

Fairbeats Music

The Fairbeats! model: a practical guide

A practical guide to setting up a musical progression project
by Catherine Carter



The Fairbeats! team lead a family singing session



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This report is intended to share knowledge and experience about setting up and running a musical progression project with young refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants. It responds to findings in the Fairbeats! Pathfinders toolkit which investigates the work Fairbeats! has done in supporting musical progression for participants at Action for Refugees in Lewisham. Fairbeats! now runs additional progression projects with Refugee Action Kingston and Love to Learn Homework Club in Wandsworth. The check list is intended as a practical guide for organisations looking to increase access to music making for young people who face barriers to getting involved with music making.

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About Fairbeats!

Fairbeats Music is a small charity based in South London. We have been working in partnership with Action for Refugees in Lewisham since 2011 and became an independent charity in November 2015. Fairbeats! works with young refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants and their families providing music making opportunities and supporting ongoing progression. Through ukulele, fife, drumming, singing and creative sessions we work with young musicians from new minority communities to support them to overcome the barriers they face to participating fully in the musical, cultural life and wider society in the UK.

What is a Fairbeats! progression project?

A progression project embeds high quality, open access music making in a grass roots community organisation where regular music making is not currently happening. It is usually attached to an educational offer that already exists, for example a supplementary school, homework club or holiday programme. Typically the additional musical offer is between 30 - 60 minutes per week for each participant.

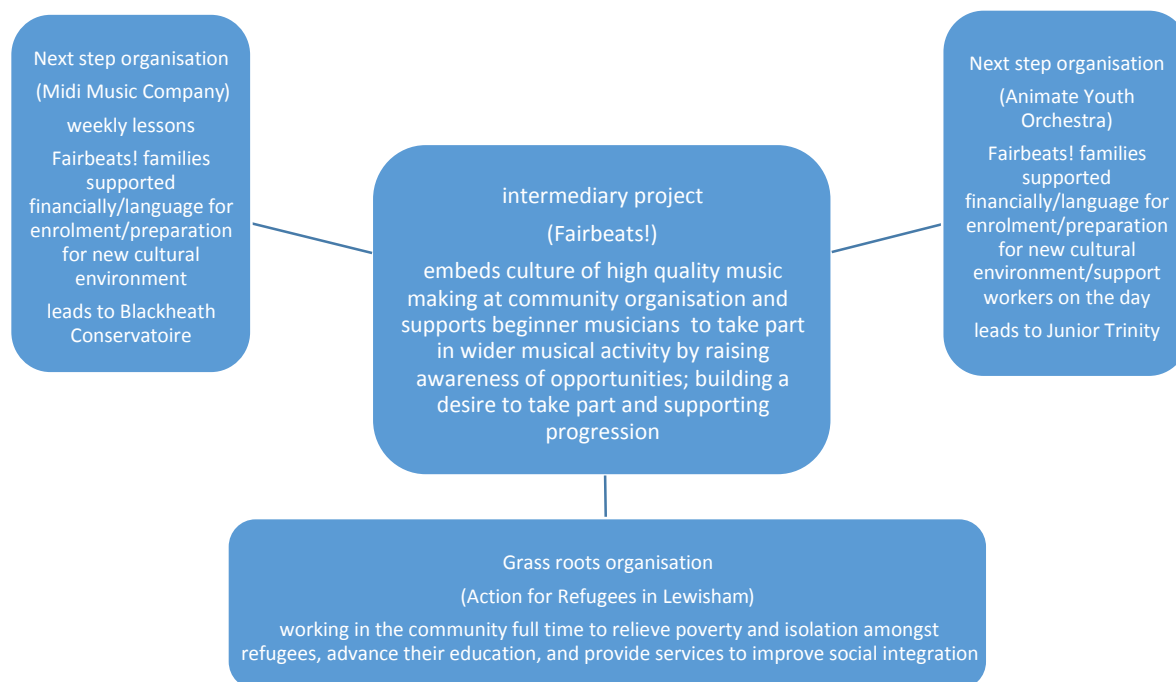
Progression projects are long term and enable staff and volunteers to build relationships with participants and families. Through establishing a culture of music making and its associated benefits within the familiar and tailored environment of a grass roots organisation they aim to engender a desire and confidence to pursue further music making amongst participants and their families.

Projects are led by a music leader and a musical progression manager with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Progression beyond the projects is supported by the musical progression manager who facilitates pathways for participants to next step opportunities by liaising with arts organisations keen to welcome participants from diverse communities.



The Pathfinders model of progression:

The Pathfinders report proposed a model of progression, based on Fairbeats! activity in 2013 – 2014 centred around the idea of partnership work between organisations:



A model for musical engagement proposed in: *Pathfinders' toolkit: Facilitating musical progression routes for children and young people from refugee, asylum seeker and new migrant families* by Catherine Carter and Kate Wakeling. Commissioned by Sound Connections Children in Challenging Circumstances Network 2014.

The report tracked 'the potential progression route of children and young people from initial contact with a **grassroots, non-arts-based organisation** (i.e. Action for Refugees in Lewisham) **which targets these communities directly**; through an **arts-based 'intermediary organisation'** (i.e. Fairbeats!) and onto a mainstream '**next-step' organisation, programme or venue that offers broader musical (or participatory) activity** (i.e. Animate Orchestra at Trinity Laban (www.animateorchestra.org.uk), the Horniman Museum (www.horniman.ac.uk), Lewisham Music Hub (www.lewishammusicservice.org) and Midi Music Company (www.themidimusiccompany.co.uk).'

Fairbeats, Pathfinders Toolkit Executive Summary (6)

Checklist: how the projects work

1. Scoping for partners: asking questions and sharing funding applications

Organisations looking to set up a progression project in a grassroots setting first need to identify potential partners. Most community organisations see the potential benefit but many are not used to supporting long term, in depth music projects. Progression projects work best when they are long term with regular weekly contact time between music staff and participants. It's important that grassroots organisations understand the level of commitment and support that will be required of them if a project goes ahead. Some issues may arise around time tabling and space. As music can be pretty disruptive to normal activities it can be worth talking this through in advance!

Some questions worth bringing up in an initial conversation:

- Is there time within their activity program? When is it? Are they really willing to give up this time to music on a regular basis?
- Where might sessions take place? How big is the space? What is in the space? Is it actually available? How much does it cost and who will pay for it?
- Are they already working with participants? Do they think that group would be interested in taking part in music making? Would they be willing to speak to them and find out?
- Do they have staff capacity to support the music project while it runs? What will their staff be doing while sessions take place? Will the addition of music sessions disrupt their current funding targets and outcomes?
- How will participants get to music sessions if they don't happen during the normal times that they access the grassroots projects? If transport costs are likely to be needed, who will pay for them

It is also a good sign if potential partners have a lot of questions for you, for example about your mission, experience and capacity to deliver a project. For Fairbeats! the most successful projects have been based on a shared sense of endeavour about and responsibility for project outcomes as well as a willingness to support music sessions on a weekly basis.

Once a partnership has been informally agreed it is a good idea to involve grassroots in the application process for funding a progression project. Grassroots may not have capacity to write the application themselves but sharing proposals as they are drafted is a good way to lay the foundations for a successful partnership. Crucial information to share includes:

- Overall aims of the project
- Specific intended outcomes
- Outputs and activity plans

If this information is shared in advance projects are more likely to be realistic, appropriate and complimentary to current provision. When (and if) funding is subsequently granted everyone will be on board with proposed activities and understand and agree their roles within the delivery of the project plan.

2. Funding in place: recruiting and training staff and volunteers

Fairbeats! progression projects are led by two facilitators with very specific roles. Both are experienced music leaders.

Creative instrumental leader:

- Confident to plan and run group sessions with up to 20 participants
- Likely to have at least 5 years experience in education (this is quite a challenging environment!)
- Instrumental skills (usually on ukulele but could also include drums)
- Experience of teaching mixed ability groups
- Confident in leading collaborative song-writing and singing sessions
- Experienced in non-formal settings and ideally in a similar setting to that in which the project will take place.

Music support leader:

- Confident musician with training in creative music leadership
- Minimum 1 year of experience in creative leadership
- Responsible for pastoral support of participants
- Beneficial to have experience as learning support assistant in school or support worker capacity elsewhere
- Responsible for gathering evaluation (as instructed by project manager)
- Responsible for managing progression opportunities (as instructed by project manager)

Volunteers:

Fairbeats! works extensively with volunteers. These include volunteers we have recruited ourselves and those who are already working with our partner organisations. Volunteers play a central role in the delivery of our projects and we are extremely grateful for the time and energy they put in to making Fairbeats! work happen. There are some considerations worth noting when working with volunteers:

- Volunteers should be invited to attend inductions with staff and be clearly briefed on their role within a project
- Music leaders should include volunteer roles in their weekly plan and share these plans with volunteers in advance of sessions
- There should be a maximum of three volunteers (in addition to two music leaders) supporting a class of 20. When volunteer numbers increase beyond this ratio it can be quite overwhelming for participants and leaders in the room.
- It's helpful for volunteers to have an interest in music and some prior experience of playing an instrument.

3. Induction: before the project begins:

Sharing the mission; ethos and values

It's important for new staff, particularly those working in satellite projects to have a clear sense of the mission of your organisation as they will be the main representative and activators of it in the grass root setting! Share this with them at induction.

Fairbeats Mission

At Fairbeats! projects, all children are given the opportunity and skills to express themselves and connect with others through music. Fairbeats! is working to enable children and families from new minority communities to overcome the barriers they face to participating fully in the musical, cultural life and wider society in the UK.

The Fairbeats! mission is to build musical skills and a culture of music making with children and young people from refugee, asylum seeking and new migrant families and the community groups that work with them.



Family session at Refugee Week 2015 (AFRIL)

Sharing project aims, intended outcomes and activity plan

The weekly responsibility for delivering the project will rest with the leaders. Share the plan and goals you have agreed with funders so that leaders understand what they are working towards and their responsibilities within the project. At the recent Love to Learn pilot we shared an edited version of our Youth Music application including outcomes and outputs relating to Love to Learn.

From Love to Learn progression project induction, Sep 201

'From grassroots organisations to London's wider cultural offer: making musical progression possible for young refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants.'

'Through a new partnership with 'Love to Learn' Homework Club, Battersea we will work with 20 additional young refugees. This will be a springboard for sharing our practice more widely, enabling us to train more staff and to write a manual for running 'progression projects' at refugee organisations.'

Outcomes:

1. Through building musical skills and a culture of music making with CYP from refugee, asylum seeking and new migrant families to increase their confidence and well-being and enable them to overcome the barriers they face to participating fully in the musical, cultural life and wider society in Britain.
2. Through building musical skills and a culture of music making with children and young people from refugee, asylum seeking and new migrant families to increase their community connectedness, integration and engagement.
3. To increase knowledge within the music education sector for supporting children and young people from refugee, asylum seeking and new migrant families to engage with music making activities and the associated personal and social benefits.

Children are encouraged to set their own goals in music and work to achieve them (resilience); express their feelings and respect each other through song-writing and musical collaboration (social connection); learn a new skill on an instrument and speak and perform in public (confidence).

Outputs:

- L2L - 1 x end of project performance to parents and staff
- Some L2L participants supported to take part in (for example) Saturday Sound Start and Junior Academy, Wandsworth Music Hub or to go on trips to see music or take part in one off musical workshops at (for example) the Horniman Museum.
- L2L 2 experienced leaders will be trained to run satellite projects...

Setting positive progression opportunities at the heart of the project

The Musical support worker will be responsible for facilitating progression opportunities for project participants. At Fairbeats! we've thought, and continue to think a lot about progression. We share our Pathfinders report with all staff at induction to underline the importance we place on facilitating progression beyond our projects.

Pathfinders toolkit: page 2

While the musical and social benefits of participating in these opportunities have been celebrated by participants, their families and our partner organisations involved, the pathway through such transitions has not always been straightforward and has taken time and effort to establish and finesse. Indeed, research undertaken in association with the Refugee Support Network and Royal Holloway highlights how vital it is that organisations formalise their aims and approaches in initiating and developing arts-based projects in this field, noting the potential pitfalls of programmes that do not address the risks and challenges of this work: 'it should be noted that arts activities, in and of themselves, have the potential to harm as much as assist young participants, and therefore the development of an effective policy should be carefully considered prior to embarking on these types of activities'.

In this vein, alongside outlining the tremendous value of positive musical progression experiences for young people in such challenging circumstances, our research has also generated a toolkit of practical considerations and procedures to support other organisations to establish secure and meaningful progression routes.

The full document can be found at: <http://www.sound-connections.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Pathfinders-Executive-Summary.pdf>

Alongside sharing the toolkit we also provide a list of tasks for the project support worker:

1. Identifying potential participants (if it is a trip anyone can do it, if it is long term it's usually best if young people are 'ready', eg confident and have some basic skills)
2. Creating simple information to share with parents, this may also be done through Love to Learn staff and needs to be done about a month in advance of the opportunity
3. Getting sign up, filling in enrolment forms etc.
4. Preparing participants for experience – what will be expected of them, what can they expect
5. Handing out travel and lunch money where necessary
6. Texting reminders in the days leading up
7. On the day supporting getting there, potentially going with them (if needed this will be paid for)
8. Gathering feedback from participants and progression opportunities to improve practice for future.



A Fairbeats! participant performs in 'Brundibar' with Blackheath Children's Opera 2015

Evaluation expectations:

The content and structure of evaluation is created by Fairbeats! project managers and evaluation consultants. The Music support leader will be responsible for gathering evaluation for the project and both leaders must understand the tasks that need to be undertaken to fulfil these obligations.

- Gathering feedback forms at the beginning and end of the project
- Filming sessions at the beginning and end of the project
- Conducting conversations with purpose with participants, staff and parents at the grassroots setting
- Keeping records of participant progress throughout



The Fairbeats! team lead music making at Refugee Week 2015



My Music Goals Autumn 2015:

Name:

Age:

I feel confident today: (agree/disagree) mark out of 100

I enjoy being challenged: (agree/disagree) mark out of 100

I feel supported by the people around me: (agree/disagree) mark out of 100

This term I will: (circle one for each category)

Confidence

Give more ideas to the whole group

Sing or play a solo to the class

Speak or play a solo to the whole school at the end of term performance

Resilience:

Keep listening even when it gets hard to concentrate

Try things I find difficult, so that I get used to them

Tell my teacher if something is bothering me and work with them to find a solution

Well-being:

Learn everyone's names in the class and play musical games positively every time

Bravely share my ideas and emotions during creative music and respect other peoples' feelings

Always be kind and respectful to my classmates

My personal goal for this project is:

4. Session content: what happens during the weekly sessions?

Typical session

5.15 – 5.30: Leaders arrive and set up

5.30 – 5.45 warm ups and tune ups

5.45 - 6.05 skills

6.05 – 6.25 creative

6.25 – 6.30 plenary

6.30 – 6.45 Leaders pack up and debrief with each other and L2L

At the Love to Learn induction we choose a theme for the project that would support progress towards the intended outcomes (Friendship) we also planned the first session together and agreed expectations for the final performance (all children to perform at least 2 new songs they have learnt and one they have created).



A Fairbeats! music session in action

Example plan for first session at Love to Learn

Teacher: JT	Subject: UKULELE	Group: Fairbeats
Date: Autumn 1– Week 1	Beginner	Lesson: 1 of 10
Learning Intentions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to know the names of the open strings (G,C,E,A) - to be able to play the open strings and sing “My Dog Has Fleas” 		
Success Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use thumb, finger 1, 2 & 3 when plucking strings. - Learn lyrics & melody and play & sing together. 		
Key vocabulary: tuning pegs, strings, pulse, strum, pluck, chord, fret, C major		
The BIG PICTURE: F, C, G & Am, write original composition & Learn two songs for winter concert.		
Notes:		

lesson phase	MAIN TEACHING POINTS
1 (10 mins)	DO NOW ! - NAME GAME (JT) - TEAM BUILDING GAME (S)
2 (10 mins)	EVALUATION - S & J hand out evaluations with help of volunteers.
3 (2 mins)	Teach “UKE, UKE!” (Vocals Only) Call & response
4 (1 min)	What are the key points we have to adhere to that will allow us to get the most out of the sessions? - QUIET POSITION - TUNING PEGS

lesson phase	MAIN TEACHING POINTS
5 (1 min)	HAND OUT UKE's
6 (1 min)	HOW TO HOLD - CLAW / BUTTERFLY
7 (5 mins)	TEACH MY DOG HAS FLEAS!
8 (5 mins)	WRITE 2nd VERSE TO HELP REMEMBER STRING NAMES G C E A
9 (2 mins)	PERFORM BOTH VERSES!
10 (5 mins)	GAME (S)
11 (5 mins)	GLADIATORS (JT & S)
12 (10 mins)	MY DOG HAS FLEAS RECAP
13 (3 mins)	AFL's

AFL's

	ALL	MOST	SOME
I know the names of the strings!			
I can sing and play My Dog Has Fleas!			

5. Keeping in touch:

Every Fairbeats! session includes a debrief between staff to discuss:

- Successes
- Pupil progress
- Challenges
- Upcoming events and opportunities for staff and participants

Throughout projects Fairbeats! managers keep in touch with the support worker who relays information from session debriefs as well as updates about progression support.

Information from debriefs:

- Informs decisions about training
- Enables quick responses to potential hurdles
- Supports tailored, empathetic response to the needs of individual participants
- Contributes to evaluation
- Informs choices about progression support

In response to weekly email updates from support workers Fairbeats! managers liaise with community settings regarding any fine tuning needed to support the smooth running of the project.



Artwork from a Fairbeats and Horniman Museum and Gardens family singing session

6. Progression:

Progression support is embedded as a central aim at Fairbeats! Ideally projects last for at least a year enabling leaders to get to know participants and follow up on providing support. Throughout the project the support worker:

- Identifies and shares information about open access musical opportunities
- Organises trips for participants to external musical performances and events
- Liaises with project staff and grass root staff about potential candidates for bursary support
- Builds relationships with participants and their families to find out what they would like to do beyond Fairbeats!

In order for long term progression such as attending local music centres to take place advance planning is required. For example:

Term 1:

- Week 1 – 5 local opportunities scoped and selected
- Week 5: interested/ready participants identified
- Week 6 – 10 participants enrolled (often for following term)

Term 2:

- Week 1: support worker liaises with participant and family regarding support needs (cost of travel and food, planning routes, what to expect at next step, who to ask for help if needed at next step)
- Week 2 – 5: support worker reminds and checks in with participants and families re next step opportunity – ‘don’t forget, music centre tomorrow, arrive at 10, pick up at 12.30 – let me know if you can’t attend’ etc How was it? Any issues etc
- Week 5: interested/ready participants identified
- Week 6 – 10 participants enrolled (often for following term) etc

Fairbeats! friends, supporters, trustees and team members regularly fund raise to contribute to the Fairbeats! bursary which was set up in 2013. Because of the financial circumstances of many of our participants there are numerous costs associated with these bursaries:

- Enrolment fees, tickets and tuition fees to take part in activities
- Where parents are not able to commit to supporting travel (for financial, work or other reasons) or unconfident about going to new locations and environments (because of unfamiliarity with London) Fairbeats! pays for support workers to travel with participants and support them at next step opportunities.
- Many of the parents of our participants do not receive free bus travel because of their immigration status so we often have to pay for their travel to get to events.
- Some are temporarily relocated out of London, in order to maintain contact and support their children in these circumstances we occasionally pay for travel from outside London to holiday activities.
- We pay for lunch for children attending day events (it’s important they don’t feel different on the day and we can’t guarantee that parents will be able to provide this adequately)
- We pay for refurbishment of donated instruments such as flutes and guitars
- We pay for new strings/pads on instruments
- We pay for music books and resources at progression opportunities