

INTRO:

I am delighted to have been appointed as the Music Mark CEO. I come to Music Mark having worked for Youth Music, the Music Manifesto, the Department of Education and the Arts Council as well as quite a few of Music Mark's members and partners! However, for the past five years I have primarily been working for the British Council, working around the world to encourage other countries to find ways to incorporate singing as part of school learning. I have therefore started my time at the helm of Music Mark - my first 100 days - listening, reviewing and reflecting on the work of the organisation, its members and the wider sector. It has been interesting to observe, having been away, the changes and developments which have taken place since 2012. I know I am joining a Music Mark which is stronger and more effective than at any other time in its short history, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank (in their absence) Jem Shuttleworth and James Devaney on all they have achieved – together, of course with the trustees - to provide me with a such a firm foundation on which to grow the organisation over the next five to ten years.

In this speech, I would like to present my vision for Music Mark having completed my first 100 days (and actually today is my 100th working day with the company!). The key points from my speech will be published on our website later today and shared with all members through the weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter. I would welcome your feedback on what I say. Music Mark is only here because of you, our members. Someone recently asked me 'what does Music Mark do' and the simple answer is 'provide support and guidance as a membership organisation'! However, I hope you will allow me now to expand on that answer – or rather, answer a slightly different question: 'what will Music Mark do over the next five years?'

To start with, I would like to state what I see as the five-year aim for Music Mark

Music Mark will – on behalf of its members and the wider sector - lobby for, and champion, a government supported, high quality, music education provision for all school-aged children and young people which addresses diversity, equity and inclusion at its core.

To do this I am proposing that Music Mark will focus on the following key activities:

- We will **retain and strengthen Music Mark's membership** – with an aspiration to have within the membership **ALL** Music Education Hub leads/music services, many of the music education hub partners working locally, regionally and nationally, an increased cohort of individuals working in the sector, in addition to an established, growing network of school members who benefit from being nominated for membership by their Music Education Hub/Music Service.
- To keep existing, and recruit new, members, we must **provide benefits which are of value and a service which supports and connects**. Over the next six months, I will review the current benefits we offer, and look at ways to refine, enhance and add to these. I will also work with our existing, and potentially add new, Advice Partners who can help us to provide expertise on particular areas of governance, safeguarding and operational and risk management.
- We must continue, at the core of what we do, **support and develop the resilience of those organisations and individuals who deliver music education provision** for school-aged children and young people. It is only by doing this that collectively we can ensure music education is of a high quality and is available to all children and young people regardless of their location and/or situation.
- **Recognising the invaluable support corporate organisations** give to Music Education, I will review and enhance engagement with the many companies we work with. I want us to better recognise them as partners and look at the benefits we provide for these organisations who support Music Mark to find ways to ensure there is real

partnership value on both sides.

- In its role as the membership organisation for Music Education Hubs, music services and their workforce, partners and schools, Music Mark will continue to **take a lead on lobbying for a sustained, realistic investment in music education**. Highlighting the growing bank of research which demonstrates the value of music both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as a tool for wider social and cognitive development, we will argue for the importance of investment by schools in music education, and for the ongoing need for additional ring-fenced funding which complements and augments that investment thus ensuring a quality offer for all school-aged children and young people. This work will include taking a central role, as part of the wider music education sector, in negotiations around a new/revised National Plan for Music Education from 2020.
- As part of ensuring the credibility behind the lobbying we do, Music Mark must **do more to fulfil its role as a subject association for Music Education**. We will do this through more pro-active consultation with school teachers and the wider music education workforce, as well as through providing relevant training and support.
- It is essential that there continues to be **regular and real dialogue between Music Mark, the DfE and ACE** on behalf of our members. I know that our ongoing role in advising and supporting these two organisations in their management of the Music Education Grant (and wider music education development both in and outside the classroom) is both important to our members and recognised as valuable by those I meet with from the two organisations.
- **Partnership – cooperative, collaborative and potentially confederative – will be at the heart of what we do** as a significant organisation within the sector and as part of the Music Education Council Forum. It is essential that we present a united, or at least harmonious, voice by working together in the service of delivering a high-quality music education for children and young people together with people across the UK.
- As our official name is ‘The UK Association for Music Education – Music Mark’ I would like to **build on existing, and negotiate new, relationships with music education organisations in the other UK nations** where appropriate, relevant and within our charitable aims. There is much we can learn from each other by working in partnership, and the potential for Music Mark to provide advice, support and even services where they don’t currently exist.
- Music Mark will continue to work on **supporting specific areas of Music Education policy, governance and research** such as continuing to lead on finding a solution to the disparate situation around child licensing; providing or signposting MEH and their partners and staff to expert advice around governance, employment and management; and commissioning, and contributing to, research.
- We have already **begun a review of the training** Music Mark has provided through Rising with the Tide. My aim is that as an organisation we signpost to and/or complement and augment training available at a local, regional and national level. Part of our role must be to help all those – teachers, managers, heads of service – to have the skills to deliver a quality music education.
- At the heart of all that we do will be ensuring that we are **a voice for and have a focus on the needs and aspirations of children and young people**. It is their music education and we must never lose sight of them as the beneficiaries of all that we do! As part of that, I am keen to promote the importance of Youth Voice – learning from those members who have found meaningful ways to involve children and young people in the development of their work, and share this across the membership as well as look at how Music Mark itself can consult with and be shaped by young people.

So, in summary:

I want Music Mark to be the membership organisation that those providing a music education for school-aged children and young people can’t afford not to join because:

- We are providing invaluable support and connectivity on a local, regional and national level
- We are a highly respected strategic organisation that models the importance and value of partnership working
- We are a key voice in the sector, sharing the messages our members (and the young people they work for) believe in.
- Our passion for a high quality, well-financed music education offer for all children and young people is infectious and influential.