions that affect their lives
- that a strong and independent local third sector is crucial to helping people and communities tackle disadvantage and discrimination
- that the role of Lewisham Music staff members and trustees is to support and encourage all people to play an active part in their community, both individually and collectively
- that priority should be given to working with people and communities whose full participation in society is limited by disadvantage and discrimination

Lewisham Music will take positive action to challenge disadvantage and discrimination and to promote diversity and full access to opportunity in all areas of its work and structures. By 'positive action' we mean *measures undertaken with the purpose of achieving full access to opportunity for people and groups that face the consequences of past or present discrimination or disadvantage*. In doing so, Lewisham Music will strive to:

- promote social justice and full access to opportunities through all its activities and programmes
- ensure all activities and programmes are fully accessible and promote awareness of the rights and needs of different groups of people
- challenge practices, legislation and institutions that deny the rights of individuals or groups experiencing disadvantage and discrimination
- have a positive and inclusive workplace culture and environment with a workforce that broadly reflects the area in which it operates
- share its experiences and promote good practice in the area of equality and diversity throughout its members and beyond
- identify and find ways of tackling new and emerging problems affecting groups facing disadvantage and discrimination
- increase its involvement and collaboration with other organisations that promote equality and diversity.

We believe that the diversity of our users and workforce is one of our greatest strengths. Equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination is a fundamental right and Lewisham Music has a duty to exercise leadership to promote this right. We intend to promote equality and prevent discrimination through our roles as

- Service provider
- Employer
- Community leader

### **Equality Objectives**

Objectives for responsive and accessible services:

- Make special or separate service provision where appropriate
- Ensure our services are delivered in buildings that are accessible to all
- Provide clear, meaningful information about our services in ways that are accessible and meet the community's needs
- Work together and consult with all sections of the community on needs and provision
- Monitor take-up and evaluate services to ensure they do not discriminate or exclude.

Objectives for equal and appropriate treatment in employment:

- Implement recruitment and selection processes which are non-discriminatory and encourage applications from all groups in the community
- Ensure that all members of staff have fair access to learning and development opportunities
- Provide a safe and accessible working environment that values and respects the identity and culture of each individual.
- Ensure that access to information and data is as open and transparent as possible
- Ensure a culture and working environment free from discrimination, harassment and violence
- Ensure effective communication with and involvement of all members of staff
- Apply a transparent way of evaluating jobs that aims to ensure equal pay for equal work
- Encourage and support staff to reach their full potential.

Objectives for effective partnership with the community:

- Encourage and support people to be active in community life
- Work with others to provide an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and violence
- Encourage others to adopt this policy, including those who provide goods and services on our behalf
- Celebrate and respect the variety of lifestyles, culture and religions within the Borough
- Listen and respond to the views of our communities through appropriate consultation and participation within a safe environment.

### **Key equality Groups**

Lewisham Music has identified the following key equalities groups:

- Younger and older people
- Women
- Refugee and Asylum Seekers
- Black and minority ethnic people
- Disabled people
- LGBTQ+

The statements below set out Lewisham Music's commitment to these groups.

### **Age**

Lewisham Music is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for younger and older people. We recognise that society has negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about youth, ageing, younger and older people and that these attitudes and beliefs can lead to both younger and older people being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that younger and older people have the right to equality and opportunity and make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large.

### **Gender**

Lewisham Music is committed to combatting sex discrimination and sexism and promoting women's equality. We acknowledge while women make a positive contribution to the community, they often experience discrimination, social and economic disadvantage, lack of recognition, inferior status and negative attitudes. We are aware that staff with caring and domestic responsibilities may need to work part-time or flexible working hours and recognise that a culture of unreasonably long hours can discriminate against staff with other responsibilities. We recognise the importance of achieving gender balance wherever possible in all areas of our work, especially in musical leadership and some instrument groups such as guitar and percussion where women and girls can be under-represented.

### **Refugees and asylum seekers**

Lewisham Music acknowledges the need to cooperate with a multi-agency approach to the provision of services to refugees and asylum seekers so that they are empowered to fully engage with social, cultural and economic life.

### **Race**

Lewisham Music recognises that black and minority ethnic people experience discrimination on the basis of colour, race, nationality, religion and ethnic origin. This discrimination manifests itself in all areas of their lives such as housing, employment, education and access to services. Racial harassment and violence is one of the most serious consequences of racism damaging people emotionally and physically and limiting life choices and opportunities. Lewisham Music will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle racial harassment and assist black and minority ethnic people to live in freedom from harassment.

### **Disability**

Lewisham Music opposes discrimination on the basis of disability. We recognise that it is the barriers erected by society that disable people rather than their impairments. Lewisham Music is committed to working to remove such barriers wherever they occur and in particular in relation to culture, education, employment and access to services, information and buildings.

We are committed to providing the necessary support, assistance and care to disabled people to enable them to lead independent lives.

Lewisham Music will ensure that its provision of services and its employment practices tackle disability, discrimination and promote disability equality. We acknowledge that we have legal obligations to prevent unlawful discrimination under the provision of the Disability Discrimination Act in terms of employment, access to services and access to buildings.

### **LGBTQ+**

Lewisham Music is committed to combating the discrimination faced by the LGBTQ+ community. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for people who identify as LGBTQ+ across our services and employment. Consultation and monitoring will enable us to recognise the needs of the LGBTQ+ community and it may be appropriate to deliver some services separately. We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation.

### **Legislation**

Lewisham Music will comply with all anti-discriminatory legislation including The Equality Act (2010).

### **Responsibility and accountability**

All managers, team leaders and employees have a role to play in implementing our Equality objectives. The overall implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Chief Executive.

### **Monitoring and review**

Responsibility for monitoring of the policy and reviewing achievement lies with the Board of Trustees. The Policy and Plan will be reviewed every 3 years.