

# Working in partnership:

*Ensuring quality and best practice in Music Education Hub partnership programmes*



Lawrence Becko

Produced by ArtsTrain  
April 2016



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# Introduction

## About Music Education Hubs

Music Education Hubs exist to provide and promote musical opportunities for all children and young people in a local authority area. They were launched in 2012, following the publication of the Department of Education's *National Plan for Music Education* the previous year, and are managed by Arts Council England.

The 123 Music Education Hubs are partnerships, each led by a Lead Organisation (often a Local Authority Music Service or, in some cases, an independent trust). Their key roles are to:

- ▶ Provide instrumental tuition
- ▶ Run ensembles
- ▶ Get everyone singing
- ▶ Enable musical progression
- ▶ Train the music teaching workforce
- ▶ Run an instrument loan scheme
- ▶ Provide high quality experiences

The hubs' overarching aim is to ensure that all children in state schools have access to music education in and out of school. They are expected to work with a wide range of partners to address local need. [Read more about Music Education Hubs.](#)

### *Working in partnership*

Arts Council note that "*Partnership working plays an important role in establishing sustainable provision...at the same time as meeting local and national priorities.*" Hubs can involve local authorities, schools, nationally funded organisations, local music organisations, community and voluntary organisations and local businesses. In practice, hubs can look very different to one another. There is no 'right answer' or singular way to run a Music Education Hub. However, interesting models and ways of working are emerging which are starting to demonstrate how hub partnerships may be most effectively developed. [Read more about hub partnerships.](#)

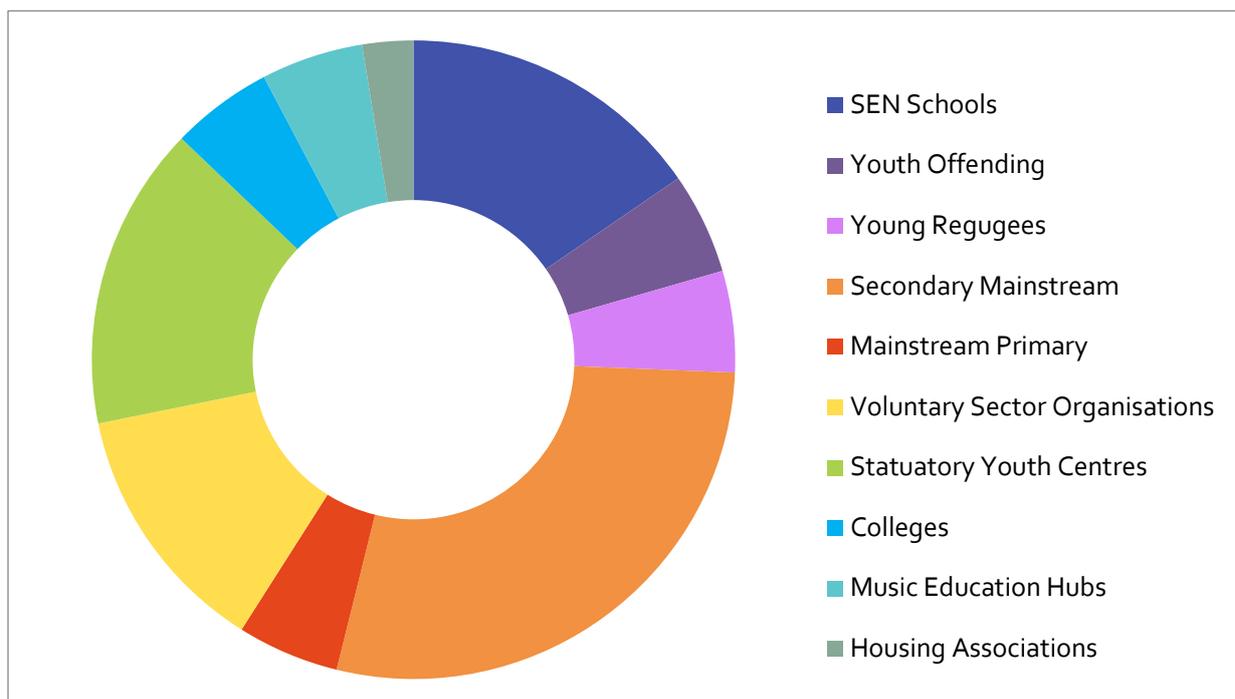
## The context for this scoping

Following the successful delivery of these programmes, alongside a range of other projects and strategic work, ArtsTrain wanted to capture evidence of their successful partnership in the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley as examples of best practice in hub partnership-working. The quality of this work has been highlighted at the 2013 Music Mark conference, selected for a Music for Youth Award and recognised by funders such as Youth Music and Arts Council who have provided year-on-year funding.

### *About ArtsTrain*

ArtsTrain is a leading provider of non-formal youth music activity in south east London. The programme was created and developed by MyTime Active and launched in September 2008, and aims to provide musical opportunities to young people who would not ordinarily have access to music. Their offer includes drop-in sessions, instrumental projects, jazz ensembles, music technology, DJing, songwriting, volunteer placements, mentoring and Arts Award. ArtsTrain is supported by major funders such as Arts Council England, Youth Music and PRS Foundation for Music, as well as local housing associations and Bromley Borough Council. [Read more about ArtsTrain.](#)

The following chart provides an insight into the make-up of ArtsTrain’s partnerships and delivery settings:



## Facts and Figures

In 2015 ArtsTrain worked in nine schools and four community organisations. 70% of this project activity was delivered in areas where there is no Music Hub Education Provision.

*Bromley schools: Ravensbourne, Priory, Marjorie McClure SEN School, Kingswood PRU*

*Bexley schools: Bexleyheath Academy, St Columbus, Woodside SEN School, Hurstmere, Townley*

*Voluntary organisations: CASPA, Carers Bromley, Crystal Palace Community Development Trust, Bexley Children in Care*

### About the programmes

ArtsTrain work closely in partnership with the Music Education Hub lead organisations in both Bexley and Bromley, led by Bird College and Bromley Youth Music Trust respectively. This has led to the delivery of two high quality partnership programmes:

- ▶ **SubUrban Orchestra (Bexley)** - ArtsTrain has been working in partnership with Bexley Music Hub to create a cross-genre creative music ensemble for young musicians aged 12-19 from a diverse range of musical backgrounds. The second year of the programme, included four 'taster courses' from ArtsTrain tutors in Bexley schools followed by the creation of the orchestra which went on to perform at the Royal Festival Hall. *Watch a video about [SubUrban Orchestra](#).*
- ▶ **ArtsTrain Academy & New Generation Jazz Band at London Jazz Festival** – Working in partnership with Bromley Youth Music Trust’s youth jazz fusion band, ArtsTrain delivered a programme for 16 young people culminating in a performance as part of London Jazz Festival in November 2015. *Watch a video of the [London Jazz Festival project](#).*

### *What are the aims of this scoping and who is it for?*

The aim of this scoping report is to explore how effective partnership working in Music Education Hubs can lead to high quality musical experiences for children and young people.

This will be done with reference to the two partnership programmes and wider discussion of ArtsTrain's work with the Music Education Hubs in each borough. The findings are discussed, leading to the production of a framework for best practice in partnership working for everyone involved or interested in working as part of a Music Education Hub. This might include the Lead Organisation, schools, arts and voluntary organisations. It is intended as a dynamic document which can be explored, interrogated and tested. It draws on specific case studies and conversations, but aims to offer a broad perspective on the bigger picture of Music Education Hub working.



*"Partnerships are what make the hub tick. It's about aligning those visions and sharing aspirations."*

Julie Stanning, Bird College

## **Approach and methodology**

### *Measuring quality and best practice in hub partnerships*

There is much ongoing discussion about how to assess quality in music education and youth music-making. Accordingly, a range of frameworks already exist to help identify and measure quality and best practice. Arts Council England has produced a range of guidance for Music Education Hubs to help them deliver on their expected outcomes. The original aims and outcomes issued in 2011 cover enjoyment, excellence, broadening horizons, quality and consistency, progression, partnership working to meet local need, value for money and accountability. Additional guidance was also issued specifically about partnership working which encourages trust and commitment among partners, clear and consensual objectives, good alignment with the local context, inclusivity and mutual recognition, regular assessment and good governance.

## Existing frameworks

An NFER report on hubs published in 2014 notes that several frameworks were being used already by hubs in their own reporting, including the Ofsted requirements, local authority guidelines and self-produced 'standards agreements'. It is also acknowledged that 'quality' itself may mean something different to each provider, for example between formal and informal settings. Other useful frameworks and references include:

- ▶ Arts Council's *Quality Principles in work for, by and with Children and Young People (2015)*, which highlights seven key indicators of quality in youth arts provision and covers themes such as excellence and innovation, progression and ownership, as well as encouraging providers to create work which is exciting, inspiring, engaging, positive, inclusive and authentic.
- ▶ Youth Music's *Quality Framework (Do, Review, Improve)*, which draws on ten years of evaluation and monitoring submitted by Youth Music's funded organisations with the focus on non-formal (out of school) music-making. The framework looks at four areas of practice: Young-people centred music-making; Session content; Environment; Music leader practice.
- ▶ The Young Foundation's *A framework of outcomes for young people*, which draws on synthesis of a diverse range of research from the youth sector to produce a comprehensive template for measuring social outcomes with young people. The key areas are: communication, confidence and agency, planning and problem solving, relationships and leadership, creativity, resilience and determination, and managing feelings.

As discussed above, the partnership programmes explored in this report have already been recognised as models of best practice in partnership working by a range of organisations and funders, and they have resulted in the delivery of high quality musical outcomes for children and young people. The role of this research, therefore, will not be to interrogate the quality of the work but rather to examine the conditions and approaches that have contributed to effective partnership working between a non-formal music organisation, hub lead organisations and schools.

It will be proposed that partnership working is a journey in which a range of visions and agendas must be acknowledged and accommodated in order to achieve a greater common goal of providing high quality musical experiences for children and young people.

## Research approach and key themes

This is just a snapshot of some of the existing frameworks that could be helpful in improving partnership working with children and young people. Those which are specific to partnership working have been extracted and combined into the following themes for further exploration:

- ▶ Aligning visions
- ▶ Establishing need
- ▶ Bringing other partners on board
- ▶ Designing the programme
- ▶ Resourcing the programme
- ▶ Recruiting music leaders
- ▶ Capturing impact and embedding the success

## Methodology

The approach in this report will be to consider the inputs and conditions which contribute to delivering a successful partnership programmes between a non-formal music organisation and a Music Education Hub. This will be done through:

- ▶ Reviewing existing evaluative material of the two key programmes to include consideration of their artistic, social and education outcomes, as well as the impact the programmes had on the partnership.
- ▶ Targeted interviews with key stakeholders about what they feel constitutes quality provision or best practice in the context of their local Music Education Hub partnership, including both Hub Leads, ArtsTrain, music leaders and participants.

This has resulted in the creation of this broader, more detailed report, alongside a practical guide to *Working in Partnership with Music Education Hubs*. The publications are intended for anyone involved, interested or invested in working in partnership with hubs.



# Findings and analysis

## Aligning visions

The two programmes in Bexley and Bromley were built on strong existing partnerships and a shared recognition of the value of working together. Partners talked about the importance of building strong relationships from the earliest stages. Julie Stanning, Hub Lead at Bird College explains that her starting point was a need to increase the inclusivity of the music offer in Bexley. She states: *"There were the traditional ensembles and tuition, but I felt that we needed to diversify our offer to embrace the diversity of Bexley...Bird College and ArtsTrain came together in 2012 and we immediately realised that our goals were the same. We held the same aspirations and visions."* Ian Rowe, Hub Lead at Bromley Youth Music Trust also describes how his organisation has developed a strong relationship with ArtsTrain: *"We talk about what each other are doing in terms of our offer and making sure we're not duplicating each other."*

From ArtsTrain's perspective, working with hubs presented an opportunity to bring together complimentary expertise and opportunities in order to increase inclusion of young people. Keith Sykes and Rachel Nelken, both managers at ArtsTrain highlighted the importance of working closely with the hub leads and recognition of the different approaches. In the partnership, the hub are seen as experts in formal music education, whereas ArtsTrain are more experienced in non-formal music and voluntary sector work. Partners also acknowledged challenges in this area, highlighting the need for transparency and an acceptance that certain approaches will not work. This requires open-mindedness, understanding and a willingness to embrace change. Long term relationships were felt to be at the heart of making this work. Whatever the approach, quality was seen to be at the centre of all partners' visions. As Keith Sykes notes: *"It needs to be good quality musically as well and push boundaries."*

Aligning visions	
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can key partners in the hub align visions and share expertise in a mutually beneficial and supportive way?</li></ul>
<b>Key challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All partners acknowledged that each organisation had different approaches and styles of delivery. There is a need for organisations and music leaders to be flexible in their approach.</li><li>• ArtsTrain noted how important it was to manage expectations and consider agendas at the start of the development phase.</li></ul>
<b>Key learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A range of partners were involved in the initial scoping sessions</li><li>• Time was allocated within the hub meetings to explore areas of joint interest</li><li>• Project planning began 12 months in advance</li></ul>

## Establishing need

Once visions are aligned, it is crucial to establish the need for any partnership programmes that may be developed. In this case, the music hubs were seeking to provide more opportunities beyond those offered by schools in order to fill gaps in provision. ArtsTrain play a key role in engaging young people who may not participate in the traditional music service offer. This requires them to work strategically with a broad range of youth and voluntary sector partners to best identify the gaps.

It was felt that an understanding of the pressures of the youth and voluntary sectors allows providers to design more realistic and deliverable projects. This might include working with settings such as PRUs and Youth Offending Teams where bespoke project design was seen as crucial to success. As Keith explains: *"When we see people are not accessing music somewhere – for example no home educated children or young carers – we would strongly look at putting provision in place."* Different drivers were identified as significant: ArtsTrain are driven by equality of access and opportunity, in contrast to the hub's requirement to deliver more comprehensive musical provision.

Establishing need	
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can partners work together to map need and identify gaps in provision?</li></ul>
<b>Key challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Managing capacity was cited as the biggest challenge for ArtsTrain. Keith Sykes explains <i>"Both boroughs have a vibrant voluntary sector and we are often over-subscribed with partnership opportunities. We are a small team and we try to work strategically with the local CVS to identify specific organisations. Similarly, we work with the Hub Leads to identify gaps in provision within school settings."</i></li></ul>
<b>Key learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mapping was carried out to identify who was delivering music and where the gaps were</li><li>• Information was collected from our wider networks, for example Community Voluntary Sector forums</li></ul>

*"There needs to be a balance between inclusion and quality"*

Keith Sykes, ArtsTrain

## Bringing other partners on board

With the intention of delivering partnership programmes in place, ArtsTrain and their Hub Leads then went about bringing in the appropriate additional partners. Setting a clear brief was seen as key to success at this stage. The importance of communicating the expectations for the project to the hub leads was highlighted. Partners described the benefits of setting a clear brief, keeping open lines of communication and holding regular debriefs. For example, describing the Sub Urban Orchestra programme, Julie Stanning explains that there was a clear brief to select good musicians who had not been involved in school music before, focusing on creative skills and composition.

Partners commented that it was helpful to have pre-existing relationships with secondary school teachers. It was therefore seen as beneficial that the hub leads had both worked in secondary schools as music teachers in the past. It was highlighted that schools may have different agendas and teachers will have different personalities and approaches. It was felt that engaging the Head of Music and ensuring they understand the aims and objectives was crucial. Reflecting on working with the teachers on the taster sessions, James Yarde, music leader for the Bromley programme, commented: *"Some teachers really get it and are very much happy for us to do what we're doing. They've been happy for us to be more far out while they handle the regular teaching."*

ArtsTrain reflected on their strong relationships with those who may have been less engaged with formal music provision, for example their work with Special Schools. Trust and honesty about the possibilities was highlighted as an important quality and it was felt that a strong track record in delivering well-designed projects helped to build these. Keith explains how ArtsTrain's experience in working with other partners can also be helpful in communicating the programme's potential outcomes and engaging a wide cohort of young people from different backgrounds: *"We speak the language of the Youth Service because we're used to delivering commissioned services. We have that voluntary sector knowledge for working with carers or young people in care."*

Julie comments: *"Schools and youth services are really targeting a lot of the same young people. There are people in the youth service who can be brilliant and acknowledge the opportunity straight away...But at the same time young people can be suspicious of organised school activity and institutions."* Keith adds: *"It's not likely that the smaller voluntary organisations are going to initiate the conversation. So if someone in the hub has a community remit, that makes it easier – and in Bromley and Bexley, that's seen to be ArtsTrain."*

Bringing other partners on board	
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can all partners clearly communicate aims and ideas to a broad range of partners? How can specific relationships be leveraged to help create the most appropriate partnerships?</li> </ul>
<b>Key challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreeing the roles and responsibilities of each partner is critical. Not having clarity of roles has previously caused confusion, with schools not feeling confident about which partner organisation to contact.</li> </ul>
<b>Key learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A partnership was built with Serious (an NPO) to provide high profile performance opportunities</li> <li>• Partnerships were developed with Churchill Theatre and Roundhouse to signpost young people onto wider creative programmes</li> </ul>

***"What we wanted to get out of the project – our aims and objectives – have really been listened to and ArtsTrain have been a really fantastic partner for us."***

Richard Beckett of Ravensbourne School, Bromley

## Designing the programme

With the vision and need established and partners on board, an active decision was taken to work more closely together to deliver a specific programme which addressed the issues and gaps identified. The early decision to work collaboratively on delivering the programmes has been crucial to testing and strengthening the initial shared aspirations described by the hub partners.

In order to ensure they delivered high quality and holistic programmes, the partners took an outcomes-driven approach – as promoted by funders such as Youth Music – which considers both the musical outcomes and the broader personal and social benefits for young people, including participants’ progression beyond the programme.

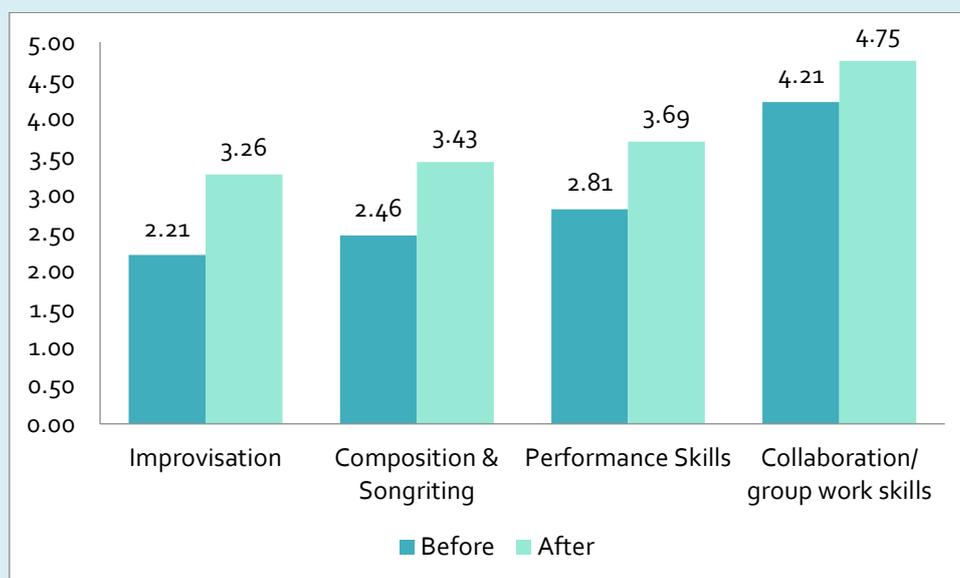
### Musical outcomes

Both Sub Urban Orchestra and the London Jazz Festival project aimed to bring together diverse cohorts of young musicians who had not necessarily worked together before, and share approaches and expertise across the partnership. Both projects were carefully coordinated between the hub lead organisations and ArtsTrain, and included extensive outreach in secondary schools and youth settings to ensure a mix of formally and informally trained musicians, with a particular focus on those who would not ordinarily take part. The programmes incorporated informal approaches which aimed to develop the whole musician and broaden their horizons. Rachel Nelken explains: *“What we’re offering young musicians is a chance to expand their musical abilities through improvising and composing – being involved in the creative process, taking ownership and collaboration.”* This was seen as a potential remedy for young people being ‘turned off’ by more formal, structured music-making.

### Facts & Figures

A cross section of 24 young people were asked to complete a self-perception skills assessment during their involvement in the Sub Urban Orchestra project. The participants were asked to record their perceived skill levels in improvisation, songwriting and composition, performance and working as part of an ensemble. These results were collected at the start and end of the project.

Over 70% of participants recorded an improvement in all four skill areas over the duration of the project. The areas of most significant improvement were improvisation and songwriting.



Nikki Yeoh who directed Sub Urban Orchestra reflects: *"SUO is a group of young musicians where each member of the band is unique and individual...with different tastes in music. You might get a string player who really likes metal or a guitarist who likes classical. Everybody has an input. We've composed it together. It's unique – because it's everybody's taste and ideas in one pot. And what comes out is the SUO sound. What's very exciting for me is that it's very different... They're a group that play together."*

SUO co-leader Ian Tripp describes the approach further: *"We wanted to make sure they were confident and comfortable with their existing skills and then push them into different areas, different genres of music, different ways of playing, different levels of dynamic..."* He explains that what makes SUO unique is that they *"had an open platform right from the beginning that they could try out on different instruments...so that they could really have an input and take ownership of the music."* This environment gave young people an open platform which led to them having more ownership over the music they were creating.

Ian Rowe of Bromley Youth Music Trust noted that the bar is being raised because technically advanced young musicians who have not engaged in composition were able to mix with more creatively confident players, resulting in both sides benefit from higher musical aspirations. One participant commented: *"I really enjoyed it – it was a chance to put instruments down and make a piece that was very our own – discussing it, breaking out, putting musical ideas together. We usually play written stuff. Most of us are used to reading. For us it was a good experience – understanding your experience, knowing the sound off the page. It was really useful for me – in terms of improvising."*

*"There's ways you can just throw curve balls at them. It's about addressing perfectionism. It about saying 'Do you know what? Just make a mess. That's a legitimate way of making music."*

James Yarde, Music Leader

### **Personal and social outcomes**

The success of these partnership programmes lies not only in the strength of their musical outcomes but also on their success in delivering personal, social and wider educational benefits for the participants. Non-formal music organisations like ArtsTrain can play a key role in advocating for the positive impact music can have on young people – and this is reinforced by the work of major funders such as Youth Music. Therefore, a capacity to demonstrate and evidence the beneficial impact musical experiences have on young musicians – rather than assume their inherent value – can help everyone involved in the Music Education Hub make the case for the work and leverage further funding. The Young Foundation's framework is particularly useful when designing programmes with social outcomes. As Keith Sykes reflects: *"Suburban Orchestra was really diverse. Every outreach setting was represented. We had two young people on the autistic spectrum who didn't miss a session and performed at the Royal Festival Hall"*

ArtsTrain music leader James Yarde adds:

*"Having come into ArtsTrain five years ago, the major difference is that they have a real understanding of what it means to be an artist. Understanding the motivations of young musicians and what they want to achieve with it. Even if they're not using the skills for a musical career, there's something about being able to work in groups, communicate with each other. We're building something with real value."*

Partners discussed how the projects set out to increase socialisation and build confidence, by building in time and space to develop understanding and trust. It was felt that by creating a safe

environment to connect with each other and explore their creativity, young people's ideas flourished. It was noted that this may take varying time and input on different projects. For example, the London Jazz Festival project was less intensive and, consequently, it took longer to find the point of trust. A key factor was encouraging the young musicians to socialise outside the sessions at lunch to help break the ice.

Ownership was another important personal outcome built in to the design of the programmes, and is a theme that appears in several quality frameworks including those of Arts Council and Youth Music. Keith explains that partners had to be comfortable taking a risk on 'excellence' and be prepared to relinquish control. Paradoxically, this led to an equal 'excellent' outcome on the projects with participants performing highly accomplished original works at major venues. One young participant commented: *"I've learnt not to be scared to share ideas, how to communicate with others and share opinions. All useful skills to have – not just for music but in general."*

*"Young people need to feel that they come together on a level playing field. It's about trusting their peers, trusting themselves."*

Stuart Readman, ArtsTrain



### *Progression*

Programmes can also be designed with the aim of improving wider educational and professional outcomes. Several existing frameworks discuss the importance of progression beyond the programmes. Partners described how they worked together to develop and unify their signposting to ensure more access to progression routes for participants across the programmes and beyond.

ArtsTrain have worked with a range of regional partners to create progression opportunities relating to performance, recording, training and youth voice. Keith explains *"ArtsTrain has worked in partnership with both hubs, as well as independently to create opportunities for young people to; win*

*awards at the National Music for Youth festival, record at the Roundhouse studios, gain ArtsAward qualifications, complete work placements in schools and attend the Rising Futures event through Sound Connections”*

Partners report that young musicians are now writing more ‘off their own back’ and forming their own bands. Stuart Readman feels this has reinforced the idea that they can create music independently and collaborate with peers from other schools. Julie Stanning notes that young people involved in the project went on to represent Bexley and win the London Rock Challenge which was live streamed across Europe. It was felt that this would better prepare young musicians for a more diverse range of roles they might encounter in future, for example as session musicians. James Yarde describes the SUO group as a ‘development orchestra’ that will ultimately lead to the establishment of a musical culture around collaborative music-making. He gives the example of one student who writes her own songs: *“She’s really good but I don’t think she understands how to manoeuvre from someone who writes songs and goes to school, to having some kind of musical direction and a sound. It really excites me to be able to grow something, put them in a group, create a musical community.”*

Beyond the positive impact of the programmes themselves, it was felt that closer partnership-working enabled more comprehensive signposting. Rachel Nelken explains that both sides better understand where each can help and everyone can signposting young people more effectively.

<b>Designing the programme</b>	
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can programmes be designed to deliver high quality social as well as musical outcomes?</li> <li>• How can opportunities be shared across the hub?</li> <li>• How can young people can be empowered to choose and shape their own progression routes?</li> </ul>
<b>Key challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ArtsTrain found that participants that joined the project at a later point did not integrate fully with the core group. In the first year of the programme, this resulted in a lack of ownership and identity for the group and their music.</li> <li>• The outer London location of both Bromley and Bexley means there are limited existing performance opportunities for young people.</li> <li>• There are also a limited number of performance venues within the two boroughs which young people may aspire to play.</li> </ul>
<b>Key learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Free time’ should be allocated throughout the whole day sessions.</li> <li>• A diverse range of young people were brought together from across the boroughs.</li> <li>• A mix of approaches and styles was used to engage the participants.</li> <li>• Work with music leaders to create a balance between a professional experience and social integration.</li> <li>• Create a network of partners (e.g. Serious, Small Green Shoots, Roundhouse) to provide valuable progression opportunities.</li> <li>• Time was built in for tutors to shape, reflect and adapt the programme as it progressed.</li> </ul>

*“We’re much stronger than the sum of our collective parts.”*

Ian Rowe, Bromley Youth Music Trust

## Resourcing the programme

Partners discussed the opportunities and challenges faced when resourcing the programmes:

### Funding

The first challenge was to secure appropriate funding to deliver the programmes to a high standard. ArtsTrain worked in collaboration with Bird College and BYMT to write joint funding applications. To date, partners have secured over £20,000 from funders including; Arts Council England, Youth Music and PRS Foundation, allowing the programmes to develop over several years. However, when working together for the first time, it is important to be aware that Music Education Hub funding is finite and must be prioritised towards the seven key roles of the hub. Partners discussed the financial pressure on hubs to retain existing services. At the same time, partner organisations may also face a challenge because hub engagement does not come attached with any funding on their side. However, the partnership itself could lead to more funding being unlocked.

Keith Sykes recommends allocating time outside the everyday operational work to speak to other partners, for example in the voluntary sector: *"The people who've been fundraising hardest for longest are the voluntary sector – you need to find that expertise."* This might include exploring commissioning models or accessing funding streams that music organisations ordinarily might not. It was highlighted that between them, partners already have the narratives and evidence they need. It therefore comes down to writing applications together which focus on all the partners' strengths combined. It was felt that securing partnership funding can be a crucial step towards demonstrating the value of such work.

### Time and space

With funding at a premium, the partners considered time and space allocation carefully in order to achieve the best outcomes for the young people involved. This included extending sessions by an extra half-hour to provide more scope for socialising, feeding back and developmental experiences. Stuart Readman reflected on the difference between the sessions and a traditional classical rehearsal, noting that on the programmes, young people were able to have ideas more freely, without being constricted by formality or protocol. James Yarde reflects on the freedom this can afford: *"The challenge is letting them know as early as possible that you'll do things in that room that you won't do anywhere else. It's safe, there's no judgement – it increases their self-confidence."* A participant on the programme in Bromley fed back: *"In other bands, you don't talk as much to everyone else and we've not been able to express ourselves. This band gets on really well – and we all talk to each other. When you have four days together as a band, it's really nice having people collaborating and having time for that."*

Space was also seen as important. In the first case, it was important to identify a space that suited young people from different backgrounds and disciplines coming together. It was also noted that improvements were made in the second year of the programmes to improve the environment to provide more space for young people to 'escape' and express themselves. This may involve looking outside the established settings, for example at new spaces in the community.

### Organisational support

When considering the staffing behind the partnerships, it is important to note that ArtsTrain's constitution and perhaps their existence in the first place is somewhat unusual. The programme is hosted and managed within the Partnerships Team of MyTime Active, a social enterprise who run leisure and sport services for the local authority in Bromley. As host, MyTime Active contribute core

funding to salaries, whilst project staff are funded through the programme itself. In return, ArtsTrain's work contributes to delivering MyTime's community outcomes which include wellbeing, health and good value. This has resulted in a distinct mix of experience and expertise within the ArtsTrain team covering the commercial music industry, youth services and community development.

ArtsTrain is therefore something of a unique and valuable asset in the music education landscape of Bexley and Bromley, without which the picture would be considerably different. Hub partnerships might consider who plays the role ArtsTrain play in Bromley and Bexley in their own borough.

Resourcing the programme	
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can the partnership leverage skills, capacity and resources across different organisations to ensure the best conditions for high quality programme delivery?</li> </ul>
<b>Key challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music Education Hub funding is finite and must be prioritised towards the seven key roles of the hub</li> <li>• ArtsTrain's position is unique in Bexley and Bromley – other boroughs may look very different</li> </ul>
<b>Key learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners worked together to raise funding for the programmes</li> <li>• Appropriate spaces were identified within the local areas</li> </ul>

*"ArtsTrain have a proven ability to form relationships with non-formal settings. Every borough needs an organisation like ArtsTrain playing that role in the hub."*

Julie Stanning, Bird College

## Recruiting music leaders

With all other resources in place, bringing in the right people to manage and lead the programmes was crucial to delivering high quality experiences. Youth Music's Quality Framework dedicates a section to this area, looking at music leading in non-formal settings. For partners this was founded on choosing appropriate, experienced and well-trained tutors and leaders. This means that both the music service and the partner organisation must recognise their pedagogy and be able to speak the musical language of both. This might mean combining different approaches – for example, a more informal approach to sessions underpinned by formal preparation in the form of session plans. Different music leaders bring new skills and backgrounds into this mix. A Head of Music from a Bromley school noted *"ArtsTrain music leaders have helped us to engage students who have had a bad experience in music before. The sessions are also more in line with the music the students would normally be exposed to."* A participant from New World Generations Jazz Band reflected: *"I think it was organised well. It had a good structure and I like how we helped each other. We all knew what we were doing – but with the help of the surrounding adults we felt comfortable."*

Partners felt that the music leaders have grown with the programmes over time. James Yarde reflects that he has acquired a greater understanding of skills like teaching composition and using Sibelius. This has been reinforced with tutor and teacher group CPD delivered across the hubs on areas such as improvisation, facilitation and singing. It was felt this is an area that could be further resourced. Julie Stanning stated her ambition to train more young leaders through the SUO programme.

Recruiting music leaders	
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can music leaders from different disciplines and with different approaches work together to deliver a high quality programme? How can hub partners join up CPD for the music leading workforce and share practice?</li> </ul>
<b>Key challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ArtsTrain's biggest challenge is that the vast majority of school projects are delivered as extra-curricular activity which limits the delivery duration to a maximum of two hours. This restricts ArtsTrain to recruiting local tutors and requires careful consideration as to how they build capacity locally.</li> </ul>
<b>Key learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All partners were involved in the recruitment process</li> <li>Young people were involved in selecting the most appropriate music leader</li> <li>Posts were advertised locally, as well as through industry recruitment platforms such as ArtsJobs</li> </ul>

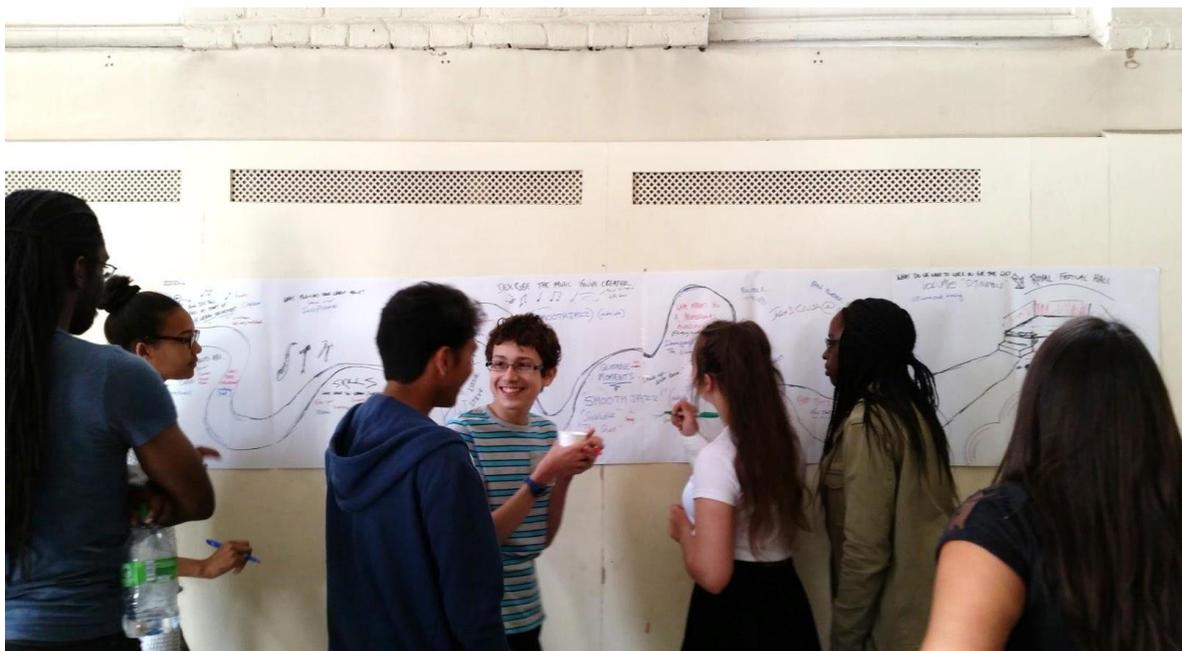
*"I very much enjoy the process. I always do.  
And I'm always learning more with every project."*

James Yarde, Music Leader

## Capturing impact and embedding success

### *Evaluation and sharing learning*

A process of evaluation was essential in ensuring ongoing high quality delivery, allowing outcomes to be monitored and learning fed back into the programmes. This included creative evaluation such as graffiti walls and interactive activities with participants to capture their feedback and feelings.



It was noted that partners had a strong framework from the start and held regular debriefs to discuss successes and areas for improvement. This is about learning from each other's way of working and discovering what music leaders and musicians are comfortable with. Keith Sykes highlights the importance of this process: *"Evaluation is something ArtsTrain are very comfortable doing. We feed into the reporting and share the vast majority of our findings now. It's been important to ask whether the value is recognised – it needs to make a difference."* The partnership programmes have provided a unique opportunity to embed the learning in the wider work of the hub. By developing the partnerships and programmes over several years, the partners have been able to share responsibility for the outcomes and ensure that the work continuously improves.

### Governance and voice

Underlying the partnerships are larger governance structures which can be used to reinforce and strengthen the success of the partnership work, creating longer term sustainability. Both hubs have steering groups with partners representing different interests and areas. It was noted that clear terms of reference are needed to ensure that people understand whether they are joining a network as partners or attending as guests. For this to work, Keith Sykes argues, the steering of a hub partnership must include as broad a range of partners as possible – and that inclusion needs to be both explicit and transparent: *"If you've got someone who's not being asked for input, or not seeing anything change, they will be gone because their time is so scarce. It's about putting it on your agenda and asking what's happening in your borough's voluntary sector."* ArtsTrain perform this role in Bromley and Bexley, but other hubs may ask who is best placed to make such connections and ensure a broad representation around the table. This has included engaging young people themselves in the work by raising their awareness. Julie Stanning notes that a major intended outcome for the SUO project was *"making the hub known to young people"* so that they can make the most of the opportunities available to them. Further engagement of young people in decision-making about their own musical experiences will help to strengthen this.

Speaking to participants of the New World Generations Jazz Band, it was clear that a music hub can have a lasting impact on young people's lives. One reflected: *"I guess it has given me this other side of my life. I wasn't that great at other stuff at school. Someone offered me the opportunity to drum. I've met new people, travelled all over the world."* Another commented: *"It means an awful lot to everyone here and it makes us stand out as a borough. It's an asset. So many professionals – and ordinary people as well – have been inspired and have learned something. The government need to know: it's worth every penny. It's worth the cause. I can't imagine life without it."*

Capturing impact and embedding success	
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can the hub use creative evaluation to monitor and ensure quality? How can findings be shared and embedded in the wider hub? What part can a representative steering group – including young people – play in strengthening and embedding the offer?</li> </ul>
<b>Key challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff capacity to collect the required evaluation from various funders</li> <li>Due to varying attendance throughout the programme we struggled to collect 'baseline' and 'follow-up' data sets to measure 'distance travelled'. We now use retrospective M&amp;E as a way to encourage young people to evaluate their progression, as well as improve monitoring response rates.</li> </ul>
<b>Key learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High quality videos, journals and recordings were collected</li> <li>Young people's perceived skill levels were captured at the start, mid-way through the project and at the end.</li> </ul>

# Summary

The research has provided a picture of music-making across two programmes in Bexley and Bromley, as well as shedding light on the challenges and opportunities of partnership working in Music Education Hubs. It was clear that there was a need to align partners' visions, balance multiple agendas and manage expectations on all sides. A strong understanding of local need was seen to paved the way for the delivery of the two partnership programmes. All partners harnessed their existing networks to ensure engagement of a diverse range of young people. They worked together to secure new funding, pool resources and leverage organisational support. Music leaders were carefully selected to bring a range of skills and experience into the programmes.

By balancing musical and personal/social outcomes, the programmes ensured that young people had a high quality, holistic and well-rounded experience. The programmes explored here benefited from the diversity of music, backgrounds and approaches, including composition and improvisation. Process was valued as highly as the final product, whilst the programmes also developed confidence, trust and ownership, engaging young people in a more authentic way and enabling them to progress to further music-making opportunities beyond the programmes.

Partnership working was also seen to presented ongoing challenges, which have been highlighted throughout the report. These included capacity issues for staff and music leaders, differing expectation and ways of working, and logistical demands in terms of planning and timescales. The outer London setting of this work also meant the programmes benefited from less local arts infrastructure, for example venues for final performances. However, regular dialogue and evaluation sessions ensured that learning could be embedded and that programmes continuously improved. This was reinforced by ensuring that a variety of voices were represented in steering the programmes and the wider work of the hubs. An important next step for the programmes will be modelling ways that young people themselves can be further engaged in decision-making about their musical journeys and experiences.

Further learning, advice and guidance is provided in the accompanying framework, [Working in Partnership with Music Education Hubs](#).



# Appendix: Background case study

**SubUrban Orchestra** was delivered by ArtsTrain in partnership with Bexley Music Hub in spring/summer 2015. The aim of the project was to create a cross-genre creative music ensemble for young musicians aged 12-19 from a diverse range of musical backgrounds. This included four 'taster courses' from guest tutors in Bexley schools followed by the creation of the orchestra who performed at the Royal Festival Hall. The project engaged over 70 young people and over ten staff over 115 hours of activity. In total, 11 new pieces of original music were created.

**BYMT New World Generations Jazz Band and ArtsTrain Academy** collaborated for the fifth year in a row, resulting in a performance as part of London Jazz Festival. The programme brought together young people from the Hub Lead's jazz band and participants of ArtsTrain's artist development community. The project 18 young people and four staff over 30 hours of activity. This resulted in the premiere of a new piece of music created with composer Soweto Kinch and music producer and leader James Yarde.

## Evaluation methods

Participants took part in evaluation of the sessions across the programmes and at outreach sessions at a number of schools. SUO participants shared their thoughts and experiences verbally through interviews and on flipchart paper, as well as creating a graffiti wall. Bromley Youth Music Trust participants attended an additional focus group in January 2016. Feedback was also collected on film resulting in several videos featuring young people's testimonials.

## Outcomes

- ▶ The programmes brought **new groups of young people together** and exposed them to a diverse range of instrumentation and musical styles from Steve Reich to Van Halen. Stuart Readman, Partnership Projects Coordinator at ArtsTrain explains that young musicians were encouraged to go *"outside their comfort zones and think about different ways of playing, different music to listen to. You'll get a flautist playing a heavy riff, replicated, transposed, reimagined in other forms."*
- ▶ Participants reported that they gained an **increased capacity to shape ideas, innovate and try new things** through exploring composition and improvisation. One participant explained: *"I have learnt how to write, structure and create songs by incorporating things I know and developing them but also help other people think of ideas and how to combine them"*.
- ▶ The participants reported that they **improved their musical skills** including how to use *"different timbres to make amazing sounds"*, how to keep time, how to use dynamics and harmonics. They also commented that they were encouraged to *"play better"* and that their concentration improved.
- ▶ A large number of participants reported **increased their confidence**: *"I have improved on my confidence...I maybe need to trust my ideas a bit more and not be so nervous about my ideas."* Another commented: *"When I first came to this I was a really shy. I've now developed my confidence in myself and in music. I can talk to people more comfortably... I'm happier I enjoy myself... And this is the only out of school club I've ever done and it's one of the best decisions I've ever made. I love it!"*

- ▶ Many commented that they were now **more comfortable playing in a group**: *“It’s great to work with new people”* and *“I have also learnt how working in a group helps you personally and how to team build and combine ideas.”* Another commented: *“I’ve learnt not to be scared to share ideas, how to communicate with others and share opinions. All useful skills to have not just for music but in general.”*
- ▶ It was evident that participants were also able to **consider their own musical and personal progression**, with individuals pledging to *“continue writing original songs and exploring my skills”*, *“keep playing in different bands”*, *“keep studying music and maybe go to music college”*, *“keep playing in the bands and orchestras at Bird College”*, and *“continue with music at GCSE.”*



# Sources

Arts Council England – Music Education Hubs:

[Music Education Hubs](#)

[Hubs in depth](#)

[Working in partnership](#)

[Music Education Hub Prospectus](#)

Department for Education and Arts Council England

[National Plan for Music Education](#)

Youth Music

[Do, Review, Improve](#)

Arts Council England – Music Education Hubs Final Report, March 2015

[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Music\\_Education\\_Hubs\\_2014\\_Report\\_final\\_March\\_2015.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Music_Education_Hubs_2014_Report_final_March_2015.pdf)

Arts Council England – Music Education Hubs Announcement

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/news/arts-council-news/department-education-increase-investment-music-edu/>

NFER Report

Young Foundation

Sub Urban Orchestra 2015

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26o\\_wjSqK-E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26o_wjSqK-E)

St Columba's SUO Outreach project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfqrbgRFGV8>

Townley School SUO Outreach project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLqJFYCkqMo>

ArtsTrain & BYMT at London Jazz Festival

<https://youtu.be/NdNHAEa5UcA>

ArtsTrain Academy

<https://youtu.be/RolR74uQ5R8>

Ravensbourne School

<https://youtu.be/YpMjZEmuukw>