



Services For Education

HUB LEAD ORGANISATION BOARD

INDEPENDENT CHAIR INFORMATION PACK

APRIL 2025

Welcome

Many thanks for your interest in applying to be the Independent Chair for our Hub Lead Organisation Board. Music education across England is partly funded by a grant which is distributed by Arts Council England, on behalf of Arts Council England. In September 2024, SFE was confirmed as the HLO for Birmingham following a national music hub investment process through which funding was allocated to 43 Hub Lead Organisations (HLOs). Securing our role as HLO for Birmingham allows us to continue with the work we have been doing as the local Music Hub Lead for over 10 years.

The remit of the HLO Board (which is a sub-committee of the main SFE Board, but with an extended membership representing key stakeholder groups) is to oversee the use of the ACE funding and to ensure that the HLO and its partners use the funding to further the aims and objectives set out in the National Plan for Music Education ²¹. The Independent Chair will bring robust leadership to this group, ensuring there is an appropriate level of challenge in order to maximise the impact of Hub activities for our beneficiaries, together with holding the Hub and its partners to account against their agreed key performance measures.

SFE are an award-winning provider of specialist services to schools in the West Midlands and our Music offer is an important part of our work. This includes our highly successful peripatetic schools Music Service, who as well as teaching in a full range of settings offer an extensive range of performance and ensemble opportunities across the City. In addition, SFE delivers services in health education, raising standards in learning and assessment, and school leadership team development.

The role of the Independent Chair is crucial to ensuring that, as we work with our Hub partners, we exceed the expectations of our major funder as we stay true to our vision of 'Bringing music and learning to life' for the children and young people of Birmingham. If you think you can help us deliver our vision, we would love to hear from you.

Martin Hall
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Sharon Bell
Chief Executive

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-power-of-music-to-change-lives-a-national-plan-for-music-education>

Background

Services For Education (SFE) is a key organisation within the educational landscape, primarily within Birmingham and increasingly further afield.

As the lead partner in the Birmingham Music Education Hub, we are one of the largest Music Hubs in the UK, delivering in over 470 schools, to over 31,000 young people each year. With 67 ensembles operating across Birmingham, there are numerous opportunities for pupils to take their learning to the next level and perform in prestigious venues such as the Birmingham Symphony Hall. At the heart of our approach, is a belief that learning an instrument or singing should be open to all. Thanks to funding from Arts Council England, participation in our ensembles is free for everyone.

Currently, our main customer base is comprised of schools and we are mindful that schools face multiple demands on limited budgets – as such we will always seek innovative funding structures for our delivery. We pride ourselves in being distinctive in our approach and holding a strong reputation for excellence in quality. Increasingly we deliver music in a range of different and specialist settings – from early years to retirement villages, our work spans the generations.

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What I enjoy about being part of the community choir, is simply the opportunity to do something that is fun and uplifting. We are a really diverse group and I love the camaraderie, the respect for one another and the development. Singing in short makes me feel grounded, happy and energised. I work in quite a pressured environment and singing is a wonderful release! Wednesdays are the highlight of my week even though I do some fabulous things most other nights too!! I think in terms of me as a person, the choir has simply given me a new love, it's like the Friday feeling on a Wednesday! When I think of choir, I smile and that says it all really.” Michelle Moore – Community Choir

Our Vision and Mission

SFE is a unique charity that uses the power of learning and of music to transform and enhance the lives of children, young people, adults, and our wider communities.

We bring learning and music to life

Our work encompasses a broad range of settings, including:

- Teaching pupils learning vocal and traditional instruments – to build technical and performance skills alongside confidence and creativity, and encourage pursuit of music-based careers
- Teaching non-traditional instruments and/or musical styles – to raise the profile of these approaches and encourage the expansion and diversification of musical experiences
- Specialist work with SEND/disadvantaged groups – to increase engagement and attainment
- Specialist work with Early Year settings – to promote a positive start to life and learning
- Our Music School – to support lifelong learning and encourage the love of music amongst young people and adults
- Working with the elderly – to promote wellbeing and positive mental health in later life

- Bespoke consultancy, advice and professional development programmes – enabling school leaders, educators and governors to raise attainment levels, and develop and implement initiatives that improve health, wellbeing, standards and outcomes to ensure for all children and young people realise their full potential academically, physically and emotionally.
- To enable schools, wider educational settings, and those organisations working with children and young people to develop safeguarding policy and practice that ensures the needs of all are recognised and met efficiently and effectively.
- Support, guidance, and development activities to those in the earliest stages of their teaching career in order to enable them to become highly skilled, leading edge practitioners.

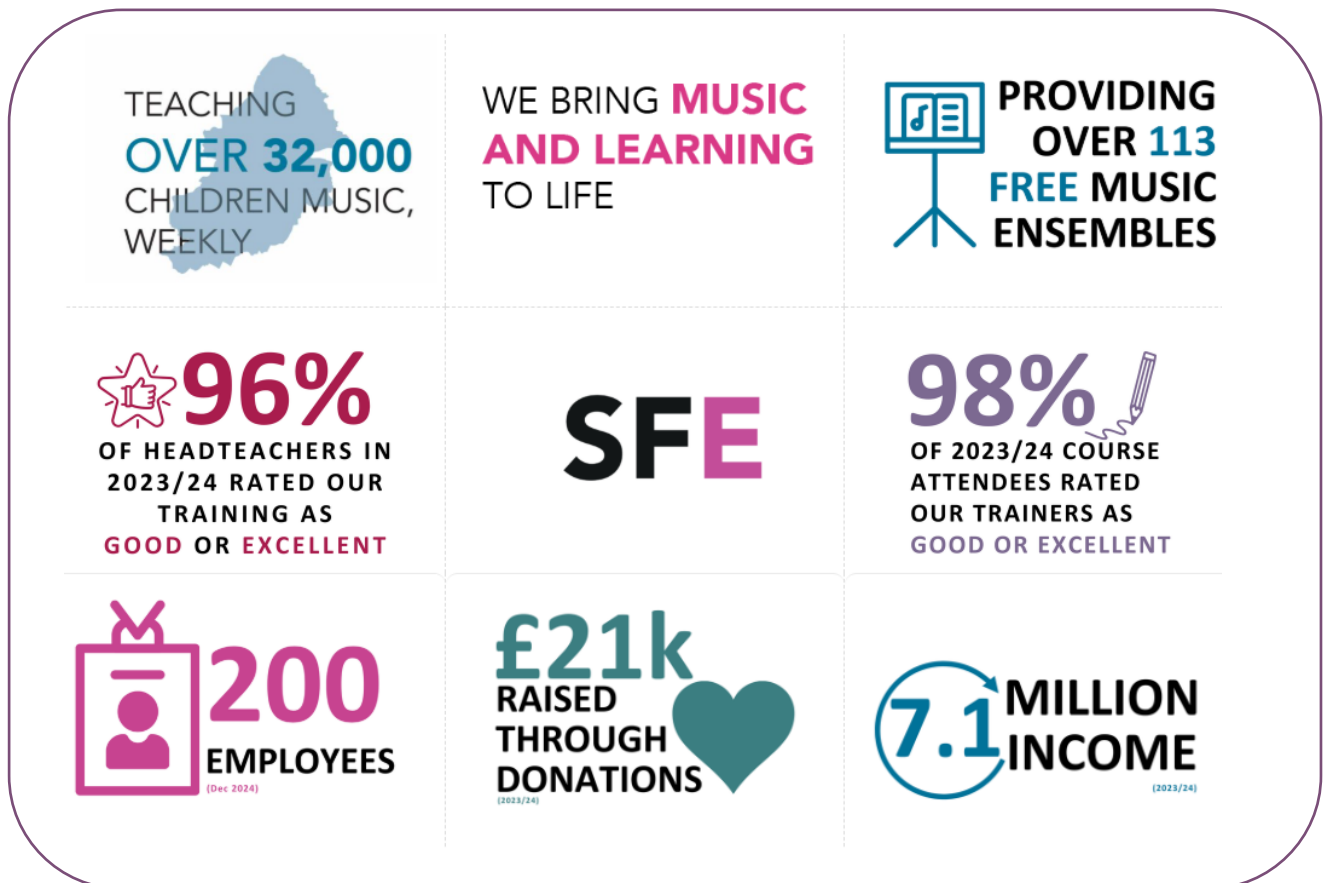
Our Values

Our values are extremely important to us as these underpin our vision and mission:



Impact and People

For over 50 years, Services For Education has been providing services which enhance the lives of the people in Birmingham and beyond. It is our focus on impact which drives our work and the graphic below shows some of our key facts and figures from this year:



Our Governance

As a charity, our executive leadership team are overseen by a Board of Trustees, the current trustees are:

Martin Hall (Chair) – 33 years in the corporate insurance broking sector until 2022, Martin now runs a consultancy which works directly with corporate clients to leverage their broker/insurer relationships. Martin sits on the board of small tech-based businesses, is Chair of Governors for a Primary School, Executive Committee Member of Lichfield & Tamworth Chamber of Commerce, an Enterprise Adviser to secondary schools in Tamworth and an Ambassador for We are Staffordshire.

David Bolton (Deputy Chair) – trained with a Birmingham accountancy practice and now works for the world's largest cash machine deployer with internationally based teams. David's three children have learned brass instruments through Services For Education.

Sarah Smith – Director of Education for the Diocese of Birmingham and a former head teacher.

Clive Stone DL – currently Clive is CEO of Professional Services company and former Chairman and CEO of a leading Midlands' catering and events company. Clive is also a Deputy Lieutenant for the West Midlands.

Joanna Cooney – who grew up in the West Midlands and is a solicitor at Irwin Mitchell. Since joining Irwin Mitchell, first as a paralegal, Joanna has worked for several years within the employment team where she developed my interest in employment law issues in the education sector. During this time she supported numerous educational clients on a range of employment issues.

Dr Peter Borg-Bartolo - is the current Chair of The Lunar Society. After a wide-ranging career in medicine, including 34-years as a general practitioner in Birmingham, he is now Senior Clinical Mentor with NHS Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (ICB) and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine.

Dr Jory Debenham - has worked in music education for more than 25 years as a private instrumental teacher, examiner and university lecturer, alongside roles in corporate communications, investor relations and government policy. She is currently Head of Special Projects in the Floods and Water Directorate at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – as well as remaining a committed private instrumental teacher.

Role Profile – Independent HLO Board Chair

Role Purpose

- To work closely with members of SFE's Senior Leadership Team and the existing Hub Board members to review the governance approach and set the direction for the current academic year and beyond
- To Chair the Hub Board, as it works alongside the SLT of SFE, to deliver the Government's National Plan for Music Education published in Summer 2022 (The Power of Music to Change Lives).
- To Chair the Hub Board in such a way that it demonstrates:
 - Objective, consistent, evidence-based decision making
 - Strong insight ensuring effective delivery
 - Independence and impartiality
 - A breadth of perspectives
 - Robust and transparent quality assurance processes

Experience sought

- You should be passionate about ensuring that all children and young people in Birmingham should be able to access high-quality music education opportunities, regardless of their background
- You will be passionate about ensuring that those opportunities are reflective of the diversity of the City in which we operate
- You will have previous experience of leading a Board (trustees, directors, governors or equivalent) and keen to bring that experience to another setting.
- You will have experience of holding teams to account for a set of agreed deliverables against a sizeable budget and bringing an appropriate level of robust challenge.

Commitment required

- We envisage that the Hub Board will meet on 4 occasions annually, and a meeting will be required with member(s) of the SFE SLT in advance of each meeting.
- We would anticipate that the majority of meetings will take place on a virtual platform (Microsoft Teams) although recognise that occasional meetings in person are beneficial to relationship building.
- Whilst attendance is not essential, there will always be an open invitation to the SFE concert programme which provides a powerful showcase of our activities.

Remuneration

- This is an unpaid role.
- Reasonable expenses may be claimed in respect of attendance at any in-person meetings.

Further information

For an informal conversation please do not hesitate to contact:

- Sharon Bell, Chief Executive, Services For Education
(sharon.bell@servicesforeducation.co.uk)
- Richard Mabbott, Head of Music Service, Services For Education
(richard.mabbott@servicesforeducation.co.uk)

The Application Process

If this sounds like the role for you, to find out more about Services For Education and our activities please visit www.servicesforeducation.co.uk.

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter to Lindsay Allen, HR Director
lindsay.allen@servicesforeducation.co.uk.

If your application is shortlisted, you will be invited to a virtual interview to discuss this further.

Services For Education

www.sfebmech.co.uk

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