



mac
makes music



MAC Makes Music

2020 - 2021



**YOUTH
MUSIC**



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Introduction

MAC Makes Music is an award winning* Youth Music funded programme that strives for musical inclusion. We work with children and young people up to 25 years' old and develop creative, inclusive, young person-centred musical opportunities. Based at the Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) in Birmingham, we work with 5 local Music Education Hubs to further advocate and push for musical inclusion across the West Midlands and beyond. The programme is split across 3 levels to ensure a multi-pronged approach towards sustainable musical inclusion; strategy, workforce development, and musical delivery.

The 2020-21 financial year, that this report covers, has been quite extraordinary to say the least; beginning with a standstill due the COVID-19 pandemic, then ramping up into a flurry of innovation, experimentation, and adaptation. Despite the unusual circumstances we still worked hard to build on the progress towards the outcomes of our current grant;

1. Improved quality of music delivery for children and young people.
2. Increased musically inclusive practice in Music Education Hubs.
3. Improve the music and creative skills of children and young people.
4. Improve children and young people's self-esteem and self-efficacy.
5. Improve the quality of children and young people's communication and interpersonal / social skills.
6. Increased quality and understanding of Youth Voice practice
7. Increased progression opportunities for those in SEN/D and SEMH.

As a programme that advocates for critical reflection and lifelong learning, we have requested a detailed review of the year from our external evaluators, Quench Arts. This report looks at each outcome we are working on and reviews the progress we're making towards them. We are delighted to share some of the lovely quotes, stories, case studies, ideas, and challenges that we have faced over the past year. We hope that you find this report useful to dip in and out of to discover more about certain areas our practice.

Throughout the year we've been so grateful to find ways of making music with young people. We trialled everything from live online sessions, delivered instruments to homes, pre-recorded videos, posted musical activity packs, hybrid sessions at MAC, to in-person delivery in education settings. The work that you're about to read about wouldn't have been possible without the support of many wonderful musicians, key staff and our partnerships with local MEHs, schools, pupil referral units, charities, and arts organisations.

Holly Radford – Producer, MAC Makes Music

**Outstanding Musical Initiative Award 2020 – Music and Drama Education Awards*



Closer Look – Evaluation

Quality of music delivery for children and young people.

Indicators and sources of evidence for outcome 1

Outcome: Improved quality of music delivery for children and young people.

Indicators:

1. Music Leaders incorporate Youth Music' quality framework into their planning and reflective practice.
2. Increased knowledge and understanding of the music leader workforce around the needs and associated behaviours of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
3. Music leaders adapt their practice to become more young-person centred, use news skills and strategies to promote a positive learning environment, and support progression.
4. Music activities are perceived to be of a high quality by participants and observers.

Evidence:

1. Music leaders' reflective diaries with evidence of session criteria from the quality framework.
2. Feedback from staff observing sessions via questionnaire and evaluation forms.
3. Verbal feedback from young people participating in sessions.
4. Statistics around attendance at CPD events and follow up questionnaires to track changes in practice.
5. Comparison of baseline to end point knowledge acquired by music leaders around children and young people's life circumstances and methods for supporting music making in relation to this.

Outcome Context

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) is well placed to lead on improving the quality of music provision for *all* children and young people through the MAC Makes Music (MMM) programme. Through our Youth Music grant we have built strong partnerships with 5 local West Midlands Music Education Hubs (Birmingham, Coventry, Sandwell, Solihull, and Worcestershire) and their partner organisations in order to challenge practice and promote musical inclusion in delivery and strategic planning, and our experience enables us to offer programmes of work which lead by example.

This year has been challenging for our sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic but we are proud of the work we have developed and delivered and the way in which we have adapted our practice to meet the needs of the young people we engage. We have been incredibly lucky to work with a fantastic group of talented and committed music leaders who have been so open and willing to significantly change the way they work and to learn new skills to ensure that we can continue to offer good quality, inclusive provision. The outcomes that they have supported us and the young people to achieve are testament to their hard work, skills, dedication and tenacity.

We have also been able to offer a wide ranging CPD programme over the past year, largely online, which has enabled us to have even more reach from across the UK, supporting the professional development of those who wouldn't normally be able to attend face to face sessions. This CPD offer has been a particular success. The following evidence against indicators illustrates clear progress in meeting this outcome.

Analysis Against Each Outcome Indicator

Youth Music Quality Framework

Music Leaders incorporate Youth Music' quality framework into their planning and reflective practice.

Sources of evidence: Music leaders' reflective diaries with evidence of session criteria from the quality framework; Comparison of baseline to end point knowledge acquired by music leaders around children and young people's life circumstances and methods for supporting music making in relation to this.

Indicator 1

MMM has encouraged all music leaders to read and refer to the Youth Music 'Do Review Improve' quality framework (both the standard version and the adapted framework for working with young disabled musicians) when planning and reflecting upon sessions. Some example extracts from music leader reflective diaries demonstrate this.

Young People Centred (Y1) - Music Leader AJ - 21/1/21

I will see how my strategy of incorporating challenges that the kids give me works out – I am hoping it will hook them to come back and hear what they have asked me to learn and make it very participant centred. As kids can switch off anytime, they really need to feel motivated to come to / stay in the session.

Music Leader Practice (M4) - Music Leader MR

An unexpected outcome was to realise the variety of meaningful activities we can create on Zoom, and the fact that now we can even make music together unmuted. A continuous challenge is to think of creative activities to engage participants of different abilities, helping them develop their individual skills. This project has made me think about my role as a choir director from a new perspective and consider the 'limitations' as triggers for creativity. I have enjoyed the challenge of thinking and developing activities that were fully inclusive, and I think some of the things I learned from this project will impact my activities as a conductor. I am already teaching my other groups how to sing and sign.

Music Leader Practice (M5) - Music Leader SW - 10/12/20

I talked to the school about using music sessions as reward and punishment and how detrimental that was to the young people and the process. I also talked to them about groupings and trying to maintain groups and not drop people in and out of them as it disrupts the creative and social progress that those groups have made. I talked to them about some people requiring 121 so that I can engage them properly and allow them the success that they deserve. Then I talked to them about how wonderful it has been overall and how supportive the teaching assistants and other staff have been.

Session Context (S4) - Music Leader LB - 5/12/20

I think we should read the chat out more [on Zoom] and describe what's going on for the visually impaired participants (just as common practice)

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health

Increased knowledge and understanding of the music leader workforce around the needs and associated behaviours of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

Source of evidence: *Statistics around attendance at CPD events and follow up questionnaires to track changes in practice.*

144 participants from across the workforce accessed a range of CPD opportunities including:

- [Music and SEMH](#) Training led by Phil Mullen (not yet completed; 18 trainees, including 7 working within our MEH hub areas and 11 from further afield including Nuneaton, Nottingham, Herefordshire, Exmouth, Glasgow and Manchester).
- 6 [Music Leader Exchange](#) sessions - a series of online peer support/networking sessions running from Feb 2021 to connect practitioners, share learning and challenges, and offer peer support. Sessions covered:
 - Remote Engagement with Primary School Aged Children (31 participants)
 - Professional Development during COVID19 (18 participants)
 - Inclusive Group Music Making (online and in-person) (22 participants)
 - Online Choirs & Vocal (16 participants)
 - Beats, Rhymes & Lyrics (working with CYP excluded / at risk, in-person and online) (16 participants)
 - Remote Engagement with Young People who identify as Disabled or have Additional Needs. (13 participants)In total, 77 different practitioners were engaged across these sessions with 116 attendances.
- 1 Peer Sharing Session based on Music in Pupil Referral Units / with those Excluded from School (6 participants)
- 1 Winter MMM Staff Reflection Session (11 participants)

Additional training provided by partners but offered to MMM staff with attendance covered via MMM's budget included:

- BEYMC (Birmingham Early Years Music Consortium) Delivering Group Music Sessions Online (8 trainees)
- Goldsmiths University Community Music Module Attendance:
 - Community Music Practice, An Introduction (3 trainees)
 - Working with Disabled Young People and Young People with Special Educational Needs (4 trainees)
- Soundabout Choir Leader Training (1 trainee)
- Trauma Training BYOS (2 trainees)
- Music Leader Ann Jones represented MAC (and the UK) for an international research project on Reflective Practice led by Phil Mullen. USA, Australia and Brazil also participating.

MMM also delivered inclusion training input for:

- Coventry Music Service staff undertaking a MAC & Drake Music programme.
- Encore Enterprises' Inclusion Champions on 'All Included' programme.

48 shadowing sessions were provided to the local workforce.



144
CPD
Participants

In regards to the 6 Music Leader Exchange sessions, of 39 responses in total across all sessions, feedback showed that:

51% felt the session improved their sense of connectedness a lot and 49% a little;
56% felt the session improved their motivation a lot and 44% a little;
33% felt the session improved their confidence a lot, 62% a little and 5% felt there was no improvement.

In terms of overall opinion of the sessions:

67% felt that the sessions were excellent and 33% good;
51% felt that the relevance to their needs was excellent, 38% good and 10% fair;
85% stated that the facilitator was excellent, with 15% stating that they were good.

In regards to the PRU Peer Sharing session:

33% felt that their knowledge improved a lot and 67% felt it improved a little;
17% felt that their skills improved a lot, 50% a little and 33% felt they stayed the same;
17% felt that their confidence improved a lot, 67% a little and 17% felt it stayed the same;
67% felt that their motivation improved a lot, 17% a little and 17% felt it stayed the same.

In regards to the Winter Reflection session:

33% felt that their knowledge improved a lot and 67% felt it improved a little;
17% felt that their skills improved a lot, 83% a little;
33.3% felt that their confidence improved a lot, 33.3% a little and 33.3% felt it stayed the same;
67% felt that their motivation improved a lot and 33% a little.

These sessions enabled practitioners to reflect on what was successful and why, any difficulties and how these were overcome, and remaining challenges.

The Music and SEMH training course sessions have not yet been completed, therefore the impact and evaluation from this course cannot be included in this report. However, increased understanding of the music leader workforce around the needs and associated behaviours of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties has also been improved via [SEMH digital training resources](#) and videos available on MAC's website, which have had a combined total of 142 views.

We've kept in touch with some course participants from previous cohorts, and a 2018-19 participant recently commented;

"The course itself was really, really rewarding. Not just for my PRU teaching but for my approach to whole class, class control, things like that. It's had a real knock on effect, not just this very specific kind of teaching we do, but across all my teaching. That's been really, really positive." Richard Russell, Solihull Music Service

Music Leader Practice

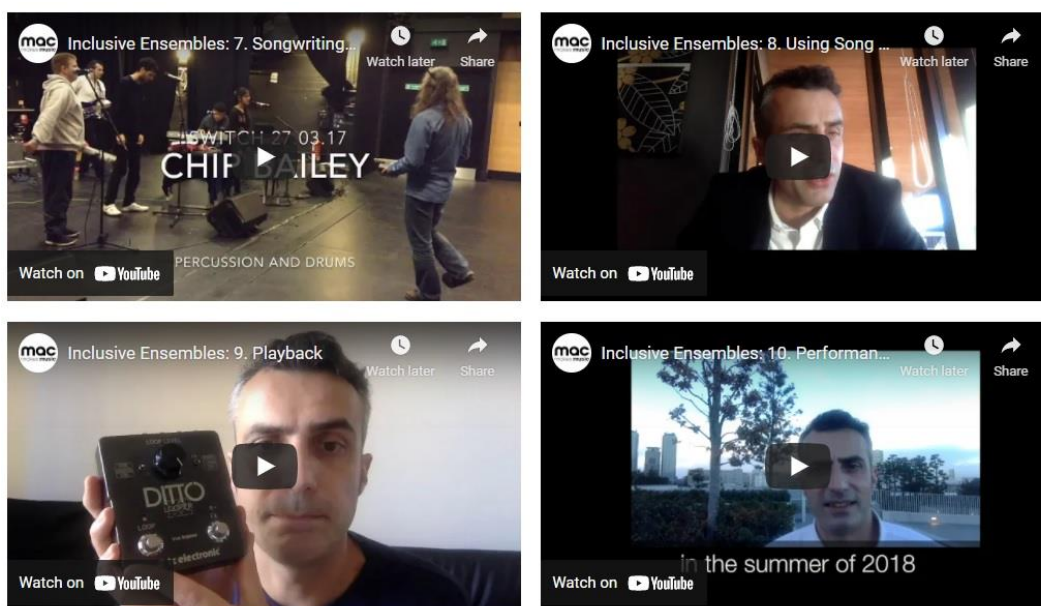
Music leaders adapt their practice to become more young-person centred, use new skills and strategies to promote a positive learning environment, and support progression.

Source of evidence: Statistics around attendance at CPD events and follow up questionnaires to track changes in practice; comparison of baseline to end point knowledge acquired by music leaders around children and young people's life circumstances and methods for supporting music making in relation to this.

In addition to the SEMH resources already highlighted, the following resources shared on MAC's website have supported music leaders to become more young-person centred:

- [Inclusive Ensemble Videos](#) with Dan Whitehouse
- [Music Leader Exchange](#) Discussions (videos of the 6 sessions detailed above)

These videos have had a combined total of 415 views.



Screenshot from Dan Whitehouse's 'Inclusive Ensembles' videos online

Evaluation feedback from training opportunities provided, as detailed under indicator 2, highlights how music leaders have adapted their practice as a result of the training, in addition to clear ongoing reflection and refinement as evidenced through reflective diaries. Example quotes include:

Online Choir and Vocals feedback

- *I plan to start running some online rehearsals with the groups I conduct and those I manage.*
- *I will certainly include more body percussion in warm-ups. I will reflect more on what I do and why I do it/improvements I need to make.*
- *Changed my way of thinking about Zoom.*

Professional Development During COVID-19 feedback:

- *It was great to hear all the good things that have come out of this pandemic, and how everyone has adapted well. It was a chance for me to stop and reflect on my work.*
- *It gave me ideas of new programs to investigate, and also ways in which I could plan the Leaders Exchange session I will be facilitating.*
- *I really appreciate the space to discuss and reflect about these topics, which as a freelancer one usually has to do alone.*

Working remotely with CYP who identify as disabled or who have ASN feedback:

- *I enjoyed learning about how to engage virtually with people with additional needs, and specially finding out about the aesthetics of disability, which was a new concept for me.*
- *I will continue trying to make my sessions more inclusive, considering the different needs that people may have, and thinking that if I provide the right environment, those additional needs don't have to be an obstacle.*

Music in PRUs / with those Excluded from School - Sharing feedback:

- *(I learned) that a lot of the problems and challenges I have encountered are not individual to me which is reassuring. I picked up some really useful tips, especially with how to tackle getting around unsuitable lyrics.*
- *I love the idea of drawing the response to a sound. I'll try that or other non-verbal responses.*
- *I think a big category and point of thought is real instruments versus music tech (DAWs). Both equally valid ways to approach sessions, but both very different in terms of outcomes and also the 'process'.*
- *Learning about different people's methods and approaches enables me to come up with different ideas for my own sessions.*

Winter Reflection feedback

- *We have to continue to adapt our practices to suit the restrictions that come with the coronavirus, and many community musicians are finding increasingly creative ways of doing so. For example, the online chord player highlighted today - this will open up music making possibilities for many participants.*
- *I learnt new ways to engage online, particularly new ways to connect sound to Zoom.*
- *It was nice to hear other leaders' experiences of this year...It was good to get validation from other leaders that we all needed to adapt our ways of working.*
- *I plan to...take the steps suggested about extra planning meetings when approaching new settings.*
- *I will try and incorporate new ideas for group activities in virtual platforms.*
- *I will ensure the sound is of the highest quality.*
- *Continuing to be flexible working within the current COVID situation, e.g., online or in-person regulations.*

Feedback on the Inclusive Group Music Making session regarding the question 'do you plan to do anything differently as a result of this session?'

- *Yes, just try and think a bit more creatively, especially in terms of improvisation. (The session gave me) another chance to evaluate my own practice and think what could I do differently to develop/improve the musical experiences I offer my pupils.*

Feedback on the Remote Engagement with Primary Aged Children session regarding the question 'do you plan to do anything differently as a result of this session?'

- *Alter how I engage with primary age children by considering their point of view in a different way and try out ways to do this that other teachers suggested.*
- *I will try more sensory toys and objects.*

And more general feedback:

- *So great to be able to hear lots of different ideas, especially at a time when it can feel so isolated as a peri teacher, and great that so many different people at stages of career joined (I thought I might be one of the only less experienced teachers).*

High Quality Music Activities

Music activities are perceived to be of a high quality by participants and observers.

Sources of evidence: Feedback from staff observing sessions via questionnaire and evaluation forms; Verbal feedback from young people participating in sessions.

Indicator 4

Although we sent out questionnaires to setting staff, we were disappointed with the number of responses returned. However, the information we did receive does show some progress against this indicator.

MMM asked partner settings to complete a survey to gain some feedback, with questions asked against a scale of 1-4 (with 4 being the highest response). Out of 4 setting responses: 75% of settings rated the content of the sessions as a 4 out of 4, for being appropriate for participants (25% rated 3 out of 4).

100% of settings gave a 4 out of 4 for the musical delivery being of high quality.

50% of settings rated 4, on a scale of 1-4, against the statements:

- 'I can see that the project had a positive impact on participants' self-esteem and self-efficacy'.
- 'I can see that the project had a positive impact on participants' communication and social skills'.
- 'I can see that project has helped participants realise their potential as music makers.'
- 'Our specific aims were met'.
- 'The project has influenced teaching in our school or centre.'

For all 5 statements, 50% of settings gave a rating of 3, on a scale of 1-4.

100%

4/4 for musical delivery quality

Some staff quotes include:

The Primrose Centre (Sandwell) - Kate Rock (Deputy Head Teacher)

"We were lucky enough to have already accessed a music tutor previously from MAC when funding was available, and children benefitted greatly from this. As our children have significant SEMH needs the sessions allowed them to explore their emotions and develop self-esteem and a confidence and love for music. Children developed a love for music and learnt that they were capable of creating a piece of music based around their feelings. They really enjoyed the sessions each week and looked forward to them as they progressed. The project was hugely successful, and we look forward to working with MAC Makes Music again in the Summer Term."

Solihull Youth Offending Service

"The project is a brilliant way to support young people to be creative, to learn and increase skills, to improve self-esteem and to support a passion for music." - Sarah Skinner (Youth Offending Service Team)

SIPS Education feedback after attending a MMM course

"Happy to say that I have found my course skills invaluable in some of my new teaching roles working with both children in care and children with autism, both with SIPS Education." - Annie Rees-Jones (SIPS Education)

COBS School on receiving lockdown resources

"Fun, accessible activities." - (Teacher, COBS School)

Some key quotes from participants evidencing the quality of provision are detailed below followed by some parental feedback. It's important to include this for those young people that may struggle to communicate themselves. Although we do have some insightful comments from both parents/carers and participants, we would like to improve our collection of feedback to be more specific as sometimes the feedback we receive is very generalised. By making our participants and parents/carers more aware of the outcomes we hope to achieve from the projects they are engaging with, we hope that in the future we will receive more detailed and tailored responses.

Solihull Youth Offending Service participant

"I got to go to the studio. It was very positive, everything was perfect. I would like to have more time in the studio and that environment. I am avid about music and I believe Music Leader OM showed me a great side to music. OM got me interested in another side of music that I didn't really know about. He got me interested in a new form of music. I like freestyle rapping and for me this is something that I do. I have been trying to get into a studio, so this option made it happen. Thank you for giving me the opportunity. It was brilliant. I would love to have more sessions".

West Midlands Inclusive Choir participant

"It empowers people doesn't it. We're all like one family aren't we? It doesn't matter what sort of needs we've got. I just love learning how to sing."

West Midlands Inclusive Choir participant

"Particularly I find it difficult at college, but music helps me through it. I feel so grateful."

Open Mic/Variety Jam participant

"Variety Jam is an opportunity for young musicians from different backgrounds to share music, by sharing a track or performing. It is also an opportunity to receive feedback and share thoughts towards a performance. These sessions stimulate inclusivity by showing that music can be created and experience by any individual, regardless of their disability, ethnicity, experience or gender."



Screenshot from a Variety Jam session.

Reflection

MMM has made good progress over this reporting period to promote musical inclusion across the West Midlands and has offered a wide ranging CPD programme to improve the quality of music delivery across the sector. The strategic input and investment across all 5 MEHs has also impacted on and supported the professional development of the wider workforce and therefore also on improved quality of delivery.

When music programmes are initiated, **time and care is put into planning these programmes to meet the needs of the young people**, as a cohort and individually. As a further development moving forwards, these initial aims could be reviewed by music leaders and setting staff across the project timeline to ensure that they are being met, to ensure that the programmes continually evolve, and that evidence against goals can be reviewed more regularly. It is always a challenge for non-music specialists to comment on what is 'good quality' in terms of music delivery and part of MMM's role is to strengthen knowledge and understanding here. Increasing dialogue and feedback from partners to review projects more regularly against aims will strengthen this learning and also give partners and setting staff the opportunity to input ideas and suggestions for improvements. This could also act to increase knowledge and evidence of the broader impact that engaging in musical activities can have on a young person's development, and encourage more reflection on how supporting such projects has impacted practice.

MMM prides itself in supporting its music leaders, ensuring that they have the space to give honest feedback in order to safeguard their wellbeing. MMM provides opportunities for our team to reflect and discuss ideas with their peers and to identify personal CPD needs. This is a key success of our work and why staff retention is good. All staff use the 'Do, Review, Improve' Quality Framework when planning and reflecting upon their practice, and this is evidenced in music leader reflective diaries and evaluation forms.

A recommendation for the future is to **introduce some individual personal baselining** of MMM music leaders' knowledge/skills/confidence and to revisit this to chart development over time. Currently, initial baselines are only completed for new emerging music leaders when starting employment and these are not revisited, making it difficult to evidence increased skills, knowledge and understanding. There is a worth in undertaking this process with all staff to ensure that training meets identified gaps and in reviewing this process at key points to measure growth and identify any areas of concern or personal development needs.

Qualitative and quantitative evidence is ample in terms of evaluating the immediate impact of MMM training courses on knowledge, skills and practice but, as mentioned, improved evaluation and data collection around other elements of the MMM programme would really assist in better evidencing of progression regarding indicators 2, 3 and 4 of this outcome. The music leader/practitioner baselines and more regular feedback from participants, partner/setting staff and parents/carers would greatly enhance the anecdotal data collected and could be analysed to give statistical data to further evidence progress on a cohort scale. It is important for MMM to consider how to improve the response rate to surveys issued to participants and partners and to understand why the response has been so low for this reporting period. The responses returned do not give a true reflection of the impact that the MMM programmes have had on young people and settings, which is so clear to see when observing sessions and reading music leader reflective diaries.

In summary, progress towards this outcome over the reporting period has been assessed as strong.

Musically inclusive practice in Music Education Hubs

Indicators and sources of evidence for outcome 2

Outcome: Increased musically inclusive practice in Music Education Hubs.

Indicators:

1. Music inclusion is embedded as a priority within MEHs; as a standing item on the agenda of hub meetings and through the development/dissemination and sharing of inclusion strategies.
2. The range of accessible and diverse music-making opportunities provided by Music Education Hubs is increased, communicated about and accessed.
3. Increased engagement in music delivery for groups of young people who previously did not participate in or had been disengaged with hub activity.

Evidence:

1. Minutes of meetings and key action points.
2. Strategy documents which outline strategic priorities and action planning.
3. Increase in number of accessible inclusive music-making opportunities.
4. Evaluation questionnaires for MEHs that assess engagement with previously disengaged CYP.

Outcome Context

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the forefront some of the challenges we face across the West Midlands and country as a whole in regards to inclusion when working with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who might not have digital devices or the internet, might not have family/carers on hand to help access resources or where provision isn't suitable for their individual needs and access requirements. As such, there has never been a better time to reflect on inclusive practice across the sector. Since returning from furlough, MMM staff members have focused a significant amount of time and energy on devising resources and materials for dissemination to young people and the groups that support them to ensure that musical support and opportunities are offered to all.

Progress towards this outcome has measured through reviewing minutes of meetings held (individual MEH management/strategy group meetings, subgroup meetings plus MAC MEH Strategy Group meeting), reviewing inclusion strategy and EDI documents/assessments completed and via inclusion data submitted by MEHs. Progress made has been positive considering the organisational and governance issues that the pandemic has caused both MAC and each MEH, and in some individual hubs progress has been excellent. Each MEH music service has had to contend with a significant drop in earned income from schools (which often pass on a percentage of costs) and parents due to COVID-19, with increased admin around managing relationships/contracts with schools, furloughing of staff, redesigning provision to offer online tuition, ensembles and digital content and resources as well as related safeguarding considerations. In addition, MEHs have been liaising with funders to agree implementation plans and producing stabilisation and business plans to ensure that they can survive. **In the context of this significant demand on leadership capacity, plus all the associated uncertainty and stress caused by the pandemic, it is incredibly positive that all 5 MEHs have shown such a commitment to further building on progress made in previous years to increase and embed musically inclusive practice.**

Analysis Against Each Outcome Indicator

Indicator 1

Musical Inclusion embedded as MEH priority

Music inclusion is embedded as a priority within MEHs; as a standing item on the agenda of hub meetings and through the development/dissemination and sharing of inclusion strategies.

Sources of evidence: Minutes of meetings and key action points; strategy documents which outline strategic priorities and action planning.

There is strong evidence that musical inclusion is seen as a priority within all 5 MEHs and that the robust strategic work and planning for inclusion this year and in previous years has also informed workforce development/CPD, resulting in inclusive practice and thinking becoming far more embedded within the workforce as a whole. Each MEH has different management and governance arrangements, with some hubs having advisory groups meeting monthly and other hubs having separate strategic/management groups with steering groups meeting less often. Sandwell MEH is currently reviewing its arrangements and is seeking to invite new board members to the group, to include wider representatives from local organisations, parents and students.

Where MEHs bring together delivery partners regularly, inclusion is generally a recurring agenda item. To allow more focused time for inclusion reviews, discussion and planning, several of the MEHs have established working subgroups. Coventry has established an **inclusion subgroup** which meets monthly, involving a range of music partners involved with the hub; Solihull has also established an Inclusion Subgroup with representatives including a Councillor, the Council Head of SEND, plus a representative from the Virtual School, a junior school and special school. MMM chairs both groups. In addition, Severn Arts (Worcestershire MEH lead) established an **EDI working group** in Jan 2021 which MMM's producer joined in Feb 2021. All subgroups feedback regularly to management and steering groups, gaining further input and sharing actions set, ensuring wider engagement in plans and progress, rather than the subgroups working in silo.

In addition to hub specific steering group meeting and subgroups, all 5 MEHs are brought together on a monthly basis for the **MAC MEH Strategy Group** meetings chaired by MMM. These meetings generally involve each Hub lead and have also recently included inclusion leads from the hubs where these roles have been established (for example in Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull). This year each hub has also been encouraged to invite along a different colleague and/or representative from a partner organisation to each meeting who is strongly connected to the agenda item focus, with **guest presenters and facilitators** invited where relevant to offer different perspectives and ideas and to challenge thinking. In the opinion of our evaluations, these monthly MMM Hub Strategy Group meetings are incredibly effective; they are well chaired and provide the right **balance between challenge and support**.

Topics and themes discussed/planned (and then revisited) have included, for example: governance and EDI work; schools CPD and the MEH Workforce; whole class and other instrumental tuition; ensembles and performing; progression routes; singing strategies; large scale/high quality experiences. Youth Music's '**Developing an Inclusive Approach to Core and Extension roles**' has been used as a starting point for discussions. The partnership relationships between each hub and with MMM have thrived as a result; there is a feeling of **mutual support and encouragement**, with hubs openly sharing successes and difficulties. These meetings have also provided opportunities for **joint strategic development, collaborative programming and pooled investment** to address gaps in provision across the region, such as with plans for roll out of the Creative Sounds initiative and with a joint

commitment to support the new West Midlands Inclusive Choir run in partnership with MMM and Soundabout.

MMM has been engaging with all 5 MEHs through the above meetings to encourage and support the **review and refresh of hub inclusion strategies** and also to encourage each MEH to complete the **EDI self-assessment** tool developed by Youth Music, using responses from a range of partners/staff to help inform their strategies and business planning. All 5 MEHs hubs are at different stages in their development here. Solihull has incorporated their inclusion strategy review, EDI assessment and Youth Voice activities into their new business plan development, with a potential restructure (pending consultation) of Solihull MEH delivery into geographic areas where all partners in each area will work in partnership with young people to co-produce their offer.

All 5 MEHs are committed to ensuring that high quality musical education should be available to all, not just those that can afford it. As an example of this, Severn Arts raised a large amount of donations from their free online teaching offer in the summer term and have re-invested this income in their bursary scheme for young musicians.

With inclusion strategy refinement and EDI assessment, it is clear that **all 5 MEHs have embedded musical inclusion as a priority** and are willing to develop and share their strategies, learning and action points and promote their inclusive opportunities.



Screenshot from a MAC MEH Strategy Group meeting.

Accessible and Diverse MEH musical opportunities

The range of accessible and diverse music-making opportunities provided by Music Education Hubs is increased, communicated about and accessed.

Sources of evidence: Increase in number of accessible inclusive music-making opportunities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought some challenges to MMM's and hubs' delivery plans for the reporting period and has reduced opportunities to roll out and expand programme provision as hoped. In addition, it has limited opportunities to profile successes through large celebratory events/performances and to disseminate learning through traditional avenues such as conferences and seminars. However, it is clear from reflecting with hubs on their progress (looking back at their original inclusion strategies) how far all 5 hubs have developed in terms of delivery but also attitude. For example, most MEHs are approaching their current inclusion strategy reviews as much more of a collaborative process, engaging more fully with partners and stakeholders, rather than seeing their strategies as internally focused on traditional music service provision. Inclusion is much more embedded as a consideration across the whole lead partners' staffing teams, in planning, delivery and reflection and within business planning, programming and staff recruitment ambitions. MEH leads are also positive about the impact:

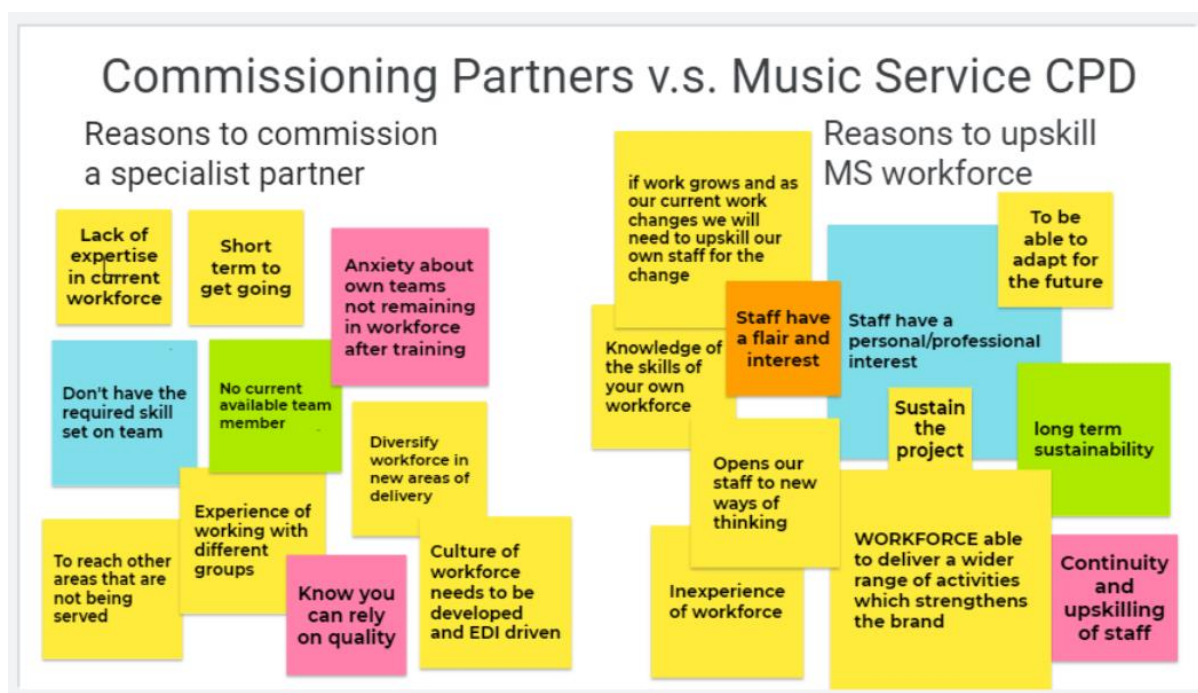
"There have been many changes across the service due to the strategy. Music delivery in wider areas of education including ELCs, Pupil Referral Units – The Gateway and Woodfield, Hospital School and new collaborative projects in SEN schools. Also a drive to find the right tutors with appropriate experience to deliver successfully to these centres." Mark Patton, Coventry MEH Inclusion Lead, on discussing the impact of the previous inclusion strategy at a subgroup meeting.

Despite COVID-19, MEHs are keen to sustain previous progress made in regards to committing to regular performance opportunities for young people with SEN/D (post pandemic), engagement in the Open Orchestras programme in all 5 MEHs (which have continued through a mixture of approaches this year), further development of Pupil Referral Unit work/delivery teams and establishment of greater links with LAC teams and the West Midlands ArtsLink initiative for LAC.

Outcome 7 provides further information of specific MMM programmes and performance opportunities running across the reporting period, in addition to the ongoing work running in each MEH. This has included new initiatives to widen engagement and increase the range of accessible and diverse opportunities offered. For example, this year a new West Midlands Inclusive Choir has been established by MMM, run in partnership with Soundabout and all 5 MEHs, for young people under 25 their families (with sessions delivered inclusively so those with the most profound and complex needs can participate). 30 young people, 29 support/parent/carers, 7 practitioners, and 6 volunteers from across the West Midlands have been engaged in sessions.

All MEHs are communicating their accessible and diverse music-making opportunities offered through their school networks and through other relevant avenues as appropriate, such as via Arts Connect (Bridge Organisation), Arts Link (West Midlands Virtual Schools) and LA/ MEH partner networks. Some clear examples of increased communication and wider promotion of their inclusion offer and impact can be seen with [Solihull](#) and [Worcestershire MEHs](#) via dedicated pages on their websites.

See also the Coventry Music [Blog on Inclusion](#) written by Coventry Music's Lead, Mark Steele, published September 2020.



Jamboard from Oct'20 MAC MEH Strategy Group Meeting, as an example of discussions.

Engagement from the disengaged

Indicator 3

Increased engagement in music delivery for groups of young people who previously did not participate in or had been disengaged with hub activity.

Sources of evidence: Evaluation questionnaires for MEHs that assess engagement with previously disengaged CYP.

There is clear evidence from looking at MEH inclusion strategies, programming and steering/management group meeting minutes over the last few years that **new initiatives have been developed and programme reach widened in order to engage groups of young people who previously did not participate**. Anecdotal and qualitative evaluation evidence here is strong, with some hubs showing real strengths in terms of their engagement of different priority groups of young people. Evidencing this statistically in previous reports has been challenging but there has been some recent progress working strategically with our MEHs to begin to improve quantitative data collection around inclusion activity and reach and we now have a limited amount of historical data from 4 MEHs to use as a baseline to assess progress against. There is further work to do here but **all MEHs have agreed to dedicate time to collectively agree on consistent inclusion data to collect moving forwards**, to aid understanding and learning in relation to engagement, reach and progression and give a sense of distance travelled.

Whilst programming this year has been affected by the pandemic, there has been some progress in regards to the **development of new accessible and diverse music-making opportunities**. Statistical evidence on increased engagement and progression opportunities for young people with SEN/D and SEMH needs can be seen in Outcome 7 analysis with data obtained from 4 MEHs (Coventry, Sandwell, Solihull and Worcestershire).

Other evidence of increased engagement and provision of accessible opportunities across these 4 MEHs includes:

- Collectively, all 4 MEHs invested in 10 new initiatives across the 2019-2020 academic year to engage identified groups (LAC, young people in PRUs and in Special Schools).
- Looking at full academic years, from 2017-18 to 2019-20 the 4 music services have increased their PRU engagement work, from 2 (of 21) settings (9.5%) to 11 (of 21) settings (52.4%), and from 77 hours to 486 hours. This is a **531 percentage change in hours of activity**.
- The number of LAC collectively reached has increased from 40 to 88 young people across the 2018/19-2020/21 academic years across Coventry and Sandwell. The hours of delivery given to Virtual Schools/ LAC specific settings across Coventry and Sandwell **increased from 650 in 2018/19 to 1191 in 2019/20**. This is an 83.2 percentage change. Delivery to date across the 2020/21 academic year in these areas is currently at 520 hours up until end March, despite the pandemic having had an impact.

Reflection

The above indicators and evidence together demonstrate that the MMM programme is extremely successful in supporting increased musically inclusive practice across the Music Education Hubs. **It is clear that the MEHs value the work and strategic investment and wholeheartedly 'buy in' to the wider impact that it can have for children and young people.** The EDI work and inclusion strategy refresh that each MEH is undertaking evidence a longer term commitment and openness to the individual development areas and changes needed, not just within their current and future programmes of work but also in regards to embedding inclusion more widely, looking at staffing, consultation and partnership working.

Progress towards this outcome has been strengthened through **use of tools and reflection documents** provided by Youth Music and MMM, such as 'Do, Review, Improve', the EDI self-assessment tool, the suggested format for new inclusion strategies and Youth Music's 'Developing an Inclusive Approach to Core and Extension roles' document. The monthly MEH Strategy Group meetings chaired by MMM have been crucial in developing strong, open, partnership relationships with and between each MEH, building collective momentum and **encouraging strategic investment**. Where established, individual MEH subgroups have then enabled focused time to work on actions.

There have been challenges; the process of obtaining retrospective inclusion data from hubs in order to establish a baseline against has been a difficult process, particularly for MEHs that have seen senior leadership changes over the period of the grant and MEHs who no longer have access to LA data and support. In hindsight, it would have been helpful to have established baseline data prior to the start of the programme in order to effectively measure distance travelled but, regardless, **improved data collection moving forwards can only improve learning regarding gaps in engagement and better inclusion**. In addition, capacity across MEH leadership teams has been stretched this year due to the pandemic which has meant that progress outside of meetings has been more difficult. However, the relationships are strong and the willingness to share learning and provide mutual support bodes well for future developments.

In summary, progress towards this outcome over the reporting period has been assessed as strong.

Solihull MEH Case Study Extract

The text below is an edited extract taken from 'Working together to move the needle on inclusion in five West Midlands music education hubs', a case study on Solihull Music Education Hub, written by Anita Holford. [The full article can be found here.](#)

"We started working with MAC in 2013. At that time, no-one had any real understanding of inclusion...As a service, we were more focused on nurturing the most accomplished musicians. Music services like ours just offered what they could deliver – rather than designing programmes and allocating resources based on the needs or interests of children and young people and those who work with them... Working with MAC was a big step for us... In 2016/17, MAC offered hubs in the area the opportunity to work together to take a more strategic approach to inclusion. We signed up because we recognised that ..we needed a culture change... Working with MAC to develop our vision for inclusion, and a route map to help implement it, gave us the impetus we needed to commit to and advocate for change.

In 2017, MAC brought in inclusion consultant and community music trainer Phil Mullen to work with the group. We developed common strategic priorities which really helped us to think about what we're for, and who we're there to serve...Initially, we sat in our SLT meeting and said, "where do we even start?" We started to realise that as a music service, we'd been living in a bubble. We've all been on an internal journey, and the culture of the music service has changed for the better. Already this inclusion strategy is driving and reinvigorating what we do as a 'business': how we act, what we offer, as well as how we deliver our work.... In the meantime, we've set up an inclusion subgroup of the Hub...that will challenge us furtherWe're still meeting as a MAC Strategy Group, but now as well as heads of service and inclusion leads, we invite other team members to challenge and help us. The fact that we come back every month, for two hours shows that we all still really value those open, honest conversations. We're open about failure and worries and that's where real change can happen, at the personal level."

Claire Batty, Assistant Head, Solihull Music Service & Music Education Hub

"One thing that's really helped – in fact, it's made all the difference - is doing it alongside other hubs. Having a document is one thing. But that constant challenge has kept everyone on their toes. We've formed really supportive relationships too. I speak with other hub leads two or three times a week, specifically about inclusion matters...Our group is very trusting and open. It helps us practically, and it helps us to improve. It should always feel like we're at the start of the journey."

Toby Smith, Head of Solihull Music Service & Music Education Hub



Snapshot of full case study document

Music and Creative Skills of Children and Young People

Indicators and sources of evidence for outcome 3

Outcome:	Improve the music and creative skills of children and young people.
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Participants, music leaders and parents/carers recognise an improvement in participants' chosen area of music making activity - this could include: instrumental, singing, composition, improvisation, performance, technology.2. Participants achieve formal recognition of musical skills, for example through gaining Arts Award or other qualifications.3. Participants feel more able to express themselves through music.4. Improvement in young people's knowledge of different musical styles, genres and cultures.
Evidence:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tracked progress of participants using music leader's reflective diaries and comparing participants starting points to end of project.2. Number of Arts Awards and other accreditation gained.3. Documentation of sharing events/performances.4. Written and/or verbal feedback from participants and staff/families.5. Self-assessment questionnaires with participants.

Outcome Context

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, MMM has worked hard to deliver a varied programme of work over the past year offering creative musical opportunities across the West Midlands. Session delivery has largely been online and despite this change to a very different way of working, there is some very good evidence of young people developing their musical and creative skills. Evidence obtained has been largely gathered via music leader reflective diaries and written/verbal feedback from participants, setting staff and parents/carers. MMM is committed to exploring new ways to chart progress in the future and to improve the range of evidence collected, such as baselining participants using self-assessment scales which can be analysed both individually and on a cohort basis to track progress and provide statistical information.

Analysis Against Each Outcome Indicator

Improvements in music making activity

Participants, music leaders and parents/carers recognise an improvement in participants' chosen area of music making activity - this could include: instrumental, singing, composition, improvisation, performance, technology.

Sources of evidence: *Tracked progress of participants using music leader's reflective diaries and comparing participants starting points to end of project; Documentation of sharing events/performances; Written and/or verbal feedback from participants and staff/families; Self-assessment questionnaires with participants.*

There are numerous examples from music leader reflective diaries and evaluations charting musical progression over a period of time. Selected examples are detailed below with some initial context of the setting/programme itself. Please note that names have been replaced by a code to retain anonymity.

Participant AK has been involved in the MMM programme at COBS Kings, a Secondary Pupil Referral Unit via online and face to face sessions.

Music Leader AL reflective diaries:

- 23/9/20 AK helped write and learn the two-chord progression. This was turned into an entire ensemble jam where we incorporated the other participants. The TA assisted on bass which helped. AK's rhythm and counting improved throughout the session. At the start, we played the chords free-time and he was having trouble counting. By the end of the session, he was able to: first count to 8; and then count 2 x 4/4 bars for each chord.
- 30/9/20 [AK's] rhythm and cajon playing improved during the session. We looked at the three sounds Tone (T) Bass (B) and Slap (S) for the cajon. Looked at a rhythm demonstrating these sounds: TT BB TT SS on repeat. Progressed to 'Straight 8th' beat B T S T B T S T played as R L R L.
- 7/10/20 In the whole group session we were looking at an 8th note groove. I went over to AK as we covered this last week on cajon and he could recall this. He showed this by demonstrating the 8th note groove learnt last week, therefore relating it to the group session today.
- 14/10/20 AK took a lot of initiative and taught ZK the three sounds (B T S) on the cajon and djembe. This was a really big development compared to his body language and communication/self-esteem 3 weeks ago, where he was introverted and closed off personally. He was interested to listen back to the recording we made of the jam.
- 21/10/20 AK came up with a lot of interesting lyrics and lyric ideas. AK hadn't recorded into the DAW before in our sessions. He recorded audio of the djembe.

The observations above show clear progress rhythmically, with instrumental skills development in hand drumming and in communication and working musically with others.

Participant SS has been involved in MMM inclusive resident band called SWITCH. SS is 22 years old and self identifies as having autism and learning difficulties.

SS' musical and creative skills development has been documented by MMM music leaders AL and KH through their reflective diaries:

- 18/8/20 SS' guitar picking skills have greatly improved.
- 29/9/20 SS' guitar playing has come on a lot since Feb/March. He is using frets, and this initiated the riff/song writing part of the session.
29/9/20 I was impressed by SS' aptitude in developing a strong musical idea as he is still very early in his career as a guitarist.
- 6/10/20 SS is continuing to improve on guitar. He's enthusiastic about it and is writing riffs being used for SWITCH.
- 15/10/20 SS was enthusiastic on the guitar today. SS performed vocal notes and was inspired in the latter part of the session by idea of separating vocals from the music. We recorded SS' vocals and added them to the track. The 'alternative' style of performing lyrics and music separately, i.e., poetry/spoken word followed by the music, helped to include SS. He recorded vocals and this is a first for him.
- 3/11/20 SS was enthusiastic on the bass. He had some great rhythm today playing $\frac{1}{4}$ notes.

The observations above show clear progress in instrumental skills and technique on the guitar and in formulating and expressing creative ideas to inform collaborative song writing. SS is also evidencing some progression in vocal confidence.

Clear progress in the development of music and creative skills is also evidenced through progress shown by participants involved in the West Midlands Inclusive Choir, as a wider partnership example. The choir is a newly formed group this year, run in partnership with Soundabout for young people under 25 years old and their families, putting inclusion at the heart so those with the most complex needs can participate.

In her evaluation, Music Leader MR stated, "Through singing, signing, dancing, and playing sound makers, participants of all abilities are welcome in the choir. We learned two core songs that were recorded – ['I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing'](#), and ['September'](#), which was chosen by the participants. Through the warm-ups, we encourage young people to explore movements and sounds they can make with their bodies and with their sound makers, helping them develop their skills. Participants are encouraged to unmute and share their sound makers, their favourite songs, poems, or anything they like, contributing to build confidence. The choir also encourages participants to be creative and use sounds and movements as a way of communicating. For this, we have had a series of scat improv activities, graphic scores, and a song writing workshop, in which participants created a song collectively. The choir has members who are very able, and also participants with profound and severe disabilities. They all work together and encourage each other to participate. Participants who did little singing at the beginning are now singing more, everybody uses their sound makers, and not only to play along with the music but also to express themselves and create their own music."



Screenshots of YouTube videos from the West Midlands Inclusive Choir.

Despite the challenges and limitations of mainly delivering online over the past year, MMM has offered numerous sharing/performance opportunities. A key focus here has been the monthly inclusive 'Open Mic' sessions happening on Zoom. There are some clear examples illustrating musical progression highlighted through Music Leader DW's Open Mic reflective diaries:

PARTICIPANT NS

- 3/10/20 NS shared her GarageBand project/screen and showed us her new arrangement of the latest Switch track. She is clearly learning loads about music tech each week! It feels like she is in the middle of a learning curve and this is great to witness.
- 7/11/20 NS continues to improve both her music tech and vocal performance skills. She performed a live vocal performance to an accompaniment she sequenced herself using GarageBand.

[See Case Study: Nashita Haque](#)

PARTICIPANT VS

- 7/11/20 VS sent a piece in advance called 'Snow'. It was a remarkable piece of music and well received by the group. VS was able to discuss it in detail and said he wanted to express a light, floating in the right hand. On his piece, VS commented: "I wanted to compose a conversation between the instruments." Whilst VS did not perform live, I believe there is a benefit to him sharing recordings of his work in this way and receiving live feedback. I think this allows his inner artist to hear the work through other ears and will help him to identify areas for improvement moving forward with future works.
- 5/12/20 VS shared a really experimental, futuristic sounding track. It was great to hear him pushing boundaries and working in the electronic music genre. He said of it, "it is regenerative software I used to create it, it runs forever."
- 6/3/21 VS gave a great overview of syncopation – he addressed the whole group and spoke clearly and illustrated his points with a good demonstration.

Highlights from the Open Mic sessions were recorded and shared online [here](#).



Participant performing live at a virtual Open Mic session.

Further evidence of musical progression highlighted in sharings and performances can be seen [in this video](#), from November 2020, showing the Sherbourne Fields Open Orchestra from Coventry performing their composition alongside professional musicians and playing various instruments such as keyboards, percussion and accessible music technology. The composition highlighted here is called 'The River – A Journey With Water' and is based on Smetana's Vltava. The video has been shared online with 455 views to date.

Feedback from participants, setting staff and families also evidences progression in the musical and creative skills of children and young people. In reflecting on how the Open Mic/Variety Jam opportunities have supported his progression, Participant VO states: *"Variety Jam is an opportunity for young musicians from different backgrounds to share music, by sharing a track or performing. As a composer, I am influencing and being influenced by those around me constantly; by bringing people from different backgrounds together, I can be exposed to new concepts, opinions and culture. Ultimately, my music identity is refined."*

Yorkswood Primary School (Solihull) supports a number of children with / at risk of social, emotional and mental health difficulties and has been involved in the Solihull Beats programme, which champions music as a vehicle to improve the attainment of children in challenging circumstances. Sessions are tailored around the diverse needs, interests and abilities of the young people and all styles of music making and learning are valued equally, from rap to song writing to composing to instruments.

In reflecting on how MMM support (via video material) improved the music and creative skills of their young people, Nina Kemp (Teaching Assistant) stated, *"The children were able to continue accessing music. The children were able to share the experience with their parents/carers. The children in school have not been able to access musical instruments due to covid restrictions; cleaning and sharing instruments. However, the videos have allowed the children to be creative with resources at home."*

Solihull Youth Offending Service (SYOS) is a multi-agency service which consists of the Local Authority, West Midlands Police, Probation and Health with a primary aim to prevent and reduce youth crime across Solihull. In her evaluation, Sarah Skinner (Youth Offending Team Officer) highlighted the musical development of participant BD: *"The mentor worked really well with BD. He helped to encourage BD to think about the music that he wanted to put to his lyrics and worked really quickly to make this happen. BD was given tasks to complete over the next week to include thinking about his lyrics, beats and rhythm. BD has always had a keen interest in music and writing lyrics. This opportunity has helped him to understand the production side and in making beats. BD was encouraged to think about what music he liked and to think about key areas in terms of his lyrics that he wanted to expand on including rhythm."*

MMM's setting partners were asked to feedback on the impact of the MMM programme via a survey. Settings were asked to give ratings against specific statements on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest rating.

Out of 4 survey responses from setting staff:

- 75% staff gave a rating of 4 against the statement 'I can see that the project had a positive impact on participants' musical development or creativity' (25% gave a rating of 3).
- 50% staff gave a rating of 4 against the statement 'I can see that the project has helped participants realise their potential as music makers.' (50% gave a rating of 3).

Parent/Carer feedback includes:

"Since joining SWITCH, NS has grown in confidence, developed her song writing skills and tried playing various musical instruments." Parent of NS (Switch and Open Mic participant)

"My daughter sang and signed in front of group independently this week, only second time attendance" Parent of a West Midlands Inclusive Choir participant.

"My magic moments are also outside of choir - my child will just start singing and signing 'do re me' or the tune and signs of the song we've just learnt in choir" Parent of a West Midlands Inclusive Choir participant.

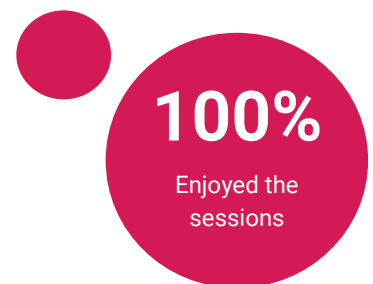
Parents/carers were also asked to complete an evaluation survey, similar to that sent out to setting partners.

- Out of 7 survey responses, 71.4% gave a rating of 4 (on a scale of 1-of 4, with 4 being the highest rating) against the statement 'MAC Makes Music sessions have helped my young person develop their musical and creative skills'.
- 57.14% stated that it was 'most or very important' that MAC Makes Music helps my young person to develop their musical and creative skills (options given were: not important, quite important, very important and most important).
- 85.71% stated that it was 'most or very important' that MAC Makes Music helps my young person to have fun exploring their own interests (options given were: not important, quite important, very important and most important).

Self-assessment questionnaires with participants also evidence improvements in music and creative skills. Out of 12 participant responses received from West Midlands Inclusive Choir members (supported by their parents/carers):

- 100% stated that they enjoyed sessions.
- 66.67% stated that they take away ideas from the choir sessions to use at home.
- 66.67% stated that they had learnt new skills (these included: signing and singing; better listening; learning notes and other things like scatting)

Out of 5 participant responses received from MMM's Inclusive Group programmes: 60% rated the sessions as a 4 (on a scale of 1- 4) against the statement 'The sessions help me to develop musical skills' (40% rated them as a 3).



Come and Sing participants at a Halloween special

Indicator 2

Formal qualifications

Participants achieve formal recognition of musical skills, for example through gaining Arts Award or other qualifications.

Sources of evidence: *Number of Arts Awards and other accreditation gained; Written and/or verbal feedback from participants and staff/families.*

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no Arts Award certificates were achieved during this reporting period. During sessions, some young people have started the process of collecting evidence to gain an Arts Award in the future. Solihull Youth Offending Service have asked MMM for information about the Arts Award as they are looking into how they can support young people to put together portfolios for future work. This offer would be hugely beneficial to the young people involved with the Youth Offending Service as they are often young people who have struggled with formal education and achieving an Arts Award would be an accredited award that they could feel proud of completing.

Ellen Cummings (a Solihull based Youth Offending Service Officer) has stated that one young person (participant CS) has got on so well with the SYOS MMM programme, that she submitted him for a Koestler Award. [The Koestler Awards](#) for arts in criminal justice started in 1962. Each year over 3,500 people in custody and in the community share their creative work by taking part. The Koestler Awards provide feedback and encouragement to entrants of all abilities in visual art, design, writing and music. Participant CS has completed 2 tracks on the MMM programme, and it is one of these tracks that has been nominated for the award.

Indicator 3

Expression through music

Participants feel more able to express themselves through music.

Sources of evidence: *Tracked progress of participants using music leader's reflective diaries and comparing participants starting points to end of project; Documentation of sharing events/performances; Written and/or verbal feedback from participants and staff/families; Self-assessment questionnaires with participants.*

A main focus of MMM's projects is around developing young people to be creative – improvising, creating music and composing songs and writing lyrics. There are many examples of this across music leader reflective diaries that are relevant to outcomes 3, 4 and 5. Please also see Outcome 5, indicator 2 for some examples of lyrics written by young people evidencing emotional literacy. Additionally, MMM produced some [videos](#) over lockdown to encourage creativity.

PARTICIPANT RK

RK was engaged in MMM sessions at COBS Kings PRU. RK's progress in musical expression has been documented in reflective diary entries written by music leader NI. Through these extracts, RK learns how to choose appropriate sounds to fit with the lyrics he wants to express:

- 4/11/20 RK learnt how to navigate Logic with basic commands such as record and stop which are fundamental to his learning.
- 11/11/20 RK is more confident with choosing sounds and is learning to trust his rhythm more and go for what makes him happy and what he likes to hear. We have made plans to further develop the song next week.
- 2/12/20 RK is writing more appropriate lyrics and is doing so quickly.

PARTICIPANT AZ

AZ has been involved in MMM's SWITCH ensemble for several years. Reflective diaries from music leaders DW, KH and AL highlight progress around how AZ develops his lyrical ideas to suit different moods, genres and tempo:

- 3/11/20 AZ was prolific and passionate about rapping tonight. AZ was singing by the end of the session. He seems more interested in singing than he was last year.
10/11/20 AZ came up with an improvised and extended set of lyrics on the theme of the brainstorming session. This was set to lots of interesting melodies.
26/1/21 AZ continued to deliver high level lyricism, giving SWITCH a killer hook for the Trap song idea.
- 2/2/21 AZ gave a solid and reasoned explanation for not wanting to use the Mic MC lyrics for the new song idea, stating that he thought the new idea was "good" but that "it's changed...The lyrics I wrote were for that speed" and that SWITCH should write new lyrics for the new slower song. We felt this put into practice what we had discussed with tempo and genre in previous sessions. I feel AZ has become more of a leader to lead discussions around lyrics, genre, style, appropriate-ness, and SWITCH look to him on Zoom to provide guidance and inspiration at times.

[Listen to the blue here.](#)

Feedback from participants, settings and parent/carers includes:

"I use a head tracker and a metal dot on my chin to play Clarion on my computer. At first, I found it hard to control the mouse. With practise, I got much better. Now I can use the on screen head tracker toolbar to mute and unmute, click, drag, double click etc. This means I can edit patterns and create new patterns myself. Before I joined Open Orchestra I had never used a head tracker ever, and I found using an eye gaze really tiring. And now, I use the head tracker not only in music but in all my lessons. It means that I can be independent and do some of my work all by myself. It makes me feel confident. *It makes me feel free.*"

(IB, Open Orchestras participant)

"[The most successful thing was] Kids' engagement with music and Music Lead AJ. [The sessions] encouraged them to express themselves and play their own music."

Rachel Sale of COBS Ashbourne Centre (Primary PRU).

"He has become more expressive." Parent of Participant RW (Open Mic)

Out of 7 survey responses from parents/carers, 57.1% gave a rating of 4 (on a scale of 1-4, with 4 being the highest) against the statement 'MAC Makes Music sessions have helped my young person express themselves' (42.9% gave a rating of 3)

85.71% stated that it was 'most or very important' that MAC Makes Music helps my young person to express themselves (options given were: not important, quite important, very important and most important).

Due to the fact that many of the young people engaged in the WM Inclusive Choir have varying additional needs, parents/carers completed the survey on the participants' behalf. Out of 12 participant responses, 91.67% stated that they noticed a consistent change in mood (happier, more positive) after attending a session. This illustrates how participating positively affects emotions.

Out of 5 participant responses received from participants involved in MMM Inclusive Groups, 40% stated that of all the activities they do, they enjoyed writing songs most in MMM sessions.

Musical styles, genres and cultures

Improvement in young people’s knowledge of different musical styles, genres and cultures.

Sources of evidence: Written and/or verbal feedback from participants and staff/families; Self-assessment questionnaires with participants.

MMM’s projects encourage young people to be introduced to a wide ranging repertoire of genres of music. A key element of the programme is encouraging young people to share music they like with others and write their own music. Music leaders encourage young musicians to analyse the music they hear so that they become critical listeners and can then take inspiration from these different genres when writing their own music, appreciating the nuances of different styles and cultures. Additionally, during the lockdown period, MMM put together 6 video resources on music from different cultures called ‘[Around The World](#)’, covering Europe, Oceania, North America, South America, Africa and Asia. These have been viewed 307 times.



Collage of musician screenshots from All Around the World videos.

“Young musicians learnt four different songs. Throughout the different tunes, they practised: singing; breathing and posture; coordination of movements with music; improvisation of movements and music; musical appreciation of different styles and genre.”
 MR, Come and Sing Music Leader

“VS contributed a live recording of his piano prelude composition. The group listened intently and were clearly motivated and inspired – we are lucky to have such a diverse and interesting group of musicians.” DW, Open Mic Music Leader

“[Re: Open Mics] A session where everyone is constantly inspiring each other, people from different backgrounds joining together and they share music” VS’ comment about the Open Mic session on the 6/2/21.

The Colour Music Project involved a week-long residency in 3 special schools in partnership with Eye Music Trust. These residencies involved a musician giving a full week of workshops and an artist building touch-sensitive paintings with groups of students. Regarding a session observed by the external evaluator, *“Young people visibly enjoyed controlling the sounds with sensors, making clear decisions of when to play and when to stop. There was good demonstration of turn taking and they relished trying different styles. Triggers were accessible regardless of physical limitations of the young people. The videos illustrated the young people improving their skills at controlling and arranging sounds to create pieces of music across different genres of music.”* (Quench Arts, regarding a session with Wilson Stuart School)

Participant AZ explained in a session how he approaches writing different styles of lyrics for different genres in SWITCH: *“For example, for different types of lyrics, different types of genres, they all flow in a different way. The lyrics are written in a different way for the genres, so literally the trap one is a fast one so lyric wise... and then you have this chill type of vibe going on, see that’s like a different feel for it.”*

“[Through] the sessions with the mentor, DD built up a good relationship with Music Leader OM who encouraged him to write his lyrics and to explore different styles of music that he could use to fit with his lyrics. It also gave him the opportunity to think about different genres of music. It enabled him to express his feelings through music and to talk about issues that young people may face.” Sarah Skinner (Solihull Youth Offending Team Officer)

MMM conducted a survey with participants, out of 7 responses, 40% stated that out of all of the activities, they liked sharing the music they like to listen to with others the most.

Reflection

MMM has made very good progress against this outcome despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that activity had to cease for some time due to the furloughing of MMM’s staff. Once operational again, the MMM team adapted very quickly to offer a mixture of online delivery and paper and video resources designed for settings and families to ensure that young people still had access to inclusive musical provision.

MMM’s strength is collecting qualitative information regarding young people’s progress, in particular through music leader reflection diaries, which provide a wealth of observation notes and comments from a facilitator perspective. It would be really helpful to be able to triangulate this data with other forms of evidence in the future, for example (where appropriate and relevant) through participant self-assessed baselines on outcome areas, revisited at key points during project delivery. Although this might not always be an appropriate approach with all young people with multiple needs, there are MMM settings where this could really empower young people to reflect on their own goals and progression, and to understand and build pride in the journey they’ve been on. For the next year of the programme MMM will target a small number of settings to trial different types of baseline tools and activities to further build the range of evidence and impact of our programme.

Additionally, having more specific feedback from setting staff and parents/carers would be hugely beneficial in terms of measuring the wider holistic impact of MMM’s programmes on young people. Response to surveys has been low this year so we have had limited feedback here to utilise. This is something that we aim to address next year, through asking settings to agree to providing feedback on a regular basis as part of our partnership agreements and through asking parents more specific questions around the impact projects are having on their young people on a more regular basis rather than just mainly at the year end.

It is clear that as the country rebuilds after the disruption of the pandemic, we will certainly need to [continue to be flexible in our delivery approach](#), with some activities continuing online and some face to face. We have learnt a huge amount over the past year around what is possible online musically and we will continue to evolve to meet any future challenges with the pandemic. [We also feel that an element of our delivery will continue to remain online even when things return to some kind of normality as it enables us to reach some young people who would be unable to attend face to face.](#) This has certainly been a positive outcome for us as we aim to reach as many young people as we can.

Self-esteem and self-efficacy

Indicators and sources of evidence for outcome 4

Outcome:	Improve children and young people's self-esteem and self-efficacy.
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Young people set personal goals in their music making and pursue a personal interest.2. Young people demonstrate increased ability to reflect on their own learning.3. Young people demonstrate increased level of patience/control and ability to sustain engagement in an activity while acknowledging the importance of effort.4. Young people share and celebrate their achievements in music with others.
Evidence:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Young people's self-reflection and feedback on their personal journey - through creative tools and Arts Award portfolio/logs in which young people state their goals, interests and subsequent achievements.2. Records of incidents of poor behaviour compared to incidents of controlled behaviour/emotions via reflective diaries or staff questionnaires/interviews.3. Staff/parents report an improvement in young people's self-esteem via questionnaire/interview.

Outcome Context

As noted against outcome 3, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, MMM has continued to offer a variety of projects in different settings across the reporting period. Evidence of progress towards this outcome is mainly seen through examples from music leader reflective diaries and via limited participant, setting staff and parent/carer verbal and written feedback received for the reporting period. Due to COVID-19 and reduced face-to-face provision it has not been possible to triangulate evidence of progress with multiple sources of data at an individual level but ample anecdotal feedback obtained across the full range of MMM's programme is testimony to the effectiveness of the programme in improving self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Analysis Against Each Outcome Indicator

Personal goals and interests

Young people set personal goals in their music making and pursue a personal interest.

Sources of evidence: *Young people's self-reflection and feedback on their personal journey - through creative tools and Arts Award portfolio/logs in which young people state their goals, interests and subsequent achievements.*

As Arts Award activities were not offered this year, evidence for indicator 1 has been obtained from Music Leader reflective diaries illustrating young people taking a lead and setting clear goals for their learning and steering the direction of their sessions. Please also see Outcome 6, indicator 1.

The Primrose Centre

Participant CJ set a goal that he wanted to write and record his own rap, including the lyrics, beats and instrumentation. This series of session reports evidences how the goal was broken down into manageable steps, supporting CJ to achieve his aim. Our music leaders aim to promote independent learning so that young people can continue to progress after our

interventions. Progress here can also be seen in this example as CJ grows in confidence to then pass on his skills to peers.

- 20/10/20 CJ really worked hard to write and record a rap and was proactive about RP's inclusion in the process and got a bit upset that it couldn't be finished today.
- 5/11/20 CJ really worked hard to practice and record his lyric. Got angry a few times because he got things wrong but pushed through.
- 12/11/20 CJ found it difficult to let others have a turn at first but then started slotting himself into a mentoring role and guiding and encouraging.
- 19/11/20 CJ really stepping into leadership role and encouraging the others with their confidence and engagement.
- 26/11/20 CJ enjoyed being really good at drumming but used it to support the others rather than show off.

[Listen to CJ's track here.](#)

Young people reflect

Young people demonstrate increased ability to reflect on their own learning.

Indicator 2

Sources of evidence: Young people's self-reflection and feedback on their personal journey - through creative tools and Arts Award portfolio/logs in which young people state their goals, interests and subsequent achievements.

As Arts Award activities were not offered this year, evidence for indicator 2 has again been obtained from Music Leader reflective diaries. The example below demonstrates a young person looking at their life choices and what they have learnt from their experiences. As a result of this work it is clear that the participant feels an improved capability to exercise control over prospective situations and shows determination and perseverance to overcome obstacles.

Solihull Youth Offending Service- PARTICIPANT KD (MUSIC LEADER JD)

The following is an extract of a communication between Music Leader JD and Participant KD (sent via his support worker) showing how 1 participant reflected on his past compared to his life now and his hopes for the future. This is followed by music leader reflective diaries showing how this conversation moved forward to achieving KD's aim of writing a song based on this concept.

"You opened up and spoke about your desire to be a policeman when you were young, but because of the way your friends think about police, this changed your attitude towards them. You also said that this was part of the reason why you started carrying a knife. This was very brave and honest of you KD and I really appreciate you giving us your perspective like this. We then went on to talk about song themes that are used frequently in music and discussed what your ambitions are in life and you said that you would love to be a footballer, so we listed the following qualities that you need to become a world class footballer:

EDUCATION - LISTENING SKILLS - TECHNIQUE - MOTIVATED - ENERGETIC - DISCIPLINED"

Music Leader Reflective Diary (JD)

23/3/21 KD decided that the 2nd verse should illustrate the main character (Jayden) witnessing a friend get badly hurt and deciding that he needed to turn his life around. This desire from KD to conclude the story positively shows a great level of maturity and sensitivity. The following shows KD's lyrics for the song related to the discussion from previous sessions.

Jayden was a popular kid at school
But he also had a couple of haters too.
He's fourteen ... ballin' was his only dream
Ever since he wanted to play for the Liverpool team.
He's good at turning and he's fast like Sterling.
He dreams about how much money he could be earning.
He wants a nice girlfriend, nice car,
Wants a nice big house, wants to be a superstar.
He got involved with a group of kids
Some of them were carrying knives and taking risks.
Jayden's mom found out, cos she saw him waving 'em round in a couple of vids
On snap, cos she added him
And now she's feelin' mad and wants to batter him.
She can't believe it, she thought she taught him well,
Now she's thinking how long before he's got drugs to sell.
How long before he's gonna be in a prison cell?
Road man life's got him under a spell
Chillin' with the olders to make him one of them
But if he gets caught then he's goin' straight to pen
Could've been on the pitch doin' rainbow flicks
But instead he's in the Trap with a Rambo
If he stuck to being a footballer he could be havin' a phat house and a Lambo

You've gotta be careful who's in your team
Cos they could switch up your life and destroy your dreams.
Look at all the things that you've done and seen.
Got your whole life ahead of you, you're only thirteen.

One night he was with his friend
Chillin' with a girl just round his ends
Next thing he couldn't believe
His mates tryin' to tell him to smoke some weed.
Jayden says nah cos if anyone finds out
I'll get beat and grounded and mom and dad will have a row.
'Nah man come on you're being soft just do it'
But Jayden sticks to his guns and won't go through with it.

You've gotta be careful who's in your team
Cos they could switch up your life and destroy your dreams.
Look at all the things that you've done and seen
Got your whole life ahead of you, you're only thirteen.

Setting staff feedback:

"I know KD really enjoyed working with you just want to thank you for taking time with KD and showing him a different way of looking at life. People like yourself and other people that have worked with KD will definitely help me with directing him down the right road again thanks".

KD's Mentor

Patience / Control and Engagement

Indicator 3

Young people demonstrate increased level of patience/control and ability to sustain engagement in an activity while acknowledging the importance of effort.

Sources of evidence: Records of incidents of poor behaviour compared to incidents of controlled behaviour/emotions via reflective diaries or staff questionnaires/interviews.

We have clear examples from music leader reflective diaries of young people becoming more focused within sessions. The examples given below have been selected from our work with young people who are either engaged with the Youth Offending Service or are students in Pupil Referral Units, where we generally encounter the most challenging behavioural issues and where progress here is routinely measured by partners. Unfortunately, this year we have limited evidence from setting staff regarding the impact that our projects had on young people's behaviour, mainly because we have had very few partner responses to our partner evaluation survey, due to timing and the COVID-19 pandemic. We will endeavour to improve feedback here and requisition this more regularly, to give a more rounded view of the impact of musical engagement.

Solihull Youth Offending Service - Participant DY (Music Leader JD)

Yesterday's session began in difficult fashion with DY expressing his frustrations (not sure what with as he wouldn't tell us) both vocally and physically in the room. Once he'd vented this emotion (20 mins later) he decided to get involved and once again very quickly became completely engaged in what he was doing. Music making is definitely DY's outlet in terms of expressing himself. His personal mentor stated that DY rarely engages for more than 10 minutes with any activity at school, yet we were able to fully engage him for 50 minutes in the first week and 40 minutes yesterday. DY made it clear that he'd 'accepted' me yesterday by fist bumping me as I left. This is a big gesture of trust which I know DY struggles with.

COBS Kings Secondary PRU - Group observations (Music Leader AL)

- 21/10/20 The group have grown in confidence and they all showed this by taking part in the group exercises where they had to come to the front and record a melody or drum pattern. The group worked well together and were settled even when two students climbed through the window and disturbed the session for a few minutes the group stayed calm and focused, this was a big achievement.
- 2/12/20 Music Leader NI and myself felt that AK, whilst not actively contributing musically, sat in on the entire second session and was observing / listening to the others, and not distracting. He listened intently to RK record his rap at the end of the session and listened back to the recording. This is quite an improvement for AK who usually actively disrupts others or finds excuses to leave the session, distract himself, actively opt out etc.

COBS Ashbourne Primary PRU - Participant CM & DM (Music Leader AJ)

- 23/10/20 CM was being restrained in corridor and we managed to entice him to music room. *He let all his frustration out on cardboard box drum* and after 15 mins was calm enough to spend 30 more mins playing chimes and calming himself until he elected to go back to class. His anxiety was triggered by snake visitor to school. He calmed enough to go and see snakes. Really brave.
- 23/10/20 DM, also out of group, was very angry. Came and sat with me and started playing chimes. *Calmed in 10 mins and was joyful in his playing, dancing and clapping.*

The above 3 examples clearly show how music has been an effective tool to help participants gain control over their emotions and, over time, can be used to build participants resilience to manage set-backs and frustrations.

Share and Celebrate

Young people share and celebrate their achievements in music with others.

Sources of evidence: Young people's self-reflection and feedback on their personal journey - through creative tools and Arts Award portfolio/logs in which young people state their goals, interests and subsequent achievements; Staff/parents report an improvement in young people's self-esteem via questionnaire/interview.

Again, as Arts Award activities were not offered this year, evidence for indicator 4 has been captured from Music Leader reflective diaries and through relevant participant quotes.

The Open Mics/Variety Jam sessions have allowed young people to share original music they have created or existing music that they enjoy with their peers and gain feedback. It is clear that this is a successful model as the young people have relished this opportunity. Each session, there is a section called Gold Inspiration where young people can share a piece of music that they really love and the reasons why they love it. As can be seen in the music leader reflective diary extracts, **this sharing of their music is a great way for participants to share their developing musical identity and gain positive feedback from peers and staff, increasing their self-esteem.**

Music leader DW reflective diaries

- 5/9/20 It was great to hear VO talking with such passion about one of his favourite performances – Chopin. Music is clearly so important to him, and his comments within this 'Gold Inspiration' section felt meaningful – I think others in the session picked up on this too. "It's really interesting to see a pianist's hands whilst they're playing" stated JS.
- 7/11/20 RO was **able to invite his mother to watch from Florida, a beautiful, global moment we could all share** – so great for his mother to see him performing and receive all of the feedback from the other participants.
- 7/11/20 The Gold Game is particularly effective for engaging the young people and boosting their self-esteem and self-efficacy. It encourages them to speak up early on in the session, breaking the ice and allows them to express some of their own individual musical tastes.
- 6/1/21 Everyone accepted positive feedback and happily offered it back, often going into more depth. I feel a lot of them felt very happy that their achievements were being recognised. All of them offered feedback at the end during the warm down and all of them offered their new year's resolution, mainly consisting around hope. They all accepted compliments and were happy receiving the comments.

[See Virtual Open Mic Case Study](#)

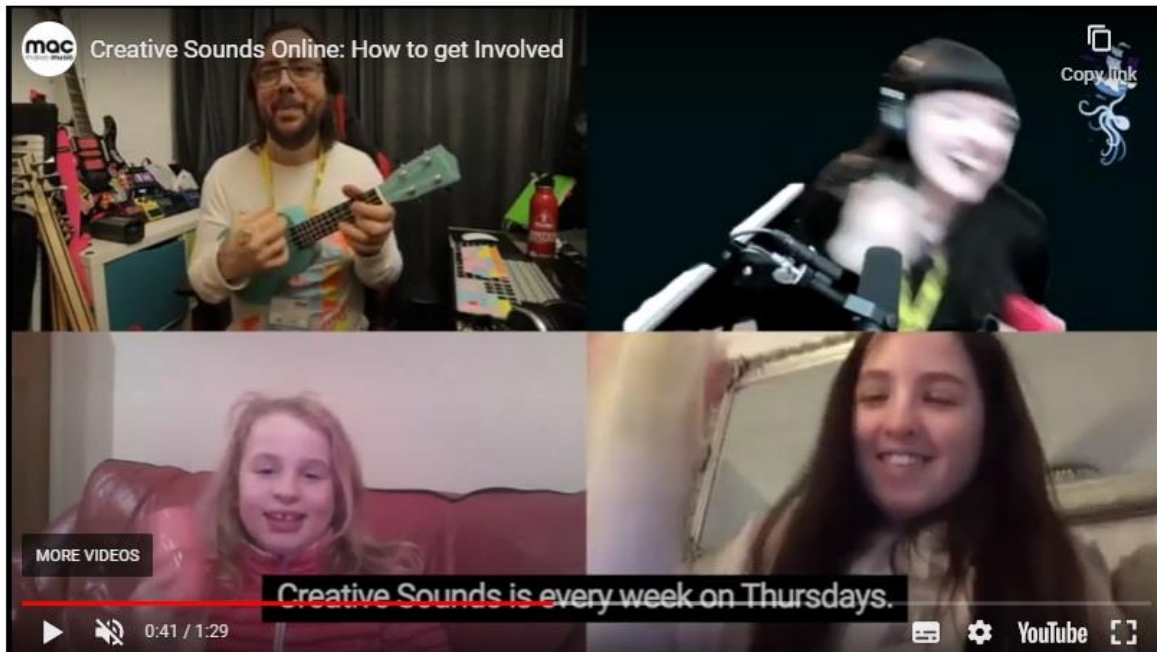
Creative Sounds - Music Leader LB reflective diaries

This example shows how participant NC became more confident over a series of sessions and how she felt easier in accepting compliments and recognising her own achievements.

- 3/12/20 NC felt uneasy about randomly playing her flute for us to draw. Afterwards, we praised her and she acknowledged that she was proud of herself and that she tried her best.
- 10/12/20 NC seemed able to accept compliments given to her. She seemed proud of her accomplishments in the session, often saying about how great the song was.
- 4/2/21 NC and MC were proud of their achievements and were excited to hear the song back. They both reflected on the session and thought ahead to next session. "I really enjoyed sound making and when I sang my verse out to you guys." NC

"I'm looking forward to more music and fun and just being myself." MC

- 25/2/21 - NC's confidence in herself and her music making is improving every week. - She was able to make a quick decision and perform unprepared to us. This is AMAZING.



YouTube screenshot from Creative Sounds video with 2 participants and 2 leaders.

West Midlands Inclusive Choir - Music Leader MR Evaluation (March 2021)

"Even though we have only met on Zoom, participants know each other, they greet each other when they arrive, and the sense of belonging is really strong. Young people are now much more confident to unmute and share with others, and also lead them in sounds or movements. The fact that everybody celebrates each other's achievements has been of great importance."

Participant quotes demonstrating recognition of their achievements include:

"I enjoyed MAC Makes Music's third Virtual Open Mic Event online via Zoom. I would like to thank Music Leaders DW, LB and the MAC Makes Music team for organising this online event. I would like to say well done to some of the members of my band SWITCH for performing and sharing their music. I really enjoyed performing my solo piece "Switch Day One" NS, Oct 2020

"I'm definitely coming back to the next open mic event in December and I'm looking forward to watching the Highlights Video on YouTube" Open Mic Participant, Nov 2020

Setting feedback against this indicator includes:

The Primrose Centre (Sandwell)

Kate Rock (Deputy Head Teacher) stated in her evaluation, "*Children's self-esteem grew throughout the project and all children participated at some level, bringing children together from different backgrounds and with different needs. As the children's confidence grew they became more able to take chances and have a go at playing different instruments and contribute towards songs and recordings.*"

Solihull Youth Offending Service

Sarah Skinner (Youth Offending Service Officer) stated, "The project is a brilliant way to support young people to be creative, to learn and increase skills, to improve self-esteem and to support a passion for music. *It enabled BK to realise his potential and to continue to work on improving his writing skills and rhythm. He enjoyed working with Music Leader OM, who encouraged him throughout providing him with praise and constructive feedback which he went away and worked on. His self-esteem has improved in his love of music and he wishes to continue with this.*"

Colour Music Project

Helen Baldwin (Deputy Head Teacher of the Uffculme School) stated, "Some pupils became very relaxed, *'found' their voice*; others were fascinated by where the light came from and making the link between sound, light and movement. All pupils engaged and gained in confidence on a second visit. A number of pupils showed increased confidence and 'talked' into the microphone." See Uffculme School newsletter (page 3) [here](#).

Out of 4 setting staff survey responses:

50% staff gave a rating of 4, on a scale of 1-4 (with 4 being the highest rating) against the statement 'I can see that the project had a positive impact on participants' self-esteem and self-efficacy (50% gave a rating of 3).

Parent/carer feedback demonstrating impact upon young people's confidence and self-esteem includes:

"Thank you so much for today's virtual open mic music session. SO was incredibly nervous initially, but you all made her feel so relaxed, it was a privilege to be part of this." Parent of Virtual Open Mic participant, Sept 2020

"It's helping CS to gain a little independence without having to rely too much on mom and helping her with communication and social skills." Parent of CS (Switch, Open Mic and West Midlands Inclusive Choir participant)

"[This is a] new experience for TW – he is only just feeling confident enough to engage online with others but loving the sessions (not sure how much singing he is able to do (he has verbal dyspraxia so singing is a recent emerging skill) but he loves the signing and feeling part of the experience!" Parent of TW (West Midlands Inclusive Choir participant)

From a parental survey (7 responses) 85.71% felt that it was 'most or very important' for the MAC Makes Music programme to 'help my young person to develop their confidence and self-esteem'. (Options given were: not important, quite important, very important and most important)

Reflection

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, MMM has made good progress against this outcome. There is **clear evidence from music leader reflective diaries of young people's self-esteem, confidence and self-efficacy improving** and some good feedback from setting staff and parents/carers. Again, as mentioned in outcome 3, evidence of progress would be greater demonstrated through an increased range of evidence sources, including information which could be analysed to give statistical data as evidence of progress. This will be addressed next year through introducing some creative baseline activities/tools in some project settings to help measure progress, as well as improving the documentation of individual goals analysing progress across key points during the year.

Another area that we aim to develop next year is to gain more specific feedback and evaluation from young people around how they feel they are progressing on our projects. Currently, most of the feedback we obtain from young musicians is quite general, such as 'what have you enjoyed the most about the project?' Although there is value in gaining this information, feedback is often not relevant to our programme outcomes. Our plan for next year is, in identified and appropriate projects/settings, to **ask much more targeted questions** to participants and setting staff to help better evidence outcome impact. For instance, giving a Likert scale and asking how much they feel that the project has impacted on their self-esteem' and/or asking an open question as to 'how participating in this project helped your self-esteem?'

A clear gap in our evidencing of this outcome has been the fact that we have not been able to offer the Arts Award this year due to the pandemic. We will be able to offer Arts Award in more projects over the coming year.

Finally, we aim to improve feedback from setting partners to help chart progress against indicator 3 and to gain wider insight of progress and greater context. We will liaise with partners to determine whether they use their own tools to measure progress in self-esteem, self-efficacy and behaviour management and, if so, incorporate these into our evaluations. We will also ask for support in producing impact case studies for a select group of identified participants across the programme in order to understand wider impact, for example to help compare behaviour and/or collaborative working within MMM project sessions to other forms of engagement with the young person.

In summary, progress towards this outcome over the reporting period has been assessed as good.

Communication and interpersonal / social skills

Indicators and sources of evidence for outcome 5

Outcome:	Improve the quality of children and young people's communication and interpersonal / social skills.
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Participants increase ability to collaborate and make music with others by: listening to others' ideas and instructions, taking turns, communicating their thoughts and ideas, playing music together, giving feedback to others.2. Participants can empathise and communicate their opinions more effectively with peers and adults.3. Participants encourage/support each other to be part of the music making process.
Evidence:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tracked progress of participants' collaboration using reflective diaries, comparing starting points to end of project by music leaders.2. Questionnaires completed by staff in settings indicating perceived improvement in communication/social skills.3. Feedback from young people reflecting on their improved ability to interact with others.

Outcome Context

As mentioned in outcomes 3 and 4, MMM have continued to offer a wide variety of musical engagement opportunities over the past year to develop young people's communication and social skills. Despite moving most activity online, there are many examples of young people showing progress via music leader reflective diaries and some feedback quotes from setting staff and parents/carers. Over the next year we will improve data collection in order to ensure that a greater range of sources evidence progress against this outcome.

Analysis Against Each Outcome Indicator

Collaborate – Music making with others

Participants increase ability to collaborate and make music with others by: listening to others' ideas and instructions, taking turns, communicating their thoughts and ideas, playing music together, giving feedback to others.

Sources of evidence: *Tracked progress of participants' collaboration using reflective diaries, comparing starting points to end of project by music leaders; Questionnaires completed by staff in settings indicating perceived improvement in communication/social skills.*

There are numerous examples that show that participants have progressed against this indicator across the varied MMM programmes. Some examples to illustrate this are detailed below.

Indicator 1

COBS Kings

Work at this PRU has been delivered both via online and face to face sessions over the course of this year. These music leader reflective diary extracts illustrate how young people's communication and social skills have developed over a series of sessions.

Extracts from Music Leader AL's reflective diary

- 16/9/20 *Their ability to take turns I feel is at a good level, the group respect each other's verbal and physical space. The group were very respectful all session of when someone was talking. Overall communication skills I feel are very low. Communication was low so it was hard to gauge their ability to listen to each other's ideas and empathy level. I estimate empathy to be quite low.*
- 23/9/20 *The participants' group communication, peer to peer, is low. As described last week, I think respect within the group is high, but communication is very low. I didn't observe any peer to peer behaviour such as 'we're doing this, it sounds good; come and join in' 'would you like to hear what I / we've done' etc. The group didn't share with each other what they thought of each other's playing.*
- 30/9/20 *Taking turns was a strong point in the pre break listening session.*
7/10/20 *I think there was more communication between the group, it felt a little more cohesive as a group dynamic.*
- 4/11/20 *Participants ZK and TK cleaned the instruments on their own accord at the end before being asked. ZK was able to build more rapport with myself and Music Leader NI this week. Every member took turns and gave very positive feedback at the end of the session.*

Come and Sing

These music leader reflective diary extracts illustrate how the Zoom etiquette of taking turns has been established successfully, enabling people to be able to communicate with each other in a managed way.

Extracts from Music Leader MR's reflective diary

- 22/12/20 *They took turns to unmute themselves and that worked really well. They waited until I named them to unmute and participate. When I did not see one of the participants, the adult present came closer to the camera and let me know that she wanted to participate.*
- 16/2/21 *Most "zoom squares" had more than one participant and I think the interaction between members of the same household was very interesting - how sharing these kinds of activities can help create different dynamics within the family.*

Setting staff feedback:

Solihull Youth Offending Service (SYOS)

Sarah Skinner (Youth Offending Service Officer) *"Participant BK was able to use his lyrics to think about his own life and to express his feelings for his girlfriend. BK struggles with writing. He has, however, been working on this. BK engaged with the sessions – listening to instruction and taking on board feedback. He was happy and enjoyed sharing his words. He was enthusiastic and keen to work on his track."*

[Listen to the track here.](#)

Out of 4 setting staff survey responses:

50% staff rated gave a rating of 4 on a scale of 1-4 (with 4 being the highest score) against the statement 'I can see that the project had a positive impact on participants' communication and social skills (50% gave a rating of 3).

Empathy and communicating opinions

Participants can empathise and communicate their opinions more effectively with peers and adults

Sources of evidence: Tracked progress of participants' collaboration using reflective diaries, comparing starting points to end of project by music leaders; Questionnaires completed by staff in settings indicating perceived improvement in communication/social skills; Feedback from young people reflecting on their improved ability to interact with others.

Creative Sounds

Creative Sounds is a new project this year and has mainly engaged 2 participants across the year. These 2 young people did not know each other before the project and got to know each other through the sessions. These music leader reflective diary extracts illustrate how they have progressed in expressing their opinions and thoughts through sessions.

Extracts from Music Leader LB's reflective diary

- 26/11/20 Participant NC was able to communicate her thoughts and feelings to us adults. She supported everyone, telling us when we did a good job. There were one or two times when she told us she wasn't happy with something (awkward silence and 'you ruined my song').
- 3/12/20 NC communicated her opinions and thoughts effectively. She attempted to be supportive but honest. Participant MC didn't express herself with words often, but we gathered her engagement from her concentration, and she was able to communicate if she enjoyed something in head nods.
- 10/12/20 MC was more verbal today than previous weeks. She happily spoke about Christmas. She was easy going with what we did however took a more forthcoming approach and offered ideas and lyrics (more than she has in previous weeks). The chat function worked incredibly well for MC, as she was given space to type her ideas. NC, once again, was very talkative and was happy to voice her creative ideas.
- 11/2/21 Here is an example of some lyrics written in this session which clearly shows participants communicating their feelings on the current Covid-19 pandemic:

*2021, no Covid dudes - when will it all go away?
I hate it so much, so does everyone else,
Let's just pray and pray until it goes away.*

*What's this Covid? It's so stupid.
When will it all go away?
All the teachers and children are amazing.
I keep getting separated.*

*Why is this Covid here? We hate it so much.
Whoever made it should be prison.
We just have to sanitize to not get Covid.*

[Listen to the track here](#)

SWITCH

SWITCH has been running now for a number of years and although new members have joined over that period, there has also been a core group that has had the opportunity to work together over a sustained period of time. The music leader reflective diaries reflect how well the young people engage with each other and how it is a safe space to share opinions and work on the ability to compromise.

Extracts from Music Leader AL's reflective diary

- 29/9/20 I think the group communicate well; they listen to each other. The group respect each other's ideas and musical space. Taking turns is a very strong skill with SWITCH.
- 20/10/20 I had some detailed chat with Participant AZ at the start of the session. He was telling me that he found it hard at first to adapt to the new COVID changes, ways of doing things, courses and activities being online, etc. He was reflecting insightfully and communicating how he has found the last few months, how he has coped etc. He expressed he found it challenging but he has improved and gotten used to things more.
- 10/11/20 JS was very communicative tonight and had lots of ideas for the direction of the new song, and she came up with lots of thoughtful insight into oxymorons. AZ picked up on this and contributed themes of Angels and Demons in his lyrics. AZ was responsive to JS's ideas of an Alt/Indie song. The following lyrics came from this discussion:

*It's a dark day, I've got nowhere to stay,
People are creeping on me, I lost my way,
People are lone, it's creeping all alone,
Making my pathway, I see no darkness ahead,
People just creeping on me, this is what I need to stay alive,
This is my headlight to the darkness ahead, I need to pray for prayer,
There's no demon in me, and it's Halloween,
Now I need a sunlight ahead, people are returning from the dead,
I see demons I see angels; I feel them all, I've got a sixth sense.*

COBS Minerva

This is a clear example of the music leader meeting the needs of the young person to enable them to communicate in the most accessible way.

Music Leader AJ reflective diary entry

23/10/20 DM prefers Makaton and signing to speech. I noticed he was not keen to speak and so used Makaton and gesture instead and he started to use simple signs back to me. It is his preferred communication and brought out a very gentle side of him which was great to see.

Surveys and evaluation materials were disseminated to setting staff and parents/carers. We have been disappointed by the level of response that we have received but the feedback we have had does demonstrate some progress against this outcome.

Open Orchestra setting staff quote:

"We are really enjoying each session and it has been so lovely to see progress in the students' personal development even over the last 8 weeks." (Class Teacher)

Parent/carer feedback:

The West Midlands Inclusive Choir sent a survey to participants and their parents/carers to complete about their involvement in the programme.

Out of 12 participant responses:

100% stated that the choir helps them to feel more connected with the community.

"We see so few people right now, it's just nice to see happy, enthusiastic people."

"In these challenging times it has brought people together who perhaps wouldn't normally have been able to do that".

"I heard my son sing quiet a lot and attempt to join in at times. He also tried to sign which he hasn't engaged with before."

Out of 7 parent/carer surveys completed, 28.6% gave a rating of 4 on a scale of 1-4 (with 4 being the highest score) against the statement, 'MAC Makes Music sessions have helped my young person to meet and communicate with other young people' (42.9% gave a rating of 3).

"[They have developed] sign language [skills]" – Parent of participant LC (Come and Sing)

Some excellent examples of young people being able to empathise and communicate their thoughts and feelings with others can be seen in the lyrics they have written across the MAC Makes Music programme. These lyrics cover a wide range of topics but are most revealing where they comment on the issues of the world around them and the challenges they as young people face growing up. Other songs contain very personal reflections around mental health and often we find that young people can be very open about their feelings in songs where they would struggle to talk about the same topics in a conversation. Some key examples can be seen below:

COBS Kings - Group lyrics examples

*Education doesn't teach us what we need to learn after school,
98% of what we're taught contains no jewels.
Teachers out here trying to make us look like fools,
Think it makes them seem smart and makes them look cool.*

Lyrics written by ZK & AK

*I wish money didn't exist cos everybody would be equal.
No rich, no poor and no homeless people
Police are getting paid to do their job.
Same people that diss them, call for their help.
What's the point in war?
It's just the same as what's gone before,*

*Maybe we were put on this earth to see what choice we make.
Life is like a test, you can either fail or be great,
Is there a higher power at work, it's a curse doing all the bad things
It's a mad thing stealing money breaking in all of that.
Not great some rappers are fake they're saying they are hood life.*

*Too much money can make some people bad.
Just all money, no people, no friends
Everybody doing stuff following trends,
Living that road life is just dead ends.
Family get the wrong stuff it just depends.
People think that they're fighting for a cause
Wait, pause for thoughts,
Denying, all these lies isn't enough.*

*Rappers think they're bad but they're actually weak,
Nonsense leaking out their mouth when they speak.*

The Primrose Centre - Extract of group lyrics ([listen here](#))

*I'm so sad and depressed
That I'm gone yeah yeah yeah
They don't listen to myself
When they find I don't care,
That I'm dead in the undergrowth
Stuck with the noise
That I don't fit where I am where I am
Then I find my way out and I get my life back
There's a light start to shine and I'm on the right track
And I'm walking back home see the pictures hung there.
They're the people that love me, the people that care.
They fix me when I get ruthless
And when I'm angry they bring me back down
The gods say, go where it's peaceful
Peaceful not angry, they bring me back round.*

Open Mic - Extract of participant NS's lyrics ([listen here](#)):

*I've been going through a tough time, I tell you it's frustrating,
I'm in the blues, sometimes it is suffocating.
I don't know when will it be ending.
In my room, I'm all so lonely.
Don't know how to take things slowly.
My mind is full of sadness.
Can't find a way to breaking my happiness.
Everything seems very dark and cloudy,
I feel like crying very loudly.
Can someone help me guide the way?
I want the light to come away.
I want to live, I want to prosper,
Give me a chance, I've got lots to offer.*

When our young people perform or share music, we encourage peer feedback to build relationships and communication skills between participants. This not only validates their opinions but gives everyone a space to be heard.

"By taking part in the Virtual Open Mic sessions, I feel I became more confident when offering feedback on someone's work." Participant VO



Dragon X performing at an Open Mic

Indicator 3

Peer support and encouragement

Participants encourage/support each other to be part of the music making process.

Sources of evidence: Tracked progress of participants' collaboration using reflective diaries, comparing starting points to end of project by music leaders.

There is an abundance of evidence from music leader reflective diaries around how young people support and encourage each other and have made friends through participating in the MMM programme, especially through our Inclusive Group work, where young people from different parts of the West Midlands come together. These relationships have been nurtured through our projects as the young people would not have met before engaging in our activity. Some key examples can be found below.

Open Mic (Variety Jam)

This is a new project that we launched this year and has provided a platform for young people from different backgrounds to come together to celebrate their achievements. The way they have gelled as a group is evidenced through the music leader DW's reflective diary:

- 7/11/20 The group are supportive of one another and offered a lot of positive feedback today such as:
"That is what I call an ANTHEM!" Participant XO feeding back to Participant RO.
"The lyrics are epic" Participant NS to Participant XO when feeding back on his live performance.
"I especially liked it when it went to the chorus – I love the dark lyrics of the chorus" Participant VO to Participant JS regarding her sharing an original composition.
- 5/12/20 The team spirit felt particularly strong today, with the festive, end of year feeling seeping in and drawing us closer together- even in the digital realm of Zoom.

- *6/2/21 One of the big benefits of these sessions is encouraging public speaking and participants learning to talk about their own personal creative work and their peers in a positive light. I would like to highlight JS today in this report. She is a naturally reserved character and sometimes at the sessions I've conducted with her in person she barely speaks at all but within these online sessions she really seems to find herself and her true creative voice. When she began attending last summer she was reluctant to share any work, but now does so routinely and always presents it with clear commentary too. XO has always been confident but within this group is showing a consistent maturity: He commented on his piece today, "This is inspired by Iridis' music and talks about mental health. This song speaks from the heart and the soul and I added echo FX to my vocals to make it sound unique." We talk about what music and artists inspire us, we share our works in progress – and it is nice to do this without an audience which has led to the idea of re-naming the group as it is not really an open mic.*

West Midlands Inclusive Choir

Again, this is another example of a new project that has been developed this year and that has purely been delivered online. Young people with varying needs from across the West Midlands have come together monthly to engage in mutually supportive activities.

Extracts from Music Leader MR's reflective diary

- *12/12/20 The group worked well together. Participants were generally keen to share with the others and took turns to unmute themselves. When unable to communicate, carers helped with communication. Participants who have been members of other inclusive choirs said how happy it makes them to meet regularly with their "choir friends" and make music together.*
- *9/1/21 During the session they developed the following skills: sharing music making with others; opportunity to express their thoughts on the music and choosing their repertoire; being supportive of each other; listening to others.*
- *20/2/21 There was a very emotional moment when CS sung her song and participants were signing along with her.*
- *20/3/21 The choir now certainly feels like a community, where everybody celebrates each other's achievements and encourages participants to share their music making. Through the song writing workshop, we managed to reflect on how music makes us feel and worked to create a tune that reflects that. Also, participants are encouraged to tell us if they like or dislike the songs we are listening. Participants are now recording themselves, both in audio and in video. Also, we rehearse in the sessions and then record, creating that sense of performance to then share with people outside from the choir.*

Reflection

Despite the challenges of the pandemic and the disruption this has caused to our usual mode of delivery, MMM has adapted activities and programmes well to ensure that young people can develop their communication and interpersonal/social skills. Even though session delivery has largely been online, there is some excellent anecdotal evidence of progress and with online working, new skills and etiquette has been gained around communicating with each other in this format. The young people have coped well with transitioning to this way of working and skills learnt working remotely will be transferable to face to face working. As before, MMM are committed to exploring new ways to chart progress in the future to ensure that multiple sources of evidence chart progression, for better triangulation.

A real key success has been the **quality of the lyrics written by young people this year** which clearly demonstrate their **increased emotional literacy** and their ability to comment on their lives and the world around them through the medium of song writing. The majority of MMM's programme is delivered via group sessions with young people, so many of these lyrics have been devised collaboratively as a group, evidencing sharing of ideas and communication skills. Although not originally listed as a form of evidence against this outcome, lyrics created can be useful evidence of progress for indicator 2, showing the young people's ability to communicate their opinions on such matters as the COVID-19 pandemic. **Writing songs can be a very useful way for young people to say what's on their mind where they may otherwise find it difficult to verbalise their feelings.** In addition, there are a huge number of reflective diary comments demonstrating how young people have communicated, both verbally and through body language, their: musical likes and dislikes; choice in styles/rhythms/sounds used in their compositions; offered suggestions and constructive comments to others and improved their listening skills and turn-taking and ability to compromise through MMM's programmes. The wealth of observations here clearly show improvement in communication, interpersonal and social skills through MMM's work.

Over the next year, MMM will review our evaluation tools and processes in conjunction with our new external evaluators to ensure that multiple sources of evidence can be used to demonstrate outcome progress. In particular, we will look at the way we set and revisit project goals, baseline participants and gather specific feedback from participants, setting staff and parents/ carers. We will also aim to gather feedback at regular points across the year rather than just at the year-end or on culmination of a programme as the response level to our recent request for feedback was low and therefore doesn't reflect the full breadth and impact of our work.

<p>'It's a Hard Life' Virtual frustration I want to go to the train station, But I can't go on vacation, Just sat on my playstation, And I'm losing concentration, Losing my education Needing validation, Looking for graduation, space station,</p> <p>losing my education need validation But there's no graduation Just sat on my playstation</p>	<p>LIFE ON ZOOM LOCKDOWN Light at the end of the tunnel Challenging Annie the orphan the musical 'It's A Hard Life' - Throwbacks/ flashbacks All the exams I couldn't take Changing plans WhetherSpoons CAN'T GO OUT We like come in a maze</p>	<p>Frustration Back to school and holidays</p>
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Whiteboard
from SWITCH
zoom song
writing
session

Youth Voice

Indicators and sources of evidence for outcome 6

Outcome:	Increased quality and understanding of Youth Voice practice
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Young people are valued, listened to and participate in decision-making during sessions and planning.2. Increased knowledge of the existing Youth Voice best practice with a view to increasing Youth Voice activities offered and to a wider breadth of participants.3. Increased knowledge and understanding of Youth Voice practice, particularly in relation to why and how to do it effectively.
Evidence:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tracked involvement of participants' collaboration in planning delivery using reflective diaries by music leaders.2. Minutes and collated documentation from steering groups and creative consultations with young people.3. Verbal feedback from young people.4. Audit of current Youth Voice work within MEHs connected to the programme.

Outcome Context

The COVID-19 global pandemic has caused great disruption to young people's lives, their education, social lives and wellbeing. It has also affected many of the organisations and hobbies that young people engage with outside of school. Arts organisations and music services have very quickly needed to review their provision and to investigate the potential of new ways to engage and support young people musically, through online learning, digital and printed content and resources, and through new face-to-face delivery that can accommodate social distancing and other COVID-secure working. As such, the pandemic has also provided the sector, including MEHs, with a real opportunity to look at the types of services and opportunities provided to assess how far they meet the needs and wishes of all young people in the area and how flexible the offer is, not solely as 'market research' for provision throughout the pandemic, but as [an opportunity to innovate for the future to support inclusion and wider, more diverse engagement](#). It has also shown the value of culture and creative activities, including musical activity in all its forms, in helping connect people and supporting wellbeing throughout such challenging times.

MMM has provided initial investment to help '[kickstart](#)' youth voice in all 5 MEHs across this reporting period, supporting both strategic planning and also initial practical youth consultation activities. Progress against this outcome has been measured through:

- analysing minutes and videos of steering group meetings with youth voice as an agenda item, including MAC MEH Strategy Group meetings with presentations given by Sound Connections staff (commissioned to support with Youth Voice);
- looking at MEH audit material and notes regarding current/planned youth voice activities and any perceived barriers;
- analysing notes and feedback obtained from youth consultations and focus group sessions across 3 MEHs (Solihull, Sandwell and Coventry)
- Evaluator session observations and reviews of music leader reflection diaries identifying youth voice practice within MMM's programme delivery.

Analysis Against Each Outcome Indicator

Indicator 1

Decision making with young people

Young people are valued, listened to and participate in decision-making during sessions and planning.

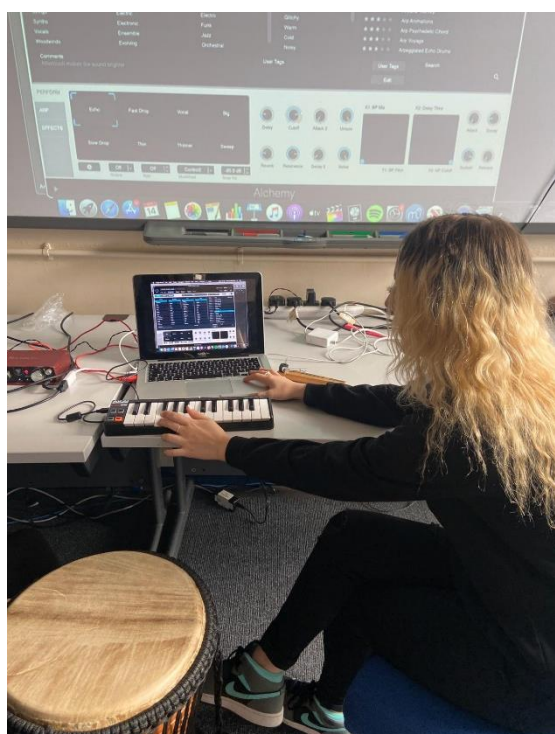
Source of evidence: Tracked involvement of participants' collaboration in planning delivery using reflective diaries by music leaders. Feedback from settings.

Young people are at the heart of MMM's programmes and steer the content of sessions and direction of projects. At the start of every MMM project, after the first session and using feedback from participants and partners, music leaders set and document musical, personal and social objectives for the programme, based on what the young people currently know, enjoy and hope to gain from the programme. Where possible and relevant, goals are set for individuals as well as the whole group. Music leader reflective diaries document individual and group progression and show strong evidence of using participant reflection and feedback to inform future activities. Notes of session visits by our evaluators have commented on the strengths of MMM music leaders in ensuring that every young person present has a voice and equal opportunity to shine and particularly mention the sensitive and measured approach that facilitators take to ensuring that final decisions and actions are agreed with participants, even when there might be different views within the group.

Due to the nature of the type of activity and/or participant groups, a small number of projects/settings appear more prescriptive or 'teacher-led' in approach. Even here, young people and their carers are given choices to steer elements of the session, for example through repertoire choice, and space for their own input and reflections. Clear examples of youth voice are given below.

Using input from young people to devise programme activity:

19/9/20: AL, Emerging Music Leader for the COBS Enrichment @ Kings Centre, Secondary PRU, ran a quiz for students asking what their musical interests were, what musical experience they had, what they want out of the sessions, etc., in order to inform future sessions.



Left: young person creating music using technology.

Right: young person performing on a microphone reading lyrics from a phone.

Tracked progress in participant collaboration in planning through music leader reflection diaries can be seen with participant NS from MMM's Switch band:

- 18/8/20: "NS took the lead on the music production – opening up her garage band project, sharing her screen and talking us through her process...NS displayed a lot of confidence in the session. She was the creative force and presented many strong ideas. I felt like she responded very well to the smaller group size and felt confident to make more verbal contributions than I noticed in previous Switch sessions. The way NS took the lead today - this was great to witness, it feels urgent, like something important shifted..."
- 3/10/20: "NS is growing in confidence and enjoying the role of compere – this has been an effective addition to the schedule."
- 13/10/20: "NS seemed confident to lead a Vocal warm up."
- 1/12/20: "JS asserted herself in the chat and suggested she wanted to revisit and work on her song. NS already had suggested working on her idea and after discussion of which song to work on, took a step back to let SWITCH work on JS's idea (not a song by NS)...this was a personal development for her, and she naturally wants to be the main leader and it was good for her to let someone else take the lead a little. NS was happy to work on JS's idea when I asked is that okay with her. NS asked JS about potentially rapping in JS's song and JS communicated she didn't imagine rapping. NS took this on board. I felt this was a development for JS – for her to be assertive in this, and also that she communicated it in a clear but calm/kind way. I felt it was a development for NS who was open to JS's feedback."

Notes from a SWITCH project session visited by our evaluators commented on how decisions were made wholly by the group in regards to what to work on in the session – a fully democratic process.

In the Virtual Open Mic session visited by our evaluators, the group were involved in creating a new name for themselves and this was also documented in music leader reflection diaries: 6/3/21: "We had a great, lively group discussion and debate surrounding the name change – we took a vote and *participants came up with the new name 'Variety Jam'* – this was one of the great positives to come from the session – lots of positive contributions from the participants." DW, Music Leader.

Due to COVID-19 we have had very limited feedback from settings this year on activities, with only 4 responses to evaluation questionnaires sent out. None of these responses specifically mention youth voice, though this was inferred with positive feedback in regards to the young people gaining confidence and devising their own songs/music in sessions.

Utilising existing Youth Voice best practice

Indicator 2 Increased knowledge of the existing Youth Voice best practice with a view to increasing Youth Voice activities offered and to a wider breadth of participants.

Source of evidence: Minutes and collated documentation from steering groups and creative consultations with young people; Verbal feedback from young people.

There has been strong progress in this area, championed by MMM, across the 5 MEHs. AIME partner Sound Connections was commissioned to support the MAC MEH Strategy Group with the development of youth voice (see Indicator 3). In addition, LB, a Solihull based young person who has been supported to develop from participant to emerging then lead music leader roles by MMM, was commissioned to develop a range of youth voice consultation materials for different audiences through differentiated surveys and focus group meetings, to help MEHs begin to action youth voice.

The youth consultation survey was piloted in Solihull, with questions set by LB and then streamlined and reviewed/tweaked by the MEH Inclusion Subgroup. The surveys produced have to date been **completed by 1,566 young people across Solihull** (785 from secondary schools, 733 from primary schools, 35 from special schools, 12 from virtual schools and 1 from Home Education). In addition, 9 online focus groups (consulting 36 young people in total) have been held, engaging a variety of young people in school settings but primarily focused on obtaining responses from LAC pupils and pupils with SEN/D and SEMH needs.

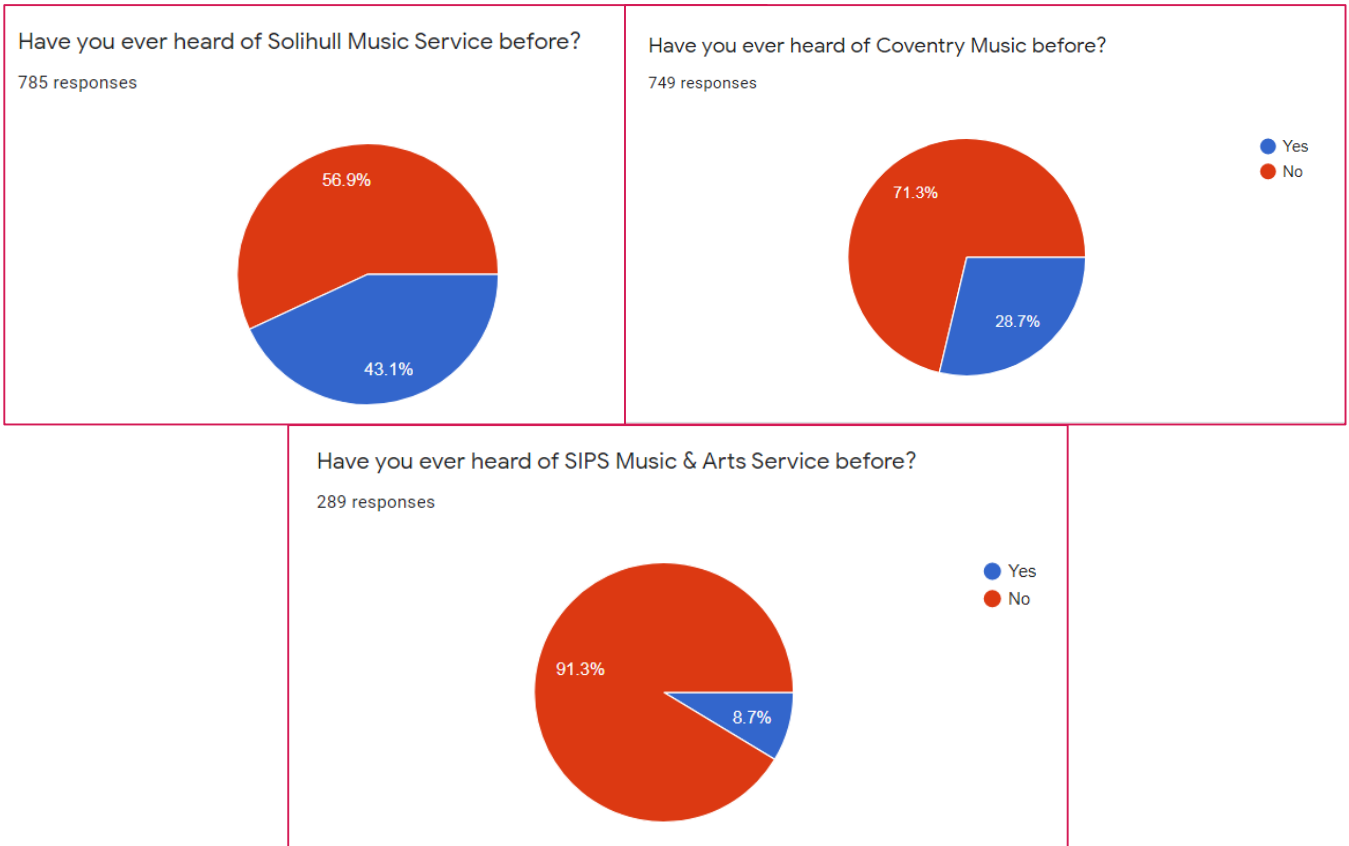
As a result of the response to this Solihull consultation, Coventry and Sandwell are now also running the same consultations across their MEHs, with **765 responses** (749 from secondary schools, 12 primary schools, 4 special schools) and **530 responses** (292 secondary, 231 primary schools, 7 special schools) respectively. The live surveys can be found [here](#). Birmingham MEH has committed to being involved in future after a review of the questions asked. In Worcestershire there are some challenges as the service is a music and arts service, so MMM is supporting this MEH to look at different options.

To date, the majority of responses across have largely been provided by young people from upper KS2 and KS3 year groups in mainstream schools but the 3 MEHs are **working hard to try to reach as wide a response as possible, including from those not currently engaged**. All 3 MEHs running the surveys to date have committed to sharing the outcomes of the consultations with the young people/settings involved, either on a setting/cohort basis to inform future plans, or as an overall collated response. In Solihull the additional 9 **focus group sessions have helped to ensure that those who might struggle to complete a form also have the chance to contribute**.

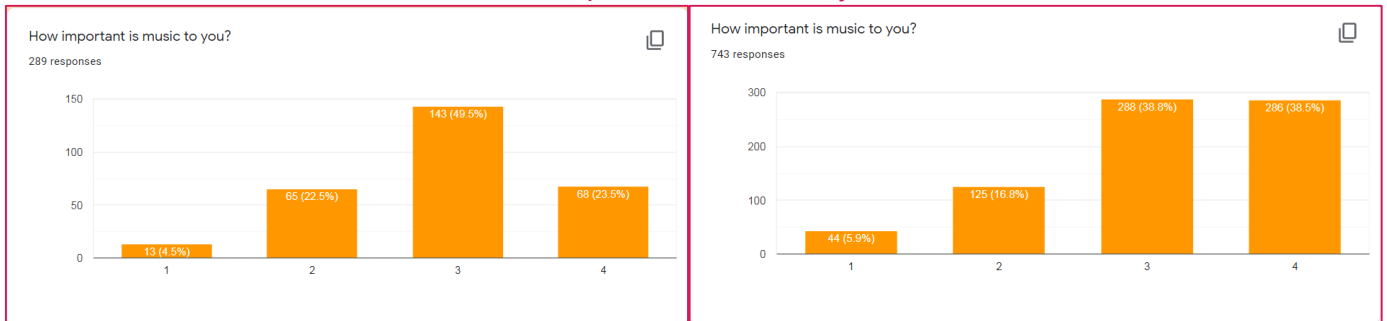
Analysis of survey responses has given some excellent insight into the genres of music that young people like, the barriers they face in accessing opportunities and their desires for future engagement. Some of the responses significantly differ across the different ages and setting types asked but, in general, the information has highlighted numbers of young people who are unaware of the music services and the current opportunities offered. **In addition, it's highlighted barriers to engagement, consistently including a lack of time after school, not knowing how to get involved/where to go, a lack of instruments/resources and not having any local provision**. In Solihull, the consultation data has already been used to inform and/or amend provision in several settings and has identified new young people with an interest in music who are eligible for pupil premium plus support to subsidise provision. Here the youth voice activity as a whole has informed their strategic thinking, new inclusion strategy development and even, potentially, a proposed restructure of Solihull MEH delivery into locality areas where partners, schools and young people co-produce the offer.

Secondary School Consultation Responses

Have you ever heard of X before?

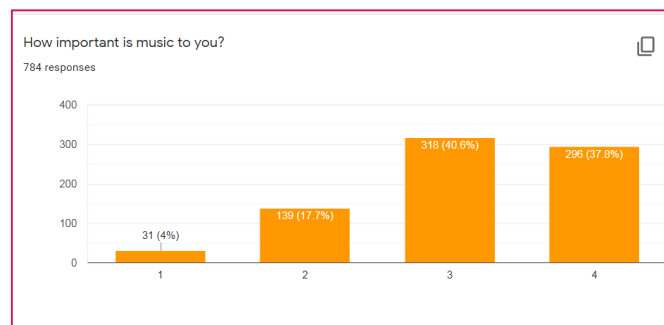


How important is music to you?



Sandwell Secondary School Response

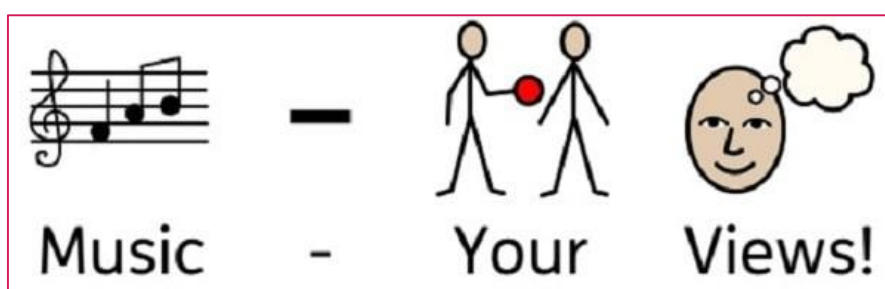
Coventry Secondary School Response



Solihull Secondary School Response

MEH Strategy Group feedback on this work has been really positive. Currently, **most MEHs are generally focused on developing their youth voice activity within their own music service** offers, rather than as a hub-wide initiative, as they see this as a natural starting point to then inform wider roll-out. Moving forwards, it would make sense to involve and utilise the skills of local Hub partners with this work where relevant, to ensure streamlining of any consultation materials. Many arts and community based organisations are highly experienced in youth consultation and youth voice through the development and fundraising for non-formal programmes and in working with young people to co-produce and co-deliver projects.

In addition, it could be useful to engage a range of young people to work together to design and disseminate future questionnaires, to ensure that the questions asked provide maximum opportunity for open responses outside of what might be traditionally expected.



An example of the Widgeit symbols used for easy read versions of the surveys.

Why and How – Youth Voice

Indicator 3

Increased knowledge and understanding of Youth Voice practice, particularly in relation to why and how to do it effectively.

Source of evidence: Audit of current Youth Voice work within MEHs connected to the programme.

AIME partner Sound Connections was commissioned to support the MMM MEH Strategy Group with the development of youth voice, helping to build understanding and awareness regarding the principles and practice of youth voice, and how it relates specifically to music education. A presentation was given covering youth voice as a human right, explaining Hart's 'Ladder of Participation' and different forms of youth voice activity, as well as detailing examples of best practice.

Each MEH completed the Sound Connections **Youth Voice Equalizer Tool** prior to engagement, producing a self-assessed score in relation to their current practice. All 5 MEHs initially scored themselves quite harshly, with scores ranging from 43 to 60 out of 100. They also completed a youth voice questionnaire regarding the training they'd had to date on youth voice, the activities they currently run that include youth voice to some degree, thoughts regarding how they'd like to embed youth voice further into their work and any barriers they face in this area.

Each MEH was allocated a one half-day bespoke session with a Sound Connections youth voice specialist to look strategically at youth voice and any barriers faced. Sound Connections found some key themes:

- **All 5 MEHs are already doing some elements of youth voice** both within their delivery (e.g., repertoire choice, co-production, outreach work, in engaging alumni and in gathering feedback and evaluation) and strategically (e.g., in market research, stakeholder consultation, having young people as advocates/ambassadors);
- There is a strong commitment to do more;

- The MEHs see the work as **key to increasing inclusion and diversity**;
- Most MEHs are focused on youth voice within their service, rather than across the hub partnership;
- Clear opportunities were highlighted for youth voice within MEH operations (governance/teams, etc.) and delivery/teaching (programmes/production).

Common needs and next steps across the 5 MEHs included:

- A **need to document and capture the youth voice activity already taking place** and start talking about this as youth voice, integrating and joining up the work;
- **Wider training and workforce development** in this area is seen as crucial, for delivery staff as well as board members and partners, to build skills and developing understanding of the value and benefits;
- A need for MEHs to **start investing in youth voice** to make real change, making it part of their budget and business case;
- As a next step the MEHs should **share their ideas and successes** and liaise wider with the 14 West Midlands MEH network and nationally;
- MEHs should consider using **youth voice to help with monitoring, evaluation** and tracking of progress.

As next steps, Sound Connections will produce a mini-toolkit about youth voice for use within the MEHs, with a practical guide and reference points/next steps for each of the 5 MEHs. **Youth voice will become a standing agenda item** in the monthly MMM MEH Strategy Group meetings and some hubs have already decided to incorporate youth voice within their September inset day training. Most of the MEHs now understand how **youth voice activity is key to EDI and inclusion strategy revisions and to wider engagement**. All see huge value in building on the youth voice work that they are already doing.

MMM will work with each MEH to analyse information collected through the youth consultations described in Indicator 2 and to discuss actions and next steps to communicate findings and develop actions from the research.

Reflection

The additional investment from MMM and resulting time and expertise given to the 5 MEHs from Sound Connections and LB has enabled strong progress to be made towards this outcome, both practically (in Solihull, Sandwell and Coventry) and strategically (across all 5 MEHs). Currently activity and learning has primarily focused on youth voice in relation to music service delivery, rather than development across each Hub partnership and this is a clear and important next step, to share learning, gain wider momentum and also to ensure a streamlined approach to youth consultation. There is clear enthusiasm for the work and the investment given **shows what can be achieved with additional financial investment and staff capacity moving forwards**.

Music Leader reflective diaries and observations show that MMM staff are highly experienced in this area and are able to incorporate effective youth voice into the pedagogical practice within most programmes. MMM programmes that incorporate partnership delivery with settings, such as youth workers or school teachers working alongside MMM staff, are highly effective in highlighting the power of this approach and developing practice in this area. Further training and professional development for all MEH staff at a delivery and strategic level will build on the positive momentum this year, in addition to ongoing investment from MEHs.

It was really **positive that a young person was commissioned to develop and lead on this youth consultation work**. The fact that this young person has been supported to grow and

develop through Youth Music funded projects into a leadership and consultancy role highlights **MMM's strengths in emerging music leader development and in nurturing young talent**. A clear next step would be for MMM to lead on developing our own youth voice work beyond young people informing their individual project sessions/content, incorporating youth voice at a more strategic level, perhaps through our own youth forum, youth consultant roles, youth producer and youth advocate programmes, or through supporting similar hub specific activities.

In summary, progress towards this outcome over the reporting period has been assessed as strong.

Youth Voice Case Study

Solihull Music Service was keen to embed youth voice into their provision. The EDI Lead and Assistant Head of Service had given the MEH a quite harsh self-assessed score of 43/100 on Sound Connections' Youth Voice Equalizer tool, which was the lowest score across our 5 MEHs. The MEH leads felt that they had very limited experience of using youth voice, other than having plans to consult young people engaged with the Youth Offending Service to design a potential new programme of work. They had had no previous training input in youth voice and felt that the barriers to date had been organisational on all levels. They were keen to build training on youth voice into their CPD offer for staff over the next 2-3 years. The COVID-19 pandemic and consequential impact on budgets had meant that the MEH was currently re-assessing their offer.

"Up until lockdown we still had very traditional ensembles: youth orchestra, wind band, etc. You had to audition or have reached a certain grade on your instrument. Also, there was no flexibility: if you wanted to play the violin you had to come on a Wednesday evening because that's when the strings orchestra meets. Now, the numbers are down and it's a time to challenge that thinking and reimagine the future offer. For example, does it really matter who you play with, as long as you're playing in a group? And I'd like to get to the point where anyone and everyone, no matter what additional needs they have, is welcome throughout all of our services." – Claire Batty, Assistant Head, Solihull Music Service

As a result of the half-day consultation session on youth voice with Sound Connections, the MEH reported back that senior staff felt energised by the process and felt confident to do more. The session gave the MEH the understanding that **they were already doing some youth voice activity but hadn't necessarily realised or articulated this as a service**. For example, young people were already involved in choosing repertoire for their ensembles and in steering the content of their lessons and learning, and Solihull alumni were already involved in 'Engage and Inspire' workshops to showcase different career paths possible in music. The next step for them was to capture and document this, to ensure it was embedded across the service, and then to develop from that point.

MMM's support for youth voice was very timely for Solihull MEH, as the hub advisory group were keen to consult with stakeholders in order to develop a business and stabilisation plan moving forwards, partly as a result of the pandemic. Therefore, when the opportunity was offered to gain some support with youth consultation, they were keen to be involved and to work with LB and MMM in supporting the design and dissemination of a youth survey. LB is a local Solihull based young person who had previously been involved in Youth Music funded programme with Quench Arts as a participant and then supported in her further development as an emerging artist and music leader through MMM and the FLOW Collective initiative. LB designed a questionnaire, differentiated for different ages and groups, which was then reviewed and tweaked in consultation with LB by Solihull's MEH Inclusion Subgroup (3 Head Teachers, Head of SEN/D for Solihull, Virtual School staff and a councillor). The surveys

were then disseminated to as wide a range of organisations and partner contacts as possible, to ensure a wide reach, with 9 additional focus group sessions to ensure that input was also gained from young people who might not respond/or be able to respond to a written survey. The survey was disseminated with the following explanation:

Solihull Music Service needs your voice to help us develop a more inclusive and diverse music offer for Children and Young people. We want to know what musical opportunities young people would like to get involved in to help us design more accessible pathways into music making...

To date **1,566** young people across Solihull have completed the survey and 36 young people have taken part in 9 focus groups. Solihull MEH has committed to sharing learning from the consultation with all the settings engaged and to talk through next steps as a result of the findings. They will also work with MMM to collate and analyse all the data to share the collective learning.

The youth voice learning, process and feedback has already been useful. For example, a school, which had previously only been lightly involved with the MEH, approached the music service with a request for some specific musical input and tuition and the MEH EDI lead was able to suggest that a youth voice focus group be held to find out exactly what the young people wanted. This has resulted in a more creative music-making offer being put in place for the young people, informed by their needs and interests, which was different to the initial request. The focus group responses clearly evidenced what the young people wanted and helped to achieve 'buy-in' from the school and the music service was able to obtain pupil premium plus funding for 7 (LAC) young people to engage. Other [school-based focus group feedback has shown that young people would really value the opportunity to try a range of instruments, rather than having to focus on 1 specific instrument as part of their learning, which has workforce implications for the MEH in regards to being able to provide staff with a flexible range of skills for, for example, WCIT provision.](#)

Finally, feedback from young people regarding barriers to engagement, such as having nothing offered locally, has helped to develop thinking around a potential restructure of the MEH offer, to include delivery across 5 locality-based areas with youth voice embedded locally and young people working with local schools, partners and agencies to co-produce opportunities and support progression across their whole school life. These potential plans are at the early stages and require further consultation and consideration, but it is clear already that youth voice is informing MEH strategic development, which is incredibly positive.

Feeding back on the impact of youth voice work to date, Claire Batty, Assistant Head stated: *"I just wanted to say thank you for pushing us to do it because it's actually been a really valuable experience. Some real learning that has kind of taken place in the schools as well as from our point of view."*

Progression in SEN/D and SEMH

Indicators and sources of evidence for outcome 7

Outcome:	Increased progression opportunities for those in SEN/D and SEMH.
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustained/regular ensemble opportunities for Young Musicians in SEN/D and SEMH compared with pre-programme.2. Increased performance and skills sharing opportunities for SEN/D / SEMH.3. Increase in investment in SEN/D / SEMH music making programmes from partners and settings.4. Young people gain work experience in the cultural industries.
Evidence:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mapping of progression/ensemble provision.2. Number and details of new/sustained/commissioned programmes.3. Statistics around young people accessing ensembles.4. Statistics around sign posting to work experiences.

Outcome Context

Increasing progression opportunities within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic has naturally posed challenges. As a result of the various national and local lockdowns and the furloughing of MMM staff for 3 months within the reporting period, there was some disruption to musical provision for young people with SEN/D and those with SEMH needs. Naturally, there was also a period of transition and adaptation while the 5 MEHs/music services moved to online provision. This situation limited fulfilment of some previously planned development activity and roll out of programmes across the 5 MEHs. However, since MMM staff returned to post, there has been a strong emphasis on ensuring that remote provision through digital online engagement and distribution of resources has been fully accessible, focused on inclusion for young people and partners who might otherwise miss out. In addition, there has been a [great deal of strategic progress and partnership development which has resulted in some new delivery](#) towards the end of the reporting period and further development plans for the future.

Progress against this outcome has been measured by reviewing MMM's delivery schedule, session reports and evaluations, and also reviewing statistical information, strategy documents and meeting minutes provided by our MEHs and partners.

Analysis Against Each Outcome Indicator

Group Music Making

Sustained/regular ensemble opportunities for young musicians in SEN/D and SEMH compared with pre-programme.

Sources of evidence: *Mapping of progression/ensemble provision. Strategy documents.*

Strategy documents and minutes from MEH Strategy Group Meetings show clear evidence of mapping of current provision and identification of areas of need in regards to supporting progression with young musicians with SEN/D and SEMH needs. Consideration within these meetings is being given in regards to opportunities provided as well as the quality of current provision. A mutually supportive relationship has been established across all 5 MEHs where good practice is shared and also constructive, challenging conversations are held to individually and collectively inform future work and strategy, supported by MMM. As

Indicator 1

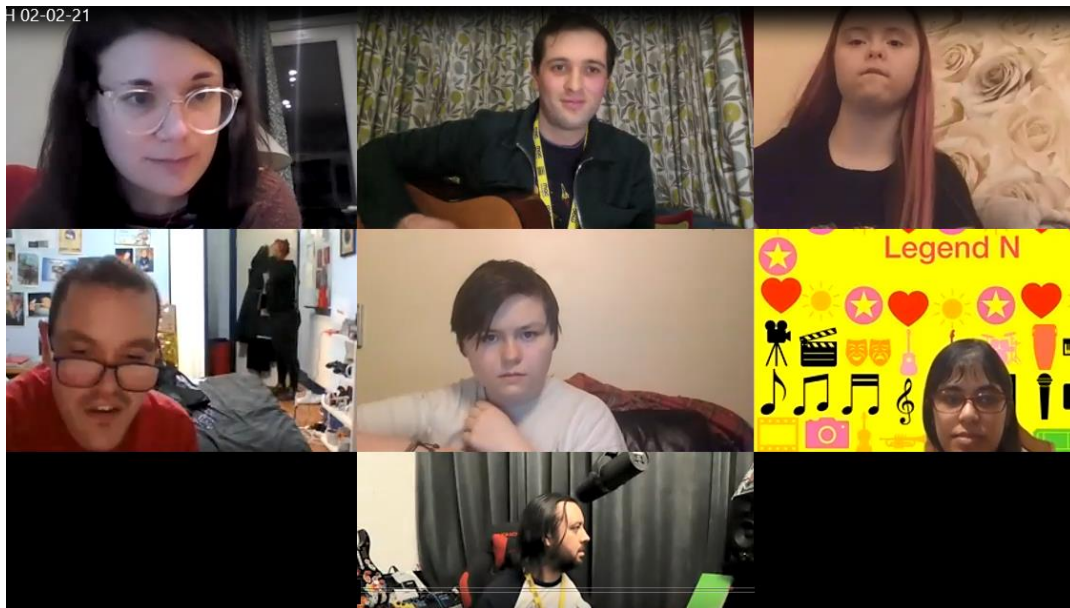
mentioned in Outcome 2, there has been some progress working strategically across our 5 MEHS in order to begin to improve quantitative data collection around inclusion activity and reach, enhancing the strong qualitative evaluation already embedded. 4 of the 5 MEHs have been able to provide some basic historical data in order to establish a retrospective baseline to assess progress against. This has been challenging but there is enthusiasm across all 5 MEHs to allocate some dedicated time to collectively agree data to collect related to shared outcomes moving forwards.

Sustained, regular opportunities established through the programme include:

- Continued provision for the City of Birmingham School in 3 PRUs across Birmingham plus 1 PRU in Sandwell (through a combination of face-to-face activity, remote sessions via Microsoft Teams and with video materials, as appropriate).
- SEMH Provision with Yorkswood Primary School (some face-to-face activity but moving to support via videos due to COVID-19) and Yew Tree (autumn term only, due to COVID-19). The pandemic meant that SEMH activity in 3 other settings had to be postponed. As positive progress, SEMH activities previously supported by MMM within Solihull and Worcestershire are now fully funded by these MEHs, showing that the work is valued and that there is a commitment to sustaining inclusion activities.
- Ongoing support of SWITCH, MAC's inclusive resident band, with the group meeting weekly online prior to and after MMM's furlough period.
- Ongoing support of a weekly inclusive ensemble called Creative Sounds, in partnership with Solihull MEH. Due to COVID-19, a small group has been meeting weekly online. Plans to set up similar ensembles in other areas have been delayed due to the pandemic but should progress over the next year.
- An 'Every Voice' strand of activity including, from August 2020, monthly 'virtual open mic' sessions (see indicator 2) for young people with additional needs aged 13-25 and, from October 2020 onwards, monthly accessible 'Come and Sing' singing/signing sessions for young people with their families/carers.
- Ongoing mentoring support for 2 young artists as part of our partnership in the National FLOW Collective, a creative and professional development programme that aims to make the music industry more representative of disabled people. [See Case Studies: IRIDIS and Dragon X](#)
- Ongoing support of 8 Open Orchestras across the 5 MEHs, which MMM supports primarily through the associated CPD programme. These continued with a mixture of approaches, depending on school bubbles.



Left three images: IRIDIS. Right three images: Dragon X



Screenshot from a SWITCH online session.

New developments over the last reporting year have included:

- A new partnership between MMM, Solihull MEH and Solihull Youth Offending Service which has provided one-to-one mentoring support through music for 6 young people, with mentoring provided by 3 MMM staff all working alongside YOS officers. Sessions began online but moved to face-to-face delivery when possible. Music created shows how music-making has been an incredibly positive and powerful means of expression for the young people involved, highlighting their experiences, challenges and aspirations for change and the future.
- Establishment of the West Midlands Inclusive Choir, informed by mapping with our 5 MEHs from last year which identified progression routes for children with physical disabilities as a focus. The WM Inclusive Choir is run, in partnership with Soundabout, for young people and their families, and provides a fortnightly online session for young people collectively from all 5 MEH areas. This will continue online with an addition of new monthly activity based locally in each of the 5 MEHs once per month, so that the regional and collaborative sessions work alongside each other, supporting progression. All hubs have committed to invest in their own local activity.
- Offering the 'Colour Music Project' in partnership with Eye Music Trust which involved a week long residency in 3 special schools. These residencies involved a musician giving a full week of workshops and an artist building touch-sensitive paintings with groups of students. The output included lots of colour flow-paintings and a filmed performance. See Hamilton School newsletter page 9 [here](#).
- Formulation and delivery of a Young Musician Mentoring Scheme for 10 young people as a result of NOYO COVID-19 related underspend, inspired by the FLOW collective approach and NOYO progression aim.

COVID-19 has naturally meant some that some activity has been unable to take place in person. Where possible online delivery has taken place instead (e.g., via 28 online PRU sessions; 20+ online SEMH pilot project sessions); where this has not been possible, music making and progression has been supported through the creation and dissemination of resources to SEN/D and SEMH settings and families, and through video materials hosted online. 40+ bespoke videos were produced for our SEMH Pilot Projects and 36 video resources for PRU settings. Activity that has been temporarily paused or postponed has included:

- Dynamic Sounds, our regional ensemble holiday offer, which normally fills the gaps between the Open Orchestra and NOYO programme.
- Launch of NOYO Birmingham, the West Midlands training centre for the National Open Youth Orchestra (NOYO), which MMM is involved with as a lead, supporting 5 identified young people to learn repertoire for the national orchestra.

These programmes will restart once COVID-19 guidance allows; where possible, budget for postponed/cancelled activity has been repurposed to support other provision.

In total, across the reporting period, MMM directly engaged face-to-face with **502** young people through their programmes, and with **176** young people online via Zoom/Teams.

650 musical resource packs were delivered to 1,119 young people with SEN/D and/or SEMH needs. These were distributed through partnerships with charities and schools to ensure they reached those without internet. FareShare Midlands, foodbank charity, wrote an [article here](#) about distributing the packs. 500 activity sheets and postcards were also distributed to local charities and schools including KIDS. A further 2,000 activity sheets and postcards were printed by Worcestershire Children First and delivered as their holiday hunger campaign.



Top left: example activity pack contents
Top right: delivery to FareShare Midlands
Bottom left: delivery to KIDS
Bottom right: Young drummer with activity pack

127 video resources have been produced for SEN/D and SEMH settings and young people; these have had a combined viewing figure of **2,835 views**.

Throughout the pandemic each MEH also developed their own offer of continued musical support for young people, including online lessons and ensembles via Zoom and via video tutorials and resources to support remote learning, once local LA guidance allowed. The speed with which each MEH was able to react to the initial lockdown varied (with some remarkably quick responses) and **lessons are being learned across the sector as a whole in regards to the digital divide and how to best engage young people with SEN/D and SEMH needs who may not be able to access online provision.**

It is clear from reviewing strategy documents from each hub and from revisiting minutes from the MMM MEH Strategy Group meetings that inclusion activity is regularly reviewed, considered and increasingly being embedded within their programme of work in general in comparison to prior to the grant. The above activities clearly evidence that this indicator has been met through provision or sustained and regular opportunities as a result of the MMM programme and strategic support, with new initiatives providing increased progression opportunities for those with SEN/D and SEMH needs.

Indicator 2

Performance and skills sharing

Increased performance and skills sharing opportunities for SEN/D / SEMH.

Sources of evidence: Number and details of new/sustained/commissioned programmes (with opportunities to share/perform). Statistics around young people accessing ensembles.

All MMM programmes provide regular opportunities for CYP to share and/or perform their work and to celebrate their achievements and, as such, any increase in provision also results in increased performance and skills sharing opportunities. Due to the pandemic this year, larger live performance events have not been possible but setting sharings have been provided where possible at all SEMH and SEN/D partners settings.

As examples please see:

- [Sherbourne Fields Open Orchestra \(Coventry\), The River A Journey With Water](#)

In addition, MAC's online offer of activity throughout the pandemic (via PRU and SEMH setting activities, SWITCH, Creative Sounds, Every Voice and the WM Inclusive Choir) has provided regular sharing opportunities for young people.

For example:

- the fortnightly WM Inclusive Choir is structured to provide the opportunity for every attendee to perform parts of the song to each other, building motivation and engagement.
- the MMM monthly [virtual open mic](#) night has attracted a regular core group of attendees and, as such, has become more of a 'performance club' and has recently been re-branded as 'Variety Jam', providing space for a new, more open access, quarterly virtual open mic giving providing another avenue for all young musicians to develop their performance skills.

In total, the MMM programme this period has provided 73 performance/sharing opportunities, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

To date all the 5 MEHs have not been able to provide baseline data to definitively assess whether the number of performance and skills sharing opportunities for young people with SEN/D and SEMH needs have increased across the period of the MMM grant. However, all 5 MEHs have provisionally committed to collecting this data in respect to music service activities for the current academic year and have an ambition to collect this data on a wider hub basis moving forwards, so that we can better measure progress here. Despite the lack of quantitative data, **it is clear from anecdotal evidence and reviews of strategy documents and evaluations across the last 3 years that there the number of performance and skills sharing opportunities for young people with SEN/D and SEMH needs has increased.**



Screenshot from West Midlands Inclusive Choir rehearsal

In addition to opportunities provided through the MMM programme and strategic support, each MEH lead organisation has also provided a range of performance opportunities for young people accessing their services.

For example:

- In March the 'Big Play' engaged nearly two hundred schools across the West Midlands to provide 1 minute of music that was launched online during the first week of lockdown.

Investment**Increase in investment in SEN/D / SEMH music making programmes from partners and settings.**

Sources of evidence: Strategy documents. Number and details of new/ sustained/ commissioned programmes (with opportunities to share/perform).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a strong focus on strategic work in relation to SEN/D and SEMH work and much discussion and learning between our 5 MEHs at strategy group meetings. Each monthly MEH Strategy Group meeting has a specific agenda item for strategic discussion (see outcome 2), providing the opportunity for Hubs to share practice, discuss their individual and collective Hub plans for the future and challenge each other constructively. Areas discussed and revisited of relevance to Outcome 7 have included EDI self-assessment in relationship to programming; CPD; WCIT, improved progression models and increased parental/carer engagement; Singing Strategy reviews; better inclusion in ensemble provision, all using Youth Music's 'Developing an Inclusive Approach to Core and Extension roles' as a starting point for discussions.

Some investment activity planned for the reporting period to widen engagement and/or expand current SEN/D/SEMH programmes has not been possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic but will happen in the future. For example, Creative Sounds activity established in partnership with Solihull and Coventry MEH has not yet been able to be rolled out to our 3 other MEHs but there remain plans to do so when feasible. **All 5 MEHs have invested staff time and capacity to attend and support at the monthly collaborative WM Inclusive Choir sessions (multi-hub) this past year in partnership with Soundabout and, as explained under indicator 1, all hubs have also committed to invest in establishing new monthly WM Inclusive Choir activity from September 2021 within their own area alongside the collaborative sessions.** This will give the initiative a wider reach and also provide progression routes for young people across each hub.

In regards to statistics evidencing increased engagement and provision, retrospective inclusion data provided from 4 MEHs (Coventry, Sandwell, Solihull and Worcestershire) shows:

- Collectively, all 4 MEHs invested in 10 new initiatives across the 2019-2020 academic year to engage identified groups (LAC, young people in PRUs and in Special Schools), as detailed in Outcome 2.
- Across the 2017-18 to 2019-20 academic years the 4 music services have increased the number of Special School/ SEND settings that they have engaged with for a sustained period from 5 settings to 12 settings, and from 576 hours to 705.3 hours across 2018-19 and 2019-20 (full data wasn't available for 2017).
- Across the 4 MEHs, 95 young people with SEMH needs were engaged in 2019-2020, with 207 hours delivered to specific SEMH settings. 5 SEMH specific settings/groups are currently being engaged by the music services on a sustained basis.

Outcome 2 provides strong additional evidence of increased engagement in relation to Looked After Children and young people in Pupil Referral Units.

Data on numbers of the above groups of young people accessing their ensembles is limited. This is an area that all 5 MEHs have committed to developing, to ensure a thorough

approach to providing appropriately differentiated activities and targeting progression support.

In regards to CPD and workforce development, 7 practitioners from our MEH areas are attending our 'Music and SEMH' course, with a total of 18 trainees. In addition, the MEH workforce have been offered **shadowing roles and/or co-delivery roles** on MMM partnership SEN/D and SEMH programmes in order to build and skills and confidence. For example, the WM Inclusive Choir monthly sessions have engaged representatives from each MEH to help understand delivery approaches and repertoire in order to develop local provision.

Most MEHs have begun developing a PRU team or an **inclusion team** and all are committed to ensuring that inclusive practice is embedded across their service and with their work of their whole staff team.

In Sandwell, partnership development is taking place with Big Top Music (specialists in SEN delivery) to provide music tuition for special schools, with a view to potential extension of the music centre off to provide a 'Special Needs Music Centre'.

The above information evidences that partners and setting are investing in new SEN/D / SEMH music making programmes and are also committed to sustaining and rolling out successful initiatives piloted in individual hubs.

Indicator 4 Work Experience

Young people gain work experience in the cultural industries.

Source of evidence: *Statistics around sign posting to work experiences.*

Due to the amount of work involved in obtaining retrospective inclusion data across all our MEHs, we have decided not to request work experience data. Therefore, currently our reporting is related only specifically to MMM funded activities.

As a result of COVID-19, there have been no MMM work experience opportunities provided this year. However, 4 emerging practitioners have benefitted from shadowing roles provided through the programmes. MMM also responded to interview requests for 2 BIMM student dissertations and, as discussed within Outcome 1, lots of students also signed up to our online Music Leader Exchange events.

MMM have continued to support 2 young people to engage with the FLOW collective, which is offering them mentoring and training to develop their creative and professional practice. One of these has led on youth voice consultancy on behalf of Solihull Music Service and has also undertaken some freelance work for Youth Music in regards to branding and marketing yourself as a musician.

Severn Arts (Worcestershire MEH) has recruited 2 'Kickstart' trainees (a national initiative providing funded placements for 16-24 year olds on Universal Credit), one for community engagement and one for business development. They are also looking to recruit an apprentice for their workshop.

Reflection

The indicator analysis and evidence above demonstrates that we are making good progress towards this outcome, despite the pandemic. Successful initiatives benefitting young people with SEN/D and/or SEMH needs have been largely sustained throughout the year after the initial lockdown challenges and furlough period, with flexible delivery and ongoing support provided through digital means and resources where face-to-face provision hasn't been possible due to COVID-19. In addition, **new partnerships have been formed** which have resulted in the development of new programmes of work this year and for the future. The strategic work and investment that MMM has provided the 5 MEHs has had a strong impact on investment into the provision of progression opportunities for young people with SEN/D and SEMH needs and **inclusion work in general is now clearly embedded in MEH delivery, in the strategic planning and in their workforce CPD**, which has further impact. Furthermore, there has been some progress in regards to supporting all 5 MEHs to improve their data collection regarding numbers of young people engaged and accessing their opportunities with SEN/D and SEMH needs. This has been a difficult process for all MEHs and has highlighted gaps in analysing reach and engagement, despite strong qualitative evaluation and strategic enthusiasm. Whilst the MEH workforce should have knowledge of any access and inclusion needs of the young people that they are working with, this information is not systematically reported back to the MEH lead organisation. Data isn't always shared between education settings and the MEHs as a matter of course. Improvement here will lead to improved differentiation and **greater awareness of young people's needs**, which in turn will also inform new developments and investment.

A particular strength in our approach towards achieving this outcome has been our partnership relationships with the 5 MEH hubs leads and their staff responsible for developing their inclusive practice. The monthly MAC MEH Strategic meetings are incredibly effective and it has really helped to have consistent attendance of key staff to build relationships between each other to the extent where constructive dialogue and challenging conversations can take place. In addition, MMM's role chairing newly formed inclusion sub-groups in Coventry and Solihull, and attending an EDI focused group in Worcestershire has really helped to move strategic plans forward in these areas, enhanced by ongoing CPD opportunities and MMM investment to support and embed progress. Piloting MMM funded activity in one or two hubs in order to evidence uptake and impact has really worked as a method to then present to all 5 MEHs for wider roll out and strategic investment, as seen with the planned West Midlands Inclusion Choir initiative described above.

In summary, progress towards this outcome over the reporting period has been assessed as good.

SEND / SEMH MEH Case Study

The text below is an edited extract taken from 'Working together to move the needle on inclusion in five West Midlands music education hubs', a case study on Solihull Music Education Hub, written by Anita Holford. [Read the full article here.](#)

"We started working with MAC in 2013. (At that time)...we had very little interaction with PRUs or SEND settings, and staff were unaware of the barriers to learning and participation that many pupils faced...At first, we didn't do much more than commissioning work...

In 2016/17, MAC offered hubs in the area the opportunity to work together to take a more strategic approach to inclusion. We began to talk more about inclusion, and then I started attending the monthly two-hour meetings with five other music hub leads, to share what we were finding difficult and what solutions we had found.... But I felt we needed something to 'show' people, to set out our inclusion stall if you like. So we created Beats Music, a programme from the music service, which champions music as a vehicle to improve the attainment of children in challenging circumstances. Currently it's delivered by MAC as we wanted to ensure high quality from the start: but the aim is eventually for our tutors to deliver it. We piloted it in two primary schools, and both wanted to target looked-after children. One school provided match funding themselves, the other had match funding from the Virtual School. It's now in the second year and has been really successful.

Gradually the perception of what we do, and the value we can bring, began to change. We started to look at the Hub through different lenses, and that started to change the language and images we choose to use in our promotional literature for schools. I began to feel more empowered to interact with the Virtual School and supported them at sessions for designated teachers responsible for LAC children. We were able to talk more confidently about our ability to meet the personal and social needs of young people, rather than just musical. We could begin to back this up because now, we could show that we were committed to developing our whole workforce to meet young people's needs.

We started to understand more about what is happening in schools around vulnerable young people, for example using the Thrive approach to social and emotional wellbeing, and we developed our programmes to take account of those. At the same time, we had also started a programme of work in one school with Open Orchestras, subsidised by MAC, and that was a complete game changer. Previously, we didn't have a relationship with the school and they bought in music therapy from other providers. But we'd never asked them what they needed from us before. The Open Orchestra programme gave us an opportunity to start to do this, and their perception of what a music service could offer started to change too. That was a big success story and now we're in that school 1.5 days a week, as well as afterschool, paid for by the school.

Up until lockdown we still had very traditional ensembles: youth orchestra, wind band, etc. Now, the numbers are down and it's a time to challenge that thinking and reimagine the future offer. I'd like to get to the point where anyone and everyone, no matter what additional needs they have, is welcome throughout all of our services.

Having one-to-one support from Holly at MAC has been critical: we talk each week, she's a combination of support, advice and critical friend. That's a big investment in time from MAC and it definitely pays off. Holly's drive and expertise has been instrumental in our journey and so much of our progress is down to that. I really don't think the strategy would have had the same impact without MAC's ongoing expertise, passion and consultancy."

Claire Batty, Assistant Head, Solihull Music Service & Music Education Hub

Evaluator's Reflection

As evidenced in the main report, progress towards all outcomes has been good, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, there has been strong progress towards some elements of the more strategic outcomes, such as in **beginning to improve MEH data collection around inclusion** and **increased progression opportunities** for young people with SEN/D and with SEMH need (outcomes 2 & 7), and in regards to **developing youth voice** practice on a practical and strategic level.

In addition to the outcomes specified for our grant there have been some additional unexpected outcomes. We will continue to use and develop the learning undertaken on remote delivery and ensure multiple mediums of accessing musical opportunities. We have also made new **links with Herefordshire MEH** and are supporting them with the delivery of their Youth Music programme 'All Included'. Links with **Sound Sense** via MAC Makes Music Producer's role on the board have developed and opened up our offer to more Community Musicians while also supporting our drive towards a national profile. **Other key partnerships** have flourished such as with Soundabout and Quench Arts.

As detailed in the main report, the different governance structures of each MEH do have an impact on the success and pace with which we are able to influence musically inclusive practice. Where an MEH has mainly partner organisations who are solely advisory or has so many partners that close relationships aren't possible, it has been more difficult to affect wider change. Naturally, **our work can have more impact where partners meet regularly as a collective to communicate success and challenges, introduce new thinking and develop targets and actions to achieve shared aims**. As examples of specific challenges across the reporting period:

- Worcestershire, Sandwell and Birmingham MEHs are not part of their local authority and so do not necessarily have easy access to data around SEND, LAC, etc.
- Some MEH structures provide a good range of strategic support for heads of service/lead contacts within each hub, where strategic priorities are shared across the team; in other hubs the staffing structures may provide less support or opportunity for delegation of work, which can affect capacity and pace for additional MMM focused strategic work.

MMM remains flexible and empathetic of the different challenges that each MEH faces and aims to work in partnership with MEH leads to assist and support as relevant to each hub, recognising that a **one size fits all approach is not appropriate**, given the differences. We feel that our partnership relationships with and between each MEH have been strengthened across this challenging year through the MMM programme and are very **excited to see the strategic plans and actions formulated this year come to fruition in the future**. Key to our success here have been the monthly MAC MEH Strategy Group Meetings, bringing all MEH hubs together to share successes, challenges and learning and to inform future strategic work, including obtaining collective investment in programmes and initiatives to widen reach.

We have had most impact where the MEHs have a core team working to push forward inclusion agendas, strategy reviews and actions and then, crucially, report back to the main MEH strategy/management group in order to ensure collective agreement and 'buy in'. Currently MMM chairs inclusion subgroups for Solihull and Coventry, which allows greater scope to influence agendas and to help embed inclusive practice. These inclusion subgroups will be led by key MEH staff to ensure future sustainability.

As with previous years, we have been able to affect the most meaningful change when working closely with MEH staff who are shadowing/working alongside our MMM Music Leaders. **This partnership delivery approach allows staff to experience and reflect on the impact of different approaches and the longer-term relationships formed allow deeper learning and embedding of changes to practice.** The wider impact of this engagement is also seen when partner staff then become advocates of this way of working with their colleagues, sharing their learning.

Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused huge challenges for MMM's and each MEH's planned programmes within schools and community settings, making it very difficult to provide a consistent delivery approach across the year. Some project and CPD delivery has had to be postponed or redesigned to incorporate digital/online learning and the impact of sickness absence/self-isolation/compassionate leave has greatly affected our partners' staff capacity to support initiatives in many cases. All young people have had to cope with significant upheaval, change, stress, grief and anxiety across the year, together with reduced social opportunities and chances to progress hobbies and interests. However, the impact on young people in already challenging situations and home-lives will have been huge and potentially have long-lasting effects. **There has been a lot of learning across the sector in general regarding inclusive practice in online provision, and MMM has invested significant time and energy into ensuring that those unable to access online/digital provision are supporting musically in other ways, for example through postal resources.** Organisationally too, the pandemic has had a huge impact on our sector and on the financial viability of arts venues and music services as a whole, with income generation being greatly reduced. MAC remains hugely grateful to Youth Music and to Arts Council England for their ongoing support to ensure that we are able to continue into the future but we have also needed to undertake an organisational restructure and consider a revised business model for future stabilisation. In the context of the above challenges, we are proud of the outcomes that have been achieved and the impact that our work has had for our partners and the children and young people engaged.

Looking ahead there are some improvements that we can make to our evaluation to better evidence our impact. In particular, we will consider:

- Asking all MMM music leaders and partner organisation co-delivery staff to complete and review a **baseline scale in regards to their professional practice and workforce development** across the year, also setting and reviewing personal development goals. This will help us better measure progress against outcome 1, indicator 3.
- Introduce a **paired peer reflection process**, where the MMM team all have the opportunity to observe another music leader's facilitation practice and together share strengths and development areas against Do, Review, Improve criteria. Together with our team reflection sessions, this will further ensure that our music leaders aren't working in isolation and can share ideas, learning and positive practice across the team.
- Introducing appropriate, **accessible baseline tools** and activities for a limited number of appropriate settings to better measure and evidence participant progress against outcomes 3, 4 and 5.
- Improving the ways we can gain more **meaningful feedback from young people** regarding their progress against the specific MMM programme outcomes, for example by asking targeted questions alongside the broader questions such as 'what did you enjoy the most' (referring to MMM's Youth Music outcomes 1, 3, 4 and 5).
- Improving the **amount and type of feedback collected from partner settings** by: collecting feedback more regularly and specifically referring to MMM's outcomes 3, 4 and 5.
- Improving the **amount and type of feedback obtained from parents/carers** by asking for this more regularly and specifically referring to MMM's outcomes 3, 4 and 5 and following up with a focus group of participants a year beyond engagement to gain feedback on longer term impact of the programme.

- Revisiting a **focus group of trainees from our CPD programme** from previous years to gain further understanding regarding the longer term impact on practice/career development to help evidence outcome 1.
- **Building case study evidence:** there is strong evidence of impact from programmes run by MMM 'in-house', where personal relationships have been established between participants and the MMM staff team. Some of the impact from outreach activity run in partner settings could be better captured and highlighted through a number of case studies being written by the music leader team, using input and feedback from setting staff/family/support workers, etc.
- Ensuring that learning is not lost from individual MMM programmes by better **documenting the impact, successes, outcomes and challenges learned** from individual projects, pulling this learning into a separate, digestible report for each project which could also act as an advocacy tool for future investment.

Strategically, some key aims for the next year of the programme are for MMM to consider:

- Supporting the 5 MEHs to come together for some focused time to collectively agree on consistent **inclusion data** to collect moving forwards, to aid their understanding and learning in relation to engagement, reach and progression and give a sense of distance travelled (as well as to help ensure best inclusive practice and differentiated provision).
- Supporting the MEHs further with their **youth voice development**, helping them to understand and utilise the youth consultation data collected to inform their future planning and delivery, and further embedded youth voice in the work and governance.
- Exploring the potential for MMM/MAC to lead on further **developing our own youth voice work** (beyond young people informing their individual project sessions/content) and incorporating youth voice at a more strategic level, perhaps through our own youth forum, youth consultant roles, youth producer and youth advocate programmes, or through supporting similar hub specific activities.
- How **work experience** for young people with SEN/D and SEMH needs can be better provided for and tracked in regards to MEH activities, as currently this isn't documented at all by MEHs. Currently progress towards outcome 7, indicator 4 is only measured through MMM's own specific programmes of work.

Final Thoughts

MAC Makes Music has evolved and flourished during an extremely difficult period. I couldn't be more proud of the team and the young people we make music with. Everyone has pulled together, learned together, and adapted together with a calm grace that has been quite remarkable. After halting everything at the start of the year, we were so delighted to resume delivery albeit in a different guise, and more excitingly to actually start new adventures.

We very much plan to build on the learning from this year, in particular continuing to offer and develop accessible digital and hybrid opportunities. We have been blown away by the music created by the young people and have been reminded how truly important music is to us all. We will continue to advocate the musical, social, and personal benefits of creative inclusive music making, and hope to use support children and young people musically through the post-pandemic recovery.

This has also been a year where MAC Makes Music has not only been able to go national but also international! Again, this is something we must build upon. We are constantly on a learning journey and there is no better way to take more steps than to share learning and challenges with musicians far and wide.

A huge thank you must go to our wonderful Music Leader team who have gone above and beyond to ensure young people can access high quality, inclusive, creative opportunities. This work would not have been possible without the determination and hard work of Jen Loffman, Administrator for MAC Makes Music, who's aptitude for picking up new skills has been invaluable and deserves an enormous thank you. This report and the precious advice given to MAC Makes Music is a testament to the thoughtful and thorough evaluation from the brilliantly passionate Nic Briggs and Liz Viggers from Quench Arts. Finally, we must say a massive thank you to our the MEH partners and their teams, the teaching and support staff, and the other partners we've had the privilege of working with this year.

Holly Radford, Producer – MAC Makes Music



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MAC Makes Music would like to thank the following partners for being involved throughout 2020-2021

Baginton Fields School
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Bristol Beacon - National Centre for Inclusive Excellence
Chadsgrove School
City of Birmingham School
Coventry Music
Encore Enterprises
Eye Music Trust
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Town Hall Symphony Hall
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Worcestershire Childrens First
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