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## **Music First – What is it?**

Music First is a new and ambitious 21st century music education programme that transforms young lives, families and communities through music, currently working in the borough of Islington.

Music First has been set up in the belief that learning to play an instrument and play music with others brings many non-musical benefits. We aim to provide these musical opportunities particularly to those who otherwise might struggle to access these benefits. Established in 2009, we provide a music education pathway for children from 7-13 working with linked Primary Schools with a varied socio/economic intake.

The project was inspired by Venezuela's *El Sistema* programme, which has provided over 300,000 children from the poorest backgrounds with orchestra-based music education in the last thirty years.

Music First's activity in Islington currently includes two **Music First Hubs** running after-school activities, each of which are linked to six local primary schools, and **The Islington Youth Orchestra**.

Music First works alongside Arts First (The Islington Education hub who provide curriculum support for all schools in the borough). Arts First run and coordinate the whole class Wider Opportunities instrumental lessons in school time.

## **Music First Hubs- what are they?**

The Hub provides a funded weekly, high-quality musical experience for primary school pupils. Students participate in choir, musicianship sessions, have a small group instrumental lessons, and play in larger sectional ensembles and orchestra. They are assigned a regular tutor that teaches them on their instrument throughout the academic year. Alongside the orchestra repertoire, children work towards the Music First Award scheme (There are 3 award levels that work as a pathway towards ABRSM grade exams).

### **There are currently 2 hubs:**

Arts and Media School Music First Hub  
Highbury Grove School Music First Hub

*\*linked Primary schools listed below*

## **Who can attend?**

Music First Hubs are open to children aged 7-11 from our linked Islington schools. A selection of children from each Primary school are put forward for the programme by the headteacher, Music coordinator or Arts First tutor at the school.

## **How do the Hubs work?**

Each child is loaned an instrument, receives tuition, and participates in inspirational music-making activities at the weekly after-school Music First Hub.

On joining, a young person comes under the care of a Music First hub Leader, assisted by Music First's team of tutors and the hub coordinator. Teaching assistants from the linked schools escort the children from school and are responsible for their pastoral care whilst at the Hub, this includes keeping letters of permission and contact details for parents/carers and any other safeguarding information.

## **Student/Parent& Carer Expectations**

As places are limited, once a student has joined us, we hope they will stay for the duration of their primary school education, with consistent attendance. This will enable them to get the most out of the experience. We aim to encourage parent/carers to assist and support the children in practicing at home, looking after their instruments and attending weekly.

## **School Responsibilities**

The Link Schools are responsible for collecting permission slips from parents, engaging & employing Teaching Assistants to accompany the pupils to and from the Hub, liaising with the Hub Leader and helping create & encourage a positive, supportive environment around the hub activities.

A set of musical instruments has been loaned to every school who participate in hub activities, schools are required to maintain these instruments and ensure pupils from Music look after them.

If and when instrumental repairs are required, Music First staff can advise how and where to have repairs completed.

## **Who teaches at the Hub**

The Hub sessions are provided by Music First tutors, who are highly qualified and experienced teachers. Tutors meet before and after the Hub and under the guidance of the Hub Leader carefully plan lessons and orchestra sessions to ensure that pupils receive a cohesive musical experience.

## **Learning Outcomes**

To ensure that pupils have a tangible goal to work towards, tutors prepare students for Music First Awards. There are three levels of award. To achieve each level, pupils are expected to prepare a solo piece, present the orchestra piece they have been working towards in their ensemble session, and in the case of the level 2 and 3 awards, play scales.

Pupils will be asked to present their learning at the end of each term in a small group of other students under the care of a tutor, and will be given a written report and certificate if they are successful at meeting the award criteria. If pupils complete all three levels of the Music First award system, they are prepared and entered for ABRSM graded exams.

All pupils have a practice diary and they are expected to record their practice against the weekly targets that their tutors sets. Students are also expected to show this to parents/carers at home. To provide further support for students, after each Hub session tutors are available to speak with parents/carers.

The chance to perform regularly, both formally and informally, is also a key feature of Music First, and so is involving parents and the wider community. For example, termly sharing sessions are also held for pupils to demonstrate their progress over the term and for parents/carers to watch and join in! There is also an annual concert at the Hackney Empire.

Expected outcomes for students who have been attending the Hub over one year are:

<b>Note reading</b>	Able to read notes on the stave and common rhythms Able to follow and read orchestral music
<b>Group learning</b>	Evident ensemble skills
<b>Singing</b>	Can confidently hold a part in a two-part piece
<b>Creativity</b>	Can understand how to play with expression
<b>Social development</b>	Is responsible for their learning and that of others, is able to lead, knows how to be a team player and is a confident role model

### **Linked Orchestras/opportunities**

Music First Islington Youth Orchestra

This was formed in April 2015 with the aim of providing Islington pupils the chance to play in a large ensemble. Once Hub pupils move onto secondary school, they are invited to join the IYO, to ensure they continue to progress and enjoy music making with students in the wider community. To take part, pupils must be in **years 5-8**, and **above Grade 2 standard in an orchestral instrument**.

### **Practical Information for Arts and Media School Music First Hub**

#### **Link Schools**

Duncombe School  
Pakeman Primary School  
Montem Primary School  
St Mark's Church of England School  
Robert Blair Primary School  
Grafton School

#### **Contacts at Islington Arts and Media School Hub**

Hub Leader/Creative consultant – Tara Franks 07976 982988 tafanks@hotmail.com  
Hub Coordinator – Helen Innes 07817972701 helen@heleninnes.com

#### **Schedule**

The Hub takes place on Wednesdays in term time. The full list of dates will be sent to your school each term.

**Start Time** : 3.30pm

**Break time**: 4.25pm - 4.40pm

**Finish Time** : 5.30pm

#### **Location**

Islington Arts and Media School (IAMS)  
Turle Road, Islington, London, N4 3LS

#### **AMSI HUB DATES**

Autumn term starts Wednesday 28th September 2016 and finishes on 30th November  
(full year dates to follow)