

Inclusive Music Strategy

Slough Music

Education Hub

2023-2024

Dr Phil Mullen

Introducing the strategy - the national context

Both the first and second National Plans for Music Education (2011, 2022) have moved English music education closer to a model that is fully inclusive and provides a high-quality music education for all children and young people, whatever their background. This strategy document reflects an intention in Slough music hub to provide such an education and to, over time, enable all children to benefit from the creative, personal and social development that music has to offer, particularly for young people experiencing barriers to engagement.

The current national plan states that the Arts Council expect music education to be fully inclusive, so that all music educators:

- commit to achieving greater access and more opportunity in music education, identifying and removing barriers, including for children in low-income families and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- take action to support increasing access, opportunity, participation, and progression of groups that are currently under-represented in music.
- support understanding of inclusive music education and skills development among teachers, tutors, practitioners and leaders, informed by high-quality research and evidence. (P8)

The plan also identifies the following national priorities for inclusion:

- A strong foundation of music in the early years is vital for all children, but particularly for disadvantaged children or children with SEND. (p17)
- Music education for pupils with SEND must be a long-term provision, sustained, rehearsed and nurtured carefully through effective personal interaction and collaboration, trust and time. (p42)
- Schools should not only actively include children with SEND in music teaching but should also consider where music opportunities could be led by pupils with SEND. (p42)
- All APs (Alternative Providers) should consider how they can use music as part of the curriculum and how it can play a valuable role in young people's education and well-being. Music in these settings can lead to young people learning new skills, working and creating together, help build confidence and can be used for social and personal development. (p45)

Slough's Music inclusion strategy aligns with the national plan and seeks to significantly expand understanding and delivery of inclusive music education over the next year and a half.

What was the process for the strategy?

I conducted some online research on the population and demographics of the hub area, the issues and data around child deprivation within the area, the general profile of the town, and some specifics around services available. I also interviewed (semi-structured interviews) six professionals

professionally involved either with music education or with young people in the Slough area. Using this knowledge plus the original draft of Slough strategic priorities for inclusive music, and my own knowledge of the field, I developed this document to indicate ways forward for the hub in inclusive music-making in Slough.

Slough Context

Geography and demographics

Slough's population in the 2021 Census was 158,500.

Slough is a young town. 25.1% of the population are 15 or under compared with 18.6% for England as a whole¹. Approximately 43,800 children and young people (aged under 18) live in Slough. This is 28% of Slough's total population, which is the 2nd highest proportion in England².

	Slough	Slough	England
Age group	Count	%	%
0-5	14,350	9.1%	6.6%
6-10	12,765	8.1%	6.0%
11-15	12,453	7.9%	6.0%
16-20	9,262	5.8%	5.7%

Slough is diverse. It is the 6th most ethnically diverse district in England³ with 64% of the population coming from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities)⁴. A further 12% of the population were from a white non-British background. It has a large Asian population, over four and a half times the English average (46% and 10% respectively⁵). Over 150 languages are spoken in Slough schools.

Broad ethnic groups	Count Slough	% Slough	% England
Asian ethnic groups	74,093	46.7%	10%
White ethnic groups	57,134	36.0%	81%
Black ethnic groups	11,992	7.6%	4%
Other ethnic groups	7,144	4.5%	2%
Mixed ethnic groups	6,311	4.0%	3%

¹ Equality Data Pack – Slough Borough Council

² JSNA

³ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11643543/Luton-Slough-Newham-London-Englands-ethnically-diverse-areas.html>

⁴ JSNA

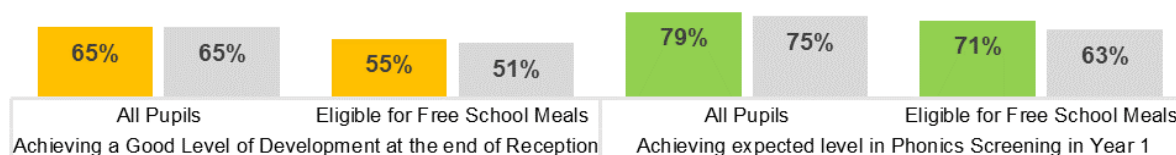
⁵ Equality Data Pack – Slough Borough Council

Arab ethnic groups	1,826	1.2%	1%
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Education and attainment

Slough's school readiness and attainment levels to Key Stage 4 are generally better than England's for all pupils including those eligible for free school meals⁶.

School readiness in Slough, compared to 5th most deprived decile (2021/22)⁷



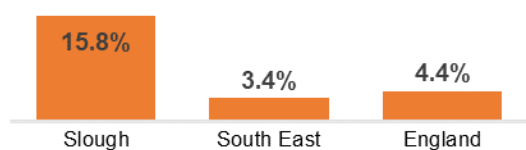
In 2019 57% of pupils achieved GCSE grade 5 or above in English and Maths, better than the national average of 43%. However, at A level 12.3 % achieved grades AAB or higher, below the national average of 14.1 %.

Deprivation

Slough is ranked 117th most income deprived local authority in England across 316 local authorities⁸. In Slough, 12.6 per cent of the population was income deprived in 2019. None of Slough's LSOAs (neighbourhoods) are in the 10% most deprived in the England. However, 7 out of Slough's 80 LSOAs fall within the 10%-20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. These are in areas of Britwell and Northborough, Central, Chalvey, Colnbrook with Poyle and Elliman wards.

Accommodation is dense with significant overcrowding. Slough has a mean household size of 3 people per household, and this is the largest mean household size in England and Wales. Slough is the third most densely populated LA in the Southeast, with 4,871 residents per square kilometre (48.7 per hectare). Nearly 8,300 households in Slough were estimated to be overcrowded in 2021.

Proportion of households that are overcrowded (2021)



969 households in Slough were identified as eligible for support (termed prevention or relief duty) under the Homeless Reduction Act in 2020/21. This is a rate of 17.6 per 1,000 households.

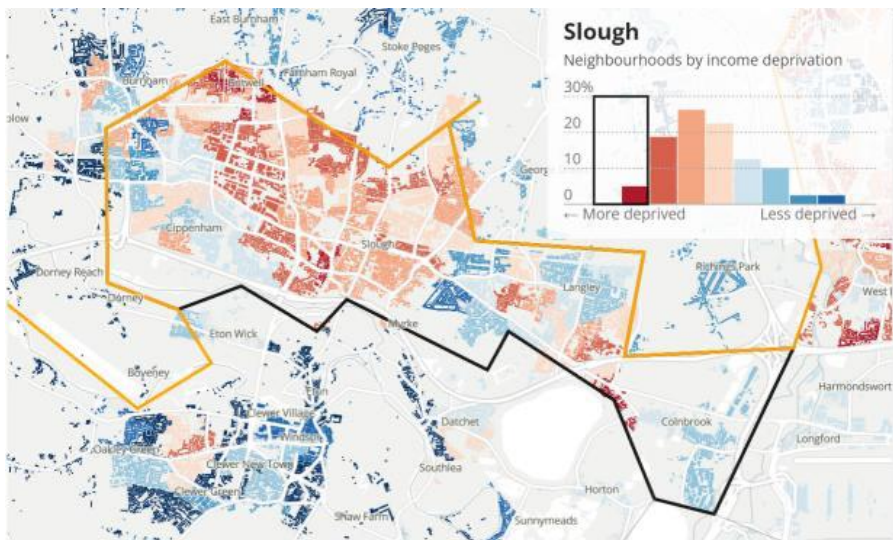
⁶ JSNA

⁷ 5th most deprived decile is used as a comparator group, being the same decile as Slough.

⁸ <https://www.sloughobserver.co.uk/news/19997930.cost-living-crisis-sloughs-least-deprived-areas>

[k/news/19997930.cost-living-crisis-sloughs-least-deprived-areas](https://www.sloughobserver.co.uk/news/19997930.cost-living-crisis-sloughs-least-deprived-areas)

In April 2021, 23 percent of the working aged population in Slough were claiming government- based benefits⁹.



Most deprived areas in Slough – Office of National Statistics

Children facing barriers

This is a snapshot of some of the barriers children in Slough are facing.

22.0% of Slough's under 16s lived in relative low-income families in 2020/21. This is over 8,700 children.

13.2% of pupils in Slough had special educational needs (SEN) in 2018, which is 3,995 pupils¹⁰.

Hospital admissions for self-harm in children have increased in recent years with admissions for young women being much higher than admissions for young men.

51 children (aged 10 to 17) were in the youth justice system in Slough at a rate of 2.8 per 1,000 population (2020/21). Slough is the most dangerous major town in Berkshire¹¹.

At 3.6%, family homelessness is significantly worse in Slough than national (1.6%) and regional (1.9%) averages¹². Children of the age 15 years or under make up 43% of those living in Temporary Accommodation (consistent with the council's objectives to support families with young children).

⁹ Doing right by Slough – Corporate plan 2022-2025

¹⁰ JSNA

¹¹

<https://crimerate.co.uk/berkshire/slough#:~:text=Slough%20is%20the%20most%20dangerous,11%20crimes%20per%201%2C000%20people.>

¹² Slough multi-agency Early Help strategy for children, young people and their families – 2019-2021

What is inclusive Education?

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Cultural and Science Organization) on inclusive education:

- (The aim of inclusive education) is to eliminate exclusion that is a consequence of negative attitudes and a lack of response to diversity in race, economic status, social class, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability¹³.
- Pedagogy should welcome students into the educational community and help them develop the skills to be inclusive and appreciative of the dignity of all others. *Pedagogy without inclusion* (my italics) weakens education as a common good and undermines the possibility of a world in which the dignity and the human rights of all are upheld.
- If human rights is to guide the new social contract for education, students' sense of identity – cultural, spiritual, social, and linguistic – must be recognized and affirmed, particularly among indigenous, religious, cultural and gender minorities and systemically marginalized populations¹⁴.

What is musical inclusion?

Musical inclusion does not have a single agreed definition; this document contains some different understandings of the term.

'Musical Inclusion is about removing barriers to ensure all children enjoy full participation in a music education which supports the development and achievement of each young person based on their individual abilities, needs and interests'. – Dr. Phil Mullen

'Musically¹⁵ inclusive practice ensures that all children and young people who want to can make music. It can only happen by embracing a wide range of genres and styles, supporting participants to achieve social and personal outcomes as well as musical ones, and having a music education workforce which can work with young people of all backgrounds, needs and interests.'

Inclusive music education, while designed for all, is also based on the notion that some groups have in the past been excluded or have excluded themselves (for reasons of low self-belief etc.) from music making.

In inclusive education everyone moves forward, but some extra effort is put in to support those who have hitherto been marginalised.

¹³ Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education - © UNESCO 2009

¹⁴ <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>

¹⁵ http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/sites/all/migrated_content/files_from_html/A_simple_guide_to_dev

What does inclusion mean for Slough?

Slough's music education hub has made great progress since the pandemic and there is a recognition that the hub is increasingly progressive and inclusive. The hub lead Rebecca Richardson had been praised by most of the interviewees as someone who has moved inclusion forward and who is regarded as strongly committed to the work and also a safe pair of hands.

In September 2024 the hub and its work will be subsumed into a new entity of a hub for all Berkshire. To ensure that the work thrives both to then and beyond, the hub should see the following as key action points:

1. Strengthening its year-round service, focusing on the Holiday activities and food programme (HAF), by developing a year-round ensemble drawn from young people attending these activities
2. Further developing the offer for SEND children and young people, through consultation, networking, training, and accessible activities
3. Increasing partnership work, giving partners a stronger voice within the hub while also agreeing what quality in inclusion means across the partnerships.
4. Reaching out to the Asian community and supporting the development of a network, individuals, and organisations within that community particularly around contemporary music education
5. Continuing to target areas of child deprivation and opening up music access to children living in temporary accommodation.
6. Creating a sustainable structure that can be a significant partner within the forthcoming Berkshire music hub.
7. Identifying and providing CPD needs among the workforce especially in relation to expertise in working with SEND children and to tutors working with young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMHD).
8. Expanding its early years offer to training in creative music making for those working with portage children.

List of strategic priorities¹⁶

Strategic Priority 1

The team reflects the communities within Slough. The music education hub has diversified and reflects the cultures represented within Slough. There is an increased engagement with the music of different cultural communities in the Slough area.

Strategic Priority 2

Cultures, policies, procedures and resources are in place to support inclusion and to ensure that appropriate and continuing resources are secured to enable the inclusion strategy to succeed.

Strategic Priority 3

The workforce has appropriate and sufficient skills, knowledge and understanding to deliver musically inclusive and nurturing practices and appropriate musical and creative development with all children and young people. Good practice is also shared across partners.

Strategic Priority 4

The music hub recognizes cost as a significant barrier to music participation in Slough and has prioritized subsidies, bursaries and other supports to young people from low-income backgrounds.

Strategic Priority 5

The work of the hub to engage in sustainable ways with new groups of children facing barriers to engagement has expanded.

Strategic Priority 6

The offer for children with SEND has been expanded with a view to promoting equity of provision. The new offer has some emphasis on performance, recording and celebratory opportunities.

Strategic Priority 7

The hub has used a partnership building approach to widen access to music participation.

Strategic Priority 8

The hub increasingly uses data (from multiple sources) as a driver for inclusion.

Strategic Priority 9

There is an increased emphasis on a move to long-term engagement in music and a culture of progression for all children. The hub offers clear progression routes for all children,

Strategic Priority 10

The hub ensures that all children have positive experiences in music activity. As part of this, youth voice is at the heart of what the hub does.

Strategic Priority 11

¹⁶ Presented as outcome statements to be achieved at the end of the action plan

The hub has prepared for the upcoming hub changes in September 2024 including implementing structural changes to enable the work to continue.

Action plan Slough Music Hub

Strategic Priority 1	The team reflects the communities within Slough. The music education hub has diversified and reflects the cultures represented within Slough. There is an increased engagement with the music of different cultural communities in the Slough area.
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Future actions (to August 2024)

- Offer targeted volunteering /shadowing opportunities to musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds and to disabled music educators
- Ensure that all delivery team have a bank of culturally diverse songs and/or resources to use in their teaching.
- Explore development of South Asian music programme in Slough.
- Identify potential stakeholders for future South Asian music initiative – from education, parents’ groups, music, faith leaders, possible sponsors. The programme should, while including traditional elements, also emphasise contemporary South Asian music and partners should reflect this.
- Build relationships, foster a network around South Asian Music provision. Engage in dialogue with young people, schools and education providers, communities and community leaders on issues including barriers to engagement.
- Create database of local music educators from a range of diverse backgrounds
- Take positive action to promote diversity in hiring, such as utilizing local and community networks, advertising in several languages etc.
- Where possible, use positive action to create new employment opportunities for musicians from under-represented communities.
- Continue to expand workforce to represent more diverse genres - find appropriate deliverers for contemporary music including various hip-hop styles

Strategic Priority 2	Cultures, policies, procedures and resources are put in place to support inclusion and to ensure that appropriate and continuing resources are secured to enable the inclusion strategy to succeed.
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Future actions (to August 2024)

- Develop a music inclusion working party to move the strategic priorities forward.
- Inclusion strategy developments to be a standing item at hub meetings including Board meetings.
- Begin to secure funds to support an ongoing inclusion programme.
- Produce advocacy document on musical inclusion for schools.

Strategic Priority 3	The workforce has appropriate and sufficient skills, knowledge and understanding (i.e., an inclusive mind-set) to deliver musically inclusive and nurturing practices and appropriate musical and creative development with all children and young people.
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Future actions (to August 2024)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All hub staff to have had induction/ training in musical inclusion where appropriate. • Adapt and adopt Youth Music’s Quality Framework as a reflective/ evaluative tool for all music practitioners. • Develop short inclusion CPD programme - Deliver for all relevant hub team and invited partners - programme to include emphasis on shared ownership and creative music making. • Partnership agreements to be revised to include a commitment to inclusive practice with appropriate training as needed. • Any new employees and volunteers are required to engage with induction/training unless already having appropriate experience. • Create inclusion champions delivery team. Offer CPD and other incentives. Team to develop skills in and understanding of cognitive diversity, music and executive function, applied emotional intelligence, assistive technology, the social model of disability, and the Sounds of Intent model. • Initiate regular sessions on structured reflective practice – combination of whole team and small group approach over time. • Disseminate a short document on inclusive working in mainstream schools. 	

Strategic Priority 4	The music hub recognizes cost as a significant barrier to music participation in Slough and has prioritized subsidies, bursaries and other supports to young people from low-income backgrounds.
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Future actions (to August 2024)

- Disseminate widely knowledge about low prices and remissions for children from disadvantaged socio- economic groups to attend classes and ensembles and to see concerts and performances.
- Ensure that children in care can have both free lessons and free access to instruments and develop programme to double engagement.
- Continue to offer subsidies to those on Free School Meals (FSM) and low incomes.
- Continue to subsidize the instrument loan scheme.
- Seek to expand Holiday activity and food programme (HAF)

Strategic Priority**5**

The work of the hub to engage in sustainable ways with new groups of children facing barriers to engagement has expanded. This includes an out of school and out of school hours programme.

Future actions (to August 2024)

- Consult with young people who have been or are at risk of exclusion as to what they would want in music provision.
- Offer supported performance opportunities to children experiencing barriers to participation.
- Offer supported recording opportunities to children experiencing barriers to participation.
- Explore and perhaps pilot work with children living in temporary accommodation.
- Continue to expand hub satellite activities, with emphasis on those wards in the lowest 20% decile of deprivation where possible. Some work may be van based.
- Pilot Urban Orchestra programme during half terms
- Work with alternative providers (AP) to plan the development of the work with young people over time particularly in relation to outlets and progression.

Strategic Priority**6**

The offer for children with SEND has been expanded, with some emphasis on performance, recording and celebratory opportunities.

Future actions (to August 2024)

- Survey current special school staff for their needs and wants around CPD.

- Audit of provision in both SEND schools and in ARPs – with particular reference to music tech (including assistive tech). Ensure regular music education (not just music therapy) is provided to all children.
- Develop online video resources for disabled children.
- Investigate instrument modifications and adaptations to increase access.
- Support system (supervision and CPD) for teachers working with young autists.
- Training programme for early years workers working with portage children.
- Investigate development of an inclusive choir in partnership with Soundabout.
- Develop integrated performances.
- Offer training in iPad use so that the hub can start a small iPad ensemble programme with children with SEND in both mainstream and special schools.
- Develop integrated online producers club

Strategic Priority 7	The hub has used a partnership building approach to widen access to music participation.
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Future actions (to August 2024)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the use of the Youth Music’s Quality Framework as a shared tool for understanding and developing higher standards in inclusive delivery across all delivery partners. Offer mentoring in the use of the framework to partners if needed. • Develop a Music Inclusion Working Party from different organisations to move the strategic priorities forward. Provide some funds for projects coming from this group. • Develop a statement of inclusive values and practices to embed inclusion. with all hub workers and appropriate partners and disseminate to all local music organisations for signing up. 	

Strategic Priority 8	The hub increasingly uses data as a driver for inclusion. The hub uses multiple sources to gather data for inclusion.
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Future actions (to August 2024)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop systems for data collection and monitoring, and for monitoring progression pathways. These should include data on FSM, Pupil Premium, LAC and 	

those with SEND, Global majority, cultural or faith background where possible and also children in need. Also include children on fixed term and, if relevant, permanent exclusions. Clarify and agree systems with council, schools and team. Trial and iron out glitches.

- Discuss and make decisions on whether inclusion will be based on aiming for natural proportion¹⁷ for all groups or whether, in this time period, some groups will be more targeted. This can be nuanced; for example, in terms of seeking natural proportion for certain groups in continuation, overall reach, ensembles, and music centres etc.

<p>Strategic Priority</p> <p>9</p>	<p>There is an increased emphasis on a move to long-term engagement in music and a culture of progression for all children. The hub provides clear progression routes for those who choose to progress in music.</p>
<p>Future actions (to August 2024)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically examine all newly developed inclusion work to establish both where the barriers are and also solutions for young people involved in new work to access on-going work within the hub, such as existing ensembles. Solutions may for example involve creating new ensembles. • Hub partners should be encouraged to provide clear progression and in most cases integration pathways. • Track and review retention of all students with special focus on those experiencing barriers to participation. Make adjustments to existing ensembles where necessary. • Examine data on and practice of existing ensembles in terms of inclusion. Review ensembles and music centres with regard to cost/offer/ pedagogy/take-up. Adapt ensemble programme to make it more representative of needs and wants of whole community of young people. • Critically review progression routes from whole class to ensembles and beyond in the light of inclusion. 	

¹⁷ The concept that a hub will engage a group of children facing barriers in the same proportion as they are within the hub area, e.g., if the hub engages with 20% of the children in the hub area and there are 100 children in care in that area then when the hub works with 20 children in care (20%) then it has reached natural proportion for that group

- Existing ensembles, at least in part, should, work collaboratively with young artists from several of the genres that will be new for the hub and in this way provide new progression routes for all concerned.
- Ascertain data for pupil premium and FSM children in tuition and in ensembles. If less than 50% of natural proportion, then give incentives in order to significantly increase numbers over 2 years.
- Pilot a new ensemble (at minimal cost) for children on the HAF programme to engage in year-round music making. Seek outside funds if necessary.

Strategic Priority 10	The hub ensures that all children have positive experiences in music activity. As part of this, youth voice is at the heart of what the hub does.
Future actions (to August 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with a broad range of young people and stakeholders on their perceptions of the inclusiveness and relevance of the hub and what they want to see going forward. • Set up Youth Voice Action Group. Include voices from young people experiencing barriers to participation. • Mentor Youth Voice Action group and support youth-led music project. Delegate funds to Youth Voice Action Group for project. 	

Strategic Priority 11	The hub has prepared for the upcoming hub changes in September 2024 including implementing structural changes so as to enable the work to continue.
Future actions (to August 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hub Lead to work with council to investigate and implement a suitable structure for continuing current hub's work (possibly an independent CIC) and to identify and access potential sources of funding. • Work with Readipop and Berkshire Maestros to ensure Slough will continue to have a musically inclusive hub from September 2024 • Begin to secure funds to support an ongoing inclusion programme. 	