

# Tri-borough Early Years Music Consortium



tri-music together

## Evaluation Report

Dr Jessica Pitt, August 2018

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With thanks to Youth Music for core funding this project, 2016-18

 National Foundation for  
Youth Music

  
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Partners in the Consortium

<p><b>CHICKENSHEd</b> KENSINGTON&amp;CHELSEA THEATRE CHANGING LIVES</p>		
 <p>Music House FOR CHILDREN</p>	 <p>Royal Albert Hall</p>	 <p>ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC <i>London</i></p>
	<p>the voices foundation transforming children through singing</p>	<p>WIGMORE HALL <i>Learning</i></p>
 	 <p>THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA</p> <p>Family Information Service</p>	 <p>City of Westminster</p> 



## Acknowledgements

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**Dr Jessica Pitt, August 2018**

Acronyms used throughout the report:

ACE	Arts Council England
CC	Children's Centre
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DfE	Department for Education
EY	Early Years
EYP/T	Early Years Practitioner / Teacher
NPME	National Plan for Music Education
ML	Music Leader
PVI	Private, Voluntary, Independent setting
TBEYMC	Tri-borough Early Years Music Consortium
TMT	Tri-Music Together
YM	Youth Music

Supporting documents can be found at:

- <https://www.triboroughmusichub.org/early-years/>
- <https://www.early-education.org.uk/musical-development-matters>
- <https://network.youthmusic.org.uk/musical-development-matters>

## Executive Summary

The Tri-borough Early Years Music Consortium (TBEYMC) project, Tri-Music Together (TMT), achieved the following outcomes:

1. **38 training sessions; 2 three-day courses; 11 inset training days; a mini-project in 10 settings with 12 musicians; 4 sharing sessions.**
2. **Participation and engagement in training sessions of 148 musicians and 294 Early Years Practitioners / Teachers from 120 early years settings.**
3. The establishment of a **strong community of collaborative learning in the early years workforce.** Bringing together two different groups of highly qualified early years music and early years education practitioners and working with them on their professional development, has led to deep sharing of practice, values and beliefs, motivations and reflections. Importantly, this has led to understanding and building of relationships across the sector.
4. The establishment of a **strong network of consortium partners** who have created a 'safe space' in their regular meetings where individuals can be honest about what they know and don't know about EY music education. This reflective opportunity has influenced organisational strategy. In arts organisations, EY music requires clear project management of the delivery of activity. It also demands equal attention to the many other areas of learning and participation.
5. Recognition that **Leaders' / decision makers' support and understanding is essential** for quality early childhood music practice. (Leaders of music hubs, arts organisations, local authorities, and settings).
6. **A CPD ethos.** Reflective practice as a requirement for the two most effective training models: the three-day training course and the mini-project. This was built around an ethos for CPD: that everyone is an expert and we learn together.
7. **The importance of giving musicians time to observe children** has enabled deeper understanding of child development leading to improved delivery of activity.
8. **Effective and fruitful dissemination of innovative early years music practice across the music education and early education sectors.** This has been achieved through: speaking at conferences, writing articles and meeting with other arts and education organisations across the Tri-borough, nationally and internationally.
9. The development of Tools and Resources that will help raise the quality and standards of music provision in settings: **Self-evaluation tool and a template music policy.** This includes the Strategic Lead's creation of **Musical Development Matters** – A guidance document for the early years workforce, co-badged by Early Education and Youth Music.
10. An understanding that **space** (in varying forms) is a significant factor in effective music activity in early childhood, with several factors to consider (e.g. noise, rooms, other learning environments, space in the timetable and space to think about including music).

The Challenges for the TMT project are:

1. The model of early years music education is challenging for sustained, effective, quality music practice. The freelance nature of the workforce can leave highly-qualified and skilled music practitioners disconnected from the organisation that engages them, from early childhood education, from other areas of music education, and from their colleagues. The model of practice expected is frequently whole class/group, led by the adult with a pre-planned format. There are few openings for discussion of aims and purposes of the music activity. Freelancers are often on a low income and insular. This is not a model for building quality practice.
2. A fixation on measurement and collection of data about children in EY settings means that areas of learning and development such as music may have got lost in recent years. The widespread idea that music is useful for other areas of learning means that its use has become somewhat instrumentalised - e.g., a good song for learning to count. The inclusion of music as an artistic experience for children to express themselves needs to be more strongly stated.
3. The two years of the project (2016-2018) has seen significant changes in early years education and care: publication of Bold Beginnings (Nov. 2017), Tri-borough became fragmented, many children's centres closed in the area. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the air of enthusiasm and positivity of 2016 is not as evident in 2018.

These challenges mean that it is difficult to confidently assert that Outcome One (*To embed high quality music-making across Tri-borough EY settings, especially those with high proportions of children in challenging circumstances*) of this project can ever be truly achieved. This project has made a significant impact and certainly has not failed in its attempts to meet this outcome - it is rather a statement that there are external factors to consider.

## Recommendations

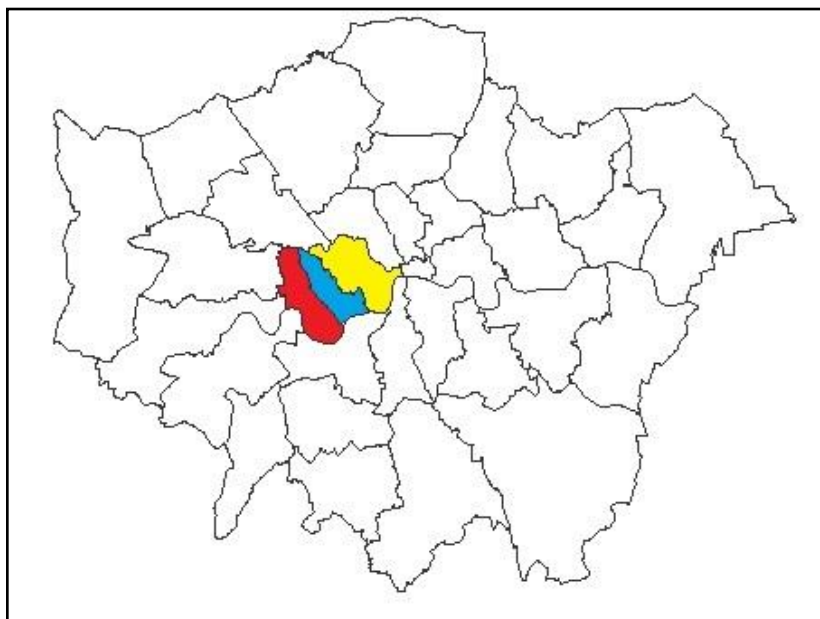
1. The dissemination of TMT's effective approach (including CPD training models) to other Music Education Hubs.
2. Training in music in EYFS for senior managers (of arts organisations and Music Education Hubs).
3. Future CPD EY Music projects should include 'placements' for musicians in settings where they are not initially expected to 'do' music, but observe before instigating any delivery.
4. A nationwide review of the whole 'system' of early years music education to provide information about the sector to inform the review of National Plan for Music Education.
5. Workforce training – Early childhood teacher training should include more time for music-arts education. Professional musicians and music teacher training should include child development and early years music pedagogical approaches.
6. Funding and support for local groups of musicians and EYP/Ts to share and support practice as part of a TMT network.
7. Subsequent CPD projects for the field must include funds to pay freelance musicians to attend and to provide the cost of bank cover to enable EYP/Ts to attend.
8. To develop / find examples of excellent early years music education practice that demonstrate the aesthetic benefit and value of children's musical experience for its own sake. To then promote and advocate this practice alongside the other 'useful-ness-of-music' benefits.



# Introduction

## Tri-borough Music Hub

The award-winning [Tri-borough Music Hub](#) (TBMH) is the lead organisation that oversees the delivery of music education in three west London boroughs - the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and the City of Westminster - working with schools, pupils, the workforce and the community. Through an agreed shared-services model, it is a centralised Local Authority service which receives core funding from the Department for Education via the Arts Council England to deliver an extensive programme of musical learning in and out of school.



(Map of Greater London)

Alongside the three Local Authorities, the TBMH Strategic Partners are two internationally renowned organisations - the Royal Albert Hall and the Royal College of Music. In addition, a dedicated and quality-assured group of delivery partner organisations, with evidence of a successful track record, work to meet the TBMH's strategic aims and positively contribute to our key stakeholders.

## Background and History

The Head of the Tri-borough Music Hub (TBMH), Stuart Whatmore, was instrumental in the design and vision for this project, driven by his view that Nursery and Reception classes should link seamlessly to Key Stage 1 to ensure better progression, and that joining-up of skills is beneficial for children's musical learning. His prior experience of research and exploration of appropriate music activity for the EYFS, whilst working in Tower Hamlets, led to real understanding about the EYFS sector:

*“Doing this delivery of work was a massive learning curve for me and a huge eye opener. It was some of the most rewarding work that I delivered and also the most exhausting due to the relentless energy needed to keep a session full of pace, variety and engagement. It made me very aware that an EYFS practitioner must have outstanding empathy skills, be very responsive to changing situations/environments, and an excellent communicator both verbally and non-verbally. There were many challenges of delivering this work, mainly with workforce development - how to train people up well, only for them to move on a few months/terms later; or tutors being unreliable causing sessions to be cancelled.”*

During this 'experimental' phase, before he joined Tri-borough Music Hub, Stuart had been tasked by the Head of the Tower Hamlets Arts & Music Education Service to develop a full cost recovery model of EY music delivery (i.e. no core funding was to be spent on its development). The restrictions of NPME/ACE/DfE mean that only music education for children from 5 years old upwards can be funded. He knew he would have to find partners with whom to work. In Tower Hamlets he found some key EY experts to offer advice and guidance and an organisation with a Service Level Agreement to fund the delivery.

*“I was also fortunate to work with some very open-minded tutors who were keen to learn about this sector and come with me on this journey of EYFS discovery. Together, we learnt all about the merits of free-flow as opposed to more formalised structures, and where and when either option could be appropriate or best employed. [...] We ended up working with some recognised partners (Wigmore Hall and Sound Connections) and bringing in specialists to help shape and train our practice.”*

With an established core sector of EYFS traded work, the Tower Hamlets Music Hub was able to show progression within their offer from birth to 18, and had engagement from parents and the community. With this experience and skillset, he arrived as Head of Tri-borough Music Hub (2014) where there was no co-ordinated EYFS offer. Stuart came with a clear vision for early years music education rooted in experience and practice, to be developed as a core component at the Tri-borough Hub. He put out an open call for current TBMH partner organisations to express their interest and to embrace and contribute to his vision for EYFS. The consortium included not only arts organisations but also Local Authority EYFS leads and Children's Centre leads.

*“We met once a term to establish what we would do, how we might do it and possible timescales. Our ambitions to seek YM funding were seen as achievable due to our strategic approach but we were aware it would be a lot of hard work. There was a significant difference between the Tower Hamlets work (delivering as a Traded service by Music Hub tutors) and the proposed TBMH work (working in partnership to provide spread of activity with several organisations). The strength of our TBMH project is that we are working collectively as one giant body of EYFS-focused partners and we are looking at organisational and workforce development of how EYFS can be delivered.”*

#### **Summary:**

- 1. An inspirational Head of Music Hub with real understanding, based on experience, of the EY music sector**
- 2. The leader’s prior knowledge and experience of what works and what is possible**
- 3. The sharing of a clear vision to excite partners from arts and education**
- 4. Regular partner meetings to build a strategic, coherent project outline**
- 5. Collaborative, partnership-working, with a shared vision in order to make strategic changes via workforce development across the Tri-borough**

#### **Unforeseen challenges**

##### *Grenfell Tower fire*

Grenfell Tower is located within the Tri-borough and the horrendous fire of summer 2017 affected many families with young children directly, and indirectly. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) Children and Family Services recount the following impact of this disaster,

*“...for the first 4 months following the fire we created an early years Grenfell response team – to this end a third of our team were working directly with affected families, this included seven days a week at the respite centre (West Way Sports Centre) and continued when the respite centre moved to The Curve. We profiled St Quintin children’s centre during the month of August 2017 and created full time childcare for children directly affected by the fire. We re-profiled Clare Gardens into a therapeutic centre offering massages and reiki. This centre opened on 1st August 2017 and closed on 11 June 2018 during which time we provided massages to over 300 residents and some staff members. Since January [2018], we have sought to embed our response to the tragedy into our business-as-usual work, which includes adding more therapeutic activities, such as yoga, mindfulness and messy play. We have amended the CPD programme we offer to our PVI providers to include: trauma awareness, mindfulness, and similar courses that have supported practitioners to support the challenges faced by families and children. Chickenshed [TBEYMC consortium partner] has been a significant resource in supporting families during this time and we increased their offer to us including purchasing additional sessions from them.”*

Naturally, this tragedy and its impact on the early years children's services teams will have had a significant impact on the capacity of many practitioners to engage fully with the CPD programme offered as part of the project because their attention was required elsewhere. Yet, the June 2018 report published by RBKC of their response to the disaster shows that Music and Rhyme activities for families with young children were offered to families who wanted to socialise and establish routines for their children following the traumatic experience (RBKC, 2018).

### *Changes to organisational structures*

Not only was there a serious tragedy to contend with but there were also extraneous structural changes taking place across the Tri-borough that severely impacted on some schools'/settings' capacity for involvement in the project.

*"... it has been really hectic here. The early help service of which early years is part of, moved over to the new family support service on the 1st of April. The service will be providing family support and includes the hub children centres that are now called family centres. There were some children centre services that were tendered out which will be monitored also by the new service. We are commissioned by the LA to provide these services and there will be a set of outcomes that we are expected to meet. We very much want to remain as part of the music hub and have felt that our providers have had real benefit from this."*

The desire to be involved and commitment to the project are not in question as seen in this extract, the issue is rather that the re-structuring and organisational issues that have led to external pressures for the LA. These impact on the strategic aspects of a project of this nature.

## Project Aims

### **To improve the music provision for children from birth to 5 years old across EY settings in the Tri-borough.**

- To develop a sustainable network of outstanding EY music practice between EY settings and the Consortium.
- To improve the skills and knowledge of music practitioners about the Early Years Foundation Stage through increased collaboration with Early Years professionals.
- To strengthen the music-leading skills of Early Years professionals across the Tri-borough area.
- To increase knowledge of innovative practice and excellence in EY music-making across the music education and EY sectors.
- Reflective practice is at the core of the project with the aim that the project will support practitioners to learn collaboratively.

### **Desired Project Outcomes:**

1. To embed high quality music-making across Tri-borough EY settings, especially those with high proportions of children in challenging circumstances.
2. To develop a better understanding among partner organisations of the needs of pre-school children in challenging circumstances across the Tri-borough areas, and the parents/carers/staff responsible for them.
3. To improve the skills and knowledge of music practitioners about the Early Years Foundation Stage including the characteristics of effective learning through increased collaboration with early years practitioners.
4. To develop and strengthen the music-leading skills of Early Years professionals across the Tri-borough area.
5. To increase knowledge of innovative practice and excellence in EY music-making across the music education and Early Years sectors.

### **Finance of the TMT project:**

The TMT project has been financed by a core grant of £99,816 from Youth Music, and consortium partner contributions of £12,000 (£600 per annum/per partner, excluding the LA CCs), from Sep 2016-Sep 2018.

## Brief rationale

### National Plan for Music Education (England)

A centralised vision for music education was produced for the first time in England on 2011 (DfE & DCMS, 2011) with the desire for this to be a driver for excellence. Music Education Hubs were created to deliver the music curriculum to schools, as well as absorbing the work of the local authority music service. Partnership working was advocated. Early years and preschool in both formal and informal settings are mentioned in the plan (p.13-14). The focus on progression (p.18), that suggests that first access to music education should start at age five, may have influenced that the core role of music hubs is to ensure that children from the age of five have the opportunity to learn an instrument (p.26). The Henley Review (2011, p.13) states that children aged 0-14 years should receive music education. There is a sense in both the National Plan and the Henley Review that music education is a linear route towards learning an instrument and playing in ensembles with singing viewed as an essential building block.

Over the last decade, early years music education has not been included in music hubs' core and statutory activity. Music hubs are the principal fund holders for music education activity in their geographical region. Therefore, early years music education has suffered from underinvestment and lack of support. Some music hub leaders choose to fund some early years music activity, but this is at their discretion. The experience of the Head of the Tri-borough Music Hub (see 'Background Section', pp.10-11 of this report) gives an example of the way he managed to organise the delivery of early years music education through the Tower Hamlets Music Hub.

Early years music practitioners have a particular expertise in the field of music education which is currently outside music hub practice. Joint working and partnerships to share knowledge and skills do not happen readily as there is no incentive for the hubs to learn about ways to work with children aged 0-5 years as this is outside their remit. Early years music practitioners are isolated, often working in a freelance capacity and chasing projects, grants and small amounts of money in the hope of making a difference to children's musical experiences at the most formative period of their lives.

Hence the need for a strategic project that is based in a music hub and explores early years music education and the training models needed for both early years education and musicians.

## Teachers' perceptions about music

Music has been found to be the subject that teachers have the least confidence to teach, because they cannot read music and therefore think it a specialist area (Holden & Button, 2006). Sarah Hennessey (2000) found that many students of teaching believed that being musical was a special gift. Their low expectations of their own musical ability added to these notions that talent or giftedness was needed. Placement experiences often reinforced these misconceptions: bought-in music specialists mean they were unable to gain practical experience. Furthermore, it is suggested that there are insufficient hours during teacher training to build competence and expertise in an area that students often feel least confident about (Lam & Wright, 2004). Theano Koutsoupidou (2010, p.69) discovered that resources, equipment and mentors for newly qualified teachers are vital.

## Useful Models

There are some positive examples that suggest a lack of musical training can be compensated for when a sensitive music practitioner models practice for an early years teacher (Davies, 2006). The most helpful collaborative relationships were found to be those based on dialogic partnership (Partington, 2017) where the skills and knowledge of both the early years teacher and the music teacher are valued and important.

Wayne Bowman (2009) describes the characteristics of effective music education as being rich, diverse, frequent with depth to the musical engagement (p6). These qualities were aspirations for the CPD that was offered to the participants so that enthusiasm and learning from programme would impact the music making opportunities in settings.

## CPD

A key element to the programme of CPD courses that were developed as part of the project was the ethos of the Tri-Music Together (TMT) project. It became clear that the CPD group can be a creative and dynamic learning environment if the right conditions are created (see Huhtinen-Hildén & Pitt, 2018, pp. 33-36). Respect for the expertise of every group member and the creation of a safe, unconditional and non-judgmental learning environment was a driving vision of the Strategic Lead (Nicola Burke) that infused every project workshop and training programme and meant that sharing of expertise happened with integrity and honesty. This was a very important element of the project's success. **Strategic leaders can influence a project's ethos.**

## Methodology

Evaluation can take different shapes and forms. For the purposes of this project I was engaged to assess the project's performance against outcomes. Luo (2010, pp.42-50) cites several theorists each considering evaluation as a different role. In this case, definition of my role seemed to fit with Scriven's position of evaluation as 'judge'- assessing and providing 'judgement' in a summative report (this document). During the project my role took on a different shape, because of the relationship that grew with the Strategic Lead in the early baseline data collection phase, with the role becoming summative as well as formative (for more detail see Robson, 2002, p.206-212). I suggest that I adopted Weiss's concept of evaluation (see Luo, 2010, p.45) which has an educative function. I sought to look beyond the instrumental nature of evaluating the project and included interrogation of the data to arrive at some implications for policy, new conceptualisations and some generalisations about the early years music sector.

## Methods of data collection

We employed a variety of data collection methods to gather rich and diverse information about the project's effectiveness to participants. The methods comprised:

- Questionnaire (baseline and exit)
- Interview
- Evaluation form
- Group 'road map' evaluation technique
- Reflective journal
- Case Study
- Observation
- Reflections with strategic lead
- Email communication
- Video

## Data Analysis

### *Questionnaire/Evaluation Forms*

The questionnaire and evaluation form data were both numerical and text format. Numerical data were analysed to produce descriptive statistical results. Text data analysis was thematic: coding for themes and then aggregated themes to a broader thematic category.

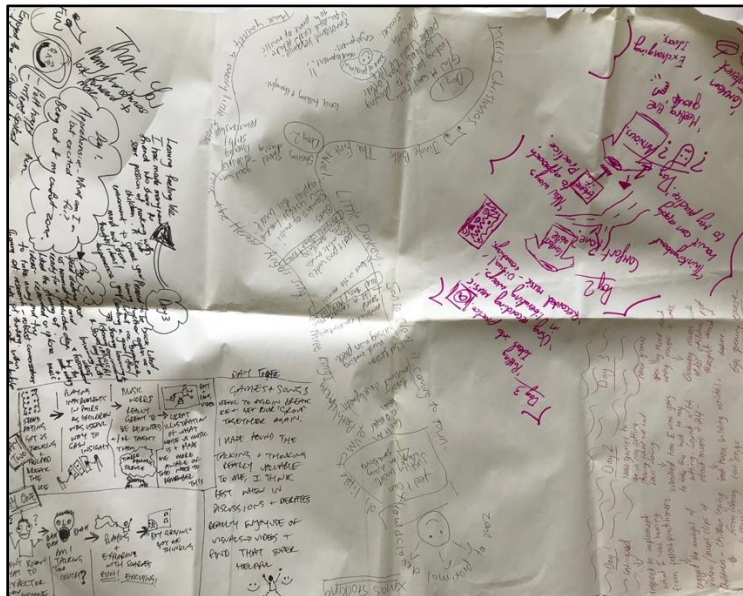


## Interview

Interviews were conducted with the Project Manager and the Strategic Lead at the end of the first term of the project, with the Strategic Lead at the end of the first year of the project and with one individual musician for a more detailed case study. Transcriptions were made of these audio data.

## Group Road Map

The group 'road map' evaluation was used on several occasions. It allowed participants in small groups to talk through their experiences from start to finish and create a pictorial representation of their experience. This method allows those who may find putting their thoughts and feelings into words difficult, a different way to describe their experience. Audio recordings of interviews would have been another mode to convey an individual's perspective. The limited time given for the evaluation meant that large-scale analysis of audio data was not feasible.



## Reflective Journal

A bespoke reflective journal was created for the mini-project that took place in the final 2 terms of year two. This was intended to capture deep learning and insights about practitioners' professional development, collaborative practice, and the project's impact on children.

## Case Study

It was hoped that several musicians would contribute to case studies. Contributions were scant from less experienced musicians; more experienced musicians were able to write about their practice and the project. An interview with a newly qualified teacher provided a case study of a less experienced music practitioner.

## *Reflections with Strategic Lead*

The negotiation of experiences through dialogue with significant others can be a dynamic process of developing one's professional identity (Huhtinen-Hildén & Pitt, 2018, p.196). Regular discussions and reflecting time together with the Strategic Lead (Nicola Burke) gave the opportunity to deepen understanding of the practice involved in our respective roles and to evolve and develop professional development opportunities for participants based on reflecting on the previous courses, their evaluation, attendance and the reality of the partners', EYP/Ts', Musicians' life on the ground. Nicola was able to reflect on the project in action and make changes based on these reflections that made a difference to the participants, increased access and ensured the project outcomes were achieved. **The importance of leaders with understanding, sensitivity and strong informed decision-making skills.**

## *Video*

Video data of children's musical experiences were collected by settings and shared as part of the ongoing CPD courses. These data brought the impact of the project on children to life as practitioners grasped new knowledge and understanding. This influenced what was offered to children and this was evidenced in short video vignettes. Permissions and confidentiality mean that these do not form a legacy for the project.



## Participants

### 1. The TBEYMC Consortium Partners

The vision and inspiration for the project was cast by the Head of the Tri-borough Music Hub and caught by the Tri-borough Early Years Music Consortium (TBEYMC) partners. This comprised a collection of arts organisations with an interest in early years music, and local education authorities' early years advisory personnel. The consortium held twelve meetings during the lifetime of the project (i.e. two per term); attendance was high, showing strong commitment to the partnership. EY advisory team members found attendance more difficult, reflecting the increasingly difficult times that they were facing.

The consortium partners are:

1. Chickenshed Theatre Company
2. Creative Futures
3. Inspire-Works
4. Music House for Children
5. Sound Connections
6. The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Children's Centres
7. The Royal Albert Hall
8. The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Children's Centres
9. The Royal College of Music
10. The Voices Foundation
11. Tri-borough Music Hub
12. Tri-borough School Standards, Children's Services, EY Lead Adviser
13. Westminster City Council Children's Centres
14. Wigmore Hall

The partner organisations invited freelance musicians who worked with them to attend the training sessions. They also offered their expertise in the form of experienced workshop leaders, who worked for them, to deliver training sessions as part of the project. Some partners offered their premises as locations for the consortium meetings.

At the start of the project, mapping of the partners' existing early years music activity was undertaken by Nicola to ascertain the following:

- Where they were working in the Tri-borough and the types and numbers of settings in which they worked.
- The ages of children that they worked with.
- The types of CPD / training the partner organisations were able to offer.

This mapping exercise informed the planning of the professional development (TMT) programme, in particular the INSET training days, the evaluation of which was important in the development and design of the mini-project in year two.

I was interested in the rationale behind each partner's decision to join the consortium. Many considered it to be a ground-breaking, strategic project with which they wanted to be associated. Other reasons given were:

- To learn
- To raise the profile of organisations and of EY music
- To increase knowledge about EY music
- To support and be connected to the Tri-borough Music Hub / music education sector
- To expand their organisation's offer of EY music
- To develop and sustain a committed freelance musician EY workforce
- To develop EY music trainers
- Share and join-up work
- To develop a strong committed network
- To be part of an exciting innovative strategic project

*"This collaboration is helping to give our mission more gravitas, profile and meaning in the eyes of families, educators and policy makers."*

The partners' knowledge and understanding about the sector grew and developed over the two years through regular meetings together (the impact of the project for the partners can be found later in this report). The ethos, atmosphere and character of the meetings enabled many of the participants to gain support in their roles as arts administrators and this was an unexpected result of the project. **The strong network that has evolved should be nurtured and developed as it is an example of partnership-working with the potential to make a substantial difference for the early years music field.**

## 2. Musicians

### **148 musician participants**

Musicians working in early years or with the aspiration to work with young children were invited to attend the training sessions. Consortium partners recommended experienced music facilitators to lead the CPD sessions. Initially, the musicians were not paid to attend the professional development courses. It became clear that the freelance nature of the working environment meant that musicians would be losing a day's work and income to attend any course; making attendance a more difficult decision than had been anticipated.

**It is important for raising quality of practice in the field that freelance practitioners are paid to attend training, not just that the training is free of charge, but that they are paid a day's fee.**

## 3. Early Years Practitioners

### **249 Early Years Practitioner and Teacher participants**

EYP/Ts from every type of early years setting were invited to participate. Participants came from: Maintained Nursery / Reception; Children's Centres; Private, Voluntary and Independent settings (PVI). **In total 120 settings participated in the project.**

They were:

- 5 Children's centre settings
- 47 Maintained school settings
- 68 PVI settings (including n=12 childminders)

It became clear through data collected at the end of the project that several EYP/Ts had been attending the CPD courses in their own time and at their own cost:

*"Staff attending sessions in their own time as [no] funding for staff to be paid for this training."*

**Covering the cost of bank cover so that EYP/Ts can attend training is essential to making lasting change possible for the sector. Professional development, to be effective, has to have people able and willing to attend.**

## The Professional Development Programme

The extensive programme of professional development named Tri-Music Together (TMT) was designed by Nicola Burke to meet the needs identified through the baseline questionnaire. In some cases, bespoke training was created for organisations to suit their requirements. Training was offered as half, or full days. Every course needed to be planned, materials organised, rooms booked, promotional material produced, booking procedures arranged, refreshments and instruments organised. The courses were evaluated, and data were collected for every session. This alone was a huge logistical piece of work.



The table below lists the TMT sessions for 2016-2018. The initials used are: SW – Stuart Whatmore, NB – Nicola Burke, JP – Jessica Pitt, CS – Claire Sutherland (early years education advisory teacher). TBEYMC – Tri-borough Early Years Music Consortium. ML – Music Leader. **There were 38 separate CPD events** mostly offered for musicians and EYP/Ts to attend together. A few courses were specifically designed for either musicians or EYP/Ts to meet needs identified through the baseline questionnaire. Nicola designed some more sustained training opportunities which are discussed separately.

Table 1 Half-day or whole-day training sessions

<b>Title of course</b>	<b>Delivered by</b>	<b>TBEYMC ML associated with...</b>
Project Launch event	SW, NB, JP	-
Enabling Musical Environments x 3	NB	-
The EYFS, The Characteristics of Effective Learning & EY Music Practice for ML's x 6 (offered as half and whole day)	NB, CS	-
Music & Movement in the EY - Dalcroze x 2	Margareta Burrell	Sound Connections
Singing in the EY x 2	Katie Neilson	Voices Foundation
End of year 1 reflection meeting for partners	NB, JP	-
End of year 1 celebration event (2 x 50-minute sessions - communication & music, and singing session)	NB, Emma Hutchinson, Penny Desbruslais	Music House for Children Wigmores Hall
Child development & pedagogy for ML's (whole day)	NB, CS	
Music in the EYFS for Childminders	NB	-
Engaging young children in musical learning and storytelling with instruments x 2	Emma Hutchinson	Music House for Children
Music and Phonics x 2	Steve Grocott	-
Music, Communication and Language x 2	Kate Comberti	Creative Futures
Bang That Drum! Child-initiated Music-Making x 2	John Webb	Wigmores Hall
Meaningful Music through Topics and Themes x 2	Katie Neilson	Voices Foundation
What Can I Do With My Music Trolley? x 2	Mike Simpson	Inspire-Works
Storytelling, puppetry, songs and performance in the EYFS x 2	James Dunbar, Lucy Dear & James Dula-Jefferson	Chickenshed Kensington & Chelsea
Planning for music making in the EYFS x 2	Trish Power	Sound Connections
Engaging musically with children x 2	Esther Sheridan	Wigmores Hall
Songs and games for the Early Years Foundation Stage	Caroline Ostler	Teacher from St. John's Walham Green CE Primary School
Practitioner Research & Practice Sharing Event (whole day)	Vanessa Stansall, Barbara Cavanagh, Kate Comberti, John Webb, Becky Dixon, Trish Power	Creative Futures, Music House for Children, Wigmores Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Sound Connections



## Evaluation of CPD Sessions

<b>N=314 participants</b>	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory
Overall opinion of today's session	<b>86%</b>	13%	1%
Presentation/Activities	<b>85%</b>	14%	1%
Relevant to my needs/interests	<b>79%</b>	20%	1%

Table 2 Evaluation of half or whole-day training sessions

The table above reveals that the half-day (occasional full day) sessions of CPD were very well received by participants. The majority found every aspect of the training excellent. The sessions covered many areas of early years music education: singing, movement, planning, instruments, improvisatory approaches, storytelling and puppets and concluded with a day where research studies were presented.

*“After attending the Tri-borough music workshops, our children have benefited by exploring and developing their music abilities. I would like to thank you for this amazing initiative you have taken offering our children this opportunity. It would be very beneficial for our provision if we could have the opportunity to participate in this new and innovative CPD mini-project.”* EYP/T email communication

This EYP/T participant shares the impact for the children of her attendance at the workshop sessions. She attended several and requests further involvement. This shows the impact of starting with one or two practical workshop sessions as part of a programme where follow-on involvement is possible. She is a motivated practitioner who sees the benefit for the children and has a supportive setting to encourage her developing interest.

Some participants may not have attended anything more than one half-day session, so the impact, although beneficial in terms of being an effective training session, may not go far in terms of sustained change over time to practice. **This model of CPD has been effective in providing choice for participants, offering a range of facilitators (each with their own style of delivery) and built on the consortium of partners' areas of skill and expertise. Evidence suggests that this programme of CPD has been effective - as part of the overall TMT programme - in meeting the following outcomes:**

**Outcome 1. To embed high quality music-making across Tri-borough EY settings, especially those with high proportions of children in challenging circumstances.**

**Outcome 4. To develop and strengthen the music-leading skills of Early Years professionals across the Tri-borough area.**

**Outcome 5. To increase knowledge of innovative practice and excellence in EY music-making across the music education and Early Years sectors.**



## Specific training for musicians

Baseline data found that the musicians were enthusiastic about specific child development training: about the EYFS, children's musical development. Training on the characteristics of effective learning was the most strongly preferred by 12 out of 19 participants. Specific courses were designed to reflect these needs. Nicola Burke and Claire Sutherland facilitated training in EYFS and characteristics of effective learning six times - five of these sessions were for the musicians associated with individual partner organisations: Chickenshed Kensington & Chelsea; The Royal College of Music; Creative Futures; Sound Connections and Wigmore Hall.

### The EYFS, The Characteristics of Effective Learning & EY Music Practice for MLs x 6

N=60	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory
Overall opinion of today's session	58.5%	38.5%	3%
Presentation/Activities	60%	37%	3%
Relevant to my needs/interests	48%	49%	3%

Table 3 Evaluation of CPD for musicians

### Child development & pedagogy for MLs (whole day)

N=14	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory
Overall opinion of today's session	86%	14%	
Presentation/Activities	64%	36%	
Relevant to my needs/interests	79%	21%	

Table 4 Evaluation of child development and pedagogy training

The following comments underline the benefits of these training sessions:

*"My increase in knowledge about the EYFS and the characteristics of effective learning has made me more conscious of the benefits of the music which I do. It has also made me more aware of the difficulties that EYP/Ts face in terms of having to observe and note when effective learning takes place."*

*"Understanding the language of these EYFS documents on characteristics and what the musical implications are and by looking at the importance of free play and allowing the time to start from what the child knows, even if that means I'm observed as a visiting music specialist who is observing."*

*"More confidence in delivering free play, as a result of a deeper understanding of the theory and by better understanding the challenges facing early years practitioners in full time settings. More reflection has allowed me to challenge my understanding of improvisation and how I might develop my ideas and link play to my wider experiences of improvisation as a performing musician. The opportunity to share, and develop ideas with other practitioners from a variety of musical and educational backgrounds has led to some rich conversations."*

**This programme of activity for musicians that was devised and delivered in partnership between the Strategic Lead - with music knowledge and understanding - and an early years education advisor - with extensive early years education knowledge and understanding - has successfully achieved Outcome 3: To improve the skills and knowledge of music practitioners about the Early Years Foundation Stage including the characteristics of effective learning through increased collaboration with early years practitioners.**



## Additional Courses

- Championing Music in the EYFS, 3-day course x 2
- Sharing sessions for EYP/Ts and MLs x 2
- Sharing sessions for Music Leaders x 2
- Mini Project, 10 x settings, 10 x EYP/Ts, 12 x ML's
- Inset sessions x 11

## 3-day Course: Championing Music in the EYFS

### **N=48 Participants**

The course (run twice) was devised to bring EYP/Ts and musicians together for three full days. The course content was designed to get participants talking and sharing their expertise. The ethos of experts sharing together was set at the outset and every task was planned for expertise from both disciplines to be required. Learning from each other was the focus.

*“Honestly – a reflective space that felt safe and empowering. Listening and resolving issues around delivery of music in EYFS”* Musician Course Evaluation

*“It was very easy to understand and I was able to make comments without being judged.”* EYP/T Course Evaluation

### *Course Outline*

Day 1: Children’s musical development, sharing of repertoire and tuning-in to children through video clips and discussion with links to EYFS, documenting children’s music making

Day 2: Speed networking, elements of music, multi-modal learning, raising awareness of music in settings, characteristics of effective learning, documenting children’s music making, self-evaluation music policy introduction

Day 3: Children’s mark making and musical notation, musical stories, observation, evaluation and reflections, music policy self-evaluation.

### *Evaluation of 3-day course*

Evaluation forms were used for this course although it was acknowledged that for a course where developing a shared understanding across disciplines the forms were not particularly useful. In addition to these forms the road map evaluation was used for the second course and provided richer and more useful insights. The evaluation forms recorded the following:

Table 5 Evaluation of three-day training course

<b>N=48</b>	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory
Overall opinion of the course	<b>88%</b>	12%	
Presentation /Activities	<b>83%</b>	17%	
Relevant to my needs	<b>74%</b>	24%	2%

What did the participants gain from the course?

*“Bringing two groups of practitioners together is definitely beneficial. I have lots of experience of intensive music training but almost no experience of working with young children. So, to learn from people who have worked with EY for years and years, that was invaluable. I suppose for those who have the EY specialism and have taught it for years and hadn’t necessarily had as much formal music education then maybe for them to learn the occasional thing from those who have that knowledge must be equally beneficial I guess.”*

Musician Interview (attended 3-day Course)

*Musicians gained:*

- **Understanding of EYFS**
- **Benefits of letting children lead musical activities**
- **Benefits of letting children explore music for themselves rather than always directing**
- **Understanding of the challenges faced by EYP/Ts in delivering the EYFS**

*“Be more bold, challenge perceptions of what a music education could be like. To work more closely with staff in devising work strategies that allow the children to lead.”* Musician Course Evaluation

*“I have worked in early childhood music for about 13 years. The project has given me an insight into the EYFS and what the characteristics of effective learning are. The workshops have been helpful to share information and to learn new repertoire. It has also been very interesting to discover what music happens in different settings and how EY practitioners view music. The collaboration happened during the workshops and training days...My increase in knowledge about the EYFS and the characteristics of effective learning has made me more conscious of the benefits of the music which I do. It has also made me more aware of the difficulties that EYPs face in terms of having to observe and note when effective learning takes place.”*

*EYP/Ts gained:*

- **Understanding of the elements of music**
- **Understanding of children’s musical development**
- **Increased confidence in using music**
- **Understanding of the benefits of observing children’s free play for musicality**

*“I think music should be recognised as a fundamental area such as PD, PSED, or CL. Children instinctively move, play and dance since they are born, and schools should move-on from thinking about data, targets and percentages and focus more on those areas that are naturally part of the children’s development and interest. We should have someone that monitors who is the music leader in each school and who has a music policy.”*

EYP/T Course Evaluation

*Both gained:*

- **Knowledge of ways to document children’s musical play**
- **Understanding the importance of sharing together**

In conclusion, this three-day course demanded commitment from the participants and settings to allow attendance for three full days. Participants connected at a deeper level, as a cohort studying and learning together, the atmosphere of enthusiasm and motivation at being together again was evident after day one. Whereas half-day or full day training sessions are beneficial for up-skilling in terms of practical ideas, this course achieved something different. It was the chance for two disciplines to start the 'becoming' of a community of early years music practice. This is essential to embedding quality music making in EYFS in the Tri-borough and more widely. **The Three-Day 'Championing Music in the EYFS' Course met each one of the following project outcomes:**

**Outcome 1. To embed high quality music-making across Tri-borough EY settings, especially those with high proportions of children in challenging circumstances.**

**Outcome 3. To improve the skills and knowledge of music practitioners about the Early Years Foundation Stage including the characteristics of effective learning through increased collaboration with early years practitioners.**

**Outcome 4. To develop and strengthen the music-leading skills of Early Years professionals across the Tri-borough area.**

**Outcome 5. To increase knowledge of innovative practice and excellence in EY music-making across the music education and Early Years sectors.**



## Sharing Sessions

These were informal gatherings of EYP/Ts and musicians where songs and musical activities were brought by participants and shared with the group. There was the opportunity to discuss together and to continue the relationships that had developed through the 3-day training courses as one EYP/T said after the 3-day course:

*“Going for a drink and have opportunity to meet together is a nice idea to have connections beyond the course.”* EYP/T interview

There were two meetings for EYP/Ts and musicians and a further two for musicians alone.

*“Firstly, I would just like to say how wonderful the session was, it felt incredibly open and welcoming and I immediately felt comfortable sharing and discussing with everyone. It was very reassuring to know that we all face similar challenges across our field even when our work can be quite different.”* (Musician feedback)

*“...“I felt sometimes...I was a lonely peri musician surrounded by people who work 9-5 in EYFS in nurseries etc. and it was hard to pin down my place in the discussion. It was a bit like I was the person holding some sort of key to music, and the other ‘non-specialists’ were on the other side of a door and neither of us were sure if the key would fit!”* (Musician feedback)

A development from this project might be to encourage local groups of music practitioners and interested EYP/Ts to meet together regularly. A comment from one musician offers a theoretically-underpinned model that has been successful and continues to support and motivate musicians in their learning journey:

*“I’m very lucky to be part of a local group of EY practitioners set up by Barbara Cavanagh as her 3rd year Masters research project. This has been a brilliant model of sharing thoughts/ideas/chatting things through with colleagues, and also it is really local to where I live (15-minute walk!) whereas it’s quite a trip for me to get over to Kensington. It’s quite an organic group, but that local focus is really helpful, and actually has been really important to my thinking about my practice (and a huge motivation for me to do the Masters course!)”*

**Recommendation: To encourage and \*fund local groups to meet together for sharing and support, to offer advice, support and a sense of belonging to a network.**

*\*Funding source to be identified*

## INSET Sessions

One-day Inset professional development was offered to twenty-seven settings identified as being in challenging circumstances. Eleven of these settings took up the offer of free Inset training; an indicator perhaps of the challenges faced by settings in difficult times. The eleven settings comprised:

- 6 x schools
- 1 x childminding group
- 2 x PVI
- 1 x CC
- 1 x Family centre

The INSET training was bespoke, tailored to the needs of each setting. Nicola organised the visits via an understanding of the skill sets she knew each partner could offer and her understanding of what the settings required. The partner information was gathered during the original mapping exercise of partner organisations that Nicola conducted at the start of the project. A musician from each of the partner organisations visited the settings with the following aims:

- To directly feed into and/or impact workforce delivery of music in the setting
- To support and develop the music provision
- To provide best-practice modelling of appropriate musical activities focused to the setting’s age group

The training was based on the information provided from the baseline questionnaire around seven themes from which settings were asked to choose:

- a) Using instruments with children
- b) Creating space for musical activity
- c) Children’s musical development
- d) Developing your repertoire of songs
- e) Planning for age-appropriate music sessions
- f) Inclusive musical activities for all children
- g) Strategically placing music/arts within your settings planning

Areas for further development were identified after the session for future CPD planning of the project. At the end of the Inset day the Early Years Music Practitioner provided an informal overview summary of what happened, with some recommendation for next steps which the Strategic Lead followed up on if necessary.

The evaluation of the sessions indicated that the settings found the training extremely beneficial and relevant to their needs.

<b>N=110</b>	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory
Overall opinion of today’s session	<b>91%</b>	9%	
Presentation / Activities	<b>90%</b>	10%	
Relevant to my needs / interests	<b>84%</b>	16%	

Table 6 Evaluation of Inset sessions

Working directly in settings allowed for the musical experiences and training ideas to be modelled for practitioners in their environment and situation, making the learning meaningful and contextualised. The success of the Inset sessions informed the design of the mini-project which expanded the length of time that settings and musicians worked together. Furthermore, it included a reciprocal learning opportunity for the musicians. The Inset sessions saw the musician as the ‘expert’ offering enrichment and CPD for setting staff. In the mini project both musicians and EYP/Ts were seen as experts sharing and learning together.



## Mini Project

### Participants:

- 10 x settings
- 10 x EYP/Ts
- 12 x ML's

One of the most effective CPD models was the mini-project. Twelve musicians were paired with ten settings for the following:

- Three meeting days where everyone came together to share, discuss, reflect and hear some presentations from experts in the field.
- Musicians visited their partner setting for three full days.
- A mentor supported each pair by visiting them at the setting, and by offering support at the 'all-together' days. The mentors for the mini-project were experienced early years music educators Dr. Susan Young and Linda Bance.
- Every participant used a bespoke reflective journal to record their experience.

The 'all-together' days were planned for the start, mid-point and at the end of the mini-project.



The reflective journals generated an enormous amount of rich data that could be the basis of an entire research study! I recommend a tool of this type for collecting thick, rich data about short-term experiences.

After the initial reading of all the journals, and informal discussions with the mentors and Nicola, it was clear that individuals were at different stages in their professional experience of early childhood music so that their learning reflections varied in both depth and quality. Some of the reflections related to the practical aspects of leading a session: e.g., explain less and repeat more, sing slower, while others revealed transformations to thinking about their approach, e.g., the need to observe children and base practice on these observations. The main themes to emerge from the data in relation to what the participants have learned from their experience are:



- **The importance of musicians observing children**

On the first visit to the setting the musicians were asked to observe the children, to talk to the EY practitioner and to get a 'feel' for the life of the setting. This was challenging for some musicians whose identity may be entangled with what they do:

*"As a workshop leader who is brought into settings to deliver a session, I leave. I have never had the opportunity to be in a setting for the whole day. I was very nervous about the observing..."*

Many commented on the surprise at finding children were using sounds and music in their play:

*"Children were creating soundscapes to accompany their stories (the broom flew in the sky zoooooom!!)"*

*"A child was humming a tune to herself while doing a craft."*

*"Music is a part of children's life, without even being stimulated by an adult activity."*

In some cases, these observations on the first day of the visit led to some deep reflections on the musicians' own practice:

*"Immersing myself in an EY setting was hugely valuable in many ways, I thought about my role ... which is still very focused on adult-led music – I want to change this."*

*"I feel very lucky as a workshop leader to have had this opportunity and I can already see this project having an effect on my work – I WILL LISTEN!!! (to the kids)."*

- **Allow children to lead – listen to children – They're more musical than we know**

Both EYP/Ts and musicians learned that children are able to lead, that they have musical ability that was expressed in various places, spaces and times of the day. More than half of each group learned about children's musicality.

*"I have learned that it is very important to allow children to lead the activity. I have also learned to observe more, especially watching the way the children respond to music...children are more musical than we know!"*

EYP/T

*"I was surprised by how much music making naturally happens with Early years – Natural creators." Musician*

*"Children sing/ Vocalise all day!" Musician(s)*

*"Children have really clear musical ideas." Musician*

- **Space**

As with other findings within this evaluation 'space' for music was mentioned by half the musicians and two EYP/Ts:

*"Find a quiet area for music." EY Manager*

*"Set-up music play areas." EYP*

*"Tone down the visual, aural space." Musician*

- **Music as a learning tool**

It became obvious to some EYP/Ts and musicians that music was valuable for other areas of learning. Observing children moving to music gave some information about children's home culture and the music/dance of their home. Several mentioned that music impacts all learning.

- **Learning in relation to practice – EYP/Ts**

Critically important to embedding quality practice in settings is learning in relation to practice and we can see evidence of practical actions that practitioners are going to take as a result of the mini-project experience.

Ideas such as:

- Ensure that music is on the timetable
- Keep it simple
- Get favourite song cards for every area
- Observe more
- Compile core books with core music
- Children's ability to make music has opened avenues to add to our planning
- Song of the week to send home
- Music and movement every week
- Start a music group for parents and children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs

All of these actions will raise the status of music within the setting and in some cases highlight music to families as well.

- **Learning in relation to practice – Musicians**

The musicians benefitted from the expertise of a mentor who visited them in the setting, observed them and gave critical and supportive feedback on topics such as: the pacing of activities, the tempo of the songs, the need for repetition, how the children were responding and the need to base the practice on what the children are interested in, observed doing and are capable of doing.

The musicians' learning included:

- Less talk
- The importance of repetition
- Be flexible
- Session management and logistics
- Respond NOT deliver!
- Communicate, play, respond
- Meaningful interactions- how to make space for them?
  - Group size (keep it small)
  - 1-1 opportunities

Through the baseline questionnaire we found that EYP/Ts identified children in challenging circumstances as benefitting from arts activities, including music. They also highlighted the importance of the pedagogical choices and actions that are most effective: child-centred, reflecting the children's interests, improvisatory, with the needs of the child at the forefront. The musicians here are drawing attention to similar characteristics of effective practice.

Concerning the role of the musician when visiting a setting, factors to consider are eloquently articulated by these musicians:

*"You have to leave the music teacher/workshop leader at the door. EY music making is about communication, play, responding."*

And yet on the other hand:

*"I think there's always pressure to deliver 'something'...this project allowed me to just 'be'."*

Essentially, this is the conundrum for our sector. With no clear answer in mind I pose the questions:

- How can freelance musicians who work in settings earn their living from practice that is the most effective for children: based on observation time, just being in the setting, working in partnership with the practitioners, working in small groups, or 1-1?
- What needs to change to allow this practice to be commissioned and paid for?

**In conclusion, the mini-project was a pilot model that achieved all the project outcomes:**

**Outcome 1. To embed high quality music-making across Tri-borough EY settings, especially those with high proportions of children in challenging circumstances.**

**Outcome 3. To improve the skills and knowledge of music practitioners about the Early Years Foundation Stage including the characteristics of effective learning through increased collaboration with early years practitioners.**

**Outcome 4. To develop and strengthen the music-leading skills of Early Years professionals across the Tri-borough area.**

**Outcome 5. To increase knowledge of innovative practice and excellence in EY music-making across the music education and Early Years sectors.**

**Recommendation:**

- **Future CPD EY Music projects should include 'placements' for musicians in settings where they are not expected to 'do' music initially.**
- **The mini-project should be expanded with musicians working together with a setting for a term.**



## Impact of the project for partners

By the end of the project the majority of the consortium partners had changed their understanding and knowledge of what constituted quality early years music practice (the others had a high level of knowledge and understanding about EY music practice at the start of the project). The impact of this change in thinking can be seen in some of the comments:

*"At the start of the 2-year project, our aim was to make our early years programme more strategic and more regular... In consultation with Nicola Burke at the start of the 2-year project, we looked at settings we might approach, to fit with the overall aims of the project. Having attended TBEYMC training courses and worked with experienced practitioner Trish Power over the past year, [...]the project has enabled [us] to offer better training opportunities to students as well as widening our reach in the local area."*

*"...through the training we've had through the TMT project our aims and approach to the learning outcomes for our session have developed greatly. Also, from all the discussions around the development in this area our practice & approach to the project has broadened & we're constantly evaluating our practice to improve the impact we can have. "*

And from a member with less direct involvement:

*"I didn't get involved in the hands-on side of music practice, although I feel I have picked up some knowledge along the way. Particularly about the sector as a whole."*

When asked to comment on how the project had influenced the consortium partners' professional practice, the following themes emerged:

- The power and impact on understanding of bringing two disciplines together (EYP and musicians)
- Changed the 'ethos' of an organisation's EY music learning and participation programme
- Increased appreciation for the work of EYP/Ts and EY musicians
- Confidence, support and empowerment
- Developed thinking in terms of strategy and practice
- Endorsed what were felt to be minority views about EY music, strength of bringing music and early childhood sector together
- Time and investment are needed for training musicians to work in early years

*"It has influenced the way I feel a Learning & Participation department should work with a music leader, [...]student trainees and a setting in terms of the training on offer/being joined up/communicating/reflecting and moving forward together."*

*"I feel supported. Less isolated and more knowledgeable. Being a programme manager e.g not facilitator, there is an assumption that we should have great levels of knowledge and understanding, but we can feel quite distanced from the work itself."*

*"They've been able to make points I've not been able to make alone, and I feel more able to try to argue for certain things now. Maybe this is what comes from bringing the music sector and early childhood sectors together? Or perhaps it's just having a wider network of early childhood music people."*

## Baseline and Exit Questionnaire Findings

Early Years Practitioners / Teachers, Musicians and Partners were invited to complete a questionnaire to gather baseline information at the start of the project. Numbers of participants were respectively: 66 EYP/Ts, and 19 musicians. They were also invited to participate in a questionnaire at the end of the two-years. Numbers of participants were respectively: 17 EYP/Ts, and 8 musicians. The significant difference between the sample sizes of baseline and exit questionnaires limited comparison between findings.

Data collected from the first questionnaire helped to shape the courses that were devised for the first year, and gave a clear idea about the workforce. Not all the findings are reported here although all the data and analysis were used formatively during the project. The questionnaires were useful in helping to understand perceptions of the terms 'quality' and 'challenging circumstances' for EYP/Ts, musicians and partner organisations at both the start, and end of the project. Both terms were used when writing the outcomes for this project, and so it was important to ask participants how they define them so the project could be evaluated effectively with these perceptions in mind at the start and the end of the project.

## Quality music in EY settings

In order to assess outcome 1 (*To embed high quality music-making across Tri-borough EY settings, especially those with high proportions of children in challenging circumstances*), it was important to discover what was perceived as quality music activity by EYP/Ts and Musicians at the start and end of the project. The term quality is not neutral, meaning different things to different people, especially in terms of music education. EYP/Ts are firmly embedded in the EYFS understanding that young children learn through play; the musicians may not have the same understanding about music education. Firstly, we consider two factors that can influence quality music practice: a setting music policy and the creation of music areas in settings. We then consider the issues of knowledge and understanding of musical terms and children's musical development as well as confidence to plan musical activities. These items may be important to EYP/Ts feeling able to organise appropriate musical environments and activities in their setting. We finally look at interpretations of quality musical activities from different perspectives to come to an understanding of what 'quality' means to the different participants at the start and end of the project.



## *Music Policy and Setting Self-evaluation Tool*

The project has created straightforward [guidance](#) for settings through encouraging all settings to have a simple policy overview prepared stating how music is offered; and to self-evaluate provision against a simple framework. This template was introduced through the CPD sessions. The importance of such a document in getting senior members of staff to acknowledge the importance of music was highlighted as an important driver for raising the quality of musical activity in settings. Secondly, the self-evaluation offers a practical template for practitioners and managers to use as a first step in assessing their music provision against a bronze, silver and gold standard.

*“As suggested you need to get the owners/managers of settings involved so that one person wouldn’t be struggling to convince them that music is a valuable and educational tool in children’s learning.”* EYP/T Course Evaluation

At the start of the project **37% (n=24)** of settings already had a music policy, by the end of the project this had increased to **47% (n=8)**. Although the questionnaire sample sizes are different, creating a setting policy for music may take some time to generate.

## *Music areas*

The creation of music areas in settings provide children (and staff) with regular opportunities to play with sound and raise awareness generally of music making, more obviously than a music session may permit. At the start of the project levels of confidence to create suitable music areas were mixed:

- 43%, n=28 (N=66) scoring low levels of confidence 1-3
- 23% scored a high level of confidence

At the end of the project confidence to create music spaces in settings had increased:

- 65%, n=11 (N=17) scored high level of confidence (level 5)

It is positive to report that **nearly 60% of settings have created music areas in their setting because of their involvement in the project**. 30% (n=5) already had music areas and only 12% (n=2) said no. (see Appendix A for numerical information).

### *Musical Understanding and Confidence to plan musical activities*

It was stressed in the project rationale that music can be the subject many teachers feel the least confident to teach. At the start of the project we asked participants about their knowledge of children's musical development, musical terminology and their confidence level to plan music making in their setting (See Appendix B for numerical information).

- **Confidence to plan music making opportunities has increased through the project**
  - **20%, n=13 (N=65) scored high level at start**
  - **70%, n=12 (N=17) scored high level at the end of the project**
- **Understanding of musical terms increased the high-level scores through the project**
  - **48%, n=31 (N=65) scored level 4 or 5 at start**
  - **70%, n=12 (N=17) scored level 4 or 5 at end**
- **Understanding of children's musical development has increased through the project**
  - **63%, n=41 (N=65) scored low levels 1-3 at start**
  - **70%, n=12, (N=17) scored levels 4 or 5 at the end of the project**

**These factors are likely to contribute to raised quality of musical activities in settings and may be significant in helping to embed the quality of music making in settings**

### *What are quality musical activities? EYP/Ts*

At the start of the project, singing, movement / dancing / being active and instruments were the most popular items. Exploration or experimentation featured to a lesser degree.

At the end of the project, children leading, having free choice and the need for free-flow music were the most popular. Instruments (including making and the need for a culturally diverse range), music for movement and relaxation, and the need for small groups or one-to-one activities were mentioned (for more detail see Appendix C).



## Has your understanding about quality musical activities for children changed as a result of the project?

17 responses

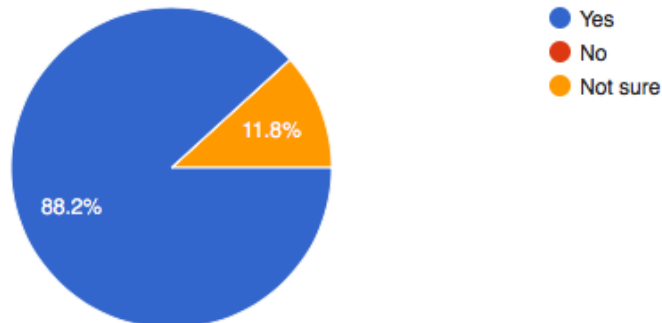


Figure 1 EYP/Ts Change in understanding about quality musical activities for children

*"We had set music times on a weekly basis, but now we allow the children to explore at their own pace and allow them to express their musical ability." EYP/T*

*"I value and provide opportunities for children's individual music making" EYP/T*

*"I have given children more freedom in their exploration of instruments and started incorporating a period of unstructured musical play in all my group sessions, observing and supporting children's own explorations."*

EYP/T

### Summary: Quality Musical Activities – EYP/Ts

Most of EYP/T respondents to the exit questionnaire have changed their understanding about what constitutes a quality musical activity. The quotes from participants indicate that set music times may now, in some cases, be supplemented with, or replaced by opportunities for children's own musical play. The responses to the questionnaire reveal a shift from the practical aspects of what constitutes a music activity at the start of the project (singing, instruments, movement) to grasping that children can have some autonomy in a creative process at the end of it.

There were some negative comments from the EYP/Ts at the end of the project about the musical activities in their setting:

*“Under resourced we need more instruments for children to get their hands on and enjoy handling and experimenting with sounds”*

*“It is not great as the children **do not get enough space** to be creative and enjoy movement. It is very controlled by the adults”*

*“Mixed, some teachers use music a lot and others don't. Music teacher is not specifically trained for EY although we are trying to get her to attend courses.”*

This reveals an understanding of quality musical activity and a desire to improve what is currently being offered in their setting. **Space and resources crop up again as factors to contend with.**

The EYP/Ts' responses at the end of the project show great understanding of what to do when children are exploring, evidence of how to support the free choice to make the activity meaningful. E.g., following the children's lead, and suggesting the 'scaffold' of a story where the children create a musical interpretation. This shows that the free exploration of instruments is shaped and guided as an expressive and creative process that has meaning to all involved. **Seeing children as music-makers and creators able to offer a coherent musical interpretation to a story.**

*What are quality musical activities? Musicians*

At the start of the project the musicians considered it important that musical activities have pedagogical underpinning e.g., *“A sense of development - the activity has a second (or third) stage that expands on the initial premise.”* And that children are learning about music, *“Expressivity - the activity has an expressive nature, exploring a wide range of dynamics, tempos and character.”*

They felt that the activities should include child-initiated elements, that they should be creative, use children's ideas and be fun and playful yet teacher-directed.

By the end of the project there is an acknowledgement of the importance of musical free play, e.g., *“Where the children are engaged and participating joyfully, exploring/making sounds on their terms and having time for children to do this.”* and the child-initiated idea seems to be more clearly articulated: *“Children's ideas being listened to and extended”*. (For numerical detail see Appendix D).

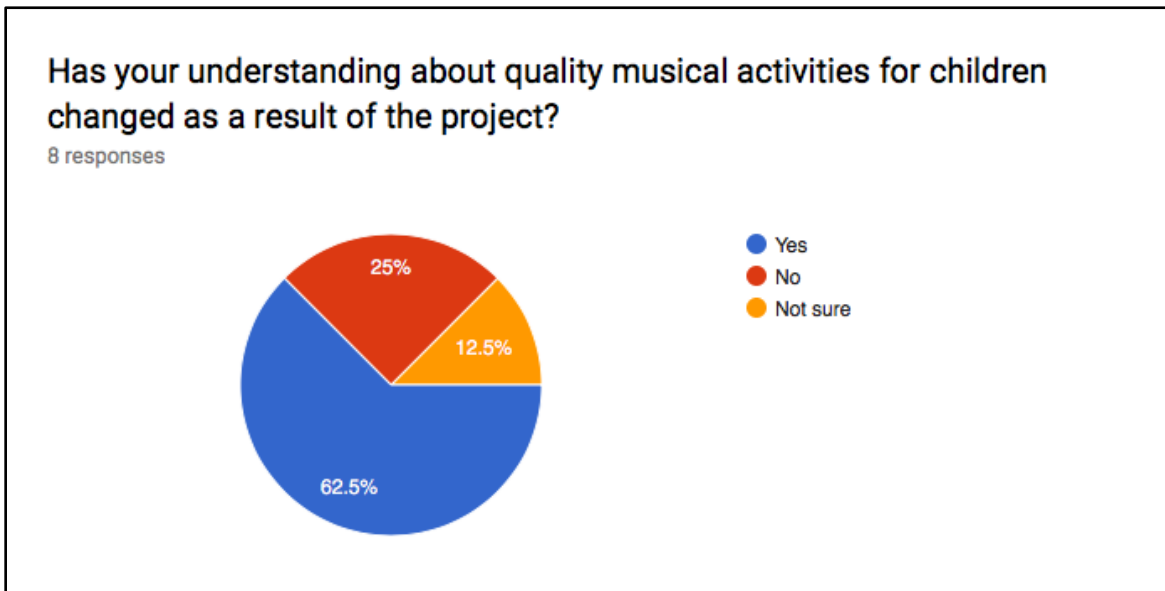


Figure 2 Musicians' change in understanding about quality musical activities

*"Now thinking more about child led activities"*

*"By sharing ideas with peers my understanding of quality musical activities has been enhanced. In many of the training sessions, a lot of the ideas I have seen or used have been mirrored or fleshed out, thus validating the work".*

*"I think I already understood what a quality musical activity looked like. But what has changed is an understanding of how that might fit in with the EYFS."*

*"Watching videos and sharing practice was really valuable."*

#### Summary Quality Musical Activities - Musicians

**At the start of the project some musicians were using the term 'child-initiated' but the exit responses show more understanding of what this might sound and look like:** e.g., children needing time and space to explore sounds on their own terms and a subtle move away from the emphasis on a 'teacher-directed' sense of where the session is going, to the notion of listening to the children and then thinking about how to extend the ideas offered (for more information see Appendix E).

## Quality Musical Activities - Summary

Singing and instruments characterise what might traditionally be considered appropriate activity for young children's music making; it is not surprising that EYP/Ts based their ideas of quality at the start of the project on these elements. The musicians' responses at the start focused more strongly on the ideas which lie behind the delivery of 'singing' and 'instruments' such as thoughts about structuring sessions, allowing children to initiate and lead, and the elements of music (e.g., dynamics, tempo) that can be explored through activities, namely their pedagogy.

By the end of the project both musicians and EYP/Ts talk about children leading musical activities as a hallmark of quality practice. The musicians are able to relate their activities better to EYFS and the EYP/Ts reveal that more free choice, exploratory musical opportunities may be on offer in settings than at the start of the project.

Support for the work of musicians in settings is still not understood nor appreciated in every setting. Musicians sometimes feel isolated when they visit settings, often left alone to 'get on with it'. Communication of expectations and the whole setting understanding the practice, needs support based on knowledge from the management team.

- **88% EYP/Ts (N=17), & 62.5% Musicians (N=8), have altered their understanding about quality musical activities for young children.**
- **Both groups acknowledge that quality musical activity should include child-led, exploratory, playful music-making that allows for children's musical ideas to be listened to.**
- **Lack of support and understanding about the musicians' role in settings remains a challenge.**
- **Training in music in EYFS for Senior Management should be a priority in subsequent projects.**

## Challenging Circumstances

In order to evaluate outcome 2 which speaks about the challenging circumstances faced by children in the Tri-borough it was necessary firstly to find out how the term 'challenging circumstances' was understood amongst the different participant groups. At the start of the project there was already some consensus across all three groups of participants (EYP/Ts, Musicians and Partners) about challenging circumstances faced by children in the Tri-borough. Every group mentioned:

- speech and language
- space or the environment
- parents and the home
- special educational needs or disability

Partners and EYP/Ts mentioned:

- English as an Additional Language; and Deprivation

Musicians and Partners mentioned:

- Nurturing; and Being cared-for

## Effective approaches for challenging circumstances – EYP/Ts

We asked EYP/Ts about the most effective approaches/activities that they have found in working with children facing challenging circumstances the following themes emerged (n=44 responses):

**Pedagogy (n=23)** includes: skills, choices, values, attitudes and actions of the teacher/practitioner

*“Child-initiated learning and 'in the moment' learning meets the child where they are and use their interests to move their learning forward.” (PEDAGOGY)*

These comments demonstrate that practitioners understand the importance of their pedagogical choices and actions, reflecting their values and beliefs about the essential ingredients of quality teaching and learning for young children. This practice is firmly embedded in their work. The models of early years music education that are frequently brought in to settings may not adopt these approaches. Adult-directed musical activities, planned for in advance, may not be responsive, in the moment to the interests and preferences of the children facing challenging circumstances in a particular setting. The most popular other themes generated were:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Arts (n=15)</b>                      | e.g., <i>“Music, Art and very visual activities for EAL and SEN”; “Practical. Non-verbal music making movement to music”</i> |
| <b>Environment (n=11)</b>               | includes: use of materials, creating quiet calm spaces, sensory spaces, book places, tents, outings                          |
| <b>Targeted speech activities (n=5)</b> | e.g., <i>“Talking slowly and clearly; providing as many opportunities as possible for the children to speak in English.”</i> |

The EYP/Ts identified that their skills, sensitivity, the ways they interact and the activities they choose, namely, their effective pedagogy, to be the most effective approaches for children in their settings experiencing challenging circumstances. They highlighted the arts as being particularly beneficial and the need for suitable environments, integrated working, targeted speech activities and physical play.

Outcome 5: To increase knowledge of innovative practice and excellence in EY music-making across the music education and Early Years sectors.

This outcome has been achieved through various opportunities. Nicola and Stuart have presented the aims and purposes of the project on different platforms to audiences from both early years education and music education sectors. This has taken place at the following:

## Conferences

- Tri-borough Early Years x 2
- London Early Years Music Network 2017
- European Network-Music Educators and Researchers of Young Children 2017
- Music Mark 2017
- Mediterranean Forum for Early Childhood Music Education 2017
- The Spark Arts for Children Symposium 2018
- London Expo 2017
- Manchester Expo 2017 & 2018
- Nursery World 2019

## Articles

Furthermore, Nicola and Stuart have written six articles for both the early years education and the music education sectors:

- Youth Music – <https://network.youthmusic.org.uk/posts/tri-music-together-early-years-workforce-development-project>
- Music education - <https://musiceducation.global/tri-music-together-one-hubs-foray-into-early-years-music-provision/>
- Nursery World x 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> article to be published Sept 2018)
- Music Teacher
- Early Education Journal (Autumn 2018)

## Legacy

### Musical Development Matters

One of the aims of TMT was to create resources to support early childhood music and to create a legacy. *Musical Development Matters* is a brand-new guidance document that has been written to support those who work with young children in early childhood. The overall purpose of the guidance is to support practitioners, teachers, musicians and parents to see the musical attributes of young children and to offer ideas as to how they can support and nurture children's musical development by offering broad musical experiences. The guidance is presented in the format of the non-statutory guidance document *Development Matters* because that is a familiar and popular format with practitioners.

As an Associate of Early Education, Nicola was able to create this guidance with the support of Early Education, *Tri-Music Together* and Youth Music. Many passionate, committed people and organisations were also involved to support and pilot the guidance. The guidance has been written to help raise the profile of music in early childhood and to support those working with children in early childhood not only in the Tri-borough, but further afield.

*Musical Development Matters* is co-badged by Early Education and Youth Music and is available to download for free from Early Education:

<https://www.early-education.org.uk/musical-development-matters>

With supporting materials available from Youth Music:

<https://network.youthmusic.org.uk/musical-development-matters>

This forms part of the ongoing legacy from the project. The legacy of the project is continuing through:

- End of project / Musical Development Matters Launch event September 6<sup>th</sup> 2018
- Musical Development Matters + Online resource
- Bringing together CEOs of National Organisations: Early Education & Youth Music

It is remarkable that so much has been achieved on top of the already enormous task of planning and coordinating a CPD project of the size and complexity of TMT. Due credit must be given to the extraordinary way that Nicola Burke has led this project. She has been inspirational. As one partner member commented on the exit questionnaire: *"Nicola is a super star."*

Thoughts from members of the partner organisations about next steps included:

*"This has been an innovative and ambitious project and it has achieved great things. But it's just the start: even across a relatively small area (TB) it feels like we have only just begun, just scratched the surface - so there is a long way to go to effect real change across the education/EY sector and thus better support young children. But, small steps - **it's been a very positive start and I sincerely hope it is just the beginning and that local and national governments take heed!**"*

*"I'm interested in the relationship different partners have between their management staff and practitioners.[...]How the practitioner CPD has impacted on practice on a micro level is probably clearer but is there a mechanism for that expertise to feed up to managers and influence project design? How can we do this better? Ideally it would be great to have specific CPD for managers in a future project - not just the meetings. I fully appreciate that for a lot of managers EY is just a small part of their job and they are extremely pushed for time.[...]What CPD would managers need/want to do their jobs better?"*

In terms of next steps: one partner organisation member suggested that the partner meetings might be streamlined with sub-groups created to focus on particular areas of expertise.

The partner meetings have been so useful for those that attended, yet there is the perception that the learning from the partner meetings should be shared further 'up the line' within organisations. **A subsequent project could focus on finding effective ways to inform managers of arts organisations about EY music education.**

These comments suggest that there is a need for continuing what this project has, in some respects, piloted. **Recommendation: The TMT models of CPD be trialled in other MEHs with a steering group of arts/bridge organisations to support and advise. Working towards the most effective CPD model for EY music education for musician and EYP/T workforce**



## Unexpected finding

### Musicians - Disconnected workforce

*"...For me personally, as someone still building my practice, my participation in early years music work is very much on a project by project basis, so the more connections I make with people in the sector, the more work flows! It's hard in the patches when you don't have any early years projects in the diary, it's easy to feel completely disconnected from the sector...."*

*"...I think probably like many freelancers my work is just a small bit of my wider work...so given I'm not doing a lot of work here, I don't feel much of a part of the bigger picture of EY work in the borough. I tend to arrive, deliver the work and leave..."*

These musicians' feedback after attending a sharing session in February 2018 are indicative of the context for most music practitioners in the early years. All mention in some way or other the sense of isolation, or disconnection from what they perceive to be a bigger picture to which they are not able to contribute. The meeting to share together has clearly allowed a sense of connection that has been appreciated.

We asked both Partners and Musicians to select how they would describe their working relationship. Over half (55.6%) the partner organisation members (n=9) view their relationship with freelance EY musicians as an integral part of the team; nearly a quarter (22.2%) see the relationship as a collaborative partnership.

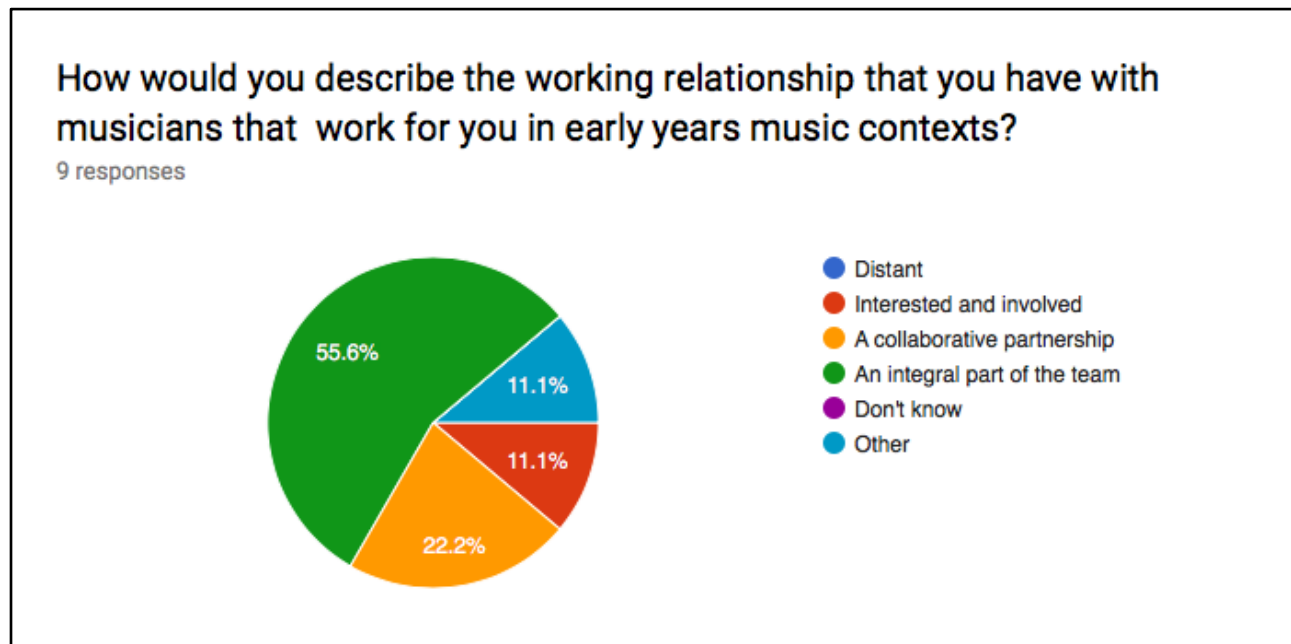


Figure 3: Partners' perceptions of the relationship with freelance EY musicians

Only a quarter (25%) of the musicians (n=8) perceived the relationship they had with the partner organisation as an integral part of the team; the largest number (37.5%) viewed the relationship as a collaborative partnership; a quarter (25%) perceived it as interested and involved; and 12.5% as distant.

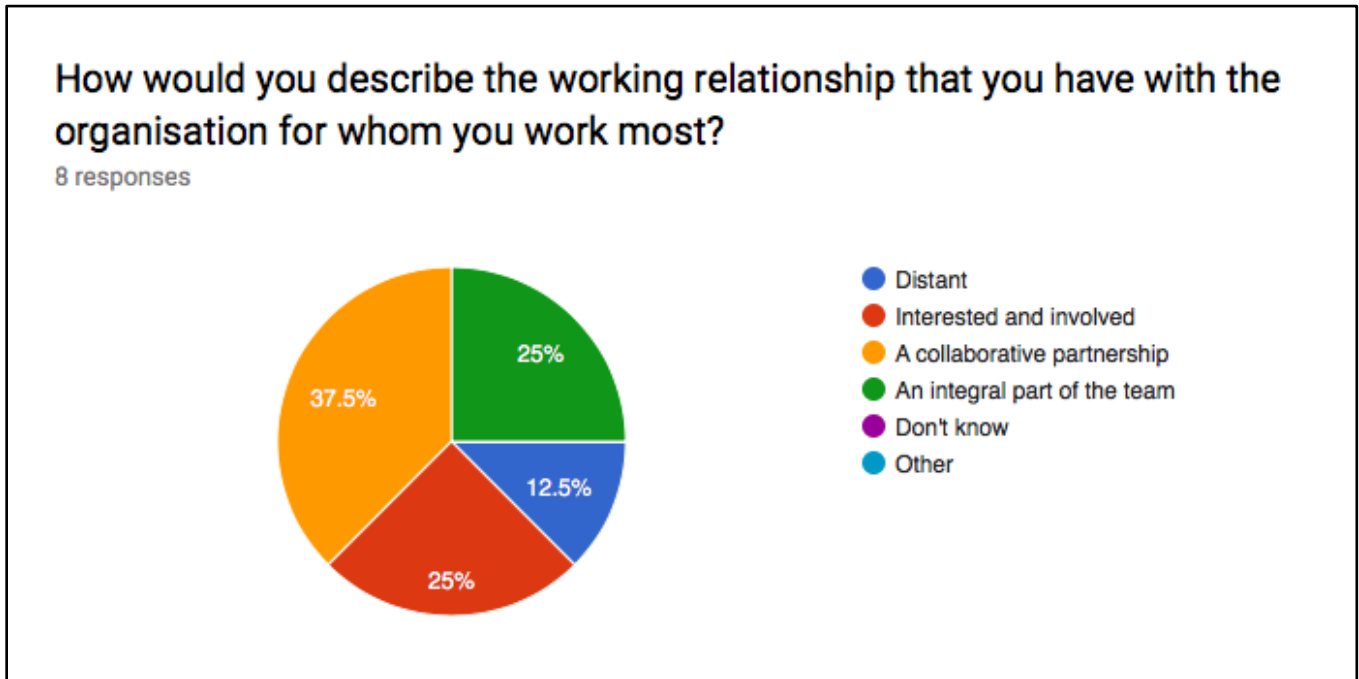


Figure 4: Freelance EY musicians' perceptions of the relationship with the partner organisation

These differing perceptions give an insight into the different worlds of freelance delivery and belonging to an arts organisational structure. **I would recommend that this might be a topic for further investigation, both sample sizes are small, yet the qualitative comments throughout this evaluation suggest that there may be a role for arts organisations to review and develop the relationship they have with their freelance EY musician workforce.**



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# Appendix A

Charts - EYP/Ts: start and end of project - confidence to create music spaces

Start of the project – EYP/Ts

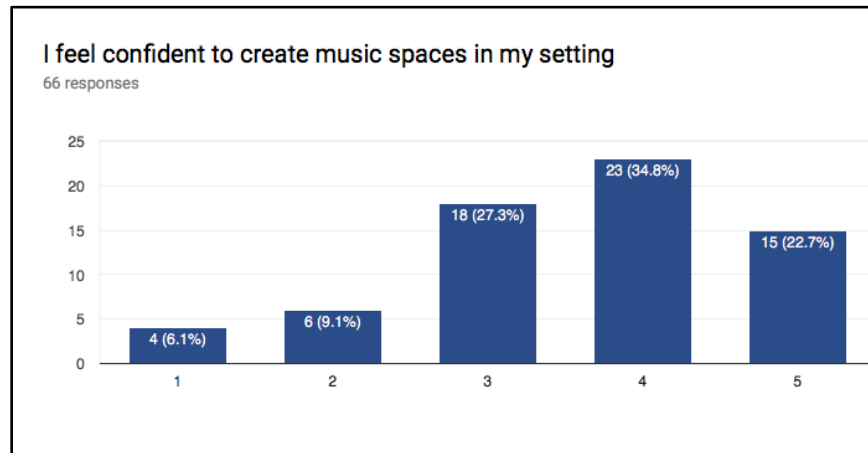


Figure 5: Start of the project EYP/Ts confidence to create music spaces

End of the project – EYP/Ts

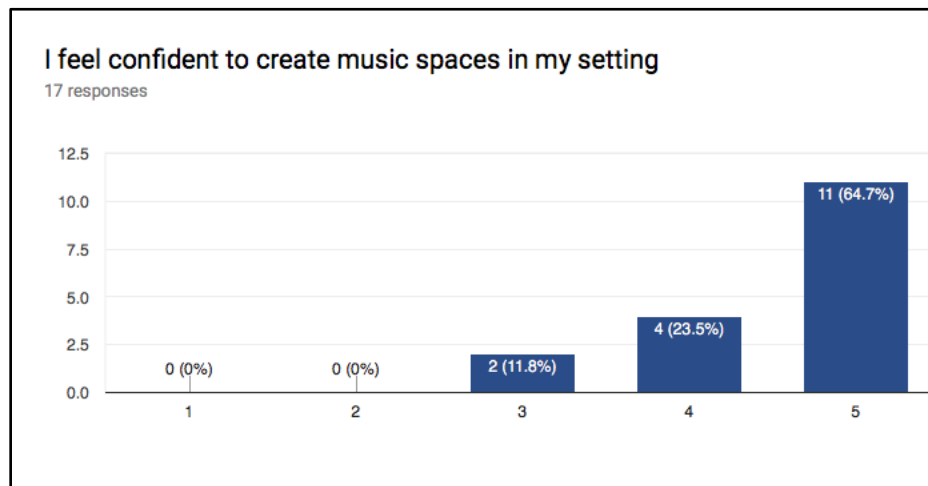


Figure 6: End of the project EYP/Ts confidence to create music spaces

## Appendix B

Charts – EYP/Ts: Start and End of project - understanding of musical concepts and confidence to plan for music

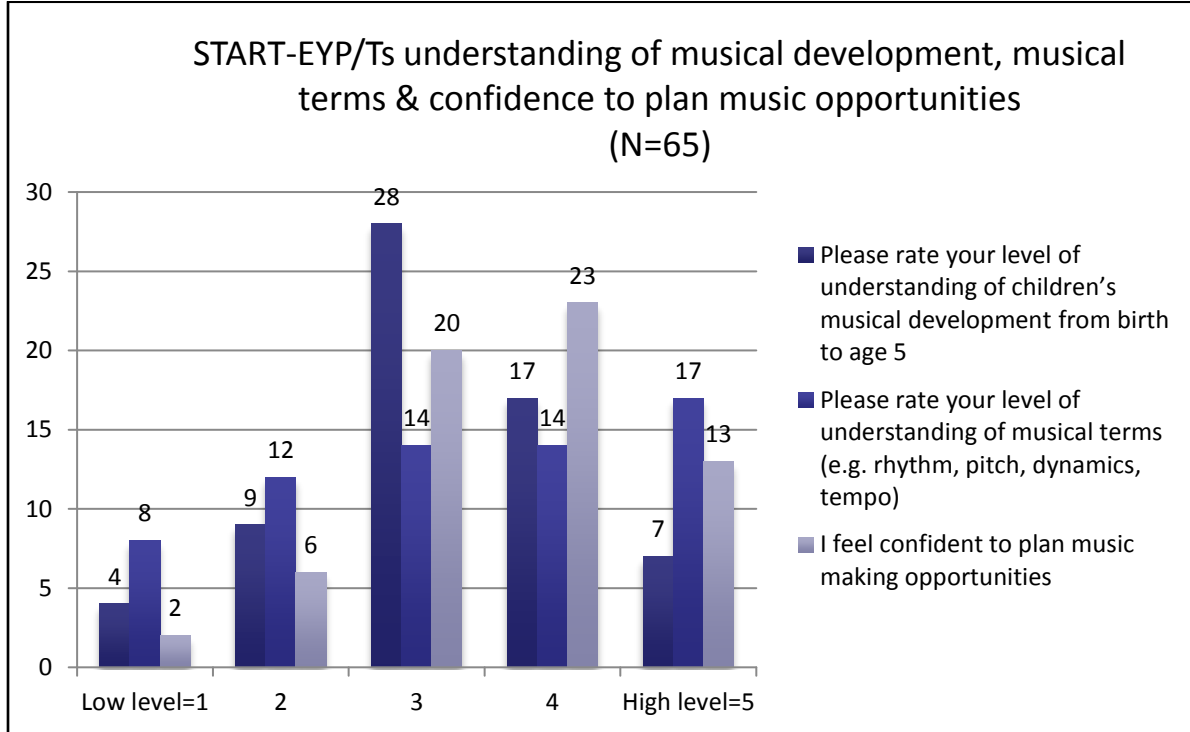


Figure 7: Start -EYP/Ts understanding of musical development, musical terms & confidence to plan music

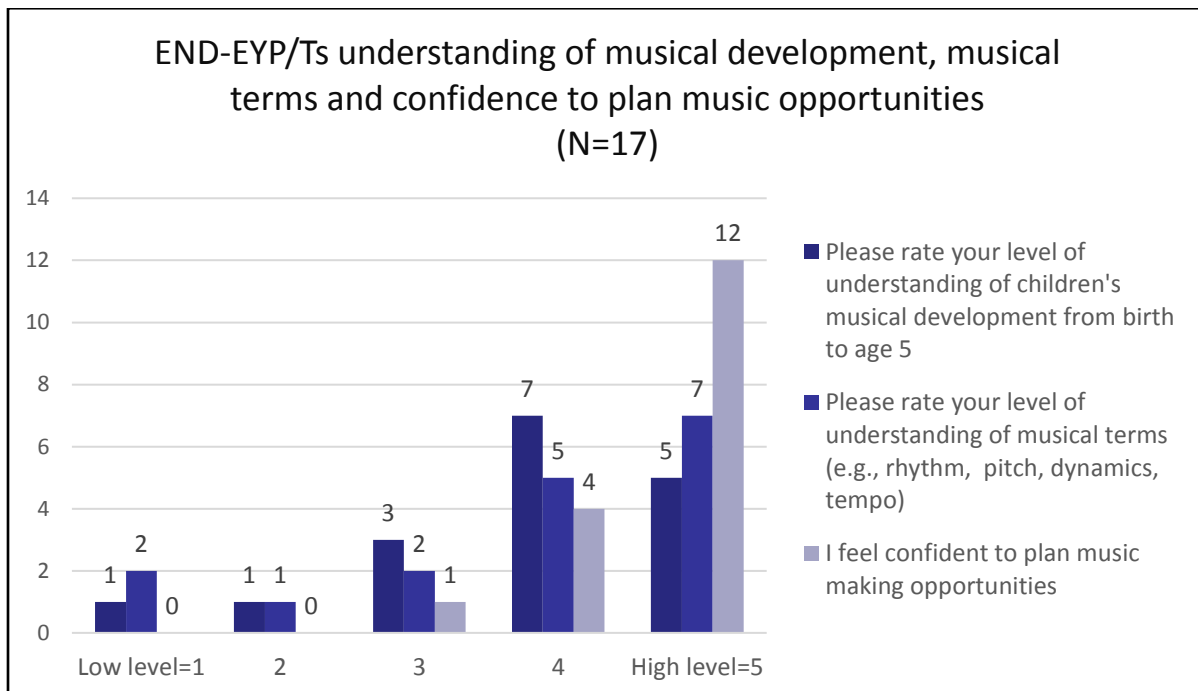


Figure 8: End - EYP/Ts understanding of musical development, musical terms & confidence to plan music

## Appendix C

Table 7 EYP/Ts: What are quality musical activities for early years children? Start and End of project

<b>What are quality musical activities for early years children?</b>			
<b>START EYPs (n=59, N=66)</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>END EYP/Ts (N=17)</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Singing (n=23)</b>	<i>"Nursery rhymes and playground game songs"</i>	<b>Children have free choice/ free-flow music (n=3)</b>	<i>"...having free choice and following their lead and making up stories where the children provide the musical interpretation"</i>
<b>Instruments (n=16)</b>	<i>"Copy back the pattern on unpitched percussion."</i>	<b>Instruments (n=4) includes: making own instruments and having cultural instruments from around the world</b>	
<b>Movement/dancing (n=13)</b>	<i>"Activities that involve music and movement."</i>	<b>Children leading (n=2)</b>	<i>"...where the children lead, take part, use resources and have fun!"</i>
<b>Emphasis on actions/being active (n=7)</b>	<i>"Active, exciting, involves movement..."</i>	<b>Music for Physical activity (n=2)</b>	<i>"Making music and movement with ribbons..."</i>
<b>Exploration/ experimentation (n=5)</b>	<i>"Circle times using instruments and then watching children explore making different sounds with resources in the classroom e.g. putting a metal bowl on their head and tapping this with a wooden spoon (this comes to mind from last week)"</i>	<b>Small groups with 1-2 staff (n=1)</b>	
		<b>Singing (n=1)</b>	
		<b>Music for Relaxation</b>	

## Appendix D

Charts – Musicians: Start and End of project understanding of child development and the EYFS

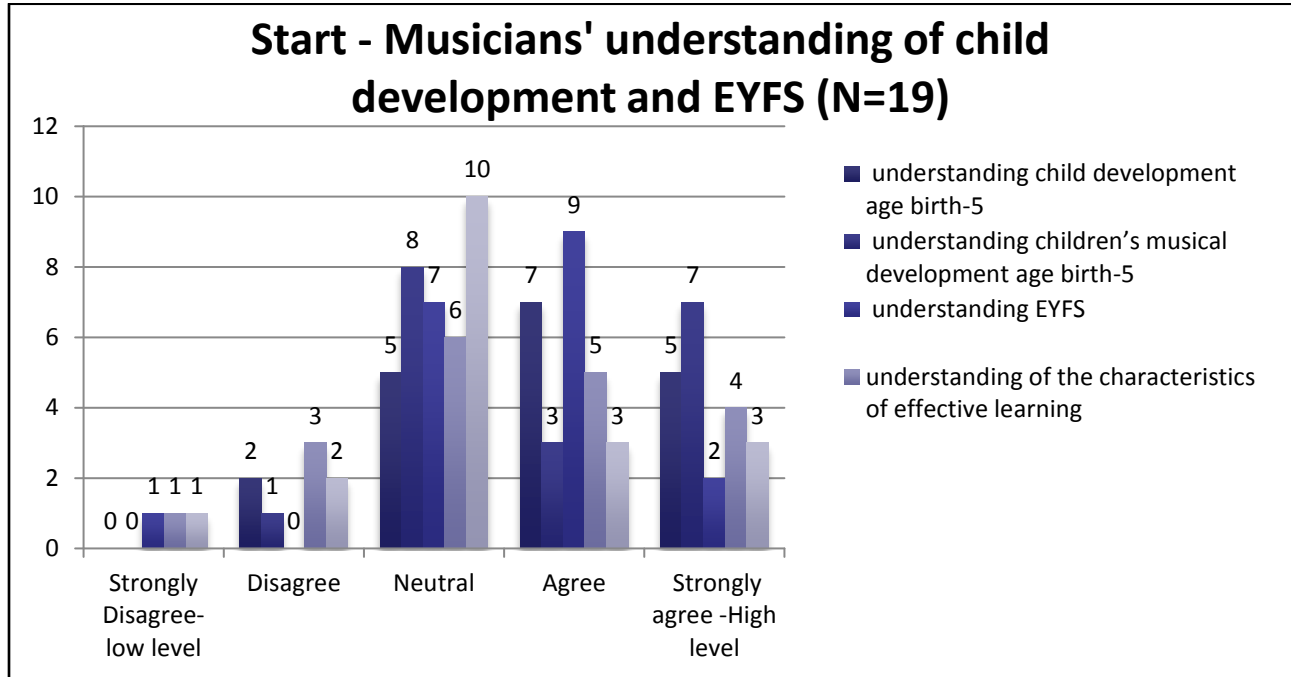


Figure 9: Start – Musicians' understanding of child development, musical development and the EYFS

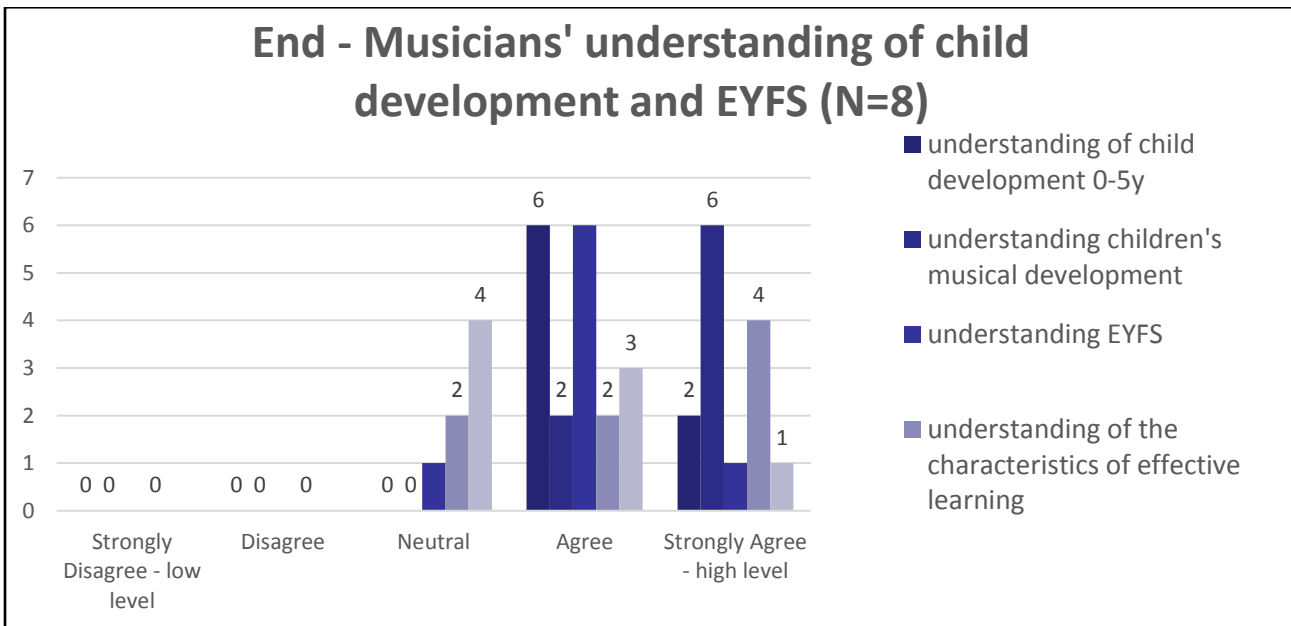


Figure 10: End – Musicians' understanding of child development, musical development and the EYFS

## Appendix E

Table 8 Musicians: What are quality musical activities for early years children?

<b>What are quality musical activities for early years children?</b>			
<b>START Musicians (N=19)</b>	Example	<b>END Musicians (N=8)</b>	Example
<b>Activities have pedagogical underpinning</b> (n=8)	<i>"A sense of development - the activity has a second (or third) stage that expands on the initial premise."</i>	<b>Combining adult and child-led aspects</b> (n=3)	<i>"Children's ideas being listened to and extended"</i>
<b>Children are learning about music</b> (n=8, of which n=2, singing and vocalisation)	<i>"Expressivity - the activity has an expressive nature, exploring a wide range of dynamics, tempos and character."</i>	<b>Musical Free Play</b> (n=2)	<i>"Where the children are engaged and participating joyfully, exploring/making sounds on their terms and having time for children to do this."</i>
<b>Musical activities include child-initiated elements</b> (n=7)	<i>"Allowing them to express themselves and have child-initiated activities."</i>	<b>Children composing</b> (n=2)	<i>"When they start making up songs and accompanying themselves, and enjoy performing and sharing."</i>
<b>Creative/imaginative/ children's ideas</b> (n=5)		<b>Value of call and response</b>	<i>"Call and response activities with djembes[...]or songs with room to add call/response and significant pauses that build anticipation. These activities foster vocal responses and children build confidence very quickly. They [children] call out without much prompting and often end up leading the call/response. Sometimes they lead by simply playing a rhythm on the djembe for the rest of the group to copy. This is a successful activity for children as young as 9-10 months old."</i>
<b>Fun/joy</b> (n=5), <b>play/playful</b> (n=4)		<b>Singing</b> (n=1)	
<b>Teacher-directed</b> (n=2)	<i>"Joy and a clear sense (for the leader) of what you would like to be the focus of any particular activity."</i>	<b>Good quality instruments</b> (n=1)	





Contact details

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and Westminster**

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