

## **Hub Lead Organisations and New Geographical Areas**

The National Plan for Music Education sets out the ambition for Hub Lead Organisations “to become more strategic, building a wider range of strong partnerships with schools, academy trusts, local authorities and others, so that children and young people receive high quality support in every local area and to ensure there are no local ‘cold spots’ where access to provision is limited. It is therefore our [government’s] expectation that, through the competitive process, we will see a reduced number of Hub Lead Organisations establishing partners across wider geographical areas.”

The Department for Education has shared their thinking on geographies for future Music Hubs, which has been updated to reflect sector feedback from our January consultation. It provides more detail on why the new Programme structure will benefit children and young people and music education provision in England. This updated version also provides further information on the role and responsibilities of new Hub Lead Organisations. The full requirements will be included within the Investment programme Guidance for Applicants, which is intended to be published in late Spring 2023.

You can read the original version of the rationale here (PDF, 78.13 KB).

## **Music Hub Geographies Rationale from the Department for Education:**

### **Introduction**

The Power of Music: A National Plan for Music Education (NPME) outlines a bold vision for music education in England - that all children and young people should be able to create music, learn a musical instrument, make music with others, learn to sing, and progress their interests and talents as far as they would like. Partnership between the broad range of services, organisations, and educators that are relevant to the musical lives of children and young people is essential if this is to be achieved.

Because of this, we will continue to invest in an England-wide network of Music Hubs which supports every local authority area, and which will be identified through the upcoming investment programme.

We have been clear that it is our intention to fund fewer, more strategic Music Hubs which cover larger geographic areas as part of the investment programme. We believe that local context, need, and understanding is central to ensuring that the music education infrastructure in a place is effective. We also believe that there are significant benefits to children and young people, and to the workforce that supports them, by considering what can be conceived of, planned for, or operated across larger geographic areas.

### **Music Hubs must respond to local context, need, and understanding**

Music Hub partnerships are tasked with providing joined-up provision both within and beyond school which will connect children and young people to high quality opportunities, and which will offer essential and accessible support for schools and the music education workforce.

We know that local experience, connection, and visibility matters. We know that understanding an area, the schools and organisations which operate there, and the needs of its children and young people is an essential component in providing a responsive and effective music education.

Each Music Hub will therefore include a broad range of local partners that can work together to determine the infrastructure and delivery models which will respond best to local context and need in their place. To support this, a single, strategic Hub Lead Organisation (HLO) will lead each Hub, providing excellent and dynamic leadership, facilitating the development and strategy of the partnership, and ensuring that high-quality activity is appropriately secured and/or commissioned. The HLO will ensure that these partners collectively inform the Local Plan for Music Education for the Hub through consultation, decision-making, and governance arrangements which are visible, meaningful and rigorous. This will include determining governance arrangements that appropriately reflect each of the Local Authority areas a Music Hub covers.

### **Why we believe Music Hubs should operate across larger geographic areas**

We believe that more and better strategic collaboration across larger areas will be beneficial for schools, families, and children and young people because it will improve the quality, breadth, and consistency of music education.

The structural change reflects the approach which other similar initiatives and infrastructure that are relevant to the lives of children and young people have taken, including Teaching School Hubs, Multi Academy Trusts, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Sport England's Active Partnerships, and the existing Music Education Hubs that deliver across multiple Local Authority Areas.

Movement towards larger geographies can enable a range of positive outcomes including by:

- attracting excellent leaders, high calibre Board members, and experienced operational teams
- galvanising partners to collaborate and connect more effectively at a local, regional, and national level so that a more diverse and equitable offer of activity, expertise, and equipment is available
- fostering connected approaches to supporting access, inclusion, and progression, including by sharing practice, resources, ideas, and opportunities
- identifying new and effective ways of generating income and support
- embedding broader support, collaboration, learning, and career development for the music education workforce
- eating more opportunities for research, innovation, and exploration
- enhancing our collective understanding of the quality and impact of music education on the lives of children and young people
- raising the profile of music education, through more effective, transparent, and navigable communications and through better alignment with place infrastructure including Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships

### **The role of the Hub Lead Organisation**

- We will invest in HLOs which consider how they can strategically support a Music Hub infrastructure that operates across larger geographies, with some operational and strategic aspects centralised in order to increase consistency, quality and take advantage of the potential opportunities and efficiencies this would support. We expect the HLO to ensure the following areas are consistent across the Hub area:
- An area-wide strategic vision, shared values, and budget, monitored by a representative Hub Board
- A strategic approach to supporting inclusion and progression so that young people can connect to local, regional, and national structures
- A shared understanding and approach to considering environmental responsibility
- A collective commitment to consulting regularly, researching, and analysing need, evaluating and monitoring the impact of programmes, keeping abreast of sector thinking and ideas (including through relationships with Hub Centres of Excellence), and using this evidence to ensure that resources, investment, and support can be effectively targeted
- A strategic approach to identifying shared fundraising and income generation opportunities, with resources and capability directed at the use of government funding to leverage further investment
- The identification of opportunities to realise economies of scale and reduce duplication by centralising expertise, resources, and processes
- A diverse and more equitable range of musical activities, opportunities, teachers, instruments and equipment which is consistently available to more young people
- A better supported and more collaborative workforce that has access to training and networking, resources, and career progression opportunities
- A strategic approach to ensuring quality through performance management, monitoring and evaluation, quality assurance processes and peer assessment
- More strategic and high-profile engagement by Music Hubs with significant place-based infrastructure such as Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Stronger communications and marketing which means that children and young people, families, and schools know about local, regional, national opportunities, prices, and subsidies

### **Guiding principles and prescribing Music Hub geographies**

We have reflected on the available evidence, consulted with the sector, and considered carefully how Music Hub geographies should be created. To ensure we clearly set out how we expect the programme to evolve and how future Music Hubs are expected to be operationally organised, we intend to prescribe the geographies of Hubs in advance of application. This will provide clarity to applicants about the partnerships arrangements and collaborations they will need to consider, develop, and implement.

We understand that the new structure for Music Hubs will be most likely to achieve this consistency and quality if it can respond to existing sector development, alliances, and ways of working that are positively benefitting children and young people. We also understand that Music Hub areas must be appropriate to the demographics of a specific place, as well as to the practicalities of how children and young people live their lives there. This means that where potential applicants to the investment programme consider increased collaboration to be beneficial to the communities that

live there, they may choose to apply to lead Hubs in more than one of the proposed geographic areas.

### **Guiding principles**

Music Hubs will be more consistent in terms of size, coverage, and good quality provision

We expect the majority, if not all, of Music Hubs will work across multiple neighbouring upper tier local authority areas

Geographic areas will be prescribed (or agreed) prior to the application process

Prescribed geographic areas will not be determined by current arrangements but will have regard to where existing partnerships and alliances are successfully operating or emerging.

One organisation will be appointed to lead the Music Hub as the HLO in each prescribed geographic area

Fewer HLOs does not mean fewer organisations being involved with Music Hub partnerships