



Introduction to Fairbeats

Fairbeats is a music charity working with young refugees, asylum seekers, newly arrived migrants and their families. We work with community centres across south London and the families we work with come from all over the world. We bring people together for music-making and other artistic activities in a way that is creative, relaxed, dynamic and fun.

Fairbeats was founded by Catherine Carter and Jennifer Raven in 2010 and became a registered charity in 2014.

The core of our work involves delivering regular music sessions for children age 3-11 in partnership with four community centres:

- The Rainbow Club Saturday school at Action for Refugees in Lewisham
- The Love To Learn homework club at the Katherine Low Settlement in Wandsworth
- Holiday clubs at Refugee Action Kingston
- Holiday clubs at the Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers

You can find out more about our work, meet the team and hear music Fairbeats children have created on our website: www.fairbeats.co.uk

Fairbeats Mission

Our **mission** is to provide relief and respite to refugees, asylum seekers and new migrants through music. We do this by making **music** with children and their families from diverse backgrounds and different walks of life. In doing so, we aim to be an anchor in a chaotic and challenging world. We offer space and time outside the challenges of everyday existence – a meeting place and a space of refuge, where we witness each other's experiences and enjoy quality time together. We also carry out and publish **research** to find out how music-making and other artistic activities can promote integrated and supportive communities.

Fairbeats Vision

Our **vision** is for a society which embraces newly arrived children and families, and supports them to participate in its musical and cultural life. We want every child to be able to take part in music and culture, to the extent that they wish to do so.

We are an enabling organisation: we acknowledge that we are one part of a much larger mission to promote equality, fairness and freedom for all human beings, especially those who have left their countries of birth and who become refugees, asylum seekers and newly arrived migrants.

Our beliefs

- We believe that **participation in arts and culture is a basic human right**, as enshrined in Article 27 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Our participants have often had their most fundamental rights violated in their country of birth. Arriving in the United Kingdom, they face multiple challenges: language barriers, complex processes, inadequate living conditions and profound uncertainty. They find themselves in a new culture, with different legal, health and education systems, as well as new customs, practices and expectations – this can be confusing and overwhelming. By making music together, we provide respite from these challenges and opportunities to forge new relationships that support families to build lives in the UK
- We believe that **children and families are best placed to voice their needs and expectations**. We recognise that refugees, asylum seekers and newly arrived migrants are not an easily defined “community”. For this reason, we work in close consultation with our partner centres, our children and their families to better understand their needs, wishes and desires.
- We believe that making **music together is the best way that we can achieve our mission and vision**. Making music allows children to connect with one another and express themselves. As artists, musicians and engaged citizens ourselves, we believe that we have a responsibility to support the most vulnerable members of our society whether they have lived here for generations or only just arrived. We believe **all forms of music are valuable**, and strive to embrace music styles from across the world. We focus on creating new music together, drawing on the knowledge, experience and expertise of every person in the room. As a learning organisation, we are constantly evaluating our practice and collecting evidence on the role of music in making such changes.

Our **values** are creativity, consistency, flexibility, fairness and trust.

The Fairbeats programme

Fairbeats creates an inclusive and inspiring space for children and their families to make music together.

Our key **aims and objectives** are to:

1. Deliver fun, dynamic music-making sessions for newly arrived children and their families, in a safe and supportive environment.
2. Train and develop practitioners to work in community settings with newly arrived children and their families.
3. Produce thoughtful, awareness-raising research about music-making in these settings, and share this with the music sector.
4. Support children's progression to other musical and cultural activities that further their development.
5. Run an ethically principled and sustainable organisation which can successfully achieve these aims.

The Fairbeats model and creative approach involves **two main strands of work**:

1. Community centre-based programme - providing children and young people with regular access to music-making:
 - Instrumental sessions (predominantly on ukulele and fife/flute)
 - Creative sessions (songwriting, improvisation, bands)
 - One-off workshops with visiting artists and organisations such as Pumpkin Jigsaw carnival band, World Heart Beat Music Academy and Aurora Orchestra
2. Progression routes - supporting children and young people to access musical progression routes such as 1:1 lessons, music classes at clubs at other local centres/organisations, and seeing live music at London venues.

Between 2019 and 2022 we embarked on the Fairbeats Songbook project to celebrate our 10th anniversary - the project was about working with inspirational Artists, chosen by Fairbeats children, to create new music. You can hear 'Rise Up' which was created by children at Love To Learn and facilitated by rapper, singer, songwriter and producer Awate Suleiman here:

<https://fairbeats.co.uk/2020/06/09/fairbeats-playlist-threads-radio-show/>

Our programme is delivered by a team of inspirational freelance Artists who facilitate music sessions with support from Trainees and volunteers. Our Trainee programme provides past participants with the opportunity to develop their skills and confidence alongside more experienced music leaders.

A core principle of our work is youth voice and choice, so we regularly consult with Fairbeats children and families, and Artists embed voice and choice within all sessions. For the 10th anniversary Songbook project children chose the Artists and musical styles they wanted to work with to create new songs. We are also developing new young leaders programmes with young people in Lewisham and Wandsworth.

The Fairbeats ethos

We promote equality, fairness and freedom for all people. Our work is focused especially on those who have left their countries of birth and who experience displacement or migration for reasons that mean they can't return, and those who seek asylum.

We actively oppose oppression and bullying in all its forms, including racism, anti-Muslim hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, ableism, sexism and any other form of discrimination whether based on race, religion, language, age, nationality, race, gender, sex, colour, sexual orientation, disability, neurodiversity, conscience, belief, culture or birth.

So that our opposition of oppression and bullying is truly active, we:

- Foster a culture of reflectiveness and openness with the hope that anyone feels able to share experiences in the knowledge that they will be heard and action will be taken.
- Take action and call things in (a term we prefer to use rather than 'calling out') when we witness oppression or bullying.
- Work to acknowledge our own position, power and privilege as individuals.
- Continuously learn and reflect as individuals and collectively.
- Seek to take an intersectional approach to understanding, supporting and connecting with anyone we work with.

Safeguarding

Due to the nature of the communities we work with, protection of children and vulnerable adults is critical. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards within Fairbeats and with all of our partners and we regularly review the training needs of our staff. The Fairbeats team have enhanced DBS certificates and safeguarding training.

Language

We treat anyone we work with, with the utmost respect, using language that promotes self-worth and value. We will refer to people using individual names (checking how people like to be referred to), or collectively using terms like children, musicians, families or parents. We will never refer to people directly as refugees or asylum seekers or any other term that may isolate them, or make them feel othered, de-humanised or unequal. We seek to ensure that anyone we work with knows they are valued and respected.

We use an asset-based model of communication rather than a deficit-based model (i.e. we celebrate and work with people's strengths, rather than focusing on challenges or weaknesses). We never make



assumptions about circumstances, we avoid the use of labels and we avoid asking about people's backgrounds or previous experiences unless they choose to bring them up.

Culture

We aim to create a culture of openness, trust, freedom and creativity. By creating safe spaces for families to be creative and learn, we aim to be an anchor in a chaotic and challenging world. We work alongside children, young people and families collaboratively – and we emphasise 'working with' rather than 'giving or doing to'.