

In Harmony Telford and Stoke on Trent
DRAFT FRAMEWORK, REFLECTIONS and PRINCIPLES
Ian Thomas
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Introduction

At the heart of El Sistema is a simple idea: using the ensemble experience to promote positive social change in participants. Today, it's aiming at one million participants in Venezuela alone and has become the most famous music program in the world, copied in dozens of countries.

Its success derives from its claim to be a social rather than a musical program, offering Venezuela's most vulnerable children a way out of their impoverished lives and – for the most talented – into the world's great concert halls. Its top ensembles, such as the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra (nowadays they've replaced the "youth" with "symphony"), are also famed for their visual spectacle – vast numbers, synchronised movements and distinctive colourful jackets. Stories of salvation and breathtaking musical performances have seized the popular imagination and elevated El Sistema into a global phenomenon.

Our In Harmony programme is inspired by the Venezuelan El Sistema, (ES-i) the goal of which is to change the lives of children in exceptionally deprived circumstances. The In Harmony programme is modelled around an immersive experience, where children play instruments together several times a week from an early age, within a whole school and/or community-based approach.

Our In Harmony Telford and Stoke on Trent programme is neither about pedagogy or a delivery programme but a research inquiry into how high quality music education can support a range of social and educational outcomes – a generous laboratory, creating learning centres / beacon centres and learning tools to be shared with Music Education Hubs and other partners such as Teaching Schools, Cultural Education Partnerships and Bridge Organisations. Abreu describes the nature of El Sistema as "ser no ser todavía" – existing and yet still becoming. Sistema (ES-i) programmes play important role in reinforcing wider view that society should not tolerate economic barriers to high quality music education.

We all know that the partnerships that thrive are based on clear expectations, common goals, mutual respect and good communication. We want to make sure that all of us involved in In Harmony Telford and Stoke on Trent develop good partnership working, and so this document outlines some of the core expectations and commitments that we have learnt and developed over the past 4 years as an In Harmony programme.

Our Mission Statement

Our In Harmony programme is a early targeted social development programme delivered through music. To improve the health, education and aspirations of disadvantaged children, young people and families through immersive ensemble music making, rooted long term in the community and in our partner schools.

Our Values

As a partnership we hold a shared belief in the power of **social impact** through **excellence** in **immersive, long-term, ensemble group music making** in a **community** or place.

Arts Council England's National Principles for the In Harmony Programme

- Focus on areas of deprivation and low engagement
- Demand-led , committed whole school approach
- Alignment /Integration with music education hubs
- Professional musicians, ensembles and orchestras working with schools
- High profile performance opportunities
- Continuity and progression for children
- Access to instruments
- Sharing expertise and resources

National Foundation for Education Research Evaluation Findings

Arts Council England (ACE) commissioned NFER to undertake the national evaluation of the In Harmony social and music education programme 2012–2015. In Harmony is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and ACE, and is currently being piloted in six areas. The evaluation is investigating the range and extent of impacts on children, families, schools and wider communities, and considering the future sustainability of the programme

Key Findings:

- early indications of positive effects on children's self-esteem, resilience, enjoyment of school, attitudes towards learning, concentration and perseverance
- some perceived impact on parents and families including raised aspirations for their children, increased enjoyment of music and confidence in visiting cultural venues, and increased engagement with school
- the programme features intensity, motivation and quality. These qualities are underpinned by a whole-school approach which embeds In Harmony in the curriculum, a clear learning programme focused on orchestral part-playing, teamwork, public performance, the provision of instruments and the involvement of professional musicians.
- In Harmony has established itself in a short time and is proving very popular with children, parents and schools

Reflections and strengths on our In Harmony Telford and Stoke on Trent programme:

- Inclusivity, fun and accessibility – encouraging as many people as possible to participate in the programme in lots of different ways, providing access to the arts and arts organisations in highly disadvantaged communities, for many young people for the first time without discrimination in terms of their prior musical training, or their ability to pay.
- Intensity – providing a programme of intensive tuition from skilled musicians every week from early years to year 8.
- Collective learning and teaching – delivery enables the benefits of socialising, learning and playing music with other children from within the community to be realised.
- Reputation and excellence – striving to provide the best learning experiences for the children and the best image of the orchestra, its members, the community and the organisation.
- Building relationships – developing strong relationships with children and young people and building relationships with families, schools and local community organisations. Any attempt to use music to effect social development or change must be in response to local community needs, careful consideration is needed around portraying a local community within a deficit model.
- Innovation and flexibility – willing to take on big challenges to be ambitious and making efforts to adapt to a community's own circumstances and local needs.
- Longevity and commitment – taking a long-term view of what needs to happen to improve people's lives, long-term generational change. This is not a short term fix or a short term music project.
- Research and Evidence from the In Harmony programmes to help support Music Services and Music Education Hub advocate for music in schools across a range of educational and social outcomes such as based on the NFER Evaluation and In Harmony Liverpool's various evaluation reports. Developing a reflective delivery team reflecting on delivery and practice, time, space and thinking to / refresh/ develop new teaching practices / repertoire to engage young people.

Key requirements of our In Harmony Telford & Stoke programme

1. **School commitment, strength of leadership, co-learning**, whole school approach, enriching curriculum. Head teachers as champions and advocates for the programme and its outcomes. Class teacher as a co-learner. Establish behavioural agreements. Can be hard but importance of mutual support. Empowering for teachers to practice

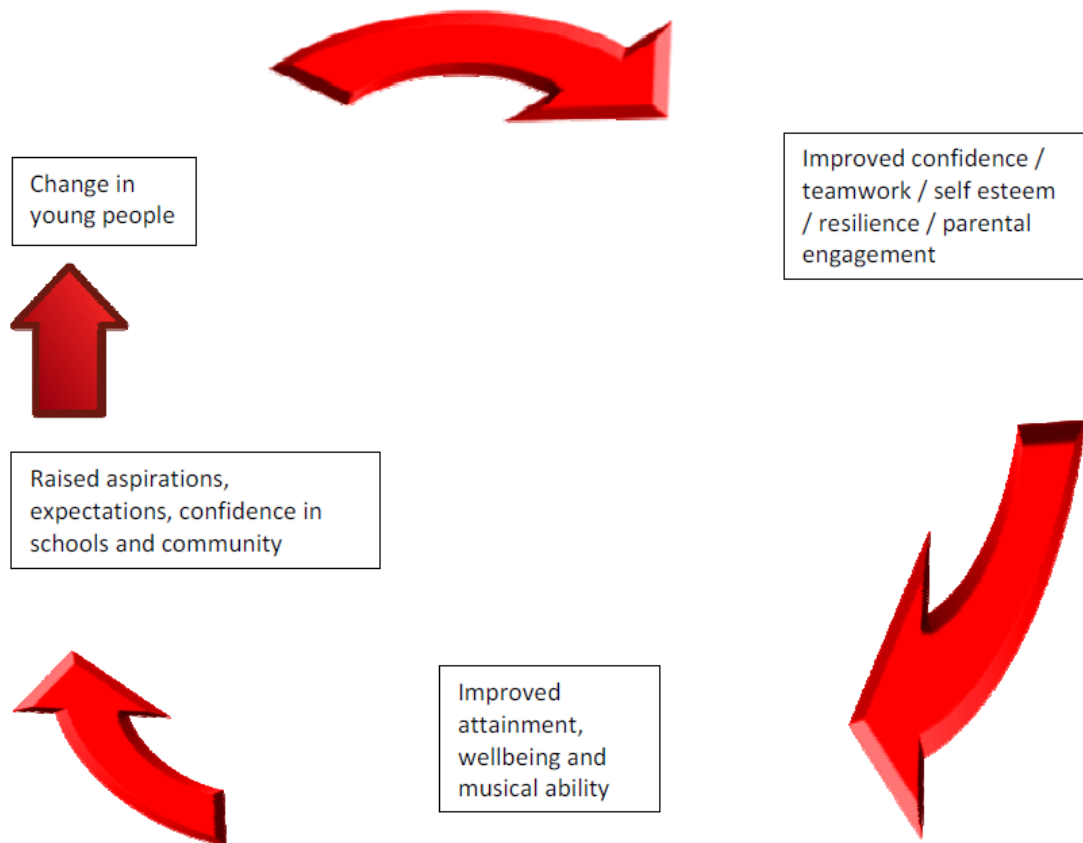
with their class. Some teachers go on to lead orchestra sessions. Online resources and planning – kids can access at home things like backing tracks, encourages practice. Staff need to value it and encourage children to take part including after school. Sharing information between the school and In Harmony delivery team. In Harmony can be a research lab for new approaches. Relationship with school must be a true partnership is fundamental. In Harmony team are part of the school community.

2. **Immersion with the child at the centre, frequency, performance leading to motivation.** Impressive musical outcomes, ensemble approach to advanced level. Immersion: it's not a quick fix; schools should recognise it is not a Music Education Hub project, but a holistic one with social outcomes; whole school approach makes it normal to learn an instrument and fun. Can be disruptive to school life, but with good reason.
3. **Build an inclusive curriculum** with defined pedagogical milestone with appropriate differentiation and diversity of learning and teaching styles to support **all** children on the programme linked to child development stages. Develop a learner friendly / fun schedule. In Harmony teaching styles are based on simultaneous learning of concepts: aural skills, theoretical and musicianship skills, all together along with feeling and expression in music and in yourself. Using all parts of the brain results in thorough understanding and rapid progression, experienced naturally as part of school life.
4. **Parental engagement** – positive links to school. Demands on parents should be explained – link to online resources. Parents get involved. Teachers upload all planning and repertoire. Linked repertoire, instrumental classes and orchestra sessions. Take on board the demands on parents to help support their children (encouragement to practise/time spent transporting kids/performances). Parents as In Harmony volunteers support aspects of the programme. Parent / adult music lessons.
5. **Child centred ensemble progression routes designing a multi year continuum working with Music Education Hubs**, progression both musical and whole child developmental as well. With common repertoire In Harmony is integrated within Music Education Hub programmes and network of ensembles. Tailored repertoire for orchestras, teachers aiming for same goals is important, and having input on repertoire. Material supports SEN etc. Consistent pedagogical approach across all repertoire. Using the same language supports inclusivity as does drawing on the same methodology. Music service staff teach on all types of music education programme and have been sharing IH pedagogical learning. Peer learning visits

enable sharing from In Harmony. Connectivity and consistency for the long term – staff, repertoire, teaching approach – common to In Harmony and other Music Education Hub programmes such as First Access programmes. What is the role of the highly competitive ‘high achiever’ track within ES-i programme such as through peer to peer learning and peer leadership as one route.

6. **In Harmony must not be a isolated programme but at the heart of the local music education ecosystem** feeding in thinking, teaching approaches, evidence for the impact of music, successful approaches to engaging disadvantaged young people into the arts, performance opportunities and practice into Music Education Hubs, Youth Music funded programmes, other In Harmony programmes - a generous laboratory. To work with local partners to raise the level of all stakeholders to deepen the impact on young lives, to contribute our best to music learning for all young people. Sharing practice not through just one-shot opportunities, but consistent practices that can make a program a regular contributor to the larger whole. Building partnerships and a stakeholder network in which the ES-I lab becomes a valuable ongoing contributor to a wider set of music education and youth development players and goals. Building connections and partnerships based on listening, and identifying the common aspirations so people want to learn from one another, and committing to succeeding together the way a musical ensemble does. An Es-i programme should not be considered a replacement or substitute for existing music education programs.
7. **Use of Developmental Evaluation Methods** - traditional evaluation takes an outsiders eye, provides judgment of impact and quality using pre-determined criteria. Developmental evaluators are integrated into the work; they focus on discovery and on the issues that leaders and stakeholders hold dear. They help create or adapt evaluation instruments and processes to bring understanding, to clarify patterns, and to refine experimentation. Formal evaluation seeks to produce valid models, best practices, and conclusions that can transfer reliably to other settings; developmental evaluation seeks to guide and maximize learning. It includes an evaluator in the process, who helps clarify the particular experiments underway and shapes the feedback loops for immediacy and effectiveness, without imposition of known models (but with reference to them when helpful). Developmental evaluation helps clarify the issues; it distinguishes and keeps returning to key questions that are being explored; it helps track discoveries as the action unfolds; it helps the practitioners understand the variables they are dealing with and recognize emerging patterns in the work.

In Harmony Telford and Stoke on Trent Cycle of Change



Our 'Golden Threads'

These principles have been developed from a range of sources, including those created by Sistema England, principles extracted from Department for Education and Arts Council England funding documents, NFER Evaluation Reports and the In Harmony Network members.

While these principles underpin the infrastructure and methods of a Sistema inspired programme (ES-i), two overarching principles must underpin them to ensure continual improvement and responsiveness to need and new understanding as it emerges:

- Sistema is a process that must remain dynamic and flexible and responsive to the evolving and differing needs of the children and young people, families and communities it serves.
- Sistema inspired work (ES-i) is underpinned by action research and longitudinal evaluation, leading to improvement, development, innovation, and capturing impact and outcomes locally, nationally and internationally.

The threads to our In Harmony programme

1. **Music as an agent of Social Change.** Though the programme is focussed on personal and community development, it uses playing and creating music together as its vehicle and it is through musical activity that social impact is achieved. Sistema inspired programmes encourage music to be used as an agent of joyful expression - passion first, refinement second - and enjoyment to be one of the core energies of the process. Children and young people are encouraged to feel ownership of the music making process, taking responsibility for both individual and group improvement.
2. **Focussed on and embedded in selected, disadvantaged communities.** Sistema is place-based, focussed on social impact in specific places and disadvantaged communities, and is tailored to their needs identified through local partnerships. It may also mean that children and young people who would not otherwise have the opportunity gain sustained access to music education.
3. **The Lifelong Continuum.** Sistema inspired programmes (ES-i) are developed to have long-term impact. They provide a continuous train of services, supporting children and young people from early childhood into adulthood, from 'cradle to career'. This requires a long-term organisational commitment, funding infrastructure, outstanding local leadership and effective partnerships.
4. **Excellence and Progression.** Sistema inspired programmes strive for musical excellence for all children and young people, where excellence means musical experiences that represent the height of ambition, talent and skill combined with child-centred, inclusive social pedagogy. This is expressed both in the offer, that teaching and music making opportunities are of the highest quality, and the ask, that children and young people are asked to strive towards being the best they can be. It may also be expressed in the other opportunities a programme creates, such as involvement with professional orchestras, artists and other organisations.

Programmes may provide intensive training for the most committed and musically gifted children and young people, and progression to other music making opportunities is supported where and when appropriate. Programmes invest in teachers and teaching quality, training and Continuing Professional Development, to ensure children and young people experience inspiring, excellent learning.

5. **Access, Free and Open to All: Removing barriers to participation.** A Sistema inspired programme will include as many children and young people as it can, with involvement whenever possible, starting as young as possible, for as long as possible, whatever their background or abilities. It is free and open to everyone regardless of ability to pay. A Sistema inspired programme commits to removing barriers to participation, including financial, geographical (transport) and attitudinal (including those of arts organisations) to ensure those facing the greatest challenges can access and enjoy the programme.
6. **Learning through Performing:** Performance is encouraged from an early age and children and young people play in front of audiences as often as possible and from as early as possible. The aim is to make performance a natural part of their musical life. Performance opportunities build skills and confidence, strengthen relationships, develop collective achievement, building trust and pride with and between families and community networks.
7. **The Support of the Núcleo Environment.** In Venezuela, the núcleo is a physical location within the community that embodies the values and goals of *El Sistema*. It is a haven of safety, fun, enjoyment and friendship, with an ethos of support, positivity and aspiration, where all are encouraged to explore their potential, and a place that enables every child and young person to feel like an asset within her or his community, both within and beyond the núcleo. A Sistema inspired programme in England adapts this principle to the realities of the communities it serves and buildings that host activities, ensuring its learning environment supports the núcleo ethos.
8. **Immersion and Intensity.** Sistema inspired programmes work towards achieving the highest possible level of immersion, frequency and intensity, based on the needs and possibilities of the children, young people and communities it serves and the local requirements to successfully achieve its stated outcomes. Rehearsals are fast paced and rigorous, demanding a durable commitment, personal responsibility, resilience, team-work, leadership and a strong work ethic.
9. **Ensemble at the centre.** Sistema inspired learning is based on the ensemble experience, in which group achievement is balanced with individualised attention. The orchestra acts as a model society in which an atmosphere of competition between individuals is balanced with a shared determination and collective celebration of achievement. Smaller ensembles and choruses adopt the same ethos. Peer leadership is an important feature of developing children and young people's ownership, enabling them to take on support and teaching roles themselves, starting at an early age and creating local role models.
10. **Child-centred and social pedagogy.** Sistema inspired programmes support the child and young person in the context that they are in, and at the stage that they are at in their lives. This informs the musical pedagogy so that it is both child-centred and

social, with implications for pastoral care and support, behaviour management and teaching and learning. The pedagogy emphasises and reinforces the wider skills and experience development that is a natural part of music-making, to make it a more explicit part of the process, and those who work on Sistema programmes are supported to deliver in this way.

11. **Family and community engagement.** Family participation and community involvement are essential elements of a Sistema inspired programme, ranging from musical involvement and audience attendance, to volunteering and structured adult learning. Siblings can attend the programme, parents can attend classes with the youngest children, and families often form the bulk of the audience at orchestra concerts. Programmes may develop parent musical ensembles, and the community at large are involved through concerts and events. An objective of Sistema inspired programmes is that families and communities are strengthened, and collaborations between them are boosted.
12. **Connections and networks – knowledge exchange and peer learning.** A Sistema programme will engage with other social and music education programmes in England (including other Sistema-inspired projects and Music Education Hubs), as well as El Sistema in Venezuela and Sistema programmes in Europe and other regions. By uniting children, young people and teachers throughout this broader network, the programme embodies the *El Sistema* ideals of sharing and learning. Programmes will contribute to and learn from wider knowledge exchange in El Sistema networks, music, arts and culture, education, health, regeneration and community development.

Our In Harmony Telford & Stoke on Trent Logic Model

Inputs <i>Programme investment</i>	Outputs <i>Activities</i>	Outputs <i>Participation</i>	Outcomes <i>Short term</i>	Outcomes <i>Medium term</i>	Outcomes <i>Long term</i>
Public funding	Identify target population	Children and young people	Provide safe, secure environment	Reduce pupil's exposure to negative influences or high risk behaviours	Improved musical skills
Private funding	Identify social objectives	Parents	Model the ideals of collaboration, compromise, mutual respect and negotiation through the medium of orchestral / ensemble music	Foster cognitive, social and emotional developments in participants.	Improved attitude to learning, self-confidence and self-esteem
Corporate funding	Coordinate resources with local partners	Guardians			
Time – high frequency	Develop curricula	Extended families	Provide focused, constructive musical activities for children and young people	Install transferable practices of discipline, rigour and self application	Improved social skills
Teachers		Community partners			
Orchestral musicians	Participatory musical experiences	Local schools	Develop knowledge, understanding and a love of music	Identification and nurturing of talent	Good school attendance and low exclusions
Musical instruments	Train teachers and orchestral musicians				
Music materials	Develop an active presence in the community and schools		Improve access to quality arts education		Improved wellbeing, relationships with parents and health
Volunteers	Develop an active presence in the community and schools				
Venues	Showcase and evaluate pupil social and musical progress		Increase enjoyable activities for children.		Improved attainment (especially in literacy and numeracy)
	Recruit new participants				
					Avoidance of anti-social behaviour, drug abuse, and crime
					Participation in education, employment or training at the end of compulsory education