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Making music matter

Music Education Strategy for London 2010-2012

**Greater London Authority
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I want every young Londoner to have the opportunity to play, listen to and enjoy music, regardless of their background.

Music education can have a transformative impact on young people; enriching the mind, giving knowledge and understanding, teaching valuable skills and discipline, and importantly, providing a source of lifelong pleasure. As Confucius said ‘Music produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without’.

It is still the case, sadly, that many families in London cannot afford access to instruments or the kind of teaching that young people need to develop their talent. We can also do more to show young people that music education – particularly for orchestral instruments – is not elitist and can be for them.

There are many local music services, orchestras, arts organisations, charities and schools which do

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excellent work. This strategy sets out how we will champion them, help them to grow and reach out to more Londoners.

I welcome the involvement of many partners in this effort to make music education truly accessible to all.



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

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Music education in London – opportunities and challenges

London is home to many of the world's most important musicians, bands, orchestras, music colleges and industry players. Our musical landscape is virtually unparalleled: we have more music venues and music performances per year than New York, Paris, Shanghai and Tokyo.¹ Live music is the fastest growing part of the UK's music industry and more than 32,000 music performances are held each year at major concert halls, arts centres, cultural and sports venues, pubs, student unions and churches.

Parallel to this vibrant music scene, there has been an explosion of music-making opportunities for young people. A vast number of orchestras, arts organisations, local authority music services, community groups and schools provide musical activities across many diverse traditions for young people. We have seen key innovations in music education: the expansion of whole class teaching; early instrument access for younger children; and successful national schemes like 'Sing Up'. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games have stimulated major music projects like BBC Sounds, which features composing, singing and live performance programmes across the

UK. London is fertile ground for new musical talent; about a quarter of Londoners are under 19 years old and more than one million children go to London's schools.

Yet, whilst musical activity for young people is flourishing in some ways, certain problems have emerged. There are aspects of music teaching, in particular instrument and vocal tuition, which are difficult to access for those on low incomes. Whilst early and free access to instruments is generally good in the capital, the increasing pressure on local authority budgets means it is harder to provide free intensive tuition and progression opportunities at an intermediate and advanced level. This makes it impossible for many young people to aspire to excellence.

The spread of music education is also patchy in London, with some local music services and schools better equipped to teach music in a variety of genres. The lack of a strategic framework for music education in London means that gaps in provision are hidden. The vast variety of short-term opportunities and initiatives can also be confusing for teachers, parents and young people. Finally, the overall system of teacher training

¹ *London, A cultural audit*, London Development Agency. March 2008

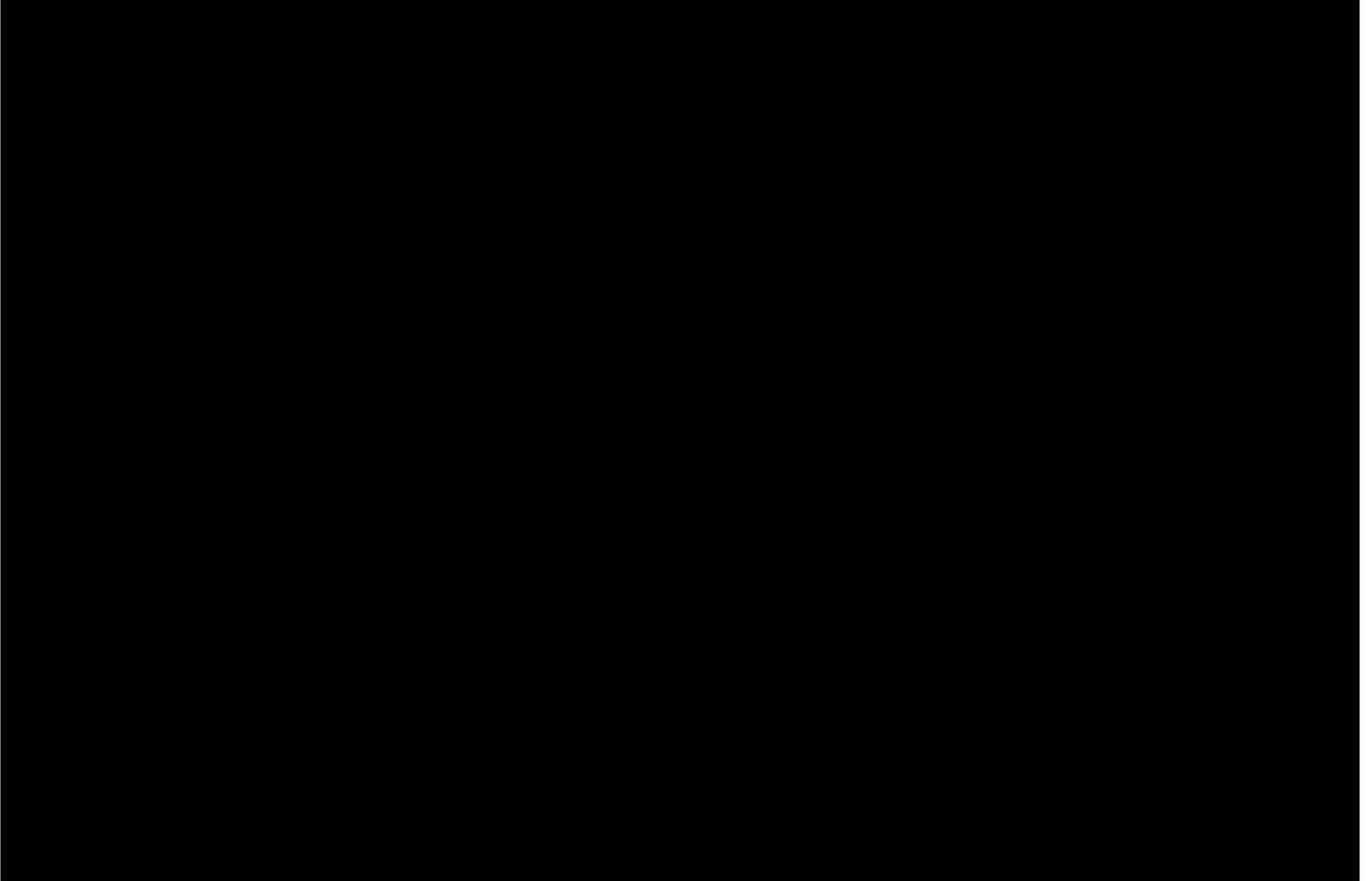
means that many teachers lack the confidence or expertise to make music part of their classrooms.

Since the closure of the ILEA (Inner London Education Authority) music service in the 1990s, which supported and monitored the provision of formal music education across inner London, there has been no Londonwide strategic agency for music education.

The Mayor believes that music education matters and should be

supported properly in London. It should be a part of every young person's upbringing, not only because it brings many benefits in terms of personal development, education, and training, but also because music can be life enhancing and is a source of human pleasure and understanding. Music education is also part of the Mayor's wider strategy to engage young people from diverse backgrounds and address a culture of low aspiration.

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In order to improve provision in London, the GLA aims to support and encourage the good practice that is currently going on, but also pay attention to gaps in provision. We aim to help bring providers together, and develop a system which emphasises quality yet recognises the different abilities and interests of young people. We plan to develop a strategic overview to ensure London is investing in the right music education infrastructure, so that more young people can progress further in their chosen area. Increasing access and aspiring to excellence need not be mutually exclusive.

Whilst the GLA is not a major funder of music education in London, it is the strategic body for London and works in partnership with a range of organisations to improve the delivery of cultural services. Based on our own discussions with stakeholders, there is widespread consensus that the GLA, with partners, should play a strategic role in shaping music education in the capital.

This paper draws on a range of discussions we have held with people working in music education in London, building on our first Music Education Summit in January 2009 for over 150 people working in the capital's music education sector.

Following the summit the GLA undertook a long period of consultation with key sector organisations to further inform this strategy, including Arts Council England, London; Department for Children, Schools and Families; Federation of Music Services; Incorporated Society of Musicians; Musicians' union; The Hub; London Councils; and the London Cultural Improvement Programme, Association of British Orchestras; plus a range of music education providers, charities, agencies and individuals. We are grateful to everyone's input and support.

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Music education has benefited from a number of developments over the past ten years:

- There has been an increase in central government support. In November 2007, the government announced a package of support totalling £332 million over three years (some new and some already committed), including ring-fenced funding to local authorities, an instrument fund, a commitment to training and Continuing Professional Development, funding for the Music Manifesto partnership programmes, and a range of initiatives.
- Local authorities are now producing their own Local Authority Music Plans (LAMPs), many of which will take a bird's-eye view of the full range of statutory and non-statutory provision.
- The music education sector is increasingly diverse and consists of hundreds of statutory and non-statutory organisations. According to Arts Council England, London, a small sample of 26 arts organisations in 2007/8 provided opportunities for over 50,000 young Londoners to engage in music-making, including primary school workshops, live performance opportunities, one-to-one artist development, and recording sessions. A range of organisations

such as Youth Music, the Music Manifesto and Sound Connections have worked to bring non-formal and statutory sectors together.

- A number of new government initiatives have been announced. A national singing programme (Sing Up) has been established. Inspired by the Venezuelan music education system 'El Sistema', the government launched 'In Harmony' in 2008 in three pilot areas – Lambeth, Liverpool and Norwich – providing instrumental tuition to children as young as four. In London, Tower Hamlets is delivering the pilot of Find Your Talent, and working in partnership with a number of key cultural organisations.

These changes have created many new opportunities for young people around the UK to learn music. However, despite the range of activity on offer, there are a number of problems with music education, some unique to London:

- The provision of music education – and instrument training in particular – is **inconsistent and patchy. There is no overview of where gaps in provision may be.** Some parts of London have stronger and more secure funding structures, and better local authority financial support than others. As

the provision of music education is spread across 32 London boroughs, there is much more diversity and fragmentation in approach compared to the old unitary system under ILEA (Inner London Education Authority), or compared to other regions of the UK.

- Although the government has made early access to instrument tuition a priority, **ongoing access is far from universal and can often depend on parents' ability to pay**. The Music Standards Fund grant, disseminated from government direct to local authorities, and totalling nearly £11.5 million for London, places a particular emphasis on instrumental and vocal tuition at Key Stage 2 (ages 7-11). A significant amount of this funding is directed at these first, taster experiences of group music-making (although each music service operates differently, thus allowing for local priorities to exist). At the other end of the scale, there are many scholarships available for young musicians who have had the opportunity to progress with instrumental lessons and who have demonstrated exceptional talent. However, there is a gap between these two points. In particular, the transition from primary to secondary school sees a significant drop-off in learning.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that even **early access is varied in terms of quality** and range of instruments. Pressure on music education services and schools means a tendency towards whole class teaching and 'easier' instruments. This means that young people may have limited experience of certain types of music. Quality and choice is also affected by the shortage of suitably qualified staff.
- The system to **evaluate the quality of music education provision outside school needs to be strengthened** and a number of music services require more expertise in this area. As well as measuring social and economic impacts and value for money, we need to measure educational standards and quality, i.e. how well young people are learning. Providers are being judged on numbers, but not always on quality

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and longer-term outcomes.

- There are **too many short-term local, regional and national government initiatives**. A new initiative every few months is difficult for teachers and young people to adjust to, as is the confusing range of statutory agencies dealing with this area.
- The way funding works can lead to an emphasis on short-term projects and initiatives within music organisations and music services themselves. Whilst time-limited projects can help excite young people, there is a **need for sustained, regular music tuition** to develop young people's skills and knowledge over the long term.
- The picture of music education is **too confusing for schools and young people**. Many schools do not have the time to sort through the range of opportunities, or judge their quality and suitability. They need quick, easy advice and guidance to help inform them.
- Requirements for initial and continuing teacher training mean that **teachers often lack the expertise and confidence to provide music education** or access opportunities to use it in their classrooms.
- Many music education professionals believe that aspects of music education have been neglected for lack of interest or

expertise, or because there is a **nervousness about challenging young people**. Neglected areas include skills such as notation, and types of music including folk, jazz, western classical and world music.

- Despite rapid growth of informal and non-formal music education, **not all schools benefit from the input of visiting musicians or orchestras**. This is sometimes the case for schools in outer London with fewer resident orchestras or concert venues. In London, this is a missed opportunity because there is a very well organised and committed non-formal sector, with music professionals who are keen to work with young people and find ways to help young people to learn together through ensembles. There are some examples of excellent partnership work, such as the London Symphony Orchestra's 'On Track' scheme, which shows how partnerships between schools, music services and orchestras can help create sustainable and high quality music education for young people.
- There is a high, **unmet demand for rehearsal and recording spaces** for young and amateur musicians. This poses a particular problem for inner London music services which lack centralised spaces for youth orchestra rehearsals, and are therefore unable to expand their offer to young people.

Objectives and activities

In March 2010, the GLA will establish a two-year dedicated music education programme in partnership with a range of key agencies, boroughs, charities and music organisations.

This programme will seek to improve the provision of music education by brokering relationships, conducting research and producing advice for the music education sector in London.

The intention is to stimulate growth and partnerships by 2012, leading to sustained improvement in the longer term. The GLA will provide core funding and resources and work with partners to raise additional funds to grow the programme for the long-term.

The GLA Music Education Programme is steered by a board comprising representatives and experts from different parts of the music education sector (orchestras, borough music services, schools, and music professionals and teachers):

- Karen Brock, Head of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service (THAMES) and Music Education Council (MEC) (Chair)
- Richard Morris, former Chief Executive of The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) (Deputy Chair)
- Stephen Dagg, Centre for Young Musicians
- Sean Gregory, Barbican
- Nigel Hiscock, Sutton Music Service, and Federation of Music Services London representative
- Nick Howdle, Youth Music
- Barry Ife, Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- Nicholas Kenyon, Barbican
- Shan Maclennan, Southbank Centre
- Gillian Moore, Southbank Centre
- Kathryn McDowell, London Symphony Orchestra
- Victoria Sharp, London Music Masters
- Helen Sprott, Arts Council England, London
- John Stephens, Consultant
- Lincoln Abbotts, Music for Youth

The GLA Music Education Programme will consist of these areas of activity:

- **Mayor's music education fund** – £100k to seed fund partnerships between local authority music services and orchestras and ensembles in the city. This grant programme will open in May 2010 and will cover projects in the academic year, September 2010 - July 2011. The aim is to give young people the experience of working with professional musicians, encouraging them to make music in ensembles whilst helping raise their musical aspirations. It will also strengthen and deepen the

partnership working between London's music services and the orchestral sector. The fund will be administered by the GLA in partnership with the Federation of Music Services – London (FMS) and working closely in the first instance with the Association of British Orchestras (ABO). Local music services² and ABO members are invited to register their interest in applying to this fund and to attend a workshop in April where more details about the scheme and how to apply will be discussed: please email rhythmoflondon@london.gov.uk

- **Audit of music education provision** – an analysis of music education provision exploring patterns and gaps across boroughs, age group, demographics, and

types of funding. This audit will be produced in stages throughout 2010-2012 and used to shape understanding of provision and provide additional support or guidance where needed. The audit will draw on information from national government, local boroughs, the Arts Council and other sources, plus ongoing surveys and consultation.

- **Annual rhythm of London event** – building on the success of Rhythm of London 2009, which featured over 100 indoor and outdoor events, ranging from busking, orchestral performances, and street pianos. This annual showcase event celebrates the work going on across the capital and raises awareness of opportunities amongst young Londoners of ways to get involved in music-making across a range of traditions. Rhythm of London will take place on 17 - 24 April 2010 across multiple venues in London. To register your interest, or to find out how to get involved, please email rhythmoflondon@london.gov.uk or visit www.london.gov.uk/rhythmoflondon/
- **Rhythm of London Website** – first launched in September 2009, the website will be continually

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² Priority will be given to those music services with greatest need in this area and not currently in an established strategic partnership with an orchestra

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updated to signpost musical opportunities for young people, teachers, and the general public. Over the long term, the aim is to 'join up' with other websites and advisory services, to ensure teachers and schools have better, clearer access to information.

- **Events and publications to support teacher development** – the GLA will work in partnership with others to develop a programme throughout 2010-2012 to promote discussion about methods of music education, curriculum scope, and best practice in London and the UK. There is strong, unmet demand for training and advice, as well as interest in learning more about existing teacher training programmes available in the city. This programme will explore online resources for case studies, research

findings, policy, events and work opportunities.

- **Advocacy to funders and government** – increase understanding of the value of music education for young people amongst public and private funders, local authorities, agencies and schools. There is a need to promote the strong existing research base which shows the value of music education.
- **Listen to users** – consult regularly with young people, teachers, parents and music education providers through events, online activity and social media. Through engaging with Londoners, we can help improve communications across the sector and ensure that providers are aware of people's views.

Conclusions

Our hope is to see a stronger, more confident and joined up music education sector, which builds on the excellent work that is currently going on. London is fortunate to have some of the finest and most exciting musicians, bands and orchestras in the world. We want young people in the city to benefit from this and be inspired to reach their full potential.

We welcome your views on this music education strategy, whether you are a young person, parent, teacher, or work in a music education organisation. Please send in your comments, suggestions and questions to rhythmoflondon@london.gov.uk