



let's make  
some music

# Equality and diversity policy

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**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# 1. Introduction

Lewisham Music is a local charity and the lead partner of Lewisham Music Education Hub, working across the London Borough of Lewisham. We are proud to work in a borough which is truly diverse (in every sense of the word), and we believe this diversity makes us stronger as a community charity.

We are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our work. This policy outlines our commitment to creating a positive and inclusive environment for our staff, participants, partners, and the communities we serve. We recognise that equity, diversity, and inclusion are essential values that should be embedded in everything we do.

We are committed to actions not just words.

## 2. Policy purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Lewisham Music actively promotes equality, values and embraces diversity, and combats discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in all its forms. We aim to create an environment that respects and values all individuals.

## 3. Policy commitments

### 3.1. Commitment to equality and diversity

Lewisham Music is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and valuing diversity. We strive to ensure that no individual or group is unfairly discriminated against, harassed, or victimised because of their protected characteristics or any other personal attributes.

### 3.2. Commitment to equity

We recognise that equality does not always mean treating everyone the same. We are committed to addressing existing inequalities and barriers to participation, ensuring that individuals have fair and equal access to our services and opportunities. We will proactively work towards achieving equity and removing systemic barriers.

### 3.3. Commitment to inclusion and intersectionality

We acknowledge that individuals possess multiple identities and may face intersecting forms of discrimination. We will strive to create an inclusive environment that respects and values the uniqueness of each person, acknowledging the interplay of different characteristics and experiences.

## 4. Legal compliance

### 4.1 Equality Act 2010

We are committed to complying with the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure that our policies, practices and procedures align with the requirements set out in the Act.

**This includes recognising that it is unlawful to directly or indirectly discriminate against anyone based on the following protected characteristics which are laid out in the Equality Act 2010:**

- **Age:** We will not discriminate against individuals based on their age, whether they are young or older participants, staff, or stakeholders.
- **Disability:** Lewisham Music follows [the social model of disability](#). Whilst the medical model of disability holds that people are disabled because of impairments or conditions that they have; the social model is the understanding that disability is something that is created by society. This is because disabled people face barriers that stop them from taking part in society in the same way as non-disabled people (for example, a building not accessible for a wheelchair user; a website not accessible for someone with epilepsy or a visual impairment). We will ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to our services and facilities. We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs and promote inclusivity across all our programmes. This includes those who are neurodiverse (for example Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)).
- **Gender reassignment:** We will respect and support individuals who are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment, ensuring they are treated with dignity and without discrimination.
- **Marriage and civil partnership:** We will not discriminate against individuals based on their marital or civil partnership status. We recognise the rights and equality of individuals in these relationships.
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** We will not discriminate against individuals based on their pregnancy or maternity status. We will provide appropriate support and accommodations to ensure their equal participation.
- **Race:** We will not discriminate against individuals based on their race, ethnicity, nationality, or ethnic origin. We will celebrate diversity and promote equality of opportunity for all racial and ethnic groups.
- **Religion or belief:** We will respect and accommodate individuals' religious or philosophical beliefs, ensuring they are not subjected to discrimination or disadvantage due to their beliefs or the absence thereof.
- **Sex:** We will not discriminate against individuals based on their biological sex. We will ensure equal opportunities and fair treatment for all genders.
- **Sexual orientation:** We will not discriminate against individuals based on their sexual orientation. We recognise and respect the diversity of sexual orientations and promote an inclusive and supportive environment.

**In addition, from the protected characteristics specifically mentioned in the Equality Act 2010, Lewisham Music recognises that the following groups deserve special attention and protection:**

- **Gender identity:** As opposed to biological sex (which refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of females, males and intersex persons), gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. Gender and sex are related to but different from gender identity. Gender identity refers to a person's deeply felt, internal and individual experience of gender. For many people, their gender identity corresponds to the sex they were registered at birth. For others, it does not. Some people see gender identity as more of a spectrum, rather than a binary. **Cisgender** is when someone's gender identity is the same as the sex they were registered at birth. **Trans** or **transgender** is when someone feels their gender is different from, or doesn't sit comfortably with, the sex they were registered at birth. **Non-binary, gender diverse** and **genderqueer** are umbrella terms for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably as man or woman. Instead, they may identify with some aspects of one or both of these identities, or identify with neither. Additionally, some people may identify as **genderfluid** and see their gender as flexible, rather than a fixed identity.
- **Displaced people and asylum-seekers:** We recognise the unique challenges faced by displaced people and asylum-seekers, and we are committed to providing inclusive and accessible services to support their musical aspirations. We will actively work to create a welcoming and supportive environment that fosters a sense of belonging for displaced individuals and asylum-seekers. This includes collaborating with relevant organisations, advocating for their rights, and providing tailored resources and support to ensure their participation and integration within our programmes.
- **Trade union status/activities:** We recognise the rights of people (including Lewisham Music employees) to be a trade union member and be actively involved in trade union activities. We will not discriminate against them or treat them differently because of such membership or activities.
- **Social 'class'/socio-economic status:** We will not discriminate against anyone based on the social 'class' they may identify with; where they grew up; their family situation or the employment status or type of work their parents or carers did/do; or their previous or current financial situation.
- **English as an Additional Language (EAL); English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL):** We recognise that many children, young people, parents and carers who take part in our activities will speak other languages. We celebrate this difference, but also recognise that some of them may face additional barriers due to language, especially for those who were born and/or raised outside of the UK. We will work to remove such barriers and make programmes accessible for all. Whilst Lewisham Music employees will need to be confident speaking and written English to a decent level, we will not discriminate against any employees who speak English as an additional language.

#### **4.2 Public sector equality duty** (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010):

We will fulfil our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires public organisations to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, considering the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low
- Foster good relations between people from different protected characteristic groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups
- Where necessary, conduct Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that our policies and practices promote equality and do not disproportionately affect any particular group.

**4.3 Employment legislation:** We will adhere to employment legislation, including but not limited to the Equality Act 2010, in all aspects of our staff recruitment, employment practices, and working conditions. We will provide fair and equal opportunities for career development, training, and promotion, ensuring that all decisions are made based on merit and individual abilities.

**4.4 Data protection and confidentiality:** We will handle all personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. We will ensure that personal information is collected, stored, and processed securely, and that individuals' privacy rights are respected.

**4.5. Safeguarding:** We will comply with relevant safeguarding legislation and regulations to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults. We will maintain robust safeguarding policies and procedures, provide appropriate training to staff and volunteers, and report any concerns or incidents promptly to the appropriate authorities. More information can be found in Lewisham Music's Safeguarding Policy, Safeguarding Staff Code of Conduct, Safer Recruitment policy, and Safeguarding Statement on our website: [www.lewishammusic.org/our-policies](http://www.lewishammusic.org/our-policies)

**4.6 Anti-discrimination legislation:** We will uphold legislation that prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, including but not limited to the Equality Act 2010. We will take all necessary steps to prevent and address any instances of discrimination or harassment, whether committed by staff, volunteers, participants, or stakeholders, and we will provide accessible and confidential channels for reporting and addressing such concerns.

**4.7 Accessibility legislation:** We will comply with relevant accessibility legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, to ensure that our premises, facilities, services, and communication channels are accessible to individuals with disabilities. We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the specific needs of individuals, providing appropriate support and accommodations to facilitate their full participation.

**4.8 Employment legislation:** We will adhere to employment legislation, including but not limited to the Equality Act 2010, in all aspects of our staff recruitment, employment practices, and working conditions. We will provide fair and equal opportunities for career development, training, and promotion, ensuring that all decisions are made based on merit and individual abilities.

## 5. Different types of discrimination

**Lewisham Music recognise and condemn all forms of unlawful discrimination, including but not limited to:**

**5.1. Direct discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

**5.2. Indirect discrimination:** Applying policies, practices, or criteria that disproportionately disadvantage individuals with certain protected characteristics.

**5.3. Perceptive discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably based on a perception of their protected characteristic.

**5.4. Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment.

**5.6. Victimisation:** Treating someone unfavourably because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

**If anyone feels they have been discriminated against by Lewisham Music, they should follow Lewisham Music's *Grievance* and *Whistleblowing* policies and procedures.**

## 6. Creating an Inclusive Environment

### 6.1. Positive working environment and culture

Lewisham Music is committed to fostering a positive working environment and culture that values diversity and promotes mutual respect, dignity, and cooperation among staff, trustees, and volunteers.

### 6.2 Attracting a diverse workforce

Lewisham Music aims to attract and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the borough's demographics. We will actively promote equal opportunities in recruitment, selection, and promotion processes, ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly and eliminating any opportunities for unconscious bias (for example by using 'blind shortlisting' where those staff who are shortlisting cannot see any information about an applicants' age, name, or where they went to school or university.)

### 6.3 Retaining a diverse workforce

We recognise that just attracting a diverse workforce is not enough; Lewisham Music will actively promote an inclusive culture which values and celebrates individual differences. This, for example, will mean an acceptance and celebration of different cultures, accents, ways of working, and dress. It also means actively working to ensure that staff do not face any [micro-aggressions](#) from other colleagues, staff from schools or partner organisations or parents or carers. It means creating a culture where staff don't feel they have to '[code-switch](#)' in order to fit in or be accepted.

## **6.2. Welcoming children, young people, and families**

We are dedicated to ensuring that children, young people, and families feel welcome, respected, and included in all our programs and activities. We will actively work to remove any barriers that prevent their full participation.

## **6.3. Language use**

We are committed to using language that respects and reflects people's identities. We will regularly review and update our language practices to ensure they align with evolving social norms and promote inclusivity.

# **7. Implementation, Monitoring, and Review**

## **7.1. Responsibility**

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff and trustees of Lewisham Music. They are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and adhere to its principles.

## **7.2. Training and development**

We will provide regular training and development opportunities to enhance awareness and understanding of equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion issues. This will enable our staff and trustees to actively contribute to creating an inclusive environment.

A copy of this document will be available to all Lewisham Music professionals and beneficiaries, who will have responsibilities to respect, and act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy. It is supported and delivered via our EDI Strategy and Action Plan which is available on our website: [www.lewishammusic.org/our-policies](http://www.lewishammusic.org/our-policies)

## **7.3 Review**

We will take action where needed to address any inequalities that have surfaced through the implementation of this policy.

A formal annual review of the policy and action plan will be led by the Chief Executive with any amendments agreed by the Board of Trustees. The review will focus on tracking progress, identifying challenges to delivery and devising ways to overcome these challenges, as well as checking that the policy aims and actions remain relevant.

# **8. Reporting discrimination or grievances**

## **8.1 Responsibility**

Ultimate responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy rests with the Chief Executive. However, every individual involved in Lewisham Music needs to play their part in translating policy into practice.

## 8.2 Reporting

A day-to-day basis breach of this policy could occur on several levels some, requiring a more urgent response than others.

If staff, trustees or volunteers from Lewisham Music find or experience examples of indirect discrimination in Lewisham Music policies and procedures they should bring this to the attention of their line manager or the Chair. They can then consider the issue and respond as appropriate.

If staff or volunteers from Lewisham Music or other partner organisations, or children, young people or parents/carers experience or witness more severe breaches of this policy –perhaps involving direct discrimination against an individual, bullying or harassment- then they have several options including:

- speaking to the individual(s) involved
- contacting the Chief Executive
- contacting the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Champion (Director of Community Programmes)
- talking to their line manager
- contacting a Lewisham Music Trustee or the Chair
- Whichever option you chose **you are strongly encouraged to act**. Cases of this nature will then most likely be dealt with through **grievance**, **disciplinary** or **whistle blowing** policies.

## 9. Conclusion

**Lewisham Music is committed to upholding the principles of equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion in all our activities and decision-making processes. This policy sets out our commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for everyone involved with our organisation. We will continually strive to learn, grow, and evolve as a learning organisation, promoting equality, equity and inclusion and embracing diversity in everything we do.**

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