

Soundwaves Extra Evaluation Report July 2018

Caroline Barnes
on behalf of Take Art

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Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I introduce you to our SoundWaves Extra Evaluation Report. Over two years ago I was both honoured and privileged to accept the post of Project Manager, working alongside a passionate and dedicated Take Art Early Years team who had the drive and insight to apply for necessary funding to carry out this project.

My role in SoundWaves Extra was diverse. As well as overall management of the project, I was one of the team of Early Years Music Practitioners who facilitated the programme in the array of early years settings. This project called for me to be a voice for all involved– as advocate, lobbyist, educator and supporter. I've contributed to debate, representing all involved in the project, speaking passionately about Early Childhood Music Education, a trainer developing the knowledge and expertise of our current and future workforce, a mentor supporting practitioner reflection, a networker connecting communities of practice, a decision maker choosing where best to place projects and, of course, a practitioner on the ground, co-facilitating.

SoundWaves Extra is set against a landscape of challenging, turbulent times in both the early education and general music sector. Both the early years curriculum and the subject specific music curriculum continue to be hindered by controversies. Our education climate is increasingly focussing on core skills of literacy and numeracy. The value of early childhood musical play is still not fully understood or represented in policy frameworks. Both the early years curriculum and music curriculum are increasingly driven by policy and political agendas rather than developmentally appropriate, evidence-based practice.

SoundWaves Extra is about giving music the priority it requires. I would like to acknowledge and thank all our settings. They gave their young children the opportunity to access a good musical learning experience. All signed up to the notion that music was not going to just be a peripheral activity or a servant to the other areas of the curriculum. SoundWaves Extra believed everyone had the right to be taught music. Everyone had the right to have their music making valued on their terms.

Which brings me to my second thanks – to our early years music practitioners who supported the children to find their own individual musicality. One of their roles was to recognise and then steer good quality musical play. From this, we hoped that the early years workforce shadowing our music practitioners would gain expertise and knowledge in the value of musical play.

The support from many, varied partners has been one of the key successes of SoundWaves Extra. I would not only like to acknowledge Youth Music (the main funder of this work who not only supported us every step of the way but also encouraged us to share our work nationally) but also The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the county Music Education Hubs, ACE, music services and Early Years county advisory teams. These agencies were not merely playing lip service to our network, but genuinely worked with us to begin to understand the value of early childhood music education. Taking the time to develop collaborative partnership work with key stakeholders (who may not initially have a core remit to deliver early childhood music education) was vital to any success when building the network.

Finally, SoundWaves Extra has been an incredible team effort. Ruth Copping (Take Art Early Years Learning Coordinator) has generously given invaluable support. Caroline Barnes was much more than our evaluator reporting on this work, acting as an advisor, a listener, a conference presenter and someone who travelled with me the length and breadth of the South West to meet all our stakeholders. I would also like to acknowledge the time and support Dr Susan Young has given as a mentor to this project. As well as contributing to the report, Susan's wealth of knowledge and expertise has greatly influenced me in to the practitioner I am today.

Lastly, none of this would have been possible without the wisdom, encouragement and, quite simply, the can-do attitude of my dear colleague Gina Westbrook (Director of Early Years at Take Art). I am so very grateful to have been given the opportunity to be part of this worthwhile work.

Jane Parker, Take Art
July 2018





SoundWaves Extra in a nuthshell

Youth Music asked Take Art to evaluate the *SoundWaves Extra* network. We discovered a lot, but these are our top outcomes:

Outcome 1

As family music sessions progressed, parents spent longer periods engaging in one to one musical play with their child. This showed that they valued it.

Outcome 2

The workforce was keen to learn. 570 adults (including childminders, pre school practitioners, school teachers, music service staff, freelance music practitioners, university lecturers, students and county advisory teachers) accessed free or low cost Early Childhood Music Education professional development.

Outcome 3

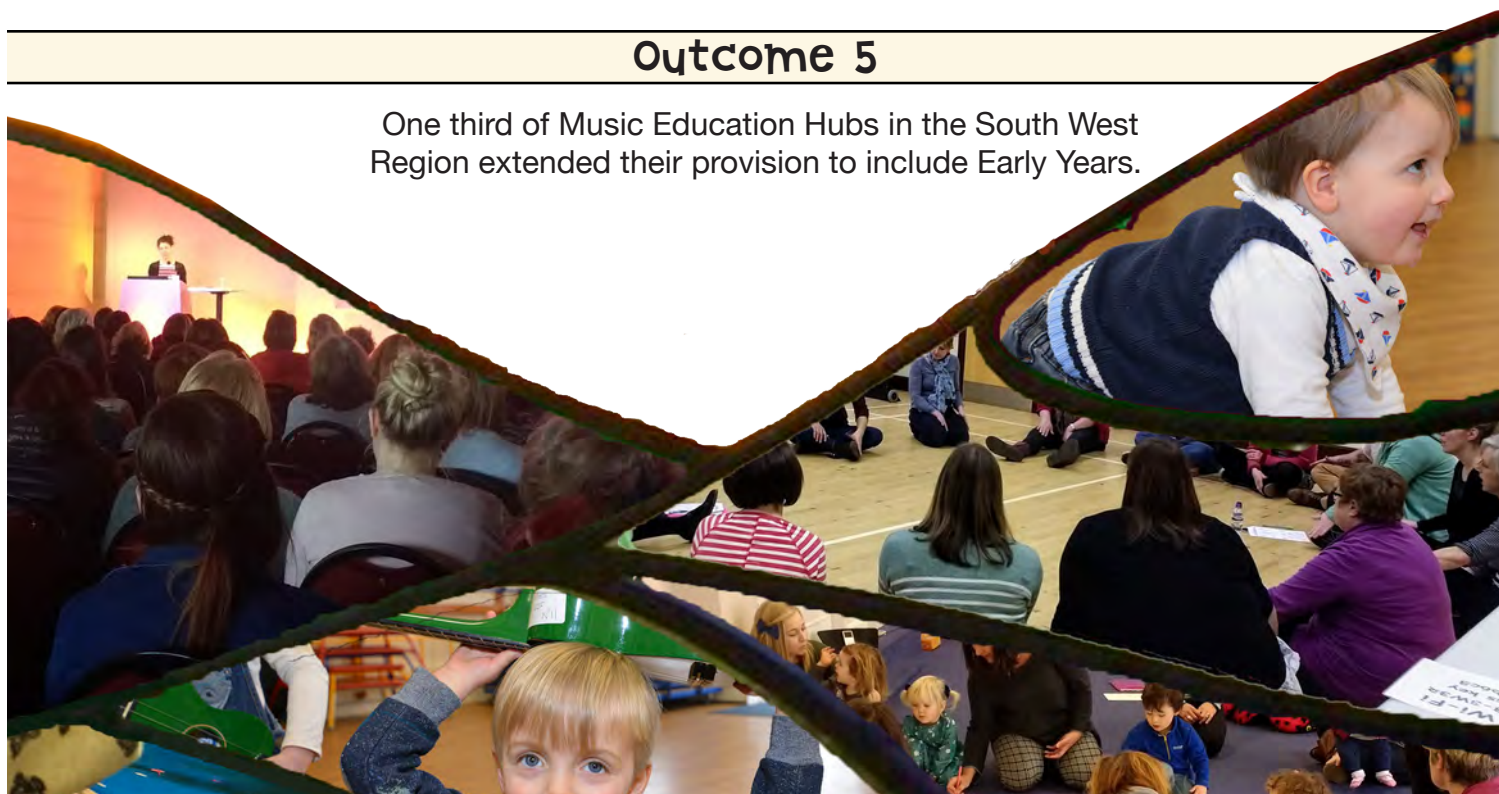
12 freelance Early Years Music Practitioners (EYPM) have benefitted from opportunities to facilitate music sessions and are confident about applying their knowledge to future work in the South West. Two EYMP also took up the bursary opportunity to study the Certificate of Music Education: Early Childhood, of which one is now about to embark on a PhD and the other will continue to be a leading practitioner in Take Art's new SoundWaves Network delivery.

Outcome 4

Practitioners reported on many occasions they noticed increased incidents of vocalisation and spoken language through participation in music sessions by young children at most risk of developmental delay.

Outcome 5

One third of Music Education Hubs in the South West Region extended their provision to include Early Years.





Overview

SoundWaves Extra is an Early Years Music Network for the South West. It has aimed is to strengthen regional Early Childhood (EC) music practice through high quality workforce development complimented by a local and varied portfolio of case study music projects with vulnerable young children.

A total of 398 children, supported by 117 members of staff, have taken part in 250 music based sessions. Delivery has been made possible through successful partnership development across Nurseries, Pre-schools, Schools, Children's Centres, Family Support Teams, Music Education Hubs (MEHs) and the Armed Forces. In addition we have worked with early years advisors, networks and researchers regionally and nationally.

Wherever possible the support of the Music Education Hubs (MEHs) has been actively encouraged. In Devon and Cornwall MEHs have been instrumental in helping to select the settings for the case studies. In other areas such as Bristol and Plymouth the advice of Music Leaders on the ground was sought helping to identify groups and strategic partnerships to collaborate with.

Each case study project developed a research question, co-constructed between the setting participants and a music leader (ML) and are available via the Take Art Website <https://takeart.org/what-we-do/early-years/case-studies>.

The sessional activity varied with each ML bringing their own child centred approach, a range of instruments, styles and activities that supported the staff, children and setting. Each worked collaboratively to explore the potential of music to scaffold learning and development in their chosen area. Within the setting a music champion was identified who became the ML's mentee, these champions gradually increased their competency and confidence as the sessions progressed until they were ready to lead sessions helping to sustain activity.

Parallel to the case study projects ran a programme of 24 professional developments events targeted at the early years workforce and music leaders. A total attendance of 570 participants attended training, seminars and conferences. Training events were developed in partnership and often hosted by the case study settings. These events offered practical skill sharing, theory and the opportunity to network amongst peers, and were often co-delivered by the ML and the music champion in the setting.

The project culminated in a Creative Conference: Small Steps Big Noise, where 160 delegates participated in workshops, seminars, performances and a strategic planning event where key partners and ML's looked at how the sector could progress in the face of challenging financial times.

The third element of our programme we has been to engage with the MEHs in the South West region, surveying all 18 of them to map and understand their perceptions of early years music activity. It has not been possible to convene regional meetings but instead we have developed more local project based partnerships with MEHs in our delivery areas.

Thinking ahead to future work, we are still shifting those beliefs and values on musical play for some. It is hoped that initial early childhood practitioner training can one day include understanding of young children's musicality. In order for our work to have a sustained impact, we must continue to engage with all involved in the education of young children regarding their conviction and belief in the value of musical play, their knowledge of how young children play musically and their early childhood music pedagogical expertise. This is essential so that all young children have the very best musical opportunities to learn and develop.

OUTCOME 1

To increase the use of music and music based dialogue between vulnerable under 5's children, parents & support staff across home & educational settings.

Indicators

1. EC setting staff, parents & children are aware of each other's musical tastes
2. EC settings regularly include appropriate music based home link activities
3. Parent and EC setting staff dialogue is improved with music and music-based achievements being seen as a valuable element

Context

Four out of the twelve case study projects directly involved parents attending weekly music sessions. The majority of projects were delivered during preschool, nursery or Children Centre sessions to which parents were less likely to attend. Often attempts were made to catch parents at the beginning or end of the day but this proved to be difficult for a number of reasons:

- Staggered starts with families arriving at different times
- Engaged parents continued to be engaged, harder to reach parents remained hard to reach in the time frame
- Lack of time, or prioritizing settling a child in at the start of the day meant parents and practitioners had a different focus
- Children excited to see parents at the end of the session and wanting their attention

1. EC setting staff, parents & children are aware of each other's musical tastes

Within the settings or groups where parents attended with their child, MLs and staff have become more aware of each other's musical tastes and this became a key link to engaging parents.

In Exeter a group led by Emma Hutchinson was attended by families from 14 different nationalities. The project was specifically targeting children with English as an additional language (EAL) who had emerging language delay. With such diversity in language the ML and Early Years worker (EYL) led with a range of musical games, familiar rhymes in English and a beautiful treasure basket of instruments from around the world. As the group gained in confidence and trust the EYL would bring folk songs in different languages, parents would translate and then enact songs often thrilled at their familiarity. This sharing and valuing of different languages and cultures became a regular part of the sessions;

"One week a shy Japanese and Turkish mother each recited a poem then explained what it meant with accompanying actions. When the group encouraged by Jayne repeated back the poem. The respective children looked animated and clearly delighted at hearing familiar words and seeing their mother 'in charge'." Flying Start

In order for practitioners to develop a deeper understanding and awareness of musical tastes MLs have been able to successfully model ideas and activities that could easily be replicated: This example from the Nursery Lead at Great Torrington Bluecoat School, Great Torrington:

“Rich listened to our story times every week and often incorporated parts of the story into the music making. For example, when we had a longer focus on the Gingerbread Man, Rich made up rhythms to go with “run, run as fast as you can” which children picked up on and joined in. They contributed animal sounds and recalled parts of the story as they played, thinking about whether the gingerbread man sounds are loud, soft, fast, slow etc. It became an improvisation that developed through the session. This also happened with the Little Red Hen, and a child’s interest in dinosaurs.”



2. EC settings regularly include appropriate music based home link activities

Very few of the settings had the capacity or culture of developing home links activities relating to music and this area has remained underdeveloped. However, informally children did continue activities and songs at home.

She makes up songs all the time” (at home).’ Parent

Where sessions directly involved parents, home links activities were much easier to introduce, these included making musical instruments, videos and singing. The Music Box in Salisbury project worked successfully with a small group of families in a relaxed and familiar Children’s Centre room:

“Although the project did not work with many families, the impact it had on regularly attending participants was considerable. They valued the time they spent together as a group, the 1:1 time with their children and the tools and ideas we gave them to try at home. They remarked that they were singing more with their children and the children themselves had increased vocabulary, vocalization and enjoyment of music. They were able to thread more musical activities into their daily lives and felt it was positive that it was so financially accessible.” Salisbury Music Box

3. Parent and EC setting staff dialogue is improved with music and music-based achievements being seen as a valuable element.

Finding the balance with particularly vulnerable groups (children and parents) was key to generating a positive dialogue. The expertise of staff including family support workers and welfare officers, whom

families knew and trusted, was essential to generating meaningful relationships with the MLs in a relatively short timeframe.

“Ahoy” based in Plymouth was a new parent and child music group, working with the wives of Military and Naval personnel. As a new group, in a new venue ML Rachel Thame worked hard at modelling child led music activity in the context of social and behavioral divides of wives of officers and wives of other ranking personnel. Music became a vehicle to share, celebrate and build social cohesion within the group:

“The modelling of supported free exploration and the encouragement of voice play became a significant development. As the weeks progressed, Mums became more actively involved in this area and less concerned with the coffee and chat break! There were also developments in the parent’s ability to guide their children in quality musical explorations with less “sing everyone Twinkle Twinkle – you’re good at that” moments, and many more shared musical interactions between and across families.”

At Badock’s Wood in Bristol ML Vicky Meadows worked with the APPLE group, a drop in session for families with children under 2, as part of her weekly visits.

“This provided the opportunity to work with parents and family support staff, sharing songs and instruments and in a relaxed way incorporating some theory: how language can develop through singing with your child, having fun through making up songs and the effect that singing with your child can have on the relationship”



Sustaining an Interest:

“We have sustained an increase in the use of song, the use of playful music making and the use of music areas in all our rooms. There has been a marked increase in staff’s willingness to enter into the musical play themselves, rather than feeling the need to record it for a learning diary” Badock’s Wood

Badock's Wood was an early case study in the project, and towards the end of the ML's time in the setting Tapestry (an online learning journal to share early years education between practitioners and parents) was just being introduced. It was felt that this type of resource would have real possibilities in the future for sharing songs and finding out more about the culture of music in children's homes.

"Music has supported the children in the setting who were achieving below the expected norms but has also impacted on the growth in confidence in those children on target within the EYFS expectations. Through sharing their musical experiences with their peers those children in the setting who lacked confidence are now able to speak in front of each other and participate in group activities. They are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings with each other and with the adults around them by vocal and musical means."

Summary

Soundwaves Extra successfully delivered against this objective particularly through the case study projects by:

- Where introduced, Home-links activities were positive tools to maintain and extend interest and engagement with parents
- Regular music making opportunities provided neutral conversation points to explore wider areas including behavior, mood and children's development with staff and adults
- Sensitive and experienced Music Leaders were competent at modelling high quality practice directly with staff, parents and children on their own terms
- Partners and staff were supportive and engaged in the process of delivery and engagement helping to create a culture of learning within their settings
- Staff brokered relationships with families and children to enable Music Leaders to enter into or join a group building trust and friendship
- Material covered at CPD events by Music Leaders and staff reinforced theories and practical examples of child led musical play which have been received positively by attendees.



OUTCOME 2

To increase knowledge, skills and understanding of staff, parents & carers as to how music can be developed to support vulnerable children in EC settings

Indicators

1. Increased opportunity to access and engage with relevant Continual Professional Development (CPD) and bursaries
2. EY staff, parents, cares more confident in recognising musicality and are likely to introduce new skills and strategies using music initiatives with children
3. Active sharing and dissemination of knowledge, resources and opportunities via the network website

1. Increased opportunity to access and engage with relevant CPD and bursaries

During the project over 400 members of staff, volunteers and parents were able to access, free or low cost training through 24 CPD sessions. In addition 170 delegates attended the Small Steps Big Noise creative conference where Soundwaves Extra was featured.

The intention behind the CPD sessions was to combine skill development and skill sharing across and between the MLs and the attendees. As part of the planning process for each of the case study project, setting leaders and practitioners were asked to actively support, and wherever possible, co-deliver the CPD sessions. In most cases there were two CPD sessions delivered per case study, one halfway through the project and the other towards the end.

Each setting was addressing a particular research question and the focus of at least one of the CPD sessions was to unpick and share the learning around the specific enquiry.

Attendance for events was high, with several reaching or exceeding anticipated numbers, the following factors influenced attendance:

- Low or no cost for the CPD events/courses meant financial barriers were reduced for attendees
- Publicised Course content and the reputation of ML seen as positive reasons to attend
- Location and course timings were key to participation
- Participants existing link to the setting

Attendees were there to learn: 95% of those responding to the feedback survey had anticipated increasing their knowledge of music and its application within the EC sector, wanting creative ideas and new ways to develop music. Specialists such as speech and language therapists or Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) were looking for specific practical tools to use music with their key children.

98% of respondents felt they had learnt new skills as part of their attendance.

When asked how practitioners are, child-minders or parents were going to introduce these new skills gained in CPD events responses included:

- Feeling confident that music could now be a real part of day to day activities in the setting
- Giving children more opportunity to create role play/ action in songs
- Being more animated during songs using expression and gesture more
- Ready to start implementing music into other subject areas
- Incorporating instruments inside and outside areas

- Wanting to go on a walk just with a box and imagination using a range of tempo, dynamics and pitch
- Facilitating more child led music making
- Being more experimental

Bursaries

Alongside the sessional CPD SoundWaves Extra had budgeted for a modest bursary scheme however, the opportunity had very limited interest and so staff looked at alternative opportunities. Through an ongoing relationship with Centre for Research in Early Childhood and Dr Susan Young it was decided to support 2 Music Leaders in the region to attend the a new course: Certificate for Music Educators: Early Childhood. A course designed to develop high-quality educators to work in early childhood music, equivalent to a Level 4 NVQ / Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE) / Higher National Certificate (HNC).

2. EC staff, parents, carers are more confident in recognising musicality and are likely to introduce new skills and strategies using music initiatives with children

As a result of attending the CPD events and working alongside MLs during session delivery, staff were able to identify areas of learning and skill development that would go on to positively effect change in their practice: These included:

- Putting a musical song in the context with outcomes, for example a song about leaves falling could extend and expand an interest or leaning goal e.g. how many leaves?
- Practical example of how to sing songs, add questions and expand exploration from one songs, object, expression, to the next
- Gaining confidence and enthusiasm to change a variety of traditional songs and rhymes
- “How we can use simple props to support inclusion and leaning” “just knowing the names of the instruments sent us on so many journeys” practitioner
- Having the confidence to now slow songs down, having pauses/gaps in songs
- Facial expression taking real notice that children are singing with their eyes and facial expressions
- “The focus on giving child time, space, ownership of song, has definitely put a different slant on my “teaching” might be less teaching now!”
- Having the confidence to be the observer, look and identify where music is happening
- Introducing musical provocations
- Increasing mirroring ideas and more non - verbal modelling

Staff respected the specific skills and energy that MLs were able to introduce to the settings. In a sector that is facing challenges over resources the opportunity to work alongside a new specialist practitioner was welcomed.

In Knowle West one of musician Bill Robert’s activities was to work with a range of practitioners each week alongside the children. The setting already had a culture of staff playing the Ukulele and each week Bill would show a different member of staff a new song (this would later be disseminated at staff meetings) *“When this happens we are noticing that the children become part of the teaching session too. They come and sit down with a ukulele and do what we do. The children are leaning how to learn as we are in the process of learning ourselves”*

In Exeter a parent and child group was developed with Flying Start Children’s Centre, Jayne, a key member of staff self-identified as the Early Years Worker for the sessions, Jayne was the first to admit she wasn’t particularly musical or played an instrument but had successfully run Rhyme and Time groups in the local library. Her appetite to learn was all that was needed. The following extract from the case study, described by the ML, illustrates how Jayne begins to learn the Ukulele:

“Jayne strummed quietly, joining as she absorbed the snippets of information offered. This was interactive skills exchange at its most sustainable. In the ‘doing’ both of us were learning. I was imparting information without a pause thereby respecting the group and the on-going activity ensured. Jayne was present as a direct participator, thus endorsing the activities to a group who knew her well, at the same time learning on the spot”

Running through the programme has been the notion that Practitioners, given the right tools, are incredibly well placed to identify and celebrate musicality in babies and children:

One attendee was motivated to attend a CPD course as she felt there wasn't enough music in her setting, she concluded that she needed to tune her observation skills: *“I now realise that there is a considerable amount of music in my setting I just need to look for it, notice it!! Value it!!”*



As part of their practice, MLs have been tasked with informally mentoring staff and vice versa. This mutual exchange of skills and knowledge has been incredibly beneficial. The ML is able to check in with staff as part of their planning time, getting up to speed on how the week has gone and any key changes or observations made by staff e.g. themes, interests, vocalization etc. that children have developed or expanded upon since the last visit. For setting staff it was an opportunity to share with the ML video observations, strategies relating to music, updates on children, staffing and feedback from parents etc. This catch up time was allocated and resourced as part of the project.

MLs felt that part of recognising musicality is about observation but also a feeling of deep connection with how a child is learning and behaving. Again modelling behaviors that take notice and promote these connections was the role of an experienced music professional:

“Music functioning as a non-verbal activity enables connection. This was actively developed within the sessions where periods of a ‘no speaking’ rule was introduced. Parents were encouraged to share and connect through playing musically with the children, not seeking to articulate verbally what is happening or offering guidance or directions. This encouraged a sense of musical connection and enabled

everyone to engage, especially pre-verbal children and shy or emotional children; it enabled mothers to develop listening and responsive parenting skills, encouraged attachment between mums and children and developed connection across the Ahoy group.

ML Rachel Thame

The likelihood of introducing a more varied music based skills and activity is obviously dependent upon the setting or groups starting point, the culture, staff experience and willingness to introduce new ways of working. For some, change became highly visible for example at St Peter's in Budleigh Salterton, music and having musical instruments available all the time is now completely embedded and as "normal" as having drawing materials available in the learning rooms.

At Frome Opportunity Nursery feedback on setting staff has included:

"Louise is more confident about being able to get instruments out and use them in adult led free play – for instance using mirroring or following a rhythm as a way of music being a positive experience and interaction rather than chaotic."

Where challenges have arisen it has been largely connected to staffing or environmental factors. The following have been observed as key factors influencing progress or change:

- The importance of senior level staff endorsing and supporting the case study through setting wide communication
- Staff being released to actively support in the planning and reflection of sessions
- Staff feeling ownership of the project from the beginning
- Staff involved in recruiting the ML
- The amount and quality of resources available
- Physical environment and noise levels effecting neighboring rooms, locality
- Existing habits and priorities recording
- Staff feeling happy, confident and inspired to participate

How might the learning be sustained?

In Devon, the opportunity for teachers and leaders to observe children has been hugely welcomed. New resources (often very low Tec) have been introduced or combined in new ways which have resulted in new reactions and behavior from the children. Complex connections are starting to be made – in the case of St Peter's, Devon, drawing combined with music have resulted in children experimenting with order and notes, recreating these in their large scale floor drawings

"As a Preschool/Nursery we have changed our provision quite dramatically after reflection on the project and the findings from the project. We are now doing 'in the moment' planning – so no structured planning – all driven from the children and their creativity with us finding 'teachable moments' alongside. We also have an empty table policy – the children have clear resources around the room (all spaces have mark making opportunities/reading opportunities/musical opportunities) that they choose to collect and bring to an open space and return when they are finished. They can therefore bring anything they like together to create what they want to achieve. From this we then add a provocation each week or add a resource to support interests" St Peter's Primary, Devon

"What was new for me in this project was realizing the value of practitioners learning instrumental skills around the children, and seeing for the first time a setting where music has become a natural and joyous thing for staff. My parting memory as I left for the last time was seeing a practitioner in the garden singing with her ukulele to a child on the climbing frame, her head touching his as she sang what he wanted" ML Bill Roberts, Knowle West

For parent groups it has been important to provide very practical opportunities for skill development and the Ukulele has been a popular instrument for this.

- In Knowle West the ML regularly introduced the Ukulele to parent during the sessions, with parents taking the instrument home for a week
- At Exeter's Flying start group 12 parents participated in a Ukulele workshop (the instruments lent by Babcock Music Service) whilst the children played with smaller instruments
- An expansion of adults Ukulele lessons for parents and children at both Flying Start Children's Centre and Chestnut Children's Centre, both in Exeter
- New purchases of Ukuleles by staff and parents for themselves but also as birthday gifts for children
- *'The adult led activity will replace their normal Letters and Sounds session, as the setting feel the children benefit in a similar way from our musical activities.'*

3. Active sharing and dissemination of knowledge, resources and opportunities via the network website

CPD opportunities have been shared through the network utilising Take Art's Twitter, Facebook, flyers, email marketing and website pages. By working in partnership with MEHs, Local Authority Teams, Schools and Early Years networks the project has been able to reach a wide audience of potential attendees across the Early Years Sector.

By locating CPD sessions within the case study settings there has been a strong motivation for practitioners to attend. Each CPD session included a resource pack which was disseminated during the session and is available through the Take Art Website alongside the collection of Case Studies.

Network members and attendees include a wider range of EY staff including child-minders, practitioners, teachers, students, SENCOs, Play workers, Freelance Arts practitioners, Speech and language Therapists and Managers.

Attendance at the Small Steps Big Noise Conference in March 2018 included 32% Early Childhood workforce, 22% musicians or other arts professionals and 9% Reception/KS1 staff.



Summary

The CPD offer we were able to make successfully reached a large and varied part of the EC workforce. By locating sessions in communities where the case studies were taking place we were able to capitalise on an interested audience who had some awareness of music development. Utilising our partners' networks we were able to effectively market each event from our Somerset base.

On the job mentoring, where practitioners have worked alongside MLs has been particularly successful. Staff explored how to make music visible, encouraging key workers to capture the music making and the inherent musicality of young children through video. These tools have now changed practice, with staff citing increased confidence and ability to explore and demonstrate music progression. The opportunity to test, reflect and change practice has developed a sense of enquiry and experimentation influencing both the individual and the whole setting.

Attendance at the Small Steps Big Noise conference exceeded expectation and we believe this was down the very few existing opportunities regional to celebrate and explore EC creativity. Overall feedback suggested that 95% of delegates felt the conference to be good or excellent in relation to their practice.

The bursary opportunity was perhaps the least successful element of this outcome and we continue to look at how we can best support a freelance workforce. We will continue to monitor outcomes from the two sponsored students attending the Certificate of Music Educators: Early Childhood.

OUTCOME 3

To develop Music Leaders knowledge and pedagogical practice in effective EC music delivery

Indicators

1. Music Leaders attendance at CPD
2. Application of CPD in individual's practice
3. Increased opportunities for ML mentees to shadow good practice in the workplace

1. Music Leaders attendance at CPD

MLs were invited to attend all CPD training events delivered through Soundwaves Extra (each case study delivered 2 events focused on their individual research question or cohort) however, few MLs took up the offer. This is largely due to finance (all the MLs employed on the project were freelance) but also Geography – an event taking place in Cornwall is geographically a long way from Salisbury. Where MLs did attend this tended to be in “on their patch”.

The bursary opportunity had very limited interest and so staff looked at alternative opportunities. Through an ongoing relationship with The Centre for Research in Early Childhood and Dr Susan Young it was decided to support 2 Music Leaders in the region to attend the a new course: Certificate in Music Education. The course is ongoing and we continue to monitor outcomes.

2. Application of CPD in individual's practice

Feedback from Music Leaders attending Soundwaves and other training events has indicated that individuals have benefited from opportunities and are confident about applying their knowledge to future work in the South West:

- Music Leaders have co-planned and co-delivered with a range of practitioners sharing a variety of pedagogical approaches Reggio Emilia Approach, Kodaly approach, in the moment planning (ITM planning)
- Music Leaders have increased their knowledge and experience of planning teaching modules relating to understanding children's musical learning, planning, facilitating and evaluating children's learning, reflective practice and professional development, promoting positive behaviour and equality, diversity and inclusion in early childhood music education.
- Music Leaders are now ready to apply the Sounds of Intent Framework training to Early Childhood music delivery
- Through one Music Leaders role as a mentor on the CREC Early Childhood Music Certificate programme, the opportunity to work alongside key professionals such as (where she is one) Dr Susan Young, Nicola Burke (Tri-Borough Music Hub) and Zoe Greenhalgh (Edge Hill Uni / Kodaly practitioner) has been particularly beneficial

Beyond the Soundwaves Extra CPD events, we have encouraged MLs to develop their own practice by attending conferences and events nationally. These have included attendance at MERYC Conference, Music Education Council Early Years Working Party and Music Mark. ML's Membership of London Early Years Music Network (LEYMN) has enabled Music Leaders to engage with wider practice and research, all of which has informed the development of Soundwaves Extra in a national context. Participation in national debate and dissemination of research has meant individuals now feel part of a united and coherent voice advocating the importance of multi-agency working.

3. Increased opportunities for ML mentees to shadow good practice in the workplace

Each case study has provided valuable opportunities for practitioners, volunteers and partner agency staff to be mentored by the Music Leaders as part of the weekly sessions. Identified and included at the planning stage, mentees have been encouraged to collaborate with the Music Leaders gradually taking on more responsibility and leadership as the sessions progressed.

“So getting the practitioners to tune in to the music that is already happening in their setting - capturing it - and discussing it. Taking the pressure off of the practitioners’ hang-ups about their own musicality”

Music Leaders Jane Parker

Feedback from mentees has included:

- Increased confidence around using more and regular music making opportunities
- Wider awareness of the impact and role of music has in EC development
- Experiencing more enjoyment and spontaneity with music and song
- Desire to learn more musical approaches

In a sector where opportunities for sustained CPD are limited, the mentoring approach has promoted a more embedded, practical way of learning for practitioners. The opportunity to test, reflect and change practice has developed a sense of enquiry and experimentation influencing both the individual and the whole setting.

Summary

The programming of CPD events at a County level worked particularly well for local practitioners but less so for our Music Leader workforce who were based across the region.

We have had particular success with one ML who was already motivated and networked, the project has been flexible and responsive enough to support this individual and has hugely benefitted the project in both informing us of national practice and disseminating the work of the South West.

ML's have been able to gain confidence, skills and experience in a range of pedagogy and theory as a result of the close working relationships with early years staff and attendance CPD events

ML's feel part of a regional network, playing a key role in how the sector moves forward in quality music delivery

OUTCOME 4

To develop communication and language skills in children at risk of developmental delay through participation in structured music activity.
Increased opportunities for ML mentees to shadow good practice in the workplace

Indicators

1. Increased incidents of vocalisation, spoken language and sound through participation in sessions by children at most risk of developmental delay
2. Increased range of vocabulary and rhythm through introduction of a more varied music programme
3. Increased ability of staff and parents to interpret early sounds/language as part of children's development

1. Increased incidents of vocalisation, spoken language and sound through participation in sessions by children at most risk of developmental delay

Changes in confidence associated with vocalisation and language have been articulated in all the case studies with staff observing how children, who are often shy, begin to interact and join a group that might have seemed very daunting on week 1.

At Great Torrington Blue coat School Nursery, the lead teacher felt the music activity connected so strongly with one girl that *"She literally found her voice over the weeks, and became more active in her participation and ability to lead what could happen"*.

Observations from Music Leaders, practitioners and parents have included:

- Children making visible and audible choices about songs they want to sing and hear
- Extending their 'normal' amount of singing, dancing and music making for sustained periods
- Boisterous boys much calmer, gentler towards each other, communicating verbally rather than through gesture
- Quieter boys demonstrating more vocalization
- Children using more language and gesture to connect with children beyond their regular friendship groups
- Parents and grandparent interested and wanting to discuss the relationship between singing and language development

"X also participated in the musical conversations and small group work, and began to take notice of what other children were doing, responding to them rather than trying to lead all the time. He also liked "conducting", deciding how loud or fast sounds were and doing the stop/go directing. Over the weeks I felt A. could tolerate taking direction better and was more prepared to take direction from others. His development of English was also helped by recalling, acting out and improvising musically, the core tales we had been working on." Setting leader Great Torrington

Two of the case studies, Piccolo's in St Austell and Frome Opportunity Nursery, focused on children with EAL needs. The following are two examples of how music based activity impacted not only on language development but on broader socialization leading to increased communication: *"We are hearing children singing who haven't sung before"* Music Leader



'I spent some time with Mario (EAL) who has hardly any English and taps your arm for attention but also whistles. He was looking at a picture of a snake. I ran my finger over the snake shape whilst making a "ssss" sound, he copied me. Then he began to count objects in the picture, "1, 2". I took some pens out of the pot on the table where we were sitting and counted them "1 -5" singing each number and rising in pitch from 1 – 5. Mario began to sing with me. We were joined by Rosie who joined in the singing too. The children then took turns to singing 1 – 5, they also increased their pitch slightly as they counted. I then initiated singing, "I am Ann, hello Mario..." this encouraged the children to sing their names, then we changed the lyric to "I am Ann, I am Mario, I am Rosie" as we took turns to sing our names. The children gave each other eye contact as they listened to each others turn.' Piccallos

In Frome Opportunity Nursery the powerful nature of sustained, very patient music activity could be seen to support children who were new to the setting, shy, tearful and lacking in confidence. The case study follows four unique children and how the Balafon and the ML helped them with a range of social communication skills including:

- Social reciprocity
- Social interaction
- Listening and turn taking
- Mirroring and reacting
- Organising and giving instructions
- Play together

"The instruments gave him a fun and physical medium to interact, first with Joanna and his key worker and later with another child and exchange ideas and dialogue. Joanna felt that the interplay with instruments gave him a means of non-verbal communications, which was clearly understood – the copying and mirroring of rhythms and sounds being like a conversation. This led to trust, confidence and then very sustained eye contact and a sense of connection and communication. During the last session his key worker commented that today had been the first time J had interacted with any of the other children" Frome Opportunity Nursery

2. Increased range of vocabulary and rhythm through introduction of a more varied music programme

Handling and exploring the different instruments that Music Leaders came with (as well as the collections the settings had) naturally meant an exploration of new words and vocabulary but also ways of describing, imitating or extending the strange and wonderful noises they could make from the Caxixi, Mini djembe or the Balafon.

Music Leaders came with their own style and repertoire, each described more fully in the individual case studies. The following indicates the range and variety of music based activities that have been introduced by Music Leaders to settings and groups:

Free play, musical instrument exploration Modelling new songs Composing Changing lyrics, improvising lyrics Musical games using props and percussion Spontaneous exploration Handling, sharing , taking turns Improvising to child initiated sounds, songs Voice play, experimenting with tempo, pitch and volume Conducting	Musical provocations, call and response Circle time ideas, new songs and rounds Coordinating action and word songs Teaching staff movement songs Re-animating familiar songs and rhymes Drawing sounds Musical conversations Using microphones to record, layer and play in a loop Animating storytelling time
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All the Music Leaders combined musical instruments and props as part of their activities. These ranged from puppets, large pieces of lycra, balls, scarves, boxes and toys to mark making equipment, scrap-store finds and vegetables.

The majority of Music Leaders worked with easily identifiable musical instruments but in the case of digital artist Richard Tomlinson at St Peter's he wanted to utilize his background as a creative technologist to introduce more technology to create music.

"Digital media and early years creativity is an unusual combination. There is a perception that digital media involves processing information and staring at a screen whereas, by contrast, early years creativity concerns developing ideas 'in the moment' and is tactile and sensory." Richard Tomlinson

But with an aim to avoid computers, and encourage active as opposed to passive engagement Richard encouraged the children to explore how they could use everyday objects to create sound, to become inventors themselves.

Exploring more technology based words such as:

"attach me to the computer", "join me up", "plug me in" and "I'm an inventor"

Simple familiar words such as food, shop, carrot, dinner and water were reinforced and 'scientist' 'inventor' 'magician' 'aubergine' 'connect' and 'circuit' were introduced.

By being encouraged to see themselves as inventors and scientists the children were able to make connections between familiar objects, play and narrative to experiment with noise and sound. Children demonstrated high levels of organizational skills, attaching different wires to different objects to create a range of sounds, they worked collaboratively and described their findings eloquently:

"I'm building a town with a river through it, the water will make the connection", "here's a noisy pie", "the bigger carrots will make a bigger noise".

Noise and sounds were everywhere, encouraging staff and children to experiment with noisy water buckets to noisy paintings process. This process encouraged children explore the connections between maths, systems and science.



3. Increased ability of staff and parents to interpret early sounds/language as part of children's development

Through the music making sessions we have found staff and parents are tuning into children's behavior more closely, they have been given the time and focus to observe how children are playing with and reacting to sound and music:

- Staff have noted how children are becoming more confident at vocalizing and what that might mean in a given situation
- Staff are becoming more spontaneous music makers themselves, mirroring children's behavior
- Children being more respectful of the instruments having experimented with different beaters and being shown how different sounds are created

"Harvey enjoyed the warm down. I played a jazz saxophone ballad from the cd. He sat with his eyes closed for the whole piece and had a huge smile on his face. He was totally absorbed in the music and seemed very relaxed and content. A real "wow" moment for me as he is a child that doesn't often join in and lacks confidence." Piccalos

Music Leaders were able to bring new ideas and ways of exploring music and sound, actively combining media and creative ideas which staff could learn alongside the children. Music Leaders avoided compartmentalized areas of learning and music, movement, drawing, play, storytelling all merged during sessions at both St Peter's and Great Torrington Bluecoat Nursery

Children in one setting were asked to explore and see if they could draw and make marks to represent the sounds or instruments – an activity that generated lots of listening, thinking and talking about the quality of sounds - long sounds, low sounds, volume, pitch etc.

"The music can grow, like your tuba. When you're in a bigger space the music can grow" child attending St Peters, Devon

"When we were sticking our heads in the tuba we only heard the first bit (of sound) but when we were outside we could hear the last bit" child attending St Peters, Devon

"We planned an outdoors session where we hung up metal tubes and had various pipes, buckets etc. - non-instrumental found objects to make sounds with. Children were interested in a wind up musical toy which they put close to their ears. Then they played it at one end of a big tube with someone else listening at the other end. This evolved into singing and calling to each other through the tubes, experimenting with vocal sounds." Great Torrington Bluecoat Nursery

Music and narrative:

"H2 then brings the doll's house next to the xylophone and proceeds to animate the characters in the house along to the music. The mixing of narrative and music seems to give both the story telling and the music more meaning and context. The music supports the storytelling and the story telling starts to define how the music should be made." St Peter's

Summary

The planning, delivery and reflective time built into session delivery has been a particularly valuable structure. It has enabled staff on the ground to observe and learn about supporting child led practice in a very immediate way. By encouraging video diaries and discussion on how music can impact on individual children, practitioners have become more skilled and dynamic in their practice.

The opportunity to keep the whole setting staff engaged with the sessions (even if they weren't directly involved) came through the CPD events. By timing this training towards the middle of a 12 or 20 week block and then again towards the end of the block staff were able to keep engaged and were clearer as to what the Music Leaders role was and what the project was exploring.

Where this has been less successful has been in settings with less engagement and therefore investment in the sessions. On one occasion, (due to capacity and ratios) staff were unable to be released for the reflective element of delivery - as a result there was less collaboration and shared delivery between setting staff and the Music Leader. In these situations it can quickly progress to the visiting musician model which is what we were trying to avoid.

OUTCOME 5:

To significantly raise the profile of EY practice within the region's Music Hubs and agencies

Indicators

1. Increased engagement by Regional Music Ed Hubs and other strategic agencies
2. Greater connectivity and raised awareness of the potential of EC music across the EYFS
3. Increased dissemination of information, PR for project and other initiatives via the Network

1. Has engagement by music education hubs increased?

Contextual information

The SW region, from Cornwall to Hampshire and Gloucestershire has 18 MEHs.

- Each hub began from a different starting point in terms of its activity and provision for Early Childhood Music
- Each hub is different in size, the number of schools/settings it serves and the size of its grant. Some SW hubs serve large geographical areas such as Devon, some serve relatively small areas such as Torbay.
- Each hub has a different model and works differently with partners

An initial questionnaire sent to each MEH as the start of the project gathered information about current activity.

At the start of the Soundwaves project the information was analysed to arrive at three groups:

6/18 EXISTING PROVIDERS: These hubs had some form of existing Early Childhood Music (ECM) provision. In some cases this provision connected with schools (reception or school-based nursery classes), in some cases this provision connected with the EYFS support service and served non-school settings as well. The distinction is an important one to identify in future but the questionnaire did not ask this question.

7/18 RESISTANT RESPONDERS: These hubs stated that their funding and remit did not permit early years work and that they did not have resources, funding or staff capacity to consider developing ECM provision. They typically gave 'short shrift' answers.

4/18 POSITIVE RESPONDERS: These hubs expressed interest in developing their work to include ECM, and maybe had some initial starting points that they described.

1/18 hub did not return the questionnaire.

NB: Some MEHs mentioned ECM projects that they had run in the past. Unless they were part of the current academic year provision, and/or ongoing, I did not include them.

SOME FINDINGS FROM THE FIRST SURVEY

- It is not always clear from responses whether EC delivery is by Music Hub staff, or through Music Hub partners and their staff.
- Funding is a major issue, many hubs citing the ACE funding as only covering the 5.18 years age range. Occasionally their school-based curriculum work includes R class (4 year olds), and very occasionally school-based nursery classes (3 year olds).
- Some smaller hubs – e.g. Swindon, NE Somerset, have established and comprehensive programmes. The 'reach' of their areas may make this more achievable. Hubs covering larger areas seem to be daunted by the number of early childhood settings.

- Hampshire *might* provide a model for hubs that cover larger areas. It offers a model of partnership working with the EYFS team and draws on alternative sources of funding.
- Where there is an established programme, it seems to then gather its own momentum. Funding is not being drawn from the Hub funding alone, however, but from additional sources.
- Partnerships with LA or similar staff to provide some musical input in Conference days etc. seems to be fruitful in some areas. However, these are mostly small contributions to one-off training days/conferences and not sustained programmes.
- The focus on instrumental provision in schools draws the MEHs into thinking along parallel lines for early childhood – i.e. providing instruments for early childhood settings (e.g. Devon). However, this provision is often not the best starting point to build ECM. MEH staff very rarely have background knowledge of ECM practice. If receptive, they will bring in specialist advice. However, experience in the South West, is that receptivity is not assured with the ‘resistant responders’ being the most difficult to access.

At the end of the project:

6/18 EXISTING PROVIDERS – The hubs who indicated at the start of the project that some ECM was ‘happening’ in their area were not targeted

5/18 NON-ENGAGERS – The hubs that did not engage. In some cases because Take Art decided, strategically, to focus on depth rather than breadth and did not approach the hubs, in other cases the hubs did not respond to overtures.

6/18 ENGAGERS – The hubs that engaged with the SoundWaves project, at different levels of engagement varying from small, emerging interest to substantial developments in a number of different areas within their hub. Clearly the varying situations, structures and budgets of the MEH influence how they can engage.

It is very important to note that the group of ENGAGERS included the 4 POSITIVE RESPONDERS to the initial survey and 2 RESISTANT REPONDERS.

Why and How do music hubs engage – or not?

This assessment of engagement is straightforward to assess and present. However an evaluative model of do and review advocated by Youth Music should explore not just the what but the why. Understanding the ‘why’ and ‘how’ can inform future work.

Issues

No Funding or Staff

The requirement to fund music 5-18 and to report is clearly the major obstacle to developing pre-5 music in hubs. The accounting and monitoring process only records activity with schools. Until the Music Education Hubs are required to support provision for under 5s, affecting change will always be an uphill struggle.

However, where hubs had well established early childhood music work prior to the conversion to hubs, this had often continued (e.g. BANES, Hampshire), particularly when this is well connected with EYFS teams. It should be noted that while the setting up of hubs in line with the NPFME has not deterred well-established provision from continuing, it has not led to the initiation and support of new programmes of work. It is noticeable that the most ‘settled’ hubs with capacity can now be encouraged to expand their reach to early childhood (e.g. Devon). Those that are in difficulties (e.g. Isle of Wight) stated clearly that they had no capacity.



Geographic

The SW area is very large. Some hubs on the regional margins were either not targeted or did not engage (e.g. Portsmouth, Isle of Wight) or some form of self-standing project structure was initiated within their region (e.g. Cornwall and Wilts). Setting up self-standing 'within hub' project structures carries greater risks unless the devolved project team have understood and committed to the aims of the work.

Finding the right person and right setting

Identifying the key hub person to contact, visit and liaise with requires time and persistence. Visits in person often require long journeys but building good relationships is often a key to success. There is therefore a good 'pay off' for the time, effort and resources of travelling for face-to-face meetings. However the time taken by this 'invisible' and often frustratingly unproductive layer of work should not be underestimated.

Motivators and prompters

In the absence of requirements and funding for Under 5s (external motivators), hub leaders had to have individual and personal motivations for developing ECM work (internal motivators). These motivations varied widely but generally linked with some kind of personal experience of prior ECM work, direct experience of or interest in small children, or prompters from someone with influence. Many espoused the benefits of starting early with music in their initial questionnaire, but this appears to be 'lip service' rather than a genuine motivator. There may be an element of 'looking over shoulders' at what other music hubs are doing and the possibility that momentum may gather in a region by work taking place in beacon centres of excellence.

Understanding of the Early Childhood sector and Early Childhood practice

The EC sector is very complex. There are many different forms of provision and it covers the birth to five age phase. Hubs are required to work with schools and so EYFS provision is confined to the 4-5s in reception class, or occasionally 3-year-olds in a school-based nursery/preschool class. For hubs to expand their reach to non-school based provision is a tall order because they do not have knowledge of the sector or settings in their region. A very few do this by working in partnership with the EYFS teams or through partners (e.g. family service team) who are engaging with early years settings.

In addition, the instrumental and ensemble teaching focus of hubs means that ECM is seen as 'merely' preparation for the real business of learning an instrument, and not as an intrinsic music learning age phase in its own right. The particular characteristics of ECM practice are not well understood unless there is a key member of the hub staff with this expertise (e.g. Swindon).

Hubs are required to provide instruments for children to use. In some cases this may translate directly into providing instrumental resources for early childhood settings. However, resource provision is the least effective approach to improving practice. The most effective approach is longer term mentoring by experienced support staff.

Learning for the Future

- Established and larger hubs are more likely to have the capacity and funds to develop ECM provision. [This does not ensure equal opportunities for children however.]
- In a large area an effective strategic decision may be to develop 'beacon' work rather than spread resources too thinly. 'Beacon' work influences practice in a surrounding area.
- The most distant hubs need 'self-standing' projects and these need to incorporate ways to reduce the possible risks.
- In the absence of 'top down' policy edicts, 'bottom-up' motivators, prompters and rationales need to be found. These are often highly personal and are difficult to predict or identify. Initial interviews with stakeholders might try to identify motivators.
- The confusions and lack of understanding about the EC sector that are widely held by those in positions of authority needs to be recognised. All too often conversations are at 'cross purposes' because of different understandings.

4 Increased dissemination of information, PR for project and other initiatives via the Network

1. Gina Westbrook and Jane Parker from Take Art have both attended the Music Education Council Special Interest Group meetings to contribute learning arising from the project with the wider music education sector.
2. Jane Parker was invited by Youth Music to be part of a panel discussion at the Music Mark conference that focused on early childhood in Music Education Hubs.
3. The Small Steps Big Noise conference in March disseminated information about the project more widely.



UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES:

We have been pleasantly surprised by the appetite for the CPD opportunities we have programmed in each county, the take up of places and the range of staff attending - including speech therapists, special educational needs coordinators, family support workers, nursery setting staff, students and child-minders. The feedback questionnaires from these sessions has been very positive with attendees feeling very positive about applying learning to their practice.

The engagement of SoundWaves staff in national debates and initiatives through CREC and the Certificate for Music Educators: Early Childhood is an unexpected outcome that came out of a rethinking and reallocation of bursary funding which, although offered and promoted, was not taken up.

Soundwaves has been able to support Music Leaders in their professional development including working with Roehampton University on The Little Amber Project (for visually impaired 0-5 year olds and their families in their homes) and a regional music leader attending training on the Sounds of Intent framework. Both new skill sets that can inform future work in the region.

Through end of project evaluation surveys and meetings we have found that Music Leaders can feel isolated and some have needed more support than anticipated. Working over such a large geographical area with multi agency partners is complex and challenging on capacity for project staff. In one Devon setting two music leaders worked in parallel to each other, resulting in a more collaborative creative experience for the children and staff involved. There was also the shared opportunity to reflect on individual outcomes and learning between staff and Music Leaders.



Next Steps: the World Café

As part of the Small Steps Big Noise conference we asked key strategic representatives, Music Leaders and Soundwaves Extra partners to a World Café event which looked at how we could all support Quality EY Creativity in Today's Climate. The purpose of which was to distill some of the thoughts and thinking regarding direction of travel for the Early Childhood Creative sector including music.

Five tables were hosted each by a key individual and groups rotated around each table. The following is a summary of the discussions and potential opportunities that surfaced during the evening:

Table 1: "Research" Led by Dr Susan Young

Individuals valued the impact research had on their own reflective practice. Skills required to interpret research were felt to be important aspects of citizenship which should be taught through school as a philosophical way of thinking. Evaluation and research in early years was felt to be of varying standards with some lacking statistical significance - a problem for the sector.

It was felt that the more public facing research was around a search for evidence from funders and stakeholders. There is a huge amount of evidence already but poorly utilised.

Opportunities

- The development of a repository of good research which promotes quality material
- Guiding principles and examples of evaluation strategies to develop skills within the sector
- MERYC continues to develop research knowledge through the MA and the certificate of Music Education <http://www.meryc.co.uk/cmeec.html>

Table 2 “Issues facing music leaders and musicians” Led by Dr Jessica Pitt SALTMusic Researcher

Early years music and the workforce that inhabits it are seen as passionate and enthusiastic, in the most successful examples this is fuelled by a strategic advocate working in senior leadership roles (hubs, schools, board members).

As many EC musicians are freelance the opportunity to have a voice can feel limiting, often chasing their tail for the next piece of work this can leave limited opportunity for development time. Sustained long-term working relationships were far more beneficial than short term project work where the skills and expertise of the musician could be included (and paid for) in the cycle of planning, delivery and evaluation.

The life of the early years musician can be isolating and co-delivery and collaboration, although costly, can bring huge benefits. Musicians were urged to be bold in their vision and planning with outcomes for the children at the heart.

Opportunities

- Music leaders and project designers need to value and include the voice of the practitioner at the earliest stage
- The sector is in constant need of the next wave of EC musicians, initiatives such as the CREC
- Funders need to recognise the freelance nature of EC musicians and include payment for planning and reflection time
- The confidence of EC practitioners was still felt to be low with regard to music, often being an area they are unwilling to teach. Initiatives to support staff at an initial teacher training stage need to be developed
- EC musicians and Hubs need to connect to look at what clear offers they can collaborate or support each other on, this involves musicians clearly and confidently communicating their skills and potential roles as well as Hubs engaging with the workforce
- Participants felt a week-long immersive play experience should be everybody's yearly activity

Table 3 “Music Hubs” led by Ken Parr Head of Devon LDP Music Service

There was clear recognition that Hubs are not consistent when it comes to early years and for all stakeholders less inconsistencies would be beneficial. Although funding is announced for two years at a time, the reality is that the cycle rarely fits with financial years and staff are unable to commit funded delivery from one year to the next.

But it wasn't always about the money, there were real examples of how Hubs were beginning to work effectively with the sector, examples which were wider than the 5-18 funding corridor. Musical instrument hire, CPD, bursaries project work, networking opportunities and shared partnerships. But these are not consistent and not all Hubs would be aware of EC child-led activities, performances, inspirational performances or settings.

Hubs are starting to collect data, providing greater intelligence about early years, they are becoming more informed about what is needed in the EC sector and their role in supporting priorities. This additional task is not a current requirement and some felt that this wasn't going to be taken up by all Hubs.

The National Plan for Music does provide common ground through SEND, early years and the role of technology, the inconstancy lies in that these don't feature in the core or extension activities of the Hubs. However, it was felt that with leadership prepared to take on board a wider perspective of child development there were opportunities to start being more creative about pushing the boundaries. Both the Hubs and the EC sector need to start asking "what do we want to do?" If we can understand what we want to do, how do we then try and secure the funding to make that possible, the writing of the Hubs new plans are a key opportunity.

Opportunities

- Hubs to look at how they can consistently collect data on EC music activity and look at sharing this with key partners and conversely delivery agencies sharing data with Hubs to gain a clear picture of activity and need
- Early childhood should have a place at the Hub table with clear representation at operational as well as strategic level, each Hub could invite an EC representative to their board
- Early Childhood musicians to be involved earlier at funding development stages
- EC's and Hubs to jointly lobby for the inclusion of EC's in the National Plan
- Hubs are well placed to signpost and support with current and future workforce development and this is a very practical way for the sectors to collaborate
- Easy access for EC musicians to simple, high quality instruments e.g. chime bars and claves.

Table 4 "The voice of the child" led by Rachel Parish, Manager, Willowset Preschool

This table talked about the voice of the child through storytelling, music and imaginative play. The simplicity of the stories and storytelling should be acknowledged and it was felt that that sometimes we are making it too hard. "We need to just give time, give the child a voice, listen, and use real objects" The desire to use storytelling as a vehicle, not just for the imagination, but as a way of children, within a safe environment, to be able to tell their own story that they might not be able to tell in any other way was voiced.

Constraints were seen in the form of the amount of assessments and observations, in some settings practitioners were less confident about how to carry these out effectively. References to Dr Young's presentation on "children becoming data" were made with individuals wanting to know and listen to the knowledge and passion the practitioners have in what actually makes a difference to children's learning and development – it was acknowledged that this can be hard to quantify. In some areas more high quality CPD was required to ensure the workforce has the opportunity to think creatively about how we listen to children.

Table 5 "Strategic Partnerships" led by Dr Karen Wickett, Lecturer and Joint Programme Lead BA Early Childhood Studies University of Plymouth

This table looked at strategic partnerships, at early years leaders, leaders of arts organisations and of music hubs.

A real positive was the way that some bids acknowledge that collaboration and partnerships take time, and that they value the process of establishing those relationships. People who are looking at big applications want to see that applicants are making time for this.

There was a clear acknowledgement that the Music Hubs have no core funding for early years resulting in targeted provision instead of universal provision. Understandably, people who are coming to these partnerships have diverse priorities and aims, different understandings, different perceptions of words, different visions. So they all end up squabbling – a tough climate.

The idea of a more phased process for project development with scope to establish relationships and partnerships to build the bigger bid was felt to be important.

The role for an early years arts education partnerships was further discussed with education being seen in its widest sense: “not schooling; a community education model, bringing parents in, the community members in, so it’s the wider sense of education”. Part of the partnerships could be Hubs, early years leaders, early childhood education, health and wellbeing and care leaders, arts organization leaders, and independent musicians. There would be a role for FE and HE, both where they’re working with the students, but also where they’re working as researchers.

There was a lack of clarity as to the role of the bridging organisation.

Opportunities

- The value of taking time to establish collaborations and partnerships should not be underestimated, it results in strong bids, this needs to be built into individual and organisational practice
- A greater distribution of power needs to be encouraged, with key stakeholders collaborating to address the power imbalance
- The fact that we now have targeted provision instead of universal provision needs to be acknowledged and recognised for its limitations and opportunities
- The introduction of a more phased funding application process to enable time to establish relationships and partnerships to build the bigger bid should be encouraged
- The introduction of an early years arts education partnership could be explored
- The need to bring parents and community members in, so there’s a wider sense of communication around projects should be encouraged



Methodology

This evaluation combines quantitative and qualitative research methodologies: questionnaires, semi structured interviews, analysis of data, case studies and minutes from planning, review and feedback meetings.

Case studies

Each project was required to produce a case study addressing an agreed research question, negotiated by the setting/group needs or issues facing them. The case studies have been co authored by both the Music Leaders and the project lead (usually the setting manager or practitioners most regularly working on the project). Music Leaders and setting staff were encouraged to keep notes from regular planning and reflective meetings (both of which were built into the weekly sessions) and utilize these, alongside video or photographic material, to generate the case study. A suggested case study template was available for staff, but each was encouraged to approach it in a style appropriate to their interest, skills and capacity.

Questionnaires

In order to capture any changes staff presented in terms of Attitude, knowledge and behavior each member of staff directly participating in regular sessional deliver was encouraged to complete an entry and exit questionnaire.

Feedback from participants at CPD sessions were invited to complete a short questionnaire covering their motivations, skill and knowledge gain and any examples of how they might implement changes in their workplace.

Survey Monkey was utilized as part of the feedback mechanism for delegates attending the Small Steps Big Noise Conference.

Music Education Hubs were surveyed using both written questionnaires and interviews prior to the programme starting and again towards the end of activity.

Early Childhood Musical Assessment Scales

As reported in our interim report to Youth Music, we have found completing the Assessment scale problematic as it relies on scoring the same children by the same member of staff and this is not always been possible due to staff/children changes or absentees. We have also noted how objectivity can reduce as staff gain more knowledge and understanding of music and musicality in their setting, making results inconsistent and unreliable.

Participant feedback

As part of the Music Leaders and staff planning and reflective sessions each was encouraged to note children and staff feedback generated during the session. Parents in most settings were either asked to complete a comment card (where they had direct engagement in the sessions) or via staff/parent hand-overs, parents evenings or visual display/comments boards specially created for the project.

Ethical issues

Participants and parents/carers were asked for permission to use feedback and any photos/video material gathered during the project.

Case Study Projects

Case study projects have been delivered in the following settings:

- Bristol: Children's Centre in Knowle West & Badock's Wood (children in deprived areas) 2 x 10 week projects
- Plymouth (armed forces families) 1 x 20 week project
- Somerset: Street, Brookside Academy nursery & reception (EAL and SEN) 2 x 20 week projects
- Somerset: Taunton Opportunity Group (SEN) 1 x 37 week project
- Somerset: Frome Opportunity Nursery (SEN) 1 x 10 week project
- Wiltshire: Salisbury City Children's Centre (EAL and Speech and Language delay) 1 x 20 weeks project
- Devon: Exeter Flying Start Children's Centre (EAL families) 1 x 20 week project
- Devon: Exeter Chestnut Children's Centre (Speech and Language delay two year olds) 1 x 7 weeks *
- Devon: Budleigh Salterton Reception/preschool (EAL and Speech and Language delay) 2 x 5 week project, 1 x 16 week project
- Devon: Great Torrington Reception/Preschool (EAL and Speech and Language delay) 1 x 10 week project
- Cornwall: St Austell Piccolo Nursery (EAL and Speech and Language delay) 1 x 20 week project
- Gloucestershire: Cinderford (EAL and Speech and Language delay) 1 x 20 week project

* At Chestnut Children's Centre only 7 sessions were delivered out of a 20 week proposed programme. A mutual decision was made to withdraw from the setting which had major staffing and capacity issues at the time of the project. The remaining sessions were reallocated to a new project in Budleigh Salterton.

Case studies are available via www.takeart.org/soundwaves-extra

