YOUTH MAKES MUSIC MAKES

National Foundation for Youth Music

Learning Report 2013-14

Contents

Executive summary

In 2013-14, organisations funded by Youth Music continued to deliver music-making activities that led to positive musical, personal and social outcomes for children and young people, particularly those in challenging circumstances. Qualitative analysis of the evaluation reports submitted by grantholders during this period identified continual learning and emerging trends within the non-formal music education sector in accordance with Youth Music's newly established outcomes framework. Key findings across musical, personal and social outcomes were as follows:

Musical outcomes:

• Participants have developed their musical skills across a range of different session types, demonstrated by triangulating evidence from self-assessment, music leader assessment and feedback from parents/carers/settings.

• Music production and technology is a growing field of interest for young musicians and many projects have supported this interest through their programmes of work.

• Organisations are increasingly offering more complex packages related to developing young musicians' understanding of the music industry from the perspective of professional musicians.

Personal outcomes

• Music leaders and mentors have demonstrated empathic responses that have supported intrinsic and extrinsic personal development as well as musical development.

• Intrinsic and extrinsic personal skills were often seen to develop in tandem with one another.

• Key extrinsic personal outcomes evidenced development around language, numeracy, transferrable skills and provided positive progression towards secure housing, employment, education and training.

Social outcomes

• Social development has been evidenced on both individual and group levels, with organisations noting increases in communication skills and personal relationships.

• Early years settings have demonstrated development of family relationships by measuring increased parent/carer-child bonding through music-making activity.

• Personalised musical compositions aiming to build parent/carer-child relationships have helped increase community involvement of parents and carers from diverse backgrounds.

Learning points

• Projects which built in time for reflection and discussion with all their staff were able to make improvements in understanding of pedagogy, and consequently improve the quality of music-making delivery.

• Making the distinction between musical, personal and social outcomes remains problematic for some grantholders who observe and measure progress in a more holistic manner on a case-by-case basis.

• Evidencing intrinsic outcomes has proved problematic in some instances. Several project reports implied development through their narrative rather than explicitly demonstrating facets such as self-efficacy, resilience, and empathy.

• Social outcomes relating to the broader community have proved harder to evidence.

• The Sounds of Intent Framework is beginning to be used more widely to measure musical development of participants with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, and there is emergent use in early years settings.

Introduction

Towards a musically inclusive England

Youth Music believes that true **musical inclusion** can only happen if there are opportunities for children and young people to be supported as musicians across all genres and styles, by practitioners who understand their needs and worldviews and who are equipped to help them on their individual learning journeys. We invest in projects that use a non-formal, inclusive approach, with a particular focus on children and young people whose challenging circumstances act as barriers to accessing music-making.

This report seeks to identify the learning specific to the non-formal approach adopted by projects funded by Youth Music in 2013-14.

These projects reported on two generic intended outcomes set by Youth Music:

- To improve the quality and standards of music delivery for children and young people.

- To embed learning and effective practice in host and partner organisations and share practice beyond the project.

In addition, the projects were working towards a wide range of module-specific intended outcomes, and an even wider variety of outcomes they have set themselves.

Youth Music's refreshed funding programme

In July 2014, Youth Music published a revised outcomes framework[1] to accompany our refreshed funding programme, in line with our vision for a more musically inclusive England. Informed by an internal evaluation of the modular funding approach, the refreshed programme supports a more open framework, in which organisations can set their own intended outcomes across five different outcome areas.

Three of the outcome areas focus on the participants, looking to bring about positive **musical, personal** and **social** changes for young people in challenging circumstances (while recognising the huge overlap in how these outcomes develop). The remaining two areas focus on workforce and organisational outcomes, with a view to continuing to improve the standards of music-making delivery and strengthening the sector.

Due to the complexities of the modular system, and the fact that we now have a much simpler application and evaluation process, this report is structured around the new outcomes framework. It explores the positive musical, personal and social outcomes for children and young people which have arisen as a result of taking part in high quality music-making activities,

supported by an experienced and knowledgeable workforce, and the investment and guidance of Youth Music.

Learning Report and Impact Report

Youth Music investment requires organisations to work towards intended outcomes for their young participants, with an explicit focus on personal and social development as well as musical progression, going beyond 'access' to embed a culture of musical inclusion. Some projects have a focus on strengthening the music education sector with intended outcomes for their workforce and organisations. At the end of each project, organisations submit evaluation reports giving evidence of how far they have achieved their intended outcomes. These reports form the basis of our annual impact report.

In previous years we have presented evidence of Youth Music's impact as a funder together with the impact of the projects we fund. This year, we have decided to separate these out into two documents: the Learning Report and the Impact Report.

The **Learning Report** is drawn from final evaluation reports submitted by projects which closed between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, and from milestone evaluation reports submitted by continuing projects within this period. It examines the musical, personal and social outcomes for young people, as well as methodologies used by the workforce to bring about these changes. The report also offers learning points for those working on music-making projects for young people, supported by robust research.

The **Impact Report** explores Youth Music's impact as a funder: investing in a strategic and intelligent manner to ensure projects are located in areas of greatest need; supporting the workforce (both online and offline) to deliver music-making projects of the highest quality; working in partnership to develop a stronger music education sector; and building a robust evidence base to demonstrate the value of music-making for young people. Top-level summaries of the types of outcomes being achieved by projects are included, but detailed analysis of these can be found in the Learning Report.

Referencing project reports

Each project supported by Youth Music is given a unique four digit reference number (URN). Throughout this report URNs are used instead of organisation names, in order to maintain anonymity of organisations and participants. These numbers are shown in brackets, either after direct quotes from project reports, or to indicate that an organisation gave evidence of a particular concept in their report.

Context

Youth Music is a research and evidence based charity, driving fresh thinking in the music education sector. In order to interpret and evaluate the findings from the projects we support, we feel it is essential to understand the theoretical context behind these findings, as well as conducting and commissioning new research of our own.

The key ideas and concepts affecting projects supported by Youth Music in 2013-14 are as follows:

Youth Music's non-formal pedagogic approach

Lonie (2013) highlighted that, in spite of reports of an increase in the number of opportunities for music-making and learning taking place outside of formal education (Higgins, 2012, Hallam and MacDonald, 2009), much of the existing research focuses on in-school groups and mainstream settings. Increasingly, Youth Music's portfolio has come to represent a particular pedagogic approach that lies somewhere along the continuum of formal and informal education, which can be defined as 'non-formal' music education (Wilson, 2013). The approach of the non-formal music educators or 'music leaders' is most neatly encapsulated in Youth Music's Quality Framework[2], which in turn builds on the findings of Communities of Music Education (Saunders & Welch, 2012) and the Music Education Code of Conduct (Youth Music/ Sound Sense, 2011), to define the key facets of a high quality music-making session. While the focus is on musical outcomes, many of the criteria work to support personal and social outcomes as well. Crucially it is by clearly identifying and evidencing the value of this non-formal way of working that the sector can become better placed to respond to what Saunders & Welch (2012) cite as an *"increasingly vociferous call for formal and non-formal sectors of music provision to work more collaboratively in order to create a 'universal music education'."* (Hallam and Creech, 2010:342)

The National Plan for Music Education recognised that formal music-making opportunities can have a positive impact on *"personal and social development, including increased self-reliance, confidence, self-esteem, sense of achievement and ability to relate to others."* [3] What sets non-formal approaches apart from most traditional and formal music education is that personal and social outcomes are integral to the approach, rather than a by-product:

"At the heart of non-formal pedagogy and many of the opportunities provided to young people experiencing additional challenges is a recognition of the validity of that person's voice, and developing musical mechanisms

by which to understand, amplify and validate that voice." (Lonie, 2013).

Recent research examining the extent to which the voice of young people is meaningfully represented in non-formal education policy and practice (Lonie and Dickens, forthcoming) suggests that all too often non-formal practitioners (and organisations) find themselves acting as a 'mutually-sympathetic buffer' meeting the needs of 'hard-to-reach' young people in a way that also satisfies the demands of those in charge of policy agendas. The pressure to 'get results' which satisfy external targets can often be detrimental to the quality of provision for the very young people who are the focal point of the intended provision.

Moving beyond traditional music education

Spruce (2013) criticises the ability of English music education to engage with other musical forms beyond the western art tradition in terms of repertoire, progression and pedagogy. He cites Quick & Feldman (2011) and suggests that a community must recognise there are "multiple ways of knowing" to be truly inclusive. Likewise, Burnard (2008) reminds readers to consider "cultural domination" and "non-recognition" to be characteristic elements of exclusionist educational practices.

Youth Music views all musical genres, styles and techniques as equal, recognising young people's interests and encouraging them to discover and explore new musical worlds.

'Musical ways of knowing' and self-identity

It is vital that inclusive practices take the time to engage with different musical ways of knowing in a meaningful fashion. Equipping young people with emancipatory knowledge - the knowledge which enables them to *"recognise and understand the power-relationships that exist in their world and to draw on this understanding as a means of interaction with, and fully participating in, the world"* (Spruce, 2013) – is also an essential part of development. As Burnard (2008) notes, *"a pedagogy that is open about questions, uncertainty and difficulty is more likely to make a real difference for young learners for whom most conventional approaches do not work."* This questioning and emergent, iterative approach to learning processes can be seen in many project reports.

Hargreaves *et al* (2003) suggest that the development of self-identity is an equally important impetus for music education as the advancement of musical skills (again, the musical outcomes overlap with social outcomes). Significantly, the authors

suggest that music education is as much about social-psychological processes and interactions as it is about the development of musical (and often merely performance) skills.

Music-making can help to build the psychological resources necessary for young people in challenging circumstances to cope with the issues they face, and help to preserve the equilibrium of wellbeing (Wilsdon, 2013). For example Lonie (2013) describes non-formal music participation which *"…serves as a way of raising consciousness and expressive ability, facilitating a deeper understanding amongst the young people of their own abilities."*

Developing empathy

Empathic understanding is not uncommon among practitioners working with young people in challenging circumstances. Successful engagement requires a specific skill base that is responsive to complex and nuanced need. However, development of this skill set is often overlooked by practitioners, in part because there is not an abundance of specific training opportunities. For this reason not all training is recognised as such, and much professional learning is carried out through reflective practice. Practitioners are not always aware of the profound empathy they are nurturing, and likewise they are not likely to consider the full function of empathy either in their practice, or as an outcome of young people's participation.

Cooper (2004) defines four types of empathy often at play in learning environments: fundamental, functional, profound and feigned. As Cooper states, it is natural that 1-1 situations breed the kind of profound empathic relationship that is harder to foster in a formal academic classroom setting. However, it is clear from the Youth Music Quality Framework that many aspects of non-formal pedagogy scaffold the development of fundamental empathy into profound empathy not just in 1-1 settings, but in group settings too.

The level to which practitioners are able to articulate these elements varies, with many working instinctively with a fundamental empathy that evolves into a profound empathy over time without ever analysing it. Many of the reports analysed for this year's learning report have alluded to the development of empathy either among participants or as a function of successful music leading. Further work is required to explore the concept in practice and in project reporting, although Finney (2013) provides a useful account for those looking to explore empathy in music education further.

Findings reported by Youth Music projects

Projects supported by Youth Music in 2013-14 reported a huge variety of beneficial outcomes for the children and young people with whom they work. Music-making activities were a starting point for personal and social development as well as musical progression, with these three areas often interlinking.

Rather than listing every reported outcome, we have selected key themes which were most commonly raised in project evaluation and milestone reports, illustrating these with examples from the reports.

Musical outcomes

Musical outcomes can be considered within three sub-categories, each of which focuses on a different aspect of potential musical changes an intervention could bring about:

- Developing **technical skills and abilities** – instrumental, singing, composition, improvisation, performance, technology.

- Developing **musical understanding and communication** – expression, creativity, listening, interpretation, evaluation.

- Developing **knowledge and understanding of musical worlds and roles** – experiences, musical cultures, the music business, music leading.

Developing technical skills and abilities

The variety of different session types delivered has resulted in evidence of a wide variety of different musical skills being developed.

"All music leaders have fed back that their students have improved in their ability to tackle challenging musical repertoire through the year, as evidenced by the complexity of the material they are able to bring in. This view is confirmed in feedback from students using outcome wheels and other feedback forms, which show student self-evaluation acknowledging improved confidence and ability to tackle more challenging repertoire." (3874)

In vocal projects, musical development was mapped by ability to match pitches, harmonise, and sing in parts. The progression to singing in smaller groups, duets and eventually solo was also considered evidence of the development of musical skill.

Obtaining a self-evaluation of musical skill from participants can at times, prove problematic. One project (3566) working across a number of Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) noted that in five out of 18 sessions delivered it was not possible to obtain self-evaluation from participants as *"student focus and behaviour had been challenging"*. Measurement was possible in the remaining 13 sessions, and 97% of

participants stated they felt *"better at music"* as a direct result of the session.

Developing musical understanding and communication

Participants were often able to articulate their own musical development:

"I sang the lead part in a performance […] with a band. I was able to stay in time with others and play the tambourine while singing." (3549)

Often, the more developed their musical skills, the better equipped the participant was to articulate their development:

"Today's workshop has helped me to develop my improvising, which is important as it is not something I would get the chance to do in my normal instrumental lessons." (3422)

One project (3549) noted that some participants found it challenging to differentiate between musical and personal targets at the outset, but with support over time were able to include subject-specific vocabulary which demonstrated their musical understanding. Examples of musical targets set were:

- *To work on finger placement (guitar)*

- *[To work on] production and lyric-writing of my own piece-structure, chords and some lyrics*

- *To expand my vocal range*

- *To get [DJing] to a level to perform - smooth mixing and accurate timing (3549)*

Young people learned to use relevant technical language to communicate their instrumental skills. For example, a young person learning the guitar was quoted as saying that they wanted to *"keep improving [their] skills such as the pentatonic scales and use fret board exercises"*. (3549)

In some instances where participants were at the beginning of their musical development, music leaders would provide the relevant musical vocabulary to discuss development of skills on behalf of the participants - *"[w]hat impressed me was his ability to respond to changes in tempo"* (3571) - while others highlighted that musical explorations could support the development of a musical lexicon *"performing a glissando from one end of the fingerboard to the other, learning several musical and vocabulary skills along the way"*. (3566)

Projects working with music technology often provided articulate descriptions of the musical learning, both in terms of elements relating to traditional

musical development, such as young people developing an understanding of pitch, tone, volume, rhythm and tempo through to more specific understanding of musical technology terminology (synths, matrix editors, samplers, compressors) and its numerous acronyms (DAW, MIDI, VST, XLR). More than ever, the studio has become an instrument in its own right, and the 'producer as musician' is recognised not only by the many of the organisations funded by Youth Music, but by the participants themselves.

Similarly, DJing has an accompanying vocabulary that participants must grasp as part of their musical development. Reflecting on a recent performance, one young DJ described the musical skills they had deployed:

"I was able to perform a 30 minute set in front of an audience. I used scratching, EQ'ing and effects from the Kaos pad. My mixing was confident, smooth and accurate." (3549)

For this particular participant, the initial engagement in DJing precipitated aspirations to further their musical ability by experiment by adding more live elements to their set such as *"improvisation on synths and drum machines."*

Performance opportunities gave young musicians the chance to recognise their own abilities, and to have their abilities recognised by others. At this point musical outcomes overlap with personal and social outcomes, bolstering self-efficacy (a young person's belief in themselves to succeed) and enhancing motivation. This in turn can lead to an increased sense of competence, relatedness (how a young person connects to others) and autonomy (a young person's independence and power to effect change). The creative process in writing music too, can be seen to have similar impact:

"Through creation of their own music they have been able to reflect upon their own situations and explore their own personal development and in turn plan for the future." (3462)

Developing knowledge and understanding of musical worlds and roles

"It makes me feel more inspired by music just to know that there is more than just hip-hop and pop music and all the music that I watch on TV - and there are all types of music out there that we don't get to hear." (3566)

For many participants, provision funded by Youth Music represents

the first contact they have with music-making outside an academic environment. One rurally isolated project (3132) found that for 84% of participants this was the first time they had taken part in music-making outside school. 71% of participants on another project (3807) could not recall having previously had an opportunity to write songs or music, yet consultancy with the target group before the project started indicated that almost 75% of respondents were interested in taking part in musical activities but were unaware of places in the community where they might do so.

Many non-formal projects are staffed by music leaders who are also professional musicians. Within these projects, contact with professional artists who project a strong musical identity can prove inspirational:

"All of the [international artists with whom the project collaborated] brought new skills, standards, cultures, music, performance techniques and styles to the participants. They inspired our young people to improve individually and collectively by focussing on the group performance." (3630)

In some instances, the contact with professional artists was extended.

Participants from one particular project were taken to see an artist they had worked with perform as part of an international festival. At the end of the concert, while the artist engaged with his fans, the participants gained an insight into his music career, as their course leader explained:

"*Our lot just left because they were like 'we've met him, we've spoken to him, it's cool he's working, let's go, we've got stuff to do, it's Friday night' – you know, pro basically – 'he's busy, we don't need to hassle him now'.*" (3566)

The appetite for professional and industry experience is also clear, made apparent by organisations that hosted workshops aimed at demystifying the structures of the music industry. One course (3204) set out to give participants a taste of what being a professional musician is like by introducing them to *"various genres of music, styles of playing and recording, and ways to go about promoting themselves as a musician"*. Another (3571) provided a comprehensive package that offered surgeries on production techniques, advice sessions on the industry, tips on publishing and promoting songs, along with details about tapping into online communities, approaching agents, labels and management.

Personal outcomes

Personal outcomes can be considered within two sub-categories:

• Developing **intrinsic outcomes** like emotional and psychological capabilities – communication, confidence, agency, self-efficacy, creativity, resilience, motivation, managing feelings, empathy, self-awareness. These are outcomes connected to internal satisfaction and achievement.

• Developing **extrinsic outcomes** like individual achievements and behaviours – literacy, language, numeracy, planning and problem solving, transferrable skills, knowledge of support available, work experience. These are outcomes connected to external rewards and opportunities.

Intrinsic personal skills

Projects reported improved emotional and psychological wellbeing, and identified more general developments in wellbeing (including stronger self-esteem and confidence) as a result of their involvement in music-making activity. One participant described the music-making as *"therapeutic"* stating it gave him *"an escape from his dark thoughts"* (3462).

Participants in challenging circumstances frequently suffer from low self-esteem and low self-efficacy.

As a teaching assistant at a PRU reflected *"they see themselves as having limitations"* (3566). Over the course of the music-making workshops she noted *"I think it's affected the way they see themselves […] by the end of the workshop they are like 'OK – I can do this' and that can only add a positive aspect to their development. It encourages them to discover something new about themselves – self-discovery – 'actually I can do this even though I felt I can't', which is a major thing with our students."*

At times, individuals were able to explicitly make the connection between music-making and their intrinsic personal development (*"singing helps me stop being angry"*, 3466), with setting staff affirming the connection (*"70% of volunteers agree that since being involved in music therapy, children have had less externalising behaviours"*). Participants' parents and carers also observed changes in self-efficacy, identifying *"real improvements"* in their children's lives, leading to a *"much more positive outlook"* and an increase in self-belief (3921). Increases in self-efficacy are connected to intrinsic motivation. One participant's tutor identified an improvement in *"motivation to engage in educational activities and learn new skills"*, which in turn raised *"aspirations and confidence"*, ultimately leading to extrinsic personal development

represented by the enrolment in a part-time music course at a local college (3921).

Mentoring, goal-setting and individual learning plans

Mentoring approaches traditionally focus on goal-setting for individuals, and as Deane et al (2011) note, in the case of music-based mentoring supported by Youth Music this encompasses a mixture of musical and personal goals.

Individual learning plans were incorporated in many projects, providing a way to measure progress for both evaluation purposes and also serving to engage young people in their own learning journey by helping them to *"measure their distance travelled"* (3486) over the course of the programme. Beyond this, the process of goal-setting was noted by one organisation (3921) as valuable in and of itself as it *"empowered"* the participants to *"recognise and identify what the key challenges were for themselves"* and give them the *"space and the skills to be able to start to tackle them."*

Examples of personal targets were:

- *To improve confidence*
- *To improve basic functional skills (literacy and numeracy)*

- *To cut down cannabis usage, and improve motivation and timekeeping*
- *Get onto a music-based college course afterwards and / or get some paid work/full-time job.* (3929)

The majority of mentees recognised the benefits of music-based mentoring, with one project reporting that 83% of participants believed *"access to 1-1 mentoring whereby they are supported musically and personally"* was the host organisation's greatest asset. (3579)

Mentoring projects often contributed towards an improvement in young people's attitudes and concentration in their formal education setting. While it is hard to attribute these developments wholly to a young person's experiences in music-based mentoring, staff from formal education institutions commented on changes in attitude, and in some cases recognised that *"attendance improved as what was perceived to be a direct result of attending [host organisation's] sessions."* (3475):

"Weekly mentoring sessions enabled the learners and their mentors to have regular catch up sessions giving the learners space to talk about their lives, say what was going on for them and know that they were being prioritised." (3921)

Extrinsic personal skills

Projects continued to demonstrate an ability to build the extrinsic personal skills of participants, although (as in previous years) the extent to which this can be directly attributed to music-making activities varied. Lyric writing demonstrated knowledge of rhetorical devices such as *"simile and metaphor used in poem"* and led to an understanding of *"complex rhyme schemes"* (3921). For one participant for whom English was an additional language, singing was used to aid the transition between his first language and English, *"reinforcing his language learning"* in the process (3099). Once equipped with these new skills, some participants chose to use them to resolve conflict in situations which had previously proved antagonistic, demonstrating both intrinsic and extrinsic personal development:

"They have managed to work through differences through 'battles' over microphones and dealt with conflict through positive interaction, positive role modelling and group agreements" (4182)

In early years settings, music-making projects remained closely tied to language development with many reporting positive outcomes:

"68% of underachieving pupils reached the expected level in Linking Sounds and Letters and 20% were just two points short." (3117)

The same project also reported considerable progress in phonic skills (*"blending/segmenting using digraphs and trigraphs"*) of participants, identifying that *"[m]usic does seem to have made a difference to children's understanding about the learning that was taking place."* The impact has also been recognised by parents of participants: one project (3466) reported that *"100% of parents surveyed have noticed their children have learnt new words"* as a result of the sessions. Practitioners were also well-equipped to make observations about language development, noting an *"increase in children's confidence in making more vocal sounds"*, with children who were normally shy becoming more engaged and expressive (3588). The same project responded to the concerns of the parents who were worried *"their 14 month old was not making any sounds"*. Following some intensive 1-1 work over a six week period, the parents reported they were *"a lot happier with the level of babbling that the child was now making"*.

In many cases numeracy was seen to improve hand in hand with literacy, through *"lyric writing, reading, counting bars, tempos and matrix/ linear editing"* (3132). Participants in this particular project were aware of this outcome, with the end of project survey recording that 84% of

participants felt the positive impact on their literacy and numeracy skills could be attributed to the sessions delivered by the host organisation. Numerical and mathematical skills were often displayed within production environments, where sequencing software required participants to have an understanding of how to count and arrange music, along with sampling, editing and recording. Some participants did not directly identify these skills as numerical or mathematical - *"He displayed a hidden talent for maths through using the software, not that he'd recognise it"* (3921) - but for those who did, the experience was empowering:

"I always thought I was rubbish at maths, but I can do this." (4182)

This particular participant went on to complete a Foundation Learning course.

The recorded impacts in this area ranged from improving attitudes towards education and training through to enrolling in further education music courses at all levels. Staff in academic settings also identified changes in attitudes towards education, reporting that participants had demonstrated *"great improvement in attendance and confidence in recent months"*, with *"a greater sense of self-belief"*. Some young people took on positions of

responsibility including "Form Captain" and representing their year group as part of the student council (3549). In many cases, music acted as an engagement hook, as an organisation working with young people explained:

"We have been able to add other programmes to the development of individuals once they are effectively engaged in the music programme such as Maths, English and IT skills." (3462)

Accreditation

While it is important to retain the creativity and flexibility fostered in non-formal music education, we also recognise that accreditation can act as a motivational factor for young people. Henley (2011, Henley Review[4]) notes that graded examination bodies offer a *"clearly defined and well respected progression route"*, and the National Plan for Music Education emphasised the importance of instrumental, vocal and Arts Award accreditation by recommending that it should be available at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

Youth Music funded projects have continued to use a variety of accreditation to evidence musical progress: particularly Arts Award, use of which is growing rapidly. Other

qualifications used include ASDAN, NOCN and QCF. Arts Award portfolios have helped participants reflect on their progress, understand music within the context of their broader lives, as well contributing towards college assessment.

For projects working in PRUs, accreditation can form a vital stepping stone towards engaging in education, employment or training. One project that supported 37 young people attending a PRU to obtain NOCN qualifications (4173), received *"brilliant feedback from support staff as a result of this achievement"* highlighting that for many of the participants it was *"the first time in their lives they have achieved any sort of accreditation"*. As an associated impact, support staff, parents and carers identified that the participants developed teamwork, problem-solving and timekeeping skills as a result of the provision. Similarly, another programme delivering work supporting QCF Level 1-2 (3132) identified the development of wider skills in the process such as self-assessment, peer-assessment, research and presentation skills.

It is clear that accreditation continues to serve a dual purpose in developing both musical and personal skills of participants.

Social outcomes

The Youth Music outcomes framework suggests considering social outcomes in two different ways:

• Social outcomes can be considered **from the perspective of the individual or group** in terms of developments in team working, cultural understanding, community connectedness, personal relationships, group creativity and problem-solving, communication.

• Social outcomes can be considered **from the perspective of the community or environments** in terms of use of resources (e.g. education, health care, criminal justice) community cohesion, perceived value and reputation of young people, family relationships, volunteering.

Individuals and groups

Communication was seen to improve across a variety of settings, most frequently demonstrated in group situations. For example one participant *"developed improved communication skills through his active involvement of group discussion, along with his collaborative work within the group"* (3462). For some, music-making projects provided an opportunity that enabled participants to overcome shyness, with referral partners being well-placed to observe these changes. The manager of one referral partner working with young carers said:

"I cannot put into words the huge impact the week's band building and singing made on [young carer participant]. Before the project she found it difficult to make eye contact with people, let alone join in with any activities." (3605)

Increased communication skills, along with the associated intrinsic personal development was often seen to better equip young people to bond with their peer group. One young carer was noted to have made ten new friends over the course of a week long programme. Others reported young people forming positive relationships and making friends, often across diverse groups united by similar interests. One music leader noted:

"The participants come from such different backgrounds but they all have this common interest, and they learn from each other and grow with each other. They meet up outside the [host organisation] and share music and inspirations and it's really built a support network of young people with similar interests." (3571)

In early years settings too the same effects are evident. One participant, who was described as developing a less negative view of herself, stated *"I'm good at making friends now"* (3466). The same project, working with

early years participants living with and closely affected by HIV, observed numerous positive social and intrinsic personal developments.The following extract from a case study the project submitted illustrates how the two areas can be closely linked:

"M has Global Developmental Delay. She is five years old. Previously, she was extremely difficult to understand, and would not speak to her peers, save for her older brother. She would only communicate with experienced volunteers and the Head of Children's Services. She was wary of anyone new. Since accessing [the music project], M has blossomed. She speaks to her peers and to a larger number of volunteers. She speaks louder, and sings and smiles. She doesn't need to be next to her brother at all times, as was previously the case.

"This inspiring transformation has caught the attention of all our volunteers:

• 'M's language, interaction and all round happiness seems to have noticeably improved since she began [the project].'

• 'M communicates a lot more with the adults. It used to be so hard to understand her but now we can hold a conversation.'

"We were particularly excited to hear that these huge steps in confidence and communication have been evident in M's family and school life. M's mother had this to say:

"Before she started [project], M wasn't expressing herself. But now, she's expressing herself so much more. She loves singing - she sings along with the radio at home! Even at school, she is so much more confident. Before she would only have 1:1s with adults, now she chats with friends - she comes home and tells me the names of her friends. It's great."

Communities and environments

Early years children are dependent on their parents or carers in the developmental stages, and therefore the success of early years music-making is often dependent on the extent to which parents or carers engage with their children at home. One setting (3887) identified that activities should also be planned for parents and carers, so that they could use music-making activities outside the sessions to support communication skills alongside musical skills. Equally, music-making sessions were seen to create a sense of community among carers, providing a safe space and time for carers of early years children to exchange issues, share thoughts and feelings without being judged. This

sentiment was echoed in other early years settings with parents reporting they *"felt able to be very open about their hopes for their children and the limitations of family resources or individual situations".* (3099)

Reflections from project managers supported parental engagement, with one project (3588) reporting that if they were to run the project again they would engage parents even more, as the work is unlikely to be successful without the incorporation of home environment. They concluded that it was imperative that this type of work is holistic and child-centred, bringing the home environment into play alongside other agencies including nurseries and support groups.

One project working in a diverse London borough (3990) composed personalised 'lullabies' for participants:

"When he heard his song […] he beamed with pride, gazing strongly and smiling back at his parent. His teachers report that since then he has gained confidence within the centre, along with his mother." (3990)

As the music leader highlighted in conversation with the child's mother, the song was not just for him but *"it's for you as well, to have a little memory of him as he is now."* By bringing personalised songs into family life, the

programme reported that *"significant numbers of parents reported that attachment, family relationships and behaviour had improved".* Beyond this, the parental involvement in the children's centre had increased as a result of their participation in the programme, with some becoming parent volunteers.

Learning points

The reporting and evaluation process at Youth Music is cyclical. Using our evidence base to plan our funding programme, we ask projects to set intended outcomes, and to measure and report on those outcomes. These reports are analysed to further our knowledge. This information is shared widely, helping to improve the quality of music-making delivery across the country.

In order to further increase the quality of delivery and reporting, we wanted to share some of the key learning points which have arisen from this year's analysis of the organisations Youth Music supports.

Delivery: Allowing time for reflection and discussion

Taking the time for all staff involved in projects to discuss pedagogy, context, and to reflect on their own successes and challenges can lead to improved outcomes for the young people taking part. Youth Music's Quality Framework (available on the Youth Music Network[5]) is a practical tool for supporting reflection.

In one project (3566), a project manager and facilitator with extensive experience of working with young people in challenging circumstances introduced a portfolio of professional artists into PRUs. The project manager worked closely with several PRUs to

establish a strong enough connection to bring in the artists who, while inexperienced in the settings, are motivated to learn:

"Many of the artists present articulated a sense of identity/empathy with the young people in the PRUs. Some had been excluded from school themselves, or left formal education as soon as they could. Others articulated their cultural norm as not fitting that required by the education system – being too loud/active – but having gone on to be high achievers (academically/professionally)". (3566)

In spite of this fundamental empathy the professional artists had with the participants, they initially found it difficult to ascertain what successful engagement might look like for young people in a PRU. One artist raised this in their session notes:

"There are certain things that I look for, that look like success to me. However success is relative, so it wasn't until we had finished, that [project manager] and the [PRU] staff were pointing out certain things, like to engage someone, for that amount of time, that's a big deal, or for you to even be able to get close to someone, in their personal space and have a conversation, that's a big deal. Whereas to me, it was about the amount of work they did, how well behaved they were, how much

participation there was, so the little things that I was seeing were actually big things, and I only realised that at the end when I was told." (3566)

In the absence of formal training opportunities beyond the project, the host organisation arranged for a group reflection day at the end of the project where the artists were invited to share their learning from the project. The host organisation invited a guest speaker with an extensive knowledge of working in PRUs who spoke on the subject of what success looks like in a PRU.

"He presented a pyramid diagram which described success, in this order: Staying in the room, joining in, sustaining engagement, contributing ideas, developing excellence and peer leading. Artists were surprised to learn that something so simple as staying in the room for the duration of the workshop was in fact an indicator of things going well." (3566)

The same organisation is currently delivering the next phase of work in PRUs, adopting a similar model (4371). A member of staff at one of the PRUs wrote a letter reflecting on the impact of the project:

"It has been good to see the development of the young people across the project. Some young people have grown in their willingness to share or showcase particular skills or talents. To take part, to try. Some of the sessions have seen sustained periods of music-making with the young people able to take effective leadership, direction or production decisions. Seeing some of the younger students […] show an increasing maturity and maintaining the confidence to perform and share has been very pleasing. The older pupils have been able to demonstrate leadership and maturity in terms of creating a positive and supporting work environment."

In this context it can be seen how it is necessary not only for those delivering sessions to exhibit a profound empathy for the target group, but also for other organisations and agents to be profoundly empathic in order to appreciate the impact of this non-formal approach.

Reporting: Communicating distance travelled

As a charity supporting music-making, inevitably project reports to Youth Music frequently discussed beneficial musical outcomes for their young participants. However, the extent to which projects were able to give evidence of the musical distance travelled was not consistent. Many evidenced an increase in musical skill through participant self-assessment spanning the duration of the projects, but the strongest evaluations cross-

referenced this evidence with music leader assessment.

When projects discussed musical outcomes in their evaluation reports, there was often an implicit thread of intrinsic personal development which proved more elusive to explicitly capture. Those who are familiar with the pedagogy and the target groups would be able to support the intrinsic personal development necessary to achieve the positive changes presented, but to find a way to present robust evidence of personal outcomes can prove more problematic. As noted in Youth Music's 2012-13 Impact Report:

"While many social interventions with young people report increases in confidence and self-esteem, Youth Music projects more commonly described how the process of learning to make music provided a way for young people to commit to a project and learn skills that led to task completion – resulting in a more positive self and social identity and linked to more positive behaviour." *(Youth Music, 2013)*

That is to say, more often than not, the outputs of a project were presented as implicit evidence of the intrinsic personal outcomes music-making activity can bring about. However, since the introduction of the current Youth Music funding programme in 2012, and the accompanying outcomes framework inherent in the modular approach, there has been a marked increase in the quality of reporting within the evaluation reports associated with the new programme.

It is with this approach that projects commonly support an individual's learning: the original engagement through music allows for the development of extrinsic (transferrable) personal skills, while also building intrinsic personal skills (self-efficacy, confidence) supporting engagement/ re-engagement in employment, education and training. In their external evaluation of one project funded by Youth Music, the New Economic Foundation (NEF) encapsulated the intrinsic personal development that lies behind the desire to engage, reporting a number of positive benefits for young people who *"felt they had the potential to achieve what they wanted, and suggested they felt more optimistic about their future."* (3571)

This year's reports showed that demonstrating the impact of music-making projects beyond the participants can sometimes be challenging, with many organisations not having the capacity to track broader social outcomes from the perspective of the community in depth. We would like to see projects working in partnership with other organisations

to track and provide evidence of these broader impacts, for example schools measuring improvements in engagement, or police departments measuring reductions in anti-social behaviour.

Reporting: Identifying different outcome areas

Relationships between intrinsic and extrinsic personal skills, as well as musical and social outcomes, are often tightly bound, so it is perhaps not surprising that it is often easier to share the journey of an individual encompassing all aspects of their development, than to discuss each aspect in isolation. However, it would be useful for projects to explicitly indicate the different types of outcomes for a young person when they are describing a journey. To use an example from one project: a case study identified an individual living in supported housing and involved in substance misuse (3462). In the initial stages their engagement was focused around learning to DJ (musical skill), and attendance was inconsistent. As the participant's self-efficacy increased (intrinsic personal skill) they became motivated to further their knowledge in the subject and undertook collaborations with his peer group (social skill). Additional support through the music leader, key worker and housing support staff bolstered

their sense of autonomy (intrinsic personal skill) and they moved from their previous address, away from their previous associations and substance misuse. Over time they became involved with another charity delivering DJ lessons for adults with disabilities (extrinsic personal skill, musical skill), and demonstrated an increase in empathy through their decision to volunteer at several events (intrinsic personal skill, social skill).

Similarly, development of empathic responses was demonstrated by a mentee who had a history of anti-social behaviour, robbery, possession of a knife and theft (3921). Through the positive relationships they built with their mentor and the extended team at the organisation (social skill) they began to demonstrate an increase in self-awareness, and empathy for the victims of their crimes (intrinsic personal skill). Assisted by two tutors, the young person wrote a letter of apology and began to pave the way to return the goods they had stolen (extrinsic personal skill, social skill).

Reporting: Using evaluation tools and frameworks

We encourage the use of pre-existing tools and frameworks to support project measuring, evaluation and reporting. Many of these tools, including the Youth Music Evaluation

Builder[6] (which has suggested measures for musical development, agency, attitude and behaviour, wellbeing, professional practice, early years musical development, and a host of qualitative measures) can be found on the Youth Music Network.

This year we have noticed a significant increase in projects using the Sounds of Intent Framework (Okelford et al, 2005) to evaluate the development of musical skills for participants with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEN/D). The framework focuses on the early stages of musical development, covering a range of ability including profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and autism. In addition to this, the framework is comparable with Performance Scales (P-Scales/P-Levels) which are used to evaluate the progress of SEN/D young people who have not yet reached Level 1 of the National Curriculum, allowing for transferrable measurements to be made with formal education settings.

One project (3968) evaluated the musical progression of 19 participants through the duration of their programme of work, and observed that:

"[O]ne boy showed a decline in his proactive, reactive and interactive musical ability. Two more participants showed neither improvement or deterioration in their proactive, reactive and interactive musical skills. The 16 remaining children and young people all showed progress during the project in all three areas". (3968)

Figure 2 overleaf represents the overall trends in one participant's reactive (pink), proactive (blue) and interactive (green) musical skills. For example the change in the proactive domain represents a shift from a musician who *"makes simple patterns in sound intentionally, through repetition or regularity"* to one who *"(re)creates distinctive groups of musical sounds ('motifs') and links them coherently."* The full scales are available on the Sounds of Intent website[7].

The significance of this shift is validated further by comments from the individual's teacher about how much ownership the young person had over the music they made, along with making significant steps towards meeting many items on their Individualised Education Programme (IEP).

Another organisation (3805) - involved in a more widespread implementation of the Sounds of Intent Framework - questioned participating schools about their inclination to continue to use the framework. Of the 10 respondents, seven stated 'yes', they would continue to use SOI beyond the Youth Music funded provision, two

said 'maybe' and one said 'no'. Of those in support of SOI, a teacher at one school claimed it *"made a huge difference"* to the way that they (as non-music specialists) *"plan, deliver and assess"* music activities. They noted that the staff were confident in using the framework, and their ability to identify small steps of musical progress more readily. Critics of the framework questioned the amount of time needed to carry out assessment, and felt it required *"a music specialist to understand the terminology, as well as to understand how to meet the next targets in order to progress"*. Crucially, the six music leaders from the host organisation involved in delivering the SOI framework in all settings were unanimous in their resolve to continue using it. There is also a growing interest in using the SOI Framework as an evaluation tool for early years music-making (4033).
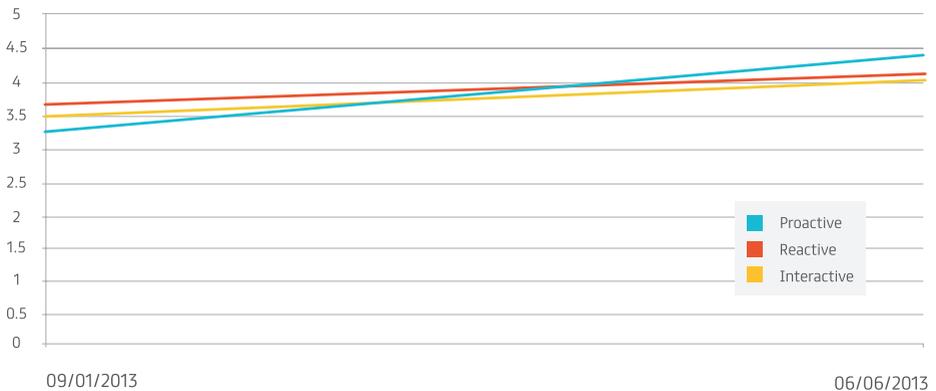

Figure 2: Graphical representation of the overall trends in reactive, proactive and interactive skills of a participant measured over a 6 month period using the Sound of Intent Framework

Conclusion

The reports analysed from the 2013-14 period continue to reinforce much of the learning from previous years. The quality of reporting continues to improve in response to the outcomes framework embedded in the application and reporting mechanisms of Youth Music's funding programme.

Non-formal music-making practice represents a specific way of working which views musical, personal and social outcomes with equal importance, turning its focus to the aspects requiring most attention at any one time for participants to progress. The overlap between these outcomes is inevitable, so it is not surprising that they are often considered in a holistic way in delivery of the projects. The ability to articulate them in isolation however, is a valuable tool that not only informs evaluation, but also supports effective reflective practice, ultimately leading to a better offer and experience for children and young people in challenging circumstances.

Musical outcomes continue to be well evidenced. The development of technical skills has been demonstrated through participant self-assessment, music leader assessment and feedback from parents/carers/setting staff. This evidence is most robust when triangulated (i.e. the views of all three groups are represented). The Sounds of Intent Framework is also emerging as a valuable tool in tracking the musical development of musicians with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, and more recently has been extended to early years settings too. Outputs such as recordings, performances or accreditation strengthen this evidence base, and can often support the development of musical understanding and communication in the process. Music technology continues to grow as an emergent field with organisations increasingly informing music production and studio technique, and offering access and insight into the music industry. Visits from professional artists have been instrumental in informing participants about music-making as a career, and have also informed learning about diverse musical cultures.

The role of profound empathy in music leader and mentor practice has also been explored, and seen to not just support musical development, but also intrinsic and extrinsic personal outcomes. Many projects continue to demonstrate an empathic understanding of their target group. Some give evidence of intrinsic personal outcomes with outputs alone, finding it harder to engage with measurements of self-efficacy, resilience and empathy. Extrinsic personal skills are often seen to develop in tandem with intrinsic personal skills, but through music-making there have been demonstrable improvements in language, numeracy, transferrable skills and positive progressions towards secure housing, employment, education and training. Youth Music will continue to support organisations to more robustly measure these effects.

Social developments have been evidenced on individual and group levels, with organisations noting increases in participants' eye contact, communication skills and personal relationships. Social developments from the perspective of community have been most strongly demonstrated through early years projects building on family relationships to enhance parent/carer-child bonding, leading to increased community involvement from parents and carers from diverse backgrounds. This is another area for future development for Youth Music and the organisations we support.

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