



Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Music hub Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028



Cambridgeshire
County Council



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Introduction

At Cambridgeshire Music Hub, we believe that education is a human right, and belongs to everybody. We endeavour to promote respect and individuality, creating a positive environment for learning characterised by equality, diversity and inclusion, affirming that all people are valued, and all outcomes and achievements are differentiated, acknowledged and celebrated.

Cambridgeshire Music Hub will implement this Inclusion Strategy starting in September 2025. The strategy has been informed by a range of sources, including Youth Voice Insight, the Hub Needs Analysis, county-wide demographic and ethnicity data, as well as insights on rural isolation and deprivation. It has also been shaped through consultation with Dr. Phil Mullen



Geography and Demographics

Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire is a predominantly agricultural, low-lying county in eastern England, consisting of five districts: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire, South Cambridgeshire, and the City of Cambridge. The area spans 1,176 square miles (3,046 square kilometres) and is characterised by significant differences in prosperity, demographics, and cultural diversity across districts.

As of the 2021 Census, Cambridgeshire's total population is 678,600, marking an 11% increase from 2011. The county's population of children and young people aged 0-19 is 156,800, accounting for 23% of the total population. The median age in Cambridgeshire is 40.5 years, with a growing proportion of residents aged 65 and over, reflecting the national trend of an aging population.

Cambridge City has the highest concentration of ethnic diversity, with 25% of its population identifying as non-White British. The second-largest ethnic group county-wide is White Other (10%), predominantly comprising residents of Eastern European origin, including Polish and Lithuanian communities.

Peterborough

Peterborough is a unitary authority in eastern England, with a land area of approximately 343 km² (133 square miles). The city is predominantly urban, with around 88% of its residents living in urban areas and 12% in rural communities.

As of the 2021 Census, Peterborough's total population is 215,700, marking a 17.5% increase from 2011. Mid-2023 estimates suggest a population of approximately 219,510. The median age in Peterborough is 36.8 years, slightly younger than the national average. The city has significant cultural and ethnic diversity, with 24.7% of the population identifying as from an ethnic minority background. The largest ethnic groups after White British are White Other (14.6%), primarily from Eastern European countries, and Asian/Asian British (14.3%), with notable Pakistani and Indian communities.

Education and Attainment

Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire is home to one of the world's leading universities, the University of Cambridge, which continues to attract global talent. However, educational outcomes for school-aged children highlight notable disparities between affluent and disadvantaged communities.

While Cambridgeshire's overall educational attainment exceeds national averages, outcomes for disadvantaged students remain significantly lower. According to the 2021 Census and Department for Education data:

Peterborough

Peterborough faces challenges in educational attainment compared to national averages. While there are examples of high-performing schools, overall performance, particularly for disadvantaged students, remains below regional and national levels.

Persistent absenteeism is a concern, especially among students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Initiatives are underway to improve educational engagement, narrow the attainment gap, and support students from diverse backgrounds.



Deprivation

Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire exhibits a stark contrast in deprivation levels between its districts. South Cambridgeshire consistently ranks among the least deprived areas nationally, while Fenland is one of the most deprived. The 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) indicates that:

- Fenland has 11 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the 20% most deprived nationally, including four LSOAs in the 10% most deprived.
- Key areas of deprivation include education, skills, and employment, with 98% of Fenland's LSOAs falling into the more deprived half of national rankings in these domains.

Child poverty remains a significant issue, with 13% of Cambridgeshire's children living in poverty. Fenland's Wisbech Waterlees ward reports the highest child poverty rate at 36.7%. Additionally, hidden pockets of deprivation exist even in affluent districts like South Cambridgeshire, highlighting the need for localised, inclusive approaches to address these disparities.

Peterborough

Peterborough demonstrates marked inequalities in deprivation across its communities. While some neighbourhoods experience relative prosperity, others face significant challenges. According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD):

- Peterborough contains 28 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the 20% most deprived nationally, with 13 of these ranking within the 10% most deprived.
- Deprivation is most acute in domains such as education, skills, and employment, where the majority of Peterborough's LSOAs fall into the more deprived half of national rankings.

Child poverty is a persistent concern. Around 23% of children in Peterborough live in poverty, with rates exceeding 40% in some inner-city wards. These figures highlight deep-rooted inequalities that affect life chances and community wellbeing. Despite areas of growth and investment, deprivation remains highly localised, requiring targeted, inclusive interventions.

Breakdown of Population of Children and Young People by Age Range – 2021 Census:

| | Cambridgeshire | | Peterborough | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Age Range | Number | % of Total Population | Number | % of Total Population |
| Age 0 to 4 | 38,097 | 6.10% | 15,300 | 7.10% |
| Age 5 to 7 | 22,201 | 3.60% | 8,900 | 4.10% |
| Age 8 to 9 | 14,177 | 2.30% | 6,000 | 2.80% |
| Age 10 to 14 | 36,245 | 5.80% | 14,100 | 6.50% |
| Age 15 | 7,660 | 1.20% | 3,000 | 1.40% |
| Age 16 to 17 | 15,020 | 2.40% | 5,900 | 2.70% |
| Age 18 to 19 | 17,620 | 2.80% | 6,100 | 2.80% |

This update reflects overall growth in the child and young population in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough consistent with the general trend of population growth in the region.

Updated Data for Disadvantaged Students in Cambridgeshire:

Disadvantaged Students Reaching the Expected Standard of Education

| Area | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | 43% |
| Peterborough | 40% |
| East of England | 49% |
| England | 53% |

Disadvantaged Students - Average Attainment 8 Score

| Area | Average Score |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Cambridgeshire | 36.2 |
| Peterborough | 35 |
| East of England | 37 |
| England | 38.5 |

Percentage of Children Eligible for Free School Meals Achieving a Good Level of Development in Early Years

| Area | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | 47% |
| Peterborough | 45% |
| East of England | 56% |
| England | 58% |

Percentage of Persistent Absentees in Special Schools

| Area | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | 33.10% |
| Peterborough | 35.00% |
| East of England | 30.00% |
| England | 29.20% |

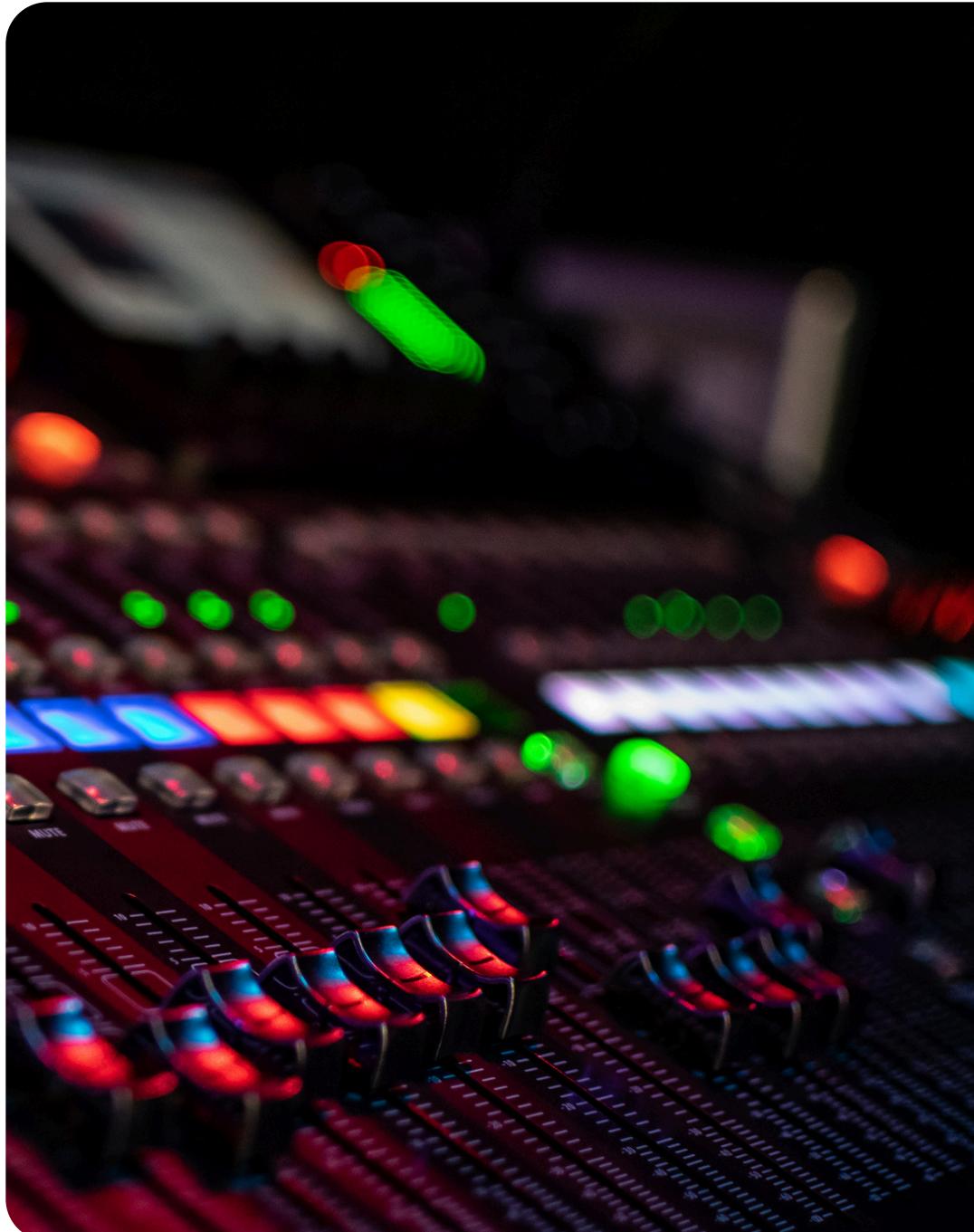
Summary

Cambridgeshire summary of Key Updates

- Disadvantaged Students Reaching Expected Standards: Slight improvement in Cambridgeshire, but still below the national average.
- Free School Meals Achieving Good Development: Cambridgeshire shows improvement, but still lags behind regional and national figures.
- Average Attainment 8 Scores: A modest increase for Cambridgeshire, but remains below both regional and national averages.
- Persistent Absenteeism: Cambridgeshire's percentage of persistent absentees in special schools has increased slightly, surpassing the regional but remaining just above the national figure.

Peterborough summary of key updates

- Disadvantaged Students Reaching Expected Standards: Peterborough remains below both regional and national averages, though there has been some recent improvement.
- Free School Meals Achieving Good Development: Peterborough continues to lag behind regional and national figures, despite incremental gains.
- Average Attainment 8 Scores: Peterborough shows a modest improvement, but remains below both the East of England and national averages.
- Persistent Absenteeism: The proportion of persistent absentees in Peterborough's special schools is above both regional and national figures, indicating a need for targeted attendance interventions.



Inclusion Strategy Themes

We will be using the themes **Unity in Diversity**, **Amplifying Voices**, and **Visible and Valued** as guiding pillars to ensure our approach to inclusion is not only aspirational but also practical and measurable. This approach prioritises clarity and structure, creating a strong foundation for actions that are focused, purposeful, and transparent. Each theme provides a lens for setting clear goals and identifying how success will be measured, embedding accountability at every stage.

The overall goal is to demonstrate inclusion through consistent practice and evidence of impact. This means showing a continued and demonstrated commitment to celebrating diversity, co development with communities, and ensuring authentic representation while delivering high quality and inspiring music education.

By aligning these themes with the Hub's wider objectives, we strengthen strategic alignment making sure that inclusion is not a separate strand but an integral part of our vision, partnerships, and delivery. These principles help us build a long term vision where every child and young person in Cambridgeshire has access to representative, empowering and quality musical experiences.

The themes serve as both our compass and our measure of progress, ensuring that our inclusion strategy is coherent, impactful and sustainable

Inclusion Strategy Themes

Unity in Diversity

Fostering a culture where difference is celebrated and collaboration across diverse groups is seen as a strength. This theme promotes cohesion, understanding, and mutual respect across Cambridgeshire's rich social landscape.

Amplifying Voices

Placing the experiences and insights of young people and marginalised communities at the heart of the Hub's work. This means co-creating programs, policies, and pathways with those we serve.

Visible and Valued

Ensuring that all children, young people, and communities see themselves reflected in the musical experiences offered by the Hub. This includes diverse representation in staff, governance, programming, and communications.

Strategic Priorities 2025 - 2028

The hub has identified thirteen strategic priorities to provide a framework for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in its work. These priorities align with three strategic inclusion themes - Visible and Valued, Amplifying Voices, and Unity in Diversity to ensure clarity, consistency, and long-term impact across all areas of work.

1. EDI is embedded across all levels of the hub's work
2. Policies, procedures, and resources actively promote equity and inclusion
3. The workforce is equipped with the skills, confidence, and resources to deliver musically inclusive practices
4. The hub is widely recognised as an actively anti-discriminatory and inclusive organisation
5. Engagement with underrepresented and marginalised groups is embedded and sustained
6. The offer for children and young people with SEND is ambitious and continually evolving
7. The hub proactively supports children and young people with SEMH needs
8. Data and lived experiences inform decision-making and drive inclusion efforts
9. A culture of long-term musical engagement and progression is embedded for all children
10. Inclusive practice is continuously monitored, evaluated, and refined
11. The workforce and governance structures reflect the diversity of the region
12. Digital innovation enhances inclusion and accessibility
13. Young people's voices shape the hub's work

Strategic Priorities 2025 - 2028

- 1. EDI is embedded across all levels of the hub's work** - from governance to delivery. Board members, senior leadership, and staff deepen their knowledge and commitment to inclusive practices.
- 2. Policies, procedures, and resources actively promote equity and inclusion** - ensuring sustainable, systemic change and long-term impact.
- 3. The workforce is equipped with the skills, confidence, and resources to deliver musically inclusive practices** - ensuring access and participation for all children and young people, particularly those facing barriers.
- 4. The hub is widely recognised as an actively anti-discriminatory and inclusive organisation** - advocating for and demonstrating the benefits of musical inclusion through meaningful engagement with schools, parents and carers, and communities.
- 5. Engagement with underrepresented and marginalised groups is embedded and sustained** - with a particular focus on addressing socio-economic disparity. This includes recognising and actively working to remove the financial, geographic, and systemic barriers, with alignment to local council priorities where appropriate.
- 6. The offer for children and young people with SEND is ambitious and continually evolving** - expanding opportunities and ensuring excellence in inclusive musical experiences.
- 7. The hub proactively supports children and young people with SEMH needs** - including those at risk of exclusion or involvement in the youth justice system, fostering long-term engagement and progression.

Strategic Priorities 2025 - 2028

- 8. Data and lived experiences inform decision-making and drive inclusion efforts** - ensuring that strategies and interventions respond to real needs and are evaluated for impact.
- 9. A culture of long-term musical engagement and progression is embedded for all children** - with targeted support for those from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 10. Inclusive practice is continuously monitored, evaluated, and refined** - using robust evaluation to inform strategy, improve quality, and ensure accountability.
- 11. The workforce and governance structures reflect the diversity of the region** - particularly ensuring representation from underrepresented communities, including those in Cambridge city.
- 12. Digital innovation enhances inclusion and accessibility** - leveraging virtual platforms to remove barriers and expand opportunities for participation. (Music tech – adaptive instruments)
- 13. Young people's voices shape the hub's work** - with an emphasis on co-creation, representation across genres, and shared decision-making.

