Exchanging Notes Research Report

Birmingham City University for Youth Music, May 2019

Exchanging Notes: A four year longitudinal research study

Dr Victoria Kinsella

Professor Martin Fautley

Dr Adam Whittaker

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ABBREVIATIONS

AR: Action Research

BERA: British Education Research Association

DCMS: Department for Culture Media and Sport

DfE: Department for Education

EBacc: English Baccalaureate

GCSE: General Certificate of Education

KS3: Key Stage Three

KS4: Key Stage Four

MATs: Multi Academy Trust

MLD: Multiple Learning Difficulty

NAME: National Association for Music Educators

NPME: National Plan for Music Education

PMLD: Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty

SEND: Special Educational Needs and Disability

SLT: Senior Leadership Team

WCET: Whole Class Ensemble Teaching

YMQF: Youth Music Quality Framework

YMEN: Youth Music Exchanging Notes

FOREWORD FROM MATT GRIFFITHS, YOUTH MUSIC CEO

Exchanging Notes was always about testing a hypothesis. Throughout Youth Music's 20 years of operation we've seen how the music-making projects we fund – which mostly take place outside of the school environment – engage young people through creative projects which are centred around their existing passion for music and their individual needs. These projects lead to a wide range of positive personal and social outcomes for young musicians, alongside transferable skills.

It seems like stating the obvious to say that young people love music. It's such an integral part of growing up. For our Sound of the Next Generation research, published earlier this year, we found that nearly all of the young people surveyed had listened to music in the past week and two-thirds had engaged in some form of music-making activity. School is the one place where everyone should be able to access music, but this widespread access is constricting as school music departments disappear by the day. Where they still exist, they are often isolated or under-resourced. The government is currently developing a model music curriculum that promises a 'sequenced and structured template curriculum' (DfE, 2019). But there's little point in having a model curriculum if there are no teachers around to teach it!

Young people on our projects often contrast their Youth Music experience to the music they do in school. Primarily because in school they are given less autonomy over their own learning, and the curriculum doesn't deliver the type of music they want to make. It's disconnected from their musical lives. Exchanging Notes was our attempt to address this: bringing community music organisations together with school music departments, so that each could learn from the other.

We wanted to know what wider benefits would occur if young people – particularly those most at risk of exclusion or low attainment – had access to sustained and engaging music in school. It was never designed as an out-and-out intervention study, but we did aim to track a core group of learners across the lifetime of the project. Projects worked to support educational and wider developmental outcomes for young people, alongside their creative, expressive and musical abilities. Use of Youth Music's quality framework was very important to ensure that the learning was centred on the young musicians' needs, and promoted personal and social outcomes as well as musical ones.

Through the research we learned that young musicians developed new patterns of social interaction through establishing trusting relationships with other young people and adults. This social development acted as a springboard for a range of other learning outcomes and instilled in young people a greater sense of resilience to navigate life's challenges. At the end of the programme they had clear ambitions for the future, with music usually playing a central role. Both the young musicians *and* the staff teams developed different identities, and re-authored new versions of themselves.

Several school staff members in Exchanging Notes talked about the preoccupation in schools with attainment and targets. This meant that they felt less able to prioritise a participatory and creative music curriculum that centred around individual need. In the research it was essential that we looked beyond the standard data to get a comprehensive picture of what took place. And boy, are we pleased we did. It was the interviews with young musicians, music leaders, music teachers and Headteachers that gave us the real story of Exchanging Notes: if all we'd collected was attainment and attendance data then much of the positive impact would have been obscured.

This wasn't always an easy project. The work was taking place alongside the introduction of the EBacc, placing greater focus on attainment in core subjects and, as a result, devaluing the importance of music in the curriculum. The staff and partnerships all had to be resilient too, in the face of many challenges.

We want to thank everyone who took part in Exchanging Notes, including teachers, music leaders, school staff, project managers, support workers from partner agencies, and of course the young musicians. Our research partners at Birmingham City University brought a positive element of critical thinking to the whole process, encouraging us to reflect deeply on the emerging findings throughout. And special thanks must go to the National Lottery, who supported the programme through public funding via Arts Council England.

Our key takeaways from this work:

- The government needs to send a clear, unambiguous message about the importance of music in the school curriculum and take urgent measures to reverse the decline in school music infrastructure that we're currently witnessing.
- But it's time for a new, ethical model of music in schools – one that centres on the social and emotional wellbeing of young people.
- External partnerships with music education charities and music industry organisations are essential to this new model – co-designing and co-delivering an innovative curriculum which is more relevant to young people's existing lives in music.
- This will be a win-win for all partners and particularly young people. Schools can offer an inspirational music curriculum that better supports young people's wellbeing; the music industry talent pipeline will grow and become more diverse; and young people's lives in music will be completely connected both in and out of school.

The future is in partnership. We all need to think about what role we can play and, like the Exchanging Notes partners, collaborate in a way that is open, honest and builds trust. Music education, let's face it, has sometimes operated in factions – but now more than ever, we all need to pull together.

Exchanging Notes has cemented our view that music in schools has the power to help young people with some of the big issues facing them today – mental health, isolation, and social inequality. But only if it is reimagined to become more relevant and inclusive of all young people.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Exchanging Notes set out to explore whether young musicians at risk of low attainment, disengagement or educational exclusion could achieve the best musical, educational and wider outcomes through participation in a longitudinal music education project. Alongside this was an aspiration to investigate new models of effective partnership-working between schools and out-of-school music providers.

This report documents the findings from young musicians, teachers, music leaders, music providers, head teachers and music hub leads. It also analyses statistical data held by schools. The report draws together these findings and offers insights into the successes and challenges of partnership working for 21st century music curriculum.

Researchers from Birmingham City University were appointed to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Exchanging Notes programme over the four years of its duration. Key findings are presented against each of the outcome statements investigated by the research team.

Outcome Statement 1: to improve the quality and standards of music delivery for children and young musicians

1. At its simplest, and most extreme, schools were concerned with learning, evidence by assessment of attainment, and music organisations were concerned with participation, evidenced by engagement. Effective partnerships recognised the positions of everyone involved.
2. The most effective projects included activities that encouraged participation, were musically relevant, extended knowledge, developed musical skills, addressed future needs, and engaged young musicians in ways appropriate to their developmental stages.
3. Assessment and evaluation of progress and progression began to be viewed as more than input to output modes of school assessment measures. These included social, emotional and cultural aspects of learning.
4. Teachers, music leaders and young musicians deconstructed their musical and educational identities, breaking out of old habits, being allowed to think differently and consider new possibilities. Part of this was due to the time afforded over the four years for curriculum and programme re-design. This entailed long term planning that remained flexible but had clear aspirations, and ethical approaches to working with one another.
5. A school inviting a music provider to come in and work with their young people was not automatically a partnership. As one commentator noted, these could be classified as "lend us your kids" projects, unlikely to make a significant impact on the music organisation or the school. True partnerships involved collaboration and shared discourse. There was a reconciliation and reconsideration of what partnership work between formal and non-formal education organisations actually meant, and the value placed on its success by all involved. These successful

partnerships were able to develop collaborative decision making processes which bridged traditional formal and non-formal divides.

6. There were many challenges faced in relation to partnership working, which proved to be a significant factor for the three projects that ended early. In such instances, setting up a joint venture did not necessarily result in a partnership in its truest sense.

7. Multi-agency working was important. Many of the projects worked with young musicians who had a range of complex physical, cognitive, health, behavioural, and social care challenges. They therefore worked with a number of professionals from across many different fields beyond the music organisation and school. Interdisciplinary working and reflection was needed to ensure a joined up approach. Over time those projects that included the music provider in discussions about the young musician's educational and social development extended their shared knowledge, built trust and developed personalised approaches to teaching and learning.

8. School senior leadership played a crucial role in advocating for music in school and the wider community. Music leaders played a key role in using their knowledge, understandings and networks to impact beyond their own organisations. In some projects, schools and music organisations worked together and were a driving force for enabling and maintaining community partnerships.

9. Thinking and planning for music making and learning developed over the course of the term. Short, medium and long term planning was the foundation for high quality partnership work. The conditions for a successful methodology for musical activity planning were carefully considered and jointly owned. The involvement of young musicians was crucial in this process and improved over time, ensuring that programme activity accounted for their needs, wants, interests and development.

10. Developing a shared ideology took time, and involved honesty, openness, dialogue, critique, and reflection. For some of the projects these open conversations were not reached until after the early stages of the projects.

11. The interlocutor's played a vital role, particularly when this had been planned for and adequately resourced. Interlocutors developed awareness of the language, practices, structures, policies used in the formal and non-formal sectors. They were important in helping to bridge divides and open spaces for shared discourses.

Outcome statement 2: to evidence the impact of the Exchanging Notes projects on educational and broader developmental outcomes for young musicians

1. Most young musicians involved in Exchanging Notes maintained high levels of attendance (>95%), with the median attendance being consistently higher than the national average for the secondary school population and mean average above that of 'persistent absentees'.

2. Two-thirds of the young musicians maintained or improved their attainment in English across the four years of Exchanging Notes and three-quarters of young musicians maintained or improved their attainment in Maths.

3. Exchanging Notes led to emotional, psychological and social wellbeing outcomes. The social outcomes were particularly marked - joining in with peers, making friends, developing teamwork and empathy. This in turn helped to develop group

identity, improving behaviour and motivation in the pursuit of high-quality musical outputs.

4. Strong, collaborative relationships were developed between teacher, music leader and young musicians which provided an environment conducive to educational exchange. This included listening to leaners, developing safe spaces for peer-to-peer interaction, agency, and independence. Where projects were too top-down, young people disengaged.

5. The relationship forged between the music leaders and the young people was central to the social outcomes. This was less hierarchical than a traditional teacher – student relationship. The music leader's focus on engagement, participation and enjoyment enabled them to build strong social connections with the young musicians and instilled in them a sense of self-belief.

6. Resilience was developed in the young musicians, giving them greater ability to 'bounce back' from difficult events and helping to future-proof their wellbeing.

7. The creative process was important in developing a collaborative and ethical learning environment. Songwriting in particular helped the young musicians to deeply engage with the musical development process at the same time as reflecting on their own life experiences.

8. The longitudinal element of the programme was key, giving time to build trust and overcome barriers to learning. Music leaders and young musicians perceived engagement at the end of the programme to be lower than at the beginning. This could be due to methodological limitations (baseline and follow-up perception surveys were used) or could point to difficulties in project-based work maintaining engagement over a long period of time.

9. Exchanging Notes helped to open the door for learning. Music was used as an engagement hook, and the strong social connections that were developed helped to re-engage young people in education, develop their confidence and self-belief, and create a more positive attitude to learning.

10. At the end of the programme the young musicians had developed new identities, as musicians, and had a strong sense of direction for their future.

11. At the end of the programme, many school staff had a different view of 'success' as they had witnessed outcomes unfolding over four years. This was less driven by data and attainment and more concerned with personal and social outcomes. This suggests that standard data collection undertaken by schools is obscuring young people's broader developmental outcomes (which music is so effective in bringing about).

12. There is evidence that the performativity agenda is exclusionary for the most vulnerable learners, as well as placing school curriculum music at risk. This presents a clear case for the introduction of broader school success indicators from policy-makers, together with the delivery of an ethical music curriculum focusing on social and emotional wellbeing.

Outcome statement 3: to embed learning and effective practice in host and partner organisations and share practice beyond the project

1. High quality partnership working led to the development of ethical and collaborative pedagogies in which teaching, learning, and musical activity were approached with humility. Ethical approaches required an understanding of the role of music in the lives of young people. In some instances the knowledge developed within the partnership extended to the wider school and music communities, and beyond.
2. Division of labour needs to be shared. A relational ontology values knowledge sharing through co-teaching and learning. In Exchanging Notes, this was shown by teachers, music leaders and young musicians sharing their expertise through meaningful interactions with one another.
3. The Youth Music Quality Framework helped teachers and music leaders reflect on their work, and on young musicians' progress. It fostered shared dialogues that enabled music leaders and teachers to focus on planning, and consider aspects of the music sessions.
4. Social, educational, and musical development occurred over time, and when all parties were joint stakeholders in the endeavour. Sustaining development, participation, and engagement over the much longer timeframe as found in Exchanging Notes required careful thinking, structured reflection, and honest long-term collaboration.
5. Successful projects impacted upon young musicians by developing them socially, emotionally and culturally, and extending learning beyond musical knowledge.

Outcome statement 4: to develop the educational practice of schools, non-formal music organisations, teachers and practitioners through an action research model

1. Being involved in action research facilitated an open-minded approach and reappraisal of the specific dilemmas the teachers and music leaders faced, as well as sharing the successes. Stakeholder involvement in action research developed:
   a. Reflexive approaches and reflection in and on action.
   b. Analysis of pedagogical and activity-based processes.
   c. The exploration of new discourses and theoretical underpinnings.
2. Projects were possibly most effective when there was a close linkage between music providers and schools working together, so that each came to understand more clearly the issues and advantages of other ways of working.

3. Variability of understandings of research were noted. This was evidenced by the ways in which the various stakeholders considered their positionality with regards to *research questions*, which were substantively different from answering questions for their funding reports. In Exchanging Notes we were keen to know about problems as well as successes, this is not necessarily something which historically has always been engaged with to its fullest extent.

Outcome statement 5: to test the validity of the Youth Music Quality Framework as a tool for increasing educational engagement of young musicians

The Exchanging Notes projects used the Youth Music Quality Framework as a way to explore session content, teaching and learning methods, music making, and the musical and social environment. The Quality Framework was effective in helping teachers and music leaders reflect on their work and on young musicians' progress. It nurtured shared dialogues that assisted the teachers and music leaders planning, and considered both musical and educational outcomes. It was effective as it:

1. Encouraged engagement between partners and critical conversations about practice, pedagogy and learning.
2. Kept teaching and learning young-people focused.
3. Offered a way to investigate pedagogy.
4. Explored what formal and non-formal approaches looked like in the classroom.
5. Observed wider social and cultural implications of the music making.

Conclusions

Exchanging Notes was a four-year action research programme pioneering new partnerships between schools and music education providers who normally work in out-of-school settings. The aim of the project was to ensure that young musicians at risk of low attainment, disengagement or educational exclusion achieved the best musical, educational and wider outcomes through participation in a pioneering music education project; and to develop new models of effective partnership working between schools and out-of-school music providers.

Music education is a complex activity that involves educating for knowledge, musical skills, social skills, understanding, attitudes, values, meanings, and many other aspects too. The Exchanging Notes projects have shown that multi-agency working beginning from music education can move into a wide variety of other social, educational, and personal development areas. In order to truly develop and transform practice in all of the key music education stakeholders – music providers, music education hubs, and music departments in schools – true partnership working needs both developing and nurturing.

One of the significant findings from the Exchanging Notes projects is that true partnership activity has real benefits as a way of working. These benefits accrue to all the stakeholders and participants; schools gain from working with community and industry-based partners, music providers gain from working with different aspects and phases of music provision, music hubs gain from working closely with both schools and music providers, and, most importantly, the children and young musicians involved benefit from joined-up provision that makes a difference not only to their music making and music creating, but, significantly, to the development of them as people, as useful and contributing members of society, and all of this starting from within their own originating communities.

A series of recommendations have been provided at the end of the report, designed to promote an ethnical approach to 21st century music education, maximising its impact for all involved.

EXCHANGING NOTES MODEL OF PARTNERSHIP

Exchanging Notes has offered the opportunity to identify factors that enhanced the quality of educational and musical outcomes, increased participation and learning and partnerhsip working. The model below allows us to look closely at the processes, structures, discourse and content within Exchanging Notes and depict core successes and challenges affecting musical and educational development. It is hoped that this model can be taken forwards and used to develop partnerships of the future.

Regular partnership planning and reflection using the Youth Music Quality Framework.

A truly collaborative approach between all partners, including young people. Use of an 'interlocutor' as a connecting mechanism between different parties.

Sustained music activity and partnership across multiple years.

Partnerships that are designed to empower both music teachers and music leaders.

Activity should develop young people as muscians, alongside wider cultural, social, emotional and educatonal outcomes.

Partnership should include the wider community. This includes teachers, young people, music leaders, the interlocutor, senior leadership teams, other professionals working with the young poeple, wider school community, the funders and researchers.

Action research cycles to encourage deep reflection and criticality.

A model of partnership in music education

Young peoples' voices are integral to partnership working, and the partnership is flexible enough to respond to young peoples interests, wants, and needs.

Partners who remain open to exploring new ways of thinking, doing, and being.

Ethical approaches and dialogue at the heart. This includes an understanding of each others' philosophies, pedagogical approaches and measures of success.

Partnerships need to plan for personal involvement, personal development, learning, and doing.

A clear understanding of the policies and practices surrounding each partners' work and the implications for musical knowledge, skills and understanding.

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, Youth Music published the *Communities of Music Education* research by Saunders and Welch. The aim of the research was to identify how formal and non-formal providers work together to ensure quality of access to music education for children and young musicians. Findings in the report suggested that there are distinct pedagogies employed in formal versus non-formal music education settings, and those children and young musicians' interpretations of the input, output and outcomes in those contexts differed. It was suggested that the translation between settings needed more in-depth exploration. How can these pedagogies join up and what is the impact of this for children and young musician's musical engagement? The published findings recommended that music education providers of all kinds should work together, to join up and co-ordinate their services to ensure that all children and young musicians could access high quality educational experiences and progress in music according to their talent and potential. Alongside this recommendation, the research report by Saunders and Welch (2012) outlined some implications for future investigations into partnership work with young musicians. A number of these implications have been addressed in the Exchanging Notes projects:

1. 'Further research would seek to increase the number of sessions observed and the variety of musical genres observed' (p.115). Exchanging Notes included a range of projects from diverse musical genres. Alongside this the research team observed over 61 of sessions over the four years.
2. 'The majority of observations made during this pilot study were all made in non-formal contexts. Further research would seek to complete further observations of the same practitioners also working in formal contexts so as to compare and contrast the ex- tent to which the strategies and techniques used are transferable across contexts' (p.115). From the outset this projected aimed to explore partnership work between the formal and non-formal contexts.
3. 'Further research would investigate the young musician's perception of and use of space within the case provider in relation to their musical identities and sense of self/social inclusion' (p115-116). The method chosen for this research took account of trying to capture young musicians' perceptions and explore the development of a musical identity and also their educational identity too. This is a theme that will run throughout this report.
4. The appropriateness of the terms 'formal' and 'non-formal' (p116). This is central to the Exchanging Notes work, although still problematic to investigate and disentangle.
5. And finally that '…partnerships are created and maintained between different organisations and music providers' (p.116). This was a central tenet of this work; however as this report will highlight, maintaining partnerships was not always possible.

The aim of Exchanging Notes

Exchanging Notes was a four-year action research programme pioneering new partnerships between schools and music education providers who normally work in out-of-school settings. The main aim of the project was:

- To ensure that young musicians at risk of low attainment, disengagement or educational exclusion achieve the best musical, educational and wider outcomes through participation in a pioneering music education project; and to develop new models of effective partnership-working between schools and out-of-school music providers.

The aim of the research was to evaluate the effects of Exchanging Notes on the musical and broader educational outcomes for the young people involved through a longitudinal action research study.

Intended outcomes

Aligned to the aim of the project were four intended outcomes:
- To improve the quality and standards of music delivery for children and young musicians.
- To embed learning and effective practice in host and partner organisations and share practice beyond the project.
- To improve young musicians' educational and wider developmental outcomes.
- To develop the creative, expressive and musical ability of young musicians.

Factors that place young musicians at risk of educational exclusion or disengagement might include (but are not limited to) ethnicity, gender, socio-economic background, special educational needs, profound or multiple learning difficulties, disability, family difficulties, or living in care.

The young musicians who took part in each partnership were involved in sustained project activity from September 2014 through to July 2018. Delivery took place in schools or a combination of in-school and out-of-school settings. A key aspect of the project was to explore provision and the development of pedagogical approaches that complement existing school music education. Exchanging Notes began with 10 project partnerships. During the course of the four years of the activity and research, three projects discontinued their partnership, this was due to a variety of factors which will be explored in this report. Loss of three projects is an indicator of both the not-insignificant challenges that the Exchanging Notes projects faced, and also their deep reflection in the action research approach, meaning that projects and Youth Music became aware of the challenges, problematised them and reflected on them for future practice.

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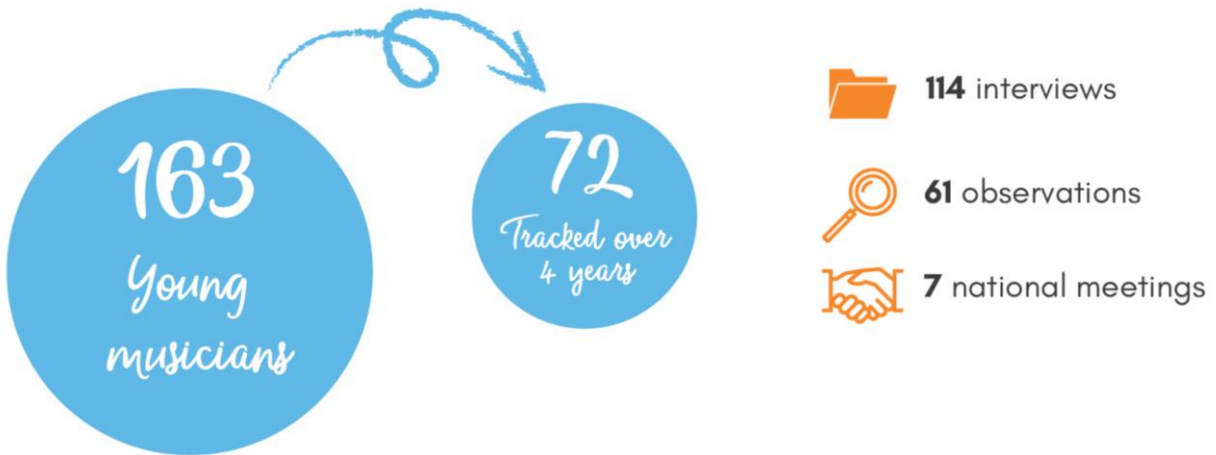Researchers from Birmingham City University were appointed to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Exchanging Notes programme over the four years of its duration.

KEY DATA

7 OUT OF 10 projects completed 4 years delivery

163 Young musicians

72 Tracked over 4 years

114 interviews

61 observations

7 national meetings

23 MUSIC TEACHERS

46 MUSIC LEADERS

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The research team worked towards five intended outcomes. These complemented the intended outcomes of the Exchanging Notes projects, and also examined the pedagogical impact of the overall programme.

1) To improve the quality and standards of music delivery for children and young musicians
2) To embed learning and effective practice in host and partner organisations and share practice beyond the project
3) To develop the educational practice of schools, non-formal music organisations, teachers and practitioners through an action research model
4) To evidence the impact of the Exchanging Notes projects on educational and broader developmental outcomes for young musicians
5) To test the validity of a Youth Music pedagogical quality framework as a tool for increasing educational engagement of young musicians

Action research

The Exchanging Notes projects were part of an ongoing action research cycle for the four years, whereby the findings from the research fed into the planning and delivery of the programmes. This feedback was disseminated via two events per year (held at Birmingham City University) for all Exchanging Notes partners, who were given the opportunity to share their experiences of the programme. This was often supported by external speakers, who shared their knowledge with the aim of encouraging projects to think beyond their practice, question approaches and consider the wider impacts of their work. The choice of an action research cycle posed an interesting and worthwhile methodological variant of the classic action research spiral (Carr & Kemmis, 1986), in that a mixed methodological approach was utilised, and results from the evaluation were fed back into the action research spiral and into project practices.

Participants

As this was a longitudinal study, aimed at exploring the impact of the programme on the participants' musical, educational and partnership working over four years, a distinct cohort was recruited. This included:

- Over 163 young musicians took part in Exchanging Notes activities.
- 69 link music leaders and teachers took part in activities over the four years.
- 7 head teachers
- 2 music hub leaders

Methods

Evaluation consisted of a mixed method research design, which involved both qualitative and quantitative methods, allowing a wide range of data to be collected and analysed. This was designed purposefully with a view to enabling the resulting data and evaluation to be as

valid and reliable as possible, given the diversity of sources of information about projects and their impact. Inclusion was important for this study; therefore data collection methods were adapted for some school contexts taking account of the range of communication and learning needs of the young musicians involved. These were co-designed with schools and music leaders to ensure that the data collection tools met the needs of the young musicians.

Evaluation of the experiences of young musicians

The views of the young musicians involved in this project were central to the evaluation of its efficacy and outcomes. These young musicians[1] were closest to the teaching and learning that took place in the sessions, therefore uniquely placed to offer insights and personal reflections on their developing identity as young musicians. They participated in:

1. Perception surveys – young musicians were asked to complete short Likert scale questionnaires at the end of each year, asking for their perceptions of the Exchanging Notes programme, their educational and social progression. These surveys also offered free text space where participants could further reflect on their learning, experiences and how the programme could be improved. The use of the Likert scales allowed exploration of an individual's response, alongside a collated opinion sampling of the whole cohort.
2. Interviews – a sub-sample of the young musicians were interviewed at the end of each year, to reflect on learning and explore impact. These interviews were recorded and transcribed. The purpose of these interviews was to gather in-depth data on the perceived effectiveness of Exchanging Notes sessions, and to consider the extent to which these perceptions had shifted over the four years.

Evaluation of delivery methods, pedagogy and partnership

1. Session observations – each project had at least one session per term observed during the four years and evaluated with reference to the Youth Music Quality Framework.
2. Reflective interviews - each lesson observation was followed by a semi-structured interview with the music leader and/or teacher in the setting about the session's strengths and weaknesses and potential for further improvements. Broader issues concerning delivery of the programme and the young musician's learning and engagement were also covered. These interviews were all recorded and transcribed.

Evaluation of young musicians' engagement with education and wider developmental outcomes

1. Measures of engagement – link teachers and music leaders were asked to complete two perception surveys regarding the engagement and wider

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[1] We are calling them "young musicians" in order to be as inclusive as possible. It is possible that at the outset of this work they may not have self-identified using that terminology.

educational development of each young musician participating in the programme each year. For the measures of engagement we used Likert scales to measure music leader and music teacher attitudes to particular questions or statements. These questions remained the same throughout the project, allowing us to explore changes and fluctuations as well as an individual response alongside a collated opinion of the whole cohort.

2. Analysis of schools' statistical data – schools were asked to provide statistical data about a young musician's engagement with education and wider developmental outcomes at the outset and during the evaluation. This included:

- Attendance data, which we asked for twice each academic year.
- English and Numeracy attainment and progression. In order to address consistency we asked teachers and schools to define whether a young musician was above, at, or below age-related expectation, based on professional judgement and drawing on teacher assessment. We asked for this data twice each academic year, at the same time as the attendance data was collected. We recognised the various modes in which assessment data was collected by schools and after consultation with projects we decided that this approach would allow all projects to track progression in the same manner and simultaneously. The intention was to investigate whether the young musicians were, at, above, or below targets.

Data Analysis

As we have seen, the perception and measure of engagement surveys consisted largely of Likert scale questions which were collated and compared. Cross references were made between perception surveys and the measures of engagement, to highlight areas of confluence and disparity. The interview data collected was analysed from an interpretivist perspective which recognised the subjective nature of the responses. The interviews were transcribed and coded, during which process textual data were disassembled, broken apart into lines, paragraphs or sections, then rearranged, through coding to produce a new understanding that explored 'similarities, differences, across a number of different cases' (Ezzy 2002:94). Following this data analysis, further reflection, categorisation and subcategorisation took place where necessary (Cohen at al., 2011). The session observations were evaluated using the Youth Music Quality Framework and examples of excellent, effective practice were identified. In a similar fashion to the interviews they were coded for analysis to explore themes.

A key objective of Exchanging Notes was to better understand the broader educational impact of the involvement of 'at risk' young musicians in musical activities. These measures were chosen to reduce any additional burden on school data teams by using data already collected by schools for national statistics. Given the extent of changes in the UK education climate, these were felt to be relatively stable measures across the timeframe of the project (Connelly et al., 2016). Obtaining complete data from all schools proved to be challenging, and thus the statistical analysis presented in Section 8 is based on the available data. As the collected attainment data was for Maths and English only, these function as proxy indicators for changes in attainment in core subject groups. Given the patchy nature of some of the

data, it is not possible to present a statistical analysis that incorporates all of the young musicians. Instead, analysis falls into two categories: comparison of beginning and end points; and longitudinal data. Combined, these two analyses give an insight into the distance travelled for a significant portion of those involved in Exchanging Notes.

Ethics

The research was approved by Birmingham City University Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences Ethics Committee. The evaluation was conducted in adherence with the British Education Research Association guidelines (BERA 2014, 2018) on ethical practice in educational research. Participants were informed of the research objectives and aims via a consent and information form. The research respected autonomy, and the consent form noted that participants could withdraw from the evaluation at any time. The responses were carefully monitored so that any issues relating to diversity and equality could be addressed, however none were identified. All participant names have been anonymised and changed in this evaluation report and any subsequent and other reporting of the evaluation.

The Steering Committee

A steering committee was established to act as a 'critical friend' to the research team. The committee comprised colleagues who had a range of expertise in music, and music education. The committee members were:

- Emerita Professor Helen Coll: Birmingham City University
- Emerita Professor Janet Hoskyns: Birmingham City University
- John Clemson: formerly head of Birmingham Music Service.
- Dr Anthony Anderson: former head of music in a West Midlands school and now Research Assistant Birmingham City University
- Gary Spruce: an academic and Course Leader for Secondary Music at Birmingham City University
- Nancy Evans: Director of Learning & Participation at Birmingham Contemporary Music Group.

The committee convened twice per year to discuss how the research team were meeting the project aims and outcomes, the methodological and analytical approaches as well as provide expert advice. Their insights were invaluable to the research team. The research team would like to offer our thanks for their time, reflections and evaluation.

CHAPTER 1: THE POLICY AND PRACTICE BACKDROP OF EXCHANGING NOTES

Music education in England has been in state of flux for a number of years. This section considers the policy and policy into practice background against which Exchanging Notes came into being, and has been operating throughout its four-year lifespan.

Back in 2003 Hargreaves *et al* wrote of the "distinction between 'general' and 'specialist' music education" (Hargreaves et al., 2003 :155). This distinction is still visible in some aspects of music education, indeed, one of the complexities of music education in England is the range of ways in which it appears. There is curriculum music in school, specialist instrumental and vocal tuition delivered by visiting teachers, music organisations providing a range of activities on a targeted basis, from Opera to grime, and an army of independent music teachers who teach various aspects of music, from classical piano, to turntablism in various domestic and independent settings. In terms of the workforce, there are Music Hubs, of which there are over 120, operating with funding from central government, delivering some of the provision; classroom music teachers, which DfE figures record that in 2016 these numbered 6700, independent teachers already described for which we have little by way of reliable statistical information, and music organisations, again for which we have no reliable statistics on numbers. As the Henley review observed back in 2011, "the music education world is fragmented…" (Henley, 2011 :30). In many ways this can be said to be still the case, and this report tries to pick its way through some of these complexities.

The policy context for music education in England is equally fragmentary. For schools, the principal policy driver is the National Curriculum. The original National Curriculum was set up in 1988 by the then Conservative Government led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. It included details of all subjects that had to be taught and learned in primary and secondary schools (Graham & Tytler, 1993). Since then a number of reforms to the National Curriculum have taken place, with the current National Curriculum entering statute in 2013 (Department for Education, 2013). The main focus of the Exchanging Notes work reported on here took place with secondary school age students, which means these were children and young people in key stages 3 and 4 aged between 11 and 14. In the National Curriculum music is a compulsory subject. However, over time the National Curriculum itself has become increasingly less specific and prescriptive. Indeed, it does not now need to be applied in academies and free schools at all. A significant proportion of secondary schools in England are now academies:

> Nearly a third of publicly-funded schools in England are now 'academies' (22 per cent of primary and 68 per cent of secondary schools), rather than 'maintained by' local authorities.

> Academies are owned and run by not-for-profit private trusts registered with Companies House, subject to company law and some statutory education law, and controlled and funded directly by central government by contract, rather than governed by statutory education law as for maintained schools.

> Although some trusts run 'stand-alone' academies, most academies are now in 'chains'. In 2017, 73 per cent of academies were run by Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs). (West & Wolfe, 2018 :4)

Even without this shift away from local authority schools, the National Curriculum for music at KS3 is currently so slight that it can be quoted in full:

> Pupils should build on their previous knowledge and skills through performing, composing and listening. They should develop their vocal and/or instrumental fluency, accuracy and expressiveness; and understand musical structures, styles, genres and traditions, identifying the expressive use of musical dimensions. They should listen with increasing discrimination and awareness to inform their practice as musicians. They should use technologies appropriately and appreciate and understand a wide range of musical contexts and styles.

Pupils should be taught to:

- Play and perform confidently in a range of solo and ensemble contexts using their voice, playing instruments musically, fluently and with accuracy and expression
- Improvise and compose; and extend and develop musical ideas by drawing on a range of musical structures, styles, genres and traditions
- Use staff and other relevant notations appropriately and accurately in a range of musical styles, genres and traditions
- Identify and use the inter-related dimensions of music expressively and with increasing sophistication, including use of tonalities, different types of scales and other musical devices
- Listen with increasing discrimination to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians
- Develop a deepening understanding of the music that they perform and to which they listen, and its history.

(Department for Education, 2013 :219)

The National Curriculum (NC) at KS3 does not delineate or imply any form of pedagogy to go with the range of content that is outlined, neither does it specify how the curriculum should be organised. As a result, a number of different ways of curriculum organisation and teaching its various aspects have emerged.

One of the issues for music education during the time-period of this research, not only those involved in Exchanging Notes, but all schools, was that the position of music as a timetabled school subject came under increasing threat. This has implications for music not only as a subject area, but also more broadly, as with a diminished music provision, or in some cases with it being axed entirely, there is no reason for the school to continue to employ a specialist music teacher. This has a knock-on effect on the ways in which that school will no longer be able to support the whole gamut of musical activities, both in and outside of the classroom, as well as out in the wider community, which that music teacher would have been able to provide. This matters:

> …a shrinking of school-based music opportunities is significant. Music teachers and music rooms are an essential part of school life (Youth Music & Ipsos MORI, 2019 p.12)

This Exchanging Notes report reports on that essential nature throughout, showing that the music projects involved have complex and far-reaching implications for the children and young people involved.

The reasons for the jeopardised place of music in the curriculum has come from a number of quarters, but significant amongst these is the role of the EBacc as a school measurement:

The focus on the narrow range of EBacc subjects has already reduced, and in some cases removed, the possibilities for students to study music as part of their secondary school curriculum. Without reform of the accountability measures and inspection protocols, the place of sustained music education in the school curriculum and as an option at Key Stages 4 and 5 will continue to decline. (All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education et al., 2019 p.14). Indeed, this decline in GCSE music provision, mentioned elsewhere in this Exchanging Notes report, is already having a significant impact on the uptake of music as a GCSE subject by KS4 pupils:

> …figures from the Department for Education show a significant fall in the number and proportion of pupils taking GCSE music. In 2014/15, prior to the re-introduction of the EBacc in 2015 there were 43,600 entries for GCSE music. In 2017/18 there were 34,708 entries. This is a reduction in GCSE music entries of more than 20% since 2014/2015. When adjusted for cohort size, again using the DfE figures, the fall in GCSE entries since 2014/2015 is 16.66%. (All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education et al., 2019 p.15)

With fewer pupils taking music, as we have commented above, the need for music teachers also reduces:

> Classroom teachers in primary and secondary schools have seen music squeezed within their schools. Despite music being a core subject of the national curriculum, the majority of teachers reported that it receives less time within the curriculum, is taught by a range of non-specialist teachers, and suffering from a 'league table' approach to subjects in the secondary curriculum as a result of decisions made by senior leadership teams in response to the government's accountability measures. (Savage & Barnard, 2019 p.3) P3 MU report

Music matters. It occupies a significant place not only as subject in and out of school, but in the identity formation and development of young people. Exchanging Notes shows us the value of music as so much more than a timetabled slot in a busy school curriculum, it is a way to engage, motivate, and reach out to young people. The ways of working of the projects discussed have made real differences to the lives of the young musicians involved, and it is to be hoped that adopting the practices outlined in this report can help address the decline in music provision more widely.

For instrumental music teaching, the principal policy driver has been the National Plan for Music Education (DfE & DCMS, 2011). This in turn emerged from a review undertaken for the Government by Darren Henley (already referenced above), and usually referred to as *The Henley Review* (Henley, 2011). The report had a lot to say about provision of music education in England, and one of the recommendations was the establishment of music hubs:

> Schools, Local Authority Music Services, Arts Council England client organisations and other recognised delivery organisations should work together to create Music Education Hubs in each Local Authority area. These Hubs should receive ring-fenced central government funding to deliver Music Education in each area following an open, advertised bidding process. It is anticipated that there would be a lead organisation (which is likely to be a Local Authority Music Service in almost all cases, but in some cases could also be an Arts Council England client organisation or other recognised delivery organisation). This lead organisation would be directly funded to undertake the leading role in each Hub. (Henley, 2011 :18)

The National Plan for Music Education (NPME) received the backing of the Government of the time in its response:

> Schools cannot be expected to do all that is required of music education alone: a music infrastructure that transcends schools is necessary.

> Hubs will augment and support music teaching in schools so that more children experience a combination of classroom teaching, instrumental and vocal tuition and input from professional musicians. Hubs will be able to deliver an offer to children that reaches beyond school boundaries and draws in the expertise of a range of education and arts partners, such as local orchestras, ensembles, charities and other music groups. (DfE & DCMS, 2011 :10)

As a result of the NPME, 123 Music Education Hubs across England were set up, and they began to be operationalised in 2012 (Fautley & Whittaker, 2017).

The NPME has the status of a policy paper, it has been significant in altering the landscape of music education in England, not only by the establishment of the aforementioned music hubs, but by working to join up provision across a range of music making and music learning aspects of provision. Indeed, the plan states:

> The best model for Music Education includes a combination of classroom teaching, instrumental and vocal music tuition and input from professional musicians. Partnership between organisations is the key to success. (DfE & DCMS, 2011 :13)

To which the Government's response was:

> No single organisation can hope to provide the full range of tuition and experiences that constitute a sound music education. (DfE, 2011 :5)

One of the stated purposes of the NPME was to address what was seen as the problem of variability of music education offers across the Country:

> Music education is patchy across the country and change is needed to ensure all pupils receive a high quality music education (DfE & DCMS, 2011 :7)

Addressing this patchiness has proved to be an ongoing issue, even with the NPME being operationalised. Indeed, Spruce has observed that there are problems lying at the very heart of the NPME

> The NPME thus privileges and promotes a relatively limited way of musical knowing, rather than the multiple ways of knowing which characterise inclusive music education practices. Furthermore, this particular way of musical knowing, rooted in

the practices of western classical music, does not readily allow for the 'the involvement of individuals in constructing process, content and decision making' (Spruce, 2012) or the deployment of informal learning pedagogies (Spruce, 2013 :29)

The NPME also has a singular view of what progression in music education entails, as is shown in this diagram from it:

First access: music education to all pupils through schools and whole class teaching programmes by music education hubs (Ages 5-14)

Most pupils continue interest beyond classroom in & out of school: large/small groups; 1:1 tuition; ensembles (Ages 8-19)

Some pupils show talent and receive specialist small group / 1:1 tuition / ensembles (Ages 8-19)

A few are exceptionally talented & enter MDS / NYMO (Ages 8-19)

Progression in music education. Source: (DfE & DCMS, 2011 :18)

These are issues which are picked up elsewhere in this report, but for the moment it is important to note this privileging of western classical music.

A further policy driver, albeit an often unintentional one, is the way in which assessment backwash can influence teaching and learning. This is where teaching to the test at KS4 has a backward facing effect on what is taught and learned at KS3.

> "State standards reflect value choices about what is most important for students to learn and what constitutes mastery of that knowledge. But different constituencies have different ideas..." (Colwell, 2007 :6). This is an important observation, and is key to understanding different local and national contexts concerning assessment. What this can result in is known as "teaching to the test," and occurs where high-stakes assessment systems place considerable weight on assessment results. This can result in a narrowing of the curriculum, and of learning opportunities, as teaching becomes focused solely on final assessment; this is known as "assessment backwash." (Fautley & Colwell, 2012 :488)

Issues of assessment backwash are not only relevant to the musical teaching and learning taking place in school classroom - instrumental[2] music education also needs to take this into account.

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[2] Whenever 'instrumental' is mentioned in this report in terms of instrumental teaching and learning, this should be taken to include vocal tuition and singing.

Once of the significant aspects of instrumental music delivery in schools that came about nationally as a direct result of the NPME was the Whole Class Ensemble Tuition (WCET) programme, also known as 'First Access', or Wider 'Opportunities'. This was a result of the then Secretary of State for Education and Skills stating that that "Over time, all pupils in primary schools who wish to, will have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument" (Ofsted, 2004 :4). The resulting programme and policy that arose from this came to be known as the "Wider Opportunities Pledge". Funding for this came directly from central government, and in a DCSF circular of c.2008 it was observed that:

> Nationally, by 2011, over 2 million pupils will have had the opportunity to learn a musical instrument for free, normally in a large group or whole class setting, for at least one year. (This represents over 80% of the Key Stage 2 population). By 2011 programmes will be in place that will result in every child having this opportunity during their time at primary school. (DCSF, no date)

This programme, operating mostly in year 4 of KS2 in primary schools, and delivered by partnerships of music hubs and schools (Fautley et al., 2017) means that many of the Exchanging Notes cohort may have had experiences of instrumental music learning at a younger age. The reason for citing it here is that it is from WCET, and then moving into group instrumental music learning, and one-to-one individual music lessons that we see the assessment backwash effect working. Both ABRSM and Trinity College London provide a range of pathways leading into their graded music examination system. These pathways affect what is taught, as the syllabus for graded music exams becomes, in some cases, the curriculum for instrumental music.

Away from the National Curriculum and graded music examinations, Trinity College London is also involved with accrediting Arts Award, which:

> … is designed to support children and young people to develop their skills and interests in the arts, building their knowledge as they progress through the levels. Young people can start at any level and advisers determine the best starting point by considering the needs and abilities of their group. Arts Award's flexible framework means young people can work across a wide range of arts, cultural and heritage activities and projects, including creative and technical roles. (Trinity/ACE 2018)

Arts Award is often taken by children and young people involved in music education (and other arts) projects organised by music organisations separate from schools and Music Hubs, and featured in some Exchanging Notes projects too. Here the policy dimension is much thinner than in the other areas described. There is little by way of regulatory and policy requirements in this sector, other than the need for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) arrangements for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Into this complexity of policy and practice, Youth Music was established in 1999, with funding for three years in the first instance from the National Lottery administered by Arts Council England (www.youthmusic.org.uk/20-years-life-changing-music-making). It had a clear remit:

> The driving force for the creation of Youth Music was that young people – with their diverse backgrounds, interests and tastes in music – weren't being fully catered for within the music education sector. (www.youthmusic.org.uk/youth-music-20)

What is distinctive about Youth Music is its approach to working to unite music education across the piece, "inclusive practice rather than inclusion projects - embedded across all aspects of music education" (www.youthmusic.org.uk/youth-music-20), rather than the separated aspects:

> …formal (describing music in the classroom, instrument lessons from peripatetic teachers, traditional local youth orchestras and the like), informal (young people forming bands, teaching themselves, or learning from friends and family) and non-formal (the kind of community-based youth-led work that Youth Music predominantly funded). It [these labels] might have helped in giving definitions for all the different work going on but boy was it confusing. And it reinforced differences and competition rather than similarities and collaboration.
> (https://www.youthmusic.org.uk/youth-music-20)

Music organisations, such as those involved in Exchanging Notes, are often charitable ventures, set up to work with children and young people to further musical, artistic, and social aspects in their lives. They operate in a policy area which lies between the formalised, regulated world of schools, and the largely unregulated world of the private music teacher. Measures of success for these organisations are therefore very different to that of schools.

The ways in which Youth Music grantholders report on their funded work is through an outcomes approach, whereby organisations set musical, social, or personal outcomes, and then report on these at the end of the grant. There are some important aspects of this:

1. They are self-evaluating the impact of their work
2. There is rarely a formal assessment framework in place
3. Whilst indicators exist, the notions of progress and progression are seldom mapped out in detail
4. Often when working with children and young people facing challenging circumstances, the main priority, certainly in early stages, is engagement

Each of these carries its own associated issues. Self-assessment of outcomes is notoriously problematic, an example being Kenny and Christophersen's (2018) notion of "victory narratives", which is discussed elsewhere in this report. Assessment and progression are complex and beyond the scope of what can be relatively small-scale intervention projects; indeed, for many musical styles that Youth Music projects will be working with there are no clear ideas of either learning progression, or of progression routes. What progression might look like in dubstep or grime, for example, are not matters which formalised music learning routes discussed above have considered. For children and young people at risk of exclusion, as was the case in Exchanging Notes, simply getting them 'through the door' could be a major achievement, and so the use of what would feel like 'school-y' progression frameworks would not be appropriate.

This is *not* to say that music organisations do not engage in reflection, often complex and structured reflection, and a willingness to develop. All of the music organisations involved in Exchanging Notes were reflective, all were keen to work with the research team to better understand what they were doing and how to improve, and the notion of a mutually self-improving system was a part of what they did in their everyday work. Again, this is not to say that regulatory frameworks are absent from the work of these organisations, far from it. The funder, Youth Music, required regular reporting of outcomes, plans, logistical matters,

financial reporting, and other considerations. Significant among these for this current research was the Youth Music Quality Framework (YMQF) which is described elsewhere in this report.

The way in which discussion of the YMQF is relevant in this section on policy should be clear when taking Schmidt and Colwell's definition into consideration:

> Policy can be formal or informal, obvious or subtle, soft or hard, implicit or explicit…Policy can consist of rules and regulations, legitimized because of custom or historical precedent, but it can also consist of ideas whose adoption and implementation can lead to profound outcomes…As a field of action, policy is a key pathway through which varied and often divergent educational ideas become established in practice. In other words policy is the realm in which educational vision is actualized. (Schmidt & Colwell, 2017 :1-2)

The YMQF clearly fits with this definition, it has certainly had an influence in the Exchanging Notes projects on the ways 'in which educational vision is actualized' as Schmidt and Colwell describe. But there is more to it than this alone. Some policy frameworks in education exist as tools and mechanisms of compliance, the intentionality behind YMQF is *making a difference*, and it is this aspect of both its conceptualisation and implementation which has proved really helpful, not only in thinking about the projects, but also in focussing attention in discussions. This is because it is an example of a policy framework that carries within itself the mechanism of utility; it is the framework itself which guides the ways in which it used, but it also enables, facilitates, and, importantly *frames* reflective discussions concerning the nature of what is, and has been taking place. In this sense the YMQF can be considered one of the key policy informants in the Exchanging Notes ecosystem as a whole.

The music organisations working on the Exchanging Notes projects had been through a rigorous application process with Youth Music, had committed to being part of action-research project, and were keen to be involved in working in the ways described throughout this report. To date, government policy has not exerted significant influence on the pedagogic practices of the music organisations typical of Exchanging Notes, which was a driver for the development of the YMQF. It is to areas of pedagogy, teaching and learning, and music making, that this report now turns.

CHAPTER 2: THE MUSIC EDUCATION CONTEXT

This section focuses on the music education context more specifically in terms of pedagogies, forms of practice, teaching, learning, and music making, and the various ways in which they are organised in England at the time of writing.

One of the key aspects of the way in which Exchanging Notes was set up originally was to explore the relationships and interrelationships in and between various typologies of music education as it happens in schools and classrooms, and those used by non-school based music education providers. These were set out in the *Exchanging Notes Delivery Card*:

> …to explore how the distinctive educational approaches used in in-school and out of school settings may be combined and built upon to bring about extended benefits to young people at risk of low attainment, disengagement or educational exclusion (ibid, p1)

> To develop sustainable partnerships between schools and out of school music education providers which share a collective understanding of quality music education practice and provide models of this that can be replicated (ibid, p2)

In order to unpick the ways in which this was operationalised in the various Exchanging Notes projects, terminologies, concepts, and constructs involved need to be explained.

What is entailed with school music lessons and out of school music providers is a key academic focus areas in music education today, not just in England and the UK, but internationally too. In many ways the work investigated in Exchanging Notes forms a microcosm of global discussions concerning the form, nature – and importantly – the *purposes* of music education in England currently.

The dominance of western classical music

As has been noted in the previous section, there is no set pedagogy or content for KS3 music in schools. We know that classroom music teachers tend to teach KS3 using a topic or thematic basis, with the topics that are taught and learned occupying specific lengths of time, often half-termly (Fautley, 2016a; Fautley et al., 2018). One of the issues which commentators have observed with regard to the National Curriculum is its apparent emphasis on western classical music, and of the 'canon' of western classical music. As Bate observes:

> …references to the 'canon' and 'great' composers and musicians in the National Curriculum inevitably suggest the presence of an underlying set of assumptions and ideologies. The concept of the canon embodies a number of philosophical and ideological approaches from the 19th- and 20th-century western classical tradition: principally those of the work-concept, aestheticism, transcendentalism, and formalism. Such ideologies have resulted in the attribution of musical value to a small, select number of certain 'great works': works made timeless through stripping them of their original, local, and extra-musical meanings to become accepted as ahistoric, transcendental masterpieces… Throughout the 2014 curriculum there is an emphasis on this concept of 'the best' as defined by the western classical tradition: 'the best in the musical canon', 'the works of the great composers and musicians', and 'high-quality live and recorded music'... Pupils are expected to listen to 'the best'

music with a sense of discrimination, rather than listening to a wide variety of music and developing their own ability 'to make judgements about musical quality', as suggested in the pre-2014 guidelines... The canon is presented as a single, static object with which pupils are to engage in order to learn how to discriminate musical value. As throughout its history, the canon's association with 'the best' and most valuable musical works suggests its manipulation to serve social and political ends; presented as an authoritative form of knowledge, it supports the assertion of cultural supremacy by those in power ... Rather than promoting emancipatory knowledge and encouraging pupils to learn to make their own judgements about musical quality, the emphasis upon the canon expects them to accept a pre-existing social construct of musical value. (Bate, 2018 :6)

This concentration on the western classical canon means that for many classroom schemes of work there is a tendency towards working with its styles and genres. We know that there are issues with having western classical music as the centre of attention in schools, this is especially notable at GCSE level:

Despite the attempts of the education establishment to devise a syllabus which presents music as a subject for all, it is in fact serving few. It is perceived by many pupils as being elitist and by others as being insufficiently academically challenging. This leads to the question of whether GCSE serves pupils from all musical backgrounds. The answer would appear to be that it does not. A large number of pupils considered that the course was too classically based and did not include sufficient study of popular music. Pupils also perceived themselves to be at a disadvantage if they did not read notation fluently, as many instrumentalists from a rock, pop or jazz background do not. (Wright, 2002: 240)

We also know that backwash from the impending nature of what will be studied at GCSE affects curriculum construction back in KS3, which means that western classical music affects what it taught and learned here too. But it is not just that Western Classical music exerts undue influence upon the curriculum, it is the tacit assumptions of value which go with this view. As Spruce and Matthews (2012: 119) argue:

…despite the introduction into the music curriculum of music from a much broader range of musical traditions and cultures than hitherto (including musical traditions and cultures from within our own society) the musical values inherent in western art music continue to be promoted as self-evidently defining 'good' music and consequently 'high status' musical knowledge, resulting in the alienation of many pupils from the formal curriculum … despite the introduction into the curriculum of music from other traditions and cultures to try to address such alienation – the way in which these musics are typically presented sustains and reinforces rather than counters the western art music rooted conception of high status music knowledge.

This is important in the ways music *in schools* is thought about, it is 'high status musical knowledge' which tends to be at the centre of the music curriculum. This can alienate those students who self-identify with a whole raft of other styles, types, and genres of music:

Popular forms of music play a central role in the lifestyle of most teenagers, and indeed constitute a 'badge of identity' for many of them … Furthermore, positive

attitudes to pop music may also be accompanied by lack of interest in 'traditional' forms of music such as 'classical' music (Lamont et al., 2003) :230)

This is significant in the ways in which many of the young people in Exchanging Notes thought about their own musical identities. After all, as Schippers notes,

> While western classical music practice has served as almost the single reference point for the practice and thought on organised music transmission and learning in many countries across the world, and certainly in the international dialogue on formal music education, contemporary societies are faced with cultural diversity in all aspects of life and art (Schippers, 2004) p199

Alienation from the 'canon' of great musical works need not just happen with those who wish to pursue other sorts of music, but can also occur within the western classical canon. Whittaker (2019) has pointed out the lack of female composers in A-level music syllabi, this is also the case with many graded music examinations.

The development of student-centred pedagogies

At the same time as noting this dominance of western classical music, there is also an important movement in music education towards informal and non-formal styles of music teaching and learning with school music classrooms. In England, this approach has been spearheaded by the work of the 'Musical Futures' programme, arising from the work of Lucy Green (2002; 2008). This is characterised by a student centred pedagogic interaction:

> Musical Futures is a tried-and-tested yet innovative approach to music learning, based on a pedagogy that is driven by the musical culture of the participants. It brings real-world music learning processes into schools and other formal settings, engaging and inspiring all and promoting inclusion and diversity…Our approach emphasises real-world learning, using methods that are employed by popular musicians and community practitioners outside of formal settings. Musical Futures is about an approach to learning, rather than a specific musical style genre, meaning that it is sustainable and transferable to a range of learning contexts, both within the UK and overseas. (https://www.musicalfutures.org/who-we-are)

This student-centred pedagogy is an important component of what is often meant by informal or non-formal pedagogy, and as one of the key factors in Exchanging Notes was the exploration of the learning that can take place between formal and non-formal situations, this is important to think about. Describing how non-formal pedagogy had been incorporated into her classroom, one teacher described what took place:

> Rather than choose the material to be studied, break it down then deliver the skills needed to achieve set attainment outcomes, informal learning practitioners support personalised learning objectives set by each individual learner themselves, and in the initial informal learning module (Green, 2008) learners even choose the material they wish to study. We facilitate the skills and understanding that learners identify they need to move forward, rather than impose a 'one-size-fits-all' set of skills for everyone. We recognise that progress occurs in peaks and troughs even within a single lesson and most importantly we allow space and time for learners to meet their objectives through the integration of listening, performing, composing and

improvising within a single lesson whilst allowing self-selected friendship groups. Therefore, rather than devising a plan for the learning that will take place in a lesson, teachers respond as learning unfolds. (Gower, 2012)

This presents an important distinction, that of planning for learning, which of necessity takes place in advance of lessons and learning encounters, and planning by knowing that the teacher or session leader will need to react 'as learning unfolds'. This distinction is explored in greater detail by Folkestad:

> …the basic criteria of formal and informal learning situations found in the literature might be briefly described as follows.
>
> In the formal learning situation, the activity is sequenced beforehand. That is, it is arranged and put into order by a 'teacher', who also leads and carries out the activity. However, that person does not necessarily have to be a teacher in the formal sense, but a person who takes on the task of organising and leading the learning activity, as, for example, one of the musicians in a musical ensemble. Moreover, this position does not have to be static, although this is commonly the case.
>
> The informal learning situation is not sequenced beforehand; the activity steers the way of working/playing/composing, and the process proceeds by the interaction of the participants in the activity. It is also described as 'self-chosen and voluntary learning'. However, as learning can never be 'voluntary' in its true sense – it takes place whether or not it is intended or wanted, as seen from the perspective presented in the opening of this article, what is in view may rather be described as self-chosen and voluntary activity. (Folkestad, 2006 :141)

However, what is also useful to note, and is a point made forcefully by Folkestad, is that there is not a simplistic division of pedagogies along these lines:

Classical = Formal

Pop = Informal

In their comprehensive review "communities of music education" written by Saunders and Welch for Youth Music in 2012, the authors noted that:

> Young people access aspects of their musical educations in a variety of ways. For the purpose of this research, differences in music education provision in formal (predominantly classroom based in school contexts through the delivery of the National Curriculum) and non-formal opportunities are outlined … Traditionally, the categorisation of music education opportunities can be seen to exist on two axes; (i) formal vs. non- formal, and (ii) statutory vs. non statutory. In addition, activities may adopt a generalist or specialist approach … However, the established dichotomy between formal and non-formal learning is increasingly less distinct. (Saunders & Welch, 2012 :15)

Considerations of what counts as formal, and what as informal or non-formal, have become blurred considerably in music education in recent years. Indeed, in the Exchanging Notes schools a wide variety of pedagogies and learning were observed, both from classroom teachers and music leaders.

Increased regulation in schools – the 'performativity agenda'

Although the observation made by Saunders and Welch can be still held to be the case, what has occurred in the intervening years can be characterised in two main ways:

1. The performativity agenda has tightened its grip
2. Music Education's position in schools has become increasingly endangered

These two issues have had – and are continuing to have – an effect on the ways in which classroom music teachers in secondary schools both conceptualise and operationalise their day-to-day practices. Performativity is defined by Ball as being

> …a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgments, comparisons and displays as a means of incentive, control, attrition and change – based on regards and sanctions (both material and symbolic). The performances (of individual subjects or organizations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection. As such they stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organization within a field of judgment. (Ball, 2003) :216)

Performativity makes itself felt in a number of ways, one of which is through its influence in teachers. Ball, again:

> …the policy technologies of education reform are not simply vehicles for the technical and structural change of organizations but are also mechanisms for reforming teachers (scholars and researchers) and for changing what it means to be a teacher, the technologies of reform produce new kinds of teacher subjects. Such reform changes - one's 'social identity' … education reform brings about change in 'our subjective existence and our relations one with another' … This is the struggle over the teacher's soul (Ball, 2003 :217)

This performative struggle is not isolated to music teachers though – it also affects schools and schooling more widely. As Rizvi and Lingard observe:

> As educational systems around the world have become larger and more complex, governments have been either unable or unwilling to pay for educational expansion, and have therefore looked to market solutions. This led to an almost universal shift from social democratic to neoliberal orientations in thinking about educational purposes and governance, resulting in policies of corporatization, privatization and commercialization on the one hand, and on a greater demand for accountability on the other (Rizvi & Lingard, 2009 :2-3)

This is clearly a troubling prospect for a teacher of any subject, but for music teachers in particular this has shifted the sphere of accountability from *making music* to generating assessment grades.

Performativity is a mode of regulation that employs judgments, comparisons, control, attrition and change based on rewards and sanctions. For schools these are in the form of school league tables constructed variously from pupil test scores; performance management; performance related pay and threshold assessment.

In England the term 'assessment' refers to the judgement of learners' work, where the extent of learning is judged (Freeman & Lewis 1998). Although assessment needs a parameter (Black and Wiliam 1998), it can often be focused on the formalisation of data collection.

Because of this, Swanwick (2008) states that assessment has become a negative term, especially in the arts as it is based on outcome driven modes which limit and reduces learning. These school measures have many implications for the development of young people's musical identities. Harlen (2012a: 174) warns of " the problems associated with extrinsic motivation in tending to lead to 'shallow' rather than 'deep' learning, also noting that in education assessment should reflect "the full range of desired learning goals" (Harlen 2012b: 88). Therefore as Sefton-Green (2000:2) notes 'a key element of making sense of our education system, is how subject disciplines define ability in their subject; that is to say, how a student's progress can be measured and recorded to demonstrate control of any particular field of knowledge'.

The ways in which the performativity agenda affects music teachers means that one of the key questions that needs to be asked by classroom music teachers, and often, by extension, their Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs), before any deviation from activities which might have an effect on assessment grades – the means by which the performativity agenda makes its presence most clearly felt for teachers in schools – is "will this adversely affect my pupils' grades?". This means that it can sometimes be the case that it is only the most experienced teachers and secure SLTs who are prepared to undertake some form of risk-taking for the possible betterment of their pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding. The effect on grades will, they hope, happen, but it may be more indirect in the ways in which this takes place than via a causal connection. This is an issue which needs taking in consideration by those planning and delivering music projects and activities in schools

Sustained instrumental tuition reaches a narrow demographic

Specialist music instrumental tuition in schools is often, although not exclusively, the province of the visiting music teacher, or peripatetic. These are people employed by music hubs or music services, who deliver instrumental music lessons in schools, from the WCET sessions discussed earlier, to group and individual lessons and/or tuition on a wide range of musical instruments and in an equally wide range of musical styles. This provision can be characterised as running alongside classroom provision. There is often (though not always) a financial aspect to this provision, with either schools or parents being billed for the music sessions involved. We know from research by the Musicians Union (2018) that there are issues with disparity of provision based on finance:

> The research from the Musicians' Union (MU) reveals families with a total household income of less than £28k are half as likely to have a child learning an instrument as more affluent peers with a family income of £48k or more.

> This stark disparity exists despite similar levels of interest from both groups of children…Cost is currently the greatest barrier to learning, with over two-fifths (41%) of those from lower income families saying lessons are beyond their household budgets…Those from low and mid-income families are more likely to teach themselves, missing out on the benefits of a specialised tutor, exposing a clear need for music provision in schools. (Musicians Union, ibid)

For the children and young people in the Exchanging Notes programme, the fact that they were deemed 'at risk' in some way meant that they were likely to come from one of the groups identified by the MU as being a cause for concern.

But, matters of finance aside, the running in parallel notion of the work of music hubs is important to observe. Many hubs do offer programmes and activities for children and young people who might be considered to be hard to reach; however, we know from analysis of DfE/ACE (Arts Council England) data returns for Music Hubs that the numbers of pupils eligible to be in receipt of the Pupil Premium who are involved in WCET has fallen:

> Between 2015/16 and 2016/17 the number of pupils … eligible for the pupil premium receiving WCET has dropped by 4.51%. The reasons for this are not clear and might merit further investigation. (Fautley & Whittaker, 2017 :23)

From the same source we also know that this does not only apply to WCET, the numbers of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium are relatively under-represented in music hub activities more widely:

> Analysis of this data return shows that … 8.24% of participating pupils were identified as being eligible for the Pupil Premium, compared with 28.9% eligibility of the national pupil population … 4.73% of pupils had an individual subsidy of some sort, and those in receipt of both an individual subsidy/PP and SEN statement made up 1.79%. (Fautley & Whittaker, 2017 :31)

This is important when considering the take-up of provision of musical opportunities offered by music hubs, and why the Exchanging Notes programme and music organisations generally fill an important gap in the provision.

One of the issues that has figured regularly in this overview is that of financing music education. Classroom music lessons in schools are funded by the schools themselves from their normal income from the DfE. Music Hubs are funded via ACE, but also charge schools and parents for their services. Music organisations often need to be self-funding, in that they generate their own income, although Youth Music and other organisations provide a source of this funding, they often do not have core funding, unlike that for schools and music hubs. The funding matter in music education is a cause for concern as school budgets are under ever-increasing strain, and music education hubs receive dwindling Local Authority support. Although beyond the scope of this report, there are many worries about music education becoming the province only for those whose parents have the means to afford to pay for it themselves. In terms of exclusion, there is a risk that music is denied to swathes of society because their parents, families, or carers lack the financial means to support them in their musical endeavours.

Other organisations supporting young people's musical development

In addition to schools and music education hub leads, there are a range of other organisations working with children and young people in music. These organisations take a variety of forms, and vary significantly. In some instances they can visit schools and other settings regularly, and provide tuition in a range of musical activities. They can be venues in their own right, they can have their own rehearsal and recording studios, or have regular access to these. Sometimes they can operate projects for pre-determined periods of time with a specific focus, perhaps leading up to a musical or arts related performance event. In other cases they can provide occasional or regular sessions, again on a variety of topics, and using a variety of resources, instruments, voices, and musical styles, types, and genres.

The range of activities that these music organisations offer do not fall neatly into any one category, indeed, in the original Exchanging Notes cohort an Opera-based organisation rubbed shoulders with an organisation focussing on samba band work, and those involved with pop and rock music. The broad range and scope of Music Organisations precludes easy and simplistic classification. Saunders and Welch also struggled with the same complexity in defining these music organisations:

> For the purpose of the following research, an amalgamation of … definitions has been adopted; i.e., the provision of collective, active and adaptive musical experiences based on the principles of access, participation and inclusion…(Saunders & Welch, 2012 :18-19)

They went on to note that there were problems with this:

> This is an imperfect definition, but seeks to distance the definition of musical practices in community music from (i) the professional identity of the musician leading the activity, (ii) the physical context of the activity and (iii) the pedagogy employed within the activity. (Saunders & Welch, 2012 :19)

In the context of Exchanging Notes, the breadth, range, and scope of the research are such that we are working with more than a reductive notion of 'Community Music', the organisations need to be treated as musical and education providers in their own right, with different areas of foci, different pedagogic traditions and outlooks, and different philosophies and conceptions of working with schools, hubs, and, importantly, children and young people.

However, whilst it is the case that the organisations we are discussing in this report may not all self-identify as community music, or as community musicians, nonetheless it is useful to briefly chart the emergence and development of community music. This is particularly the case as it applies to the origins of some of the thinking, as well as the pedagogies and practices employed.

Defining community music is notoriously problematic, not least because, as David Price observed, it has historically thought about itself by saying what it is not:

> …community music often defined itself in oppositional terms. We didn't quite know what we were, but we were sure that we were *not* formalized education, nor were we anything to do with the dominant ideology. (cited in Bartleet & Higgins, 2018: 330

This point was amplified by Higgins, who observed that:

> Many supporters and advocates of community music have viewed the act of defining the term as a violation of the very project of community music, choosing instead to describe its dispositions and thus leaving the concept open to individual interpretation. (Higgins, 2012) p3

However, Higgins goes on to observe that there are general characteristics which community music can be said to involve:

> …community music may be understood as an approach to active music making and musical knowing outside of formal teaching and learning situations. By formal, I mean music that is delivered by professionals in schools, colleges, and other statutory organizations through formalized curricula … community music is an intentional intervention, involving skilled music leaders, who facilitate group music-making

experiences in environments that do not have set curricula. Here, there is an emphasis on people, participation, context, equality of opportunity, and diversity. Musicians who work in this way seek to create relevant and accessible music-making experiences…(Higgins, 2012) p4

It is this description which meshes markedly with many of the music organisations involved in Exchanging Notes.

It is difficult to estimate the total number of these music organisations in the country, but we know from Youth Music statistics the numbers of such organisations that are supported by them. In 2016/17 Youth Music

> …invested a total of £9.3 million into 179 organisations, supporting 183 projects. (Around another 200 projects continued from previous funding rounds.) (Youth Music, 2018 :20)

Youth Music also noted that:

> 42% of the organisations we supported in 2016/17 had not previously been supported by Youth Music. This is the same percentage as last year, showing our continuing commitment to diversifying the range and type of organisations that we support.   (Youth Music, 2018 :20)

These statistics probably only scratch the surface of what is involved, but what they at least give is some idea of the number of music organisations that are operating. What the figures also do is to show that the significance and breadth of these organisations, and that the work that they do is notable and noteworthy.

Youth Music funding is targeted towards young people facing barriers to music education because of who they are, where they live, or what they are going through. Investment is also targeted in geographical areas of need:

> 47% of new Youth Music investment in 2016/17 was allocated to local authority areas that ranked in the 20% most deprived nationally. 76% of investment went to the 40% most deprived areas (Youth Music, 2018 :21)

This focus on children and young people facing challenging circumstances is important when we come to consider how the various projects in Exchanging Notes characterised success.

CHAPTER 3: PROJECT CASE STUDIES

Map of projects

Projects with white pins closed early

Derbyshire Music Education Hub

Derbyshire Music Education Hub's Exchanging Notes project was a multi-agency project involving music organisation Baby People and Derbyshire's Virtual School for looked-after children. It worked with 20 students from 20 schools, including 3 special schools and 17 secondary schools. 5 music leaders worked with these young musicians in 1:1 sessions, and sought to build relationships with Virtual School Education Support Officers to raise awareness of the potential of music for these young musicians. Baby People collaborated closely with the Virtual School, and noted that developing high level collaboration was both challenging and rewarding:

> Finding time for this level of collaboration has been hard, but from both sides we recognise the mutual benefits of working together, and have had some success in fundraising

The impact upon these young musicians was wide ranging and varied:

> One young musician gained from Exchanging Notes the social skills and confidence to move from Special School to mainstream secondary and confidently integrated. He took 5 GCSE examinations, which when he joined the Exchanging Notes cohort in Year 8, he was not anticipated to be capable of this.

Music organisation Baby People also acknowledged that involvement in Exchanging Notes has impacted upon their organisational practice and skills.

> Working with special needs young people has extended the skills base of Baby People music leaders and led to other projects and work in special schools...and made other multi agency professionals aware of the potential for commissioning music provision.

It is clear that the outcomes from Exchanging Notes have encouraged broader thinking around the role of creativity in working with these young musicians:

> Exchanging Notes has been instrumental in the development of a 'creative engagement curriculum' model that is unique to Derbyshire Virtual School...incremental leaps in a young musician's progress can result from having a consistent, long run of high quality encounters with nurturing adults.

A young musician also spoke of the profound effect Exchanging Notes activities had on understanding their own identity, and the emotional responses this sparked:

> It always brought memories back to me, the recreation of my life. It was painful but good to get people knowing that we don't have it easy. The story is about one and all of us, I was crying. All of us were speechless, it felt like it was just for us and about us. I understand now, it must be very difficult for a carer to look after a person that has been through so much.

Building on such compelling narratives from the young musicians, Baby People noted that they would look to do more collaborative work that involved joint commissioning:

> We feel that joint commissioning of such projects, involving education, care and cultural sector is an exciting and sustainable way forward for Virtual Schools, a creative curriculum, promoting learning through music making as an education model for vulnerable learners.

Brighter Sound

Brighter Sound worked with 21 young musicians over the 4 years, having started with around 30. They worked with 3 music teachers in 2 schools, and 14 music leaders in school settings and out-of-school settings. The project originally operated in short lesson-length sessions in school, but later moved towards full days away from school in cultural venues.

Over the 4 years, the young musicians developed musical skills, with many having little prior experience of music making. Examples of this included performing a range of originally composed songs at iconic Manchester venues, and also recording their own music in professional studios. The young musicians also had access to wider opportunities offered through Brighter Sound and performed to staff and their peers at school. The young musicians identified key developments in their social skills, having broadened their horizons and coming to view music in a more aspirational way, with music leaders being a big part of this:

> It's helped me to be more confident around people or if I have to talk or perform in front of people. I communicate better with others now

> No matter who you are, what you like, what you're into, you'll still speak to someone and get along with them cos of what you're doing [i.e. making music]

Members of school staff also identified changes in the attitudes of the young musicians:

> [Young musician was] very quiet at the start but ended [the project] on stage, singing and leading the band

> that's [young musician], but not the [young musician] I know!

Brighter Sound also observed areas of organisational development that had taken place through Exchanging Notes, pointing to changes in practitioner experience and training, and an enhanced understanding of the importance of building relationships with schools in this type of work. This has included engaging with SLT in school to develop a shared vision and having time to reflect together:

> We've shifted from 'we'll do this for you' to 'let's get shared aims'

> sharing practice and building understanding, and continuous and valued reflection and discussion in both formal (meetings) and non-formal (having lunch together) contexts.

Exchanging Notes also impacted upon the schools involved, with one of the schools demonstrating this especially clearly. Alongside increased uptake in GCSE, the Headteacher of the school noted that Exchanging Notes had impacted upon:

> the culture of the school, building school identity and offering students a chance to explore their interests and alternative career options. A radio club is now attended by many students not previously linked to the Exchanging Notes project.

Drake Music

Drake Music's Exchanging Notes project was based in a school for children with moderate learning difficulties (MLD), and involved 3 Drake Music associate artists as music leaders and 4 guest musicians. The project operated in a mix of 1:1 and group sessions, and saw varying levels of engagement reflecting the diversity and needs of the young musicians involved. Recalling their experiences of Exchanging Notes, the young musicians identified key areas of development in their confidence and the overcoming challenges relating to change or group dynamics:

> Drake Music has given me confidence to [work] by myself, and it's helped me through the years to gain that confidence in playing music in front of people, and I think being able to do that now will definitely help me to move on in the future with music

> I've had a lot of people come and go through music…and every time someone else comes in I need to get used to the fact that they're there…but it's helped me gain my confidence.

Young musicians clearly identified their increased awareness of music making, and could envisage themselves making music in the future. Giving ownership of the sessions and music making to the young musicians was an important part of this project. In conversations with music leaders, the young musicians spoke of how they had taught the music leaders new approaches and offered original ideas:

> Not only do we learn stuff from you, but I've taught you things you didn't learn from me. I think you've learned how people want to change things around, and I think you've learned how to make music in different ways, but also to understand other people's music through their eyes.

These positive outcomes were also identified by the adults involved in the project, especially around the development of confidence in performing in front of other people. The music teacher noted:

> Performing in front of other people is very important, confidence in presenting to other people, taking risks.

Alongside these outcomes for the young musicians, Drake Music noted the development of a long-term partnership. The notion of co-delivery and co-creation was of great importance to the success of this project. Drake Music noted:

> It was natural for the co-delivery model and skills developed with [music teacher] and other teachers to extend to these situations, and trainee musicians were given opportunities to observe…as well as engaging directly.

The influence of Exchanging Notes learning had a significant impact on music leaders' practice, with one leader observing that they were now adopting a 'more social approach, seeking equality and dialogue with young musicians whenever possible' (Music Leader).

Drum Works

Drum Works worked regularly with 110 young musicians, 2 music teachers, 2 music leaders and 2 assistant music leaders across the four years of Exchanging Notes. Although some young musicians experienced emotional and behavioural barriers which impacted involvement, most young musicians remained committed. Drum Works summarised:

> Their self-belief, team working skills, maturity and focus were definitely enhanced by being members of Drum Works and it is something they are all very proud of.

The social outcomes for these young musicians were clearly significant, with Exchanging Notes identified as a positive activity in challenging circumstances for some of the young musicians:

> Students have indicated that it has been the thing that keeps them going through tough days…they use it to channel their stresses and frustrations and they speak extremely highly of their tutors' patience, kindness and encouragement.

Alongside these social and educational impacts, where young musicians were incentivised by music to stay in mainstream education, Drum Works also identified significant developments in musical abilities, helping these young musicians take on roles as junior music leaders:

> The improvements in participants' musical ability over the course of the four years was evident from the continual development in the quality and complexity of the music they composed, the standard of their performances, and in the way that they talk about music. A number of the Drum Works participants led lessons with younger students…They developed an understanding of how to rehearse effectively, lead musical performances and work together in a large ensemble.

Drum Works noted this development clearly in one of the young musicians who was originally disengaged from education. At the end of the project, the music leader wrote:

> He became a real advocate for the ways in which we work as a collective, supporting each other as an ensemble socially and musically

Music leaders from Drum Works also pointed to the ways the Exchanging Notes research developed their practice and thinking, and changed approaches going forward:

> Being involved in action research has greatly improved Drum Works' approach to data collection and evaluation…elements of the evaluation processes developed through Exchanging Notes have been applied to other areas of our programme.

Drum Works therefore clearly identified reflective tools as an important development in their practice across Exchanging Notes. They recognised the importance of developing trusting relationships through having the same staff for the duration of the project:

> It was very clear that having the same tutors throughout the four years had a huge impact: it was the most consistent staffing - and therefore some of the most consistent relationships - that the students had experienced in their whole school careers. We are delighted to say that funding has subsequently been secured to continue the project until July 2021.

Kinetika Bloco

Kinetika Bloco worked with 23 core Exchanging Notes students, 2 music teachers, and 16 musical leaders over the four years of Exchanging Notes. This project involved timetabled classes and after-school groups, alongside junior summer schools. The project encountered the challenges of school timetables and had to adopt strategies to maintain consistent engagement in after-school activities. Through music, the young musicians were introduced to new group working practices and broadened both their musical and social horizons, building important social skills that supported their musical development:

> Throughout the project the young musicians commented on how they made new friends with a range of skills and interests outside of their usual friendship circle which has influenced what they do, what music they listen to, and has broadened their knowledge of the world.

The young musicians also identified musical outcomes from their involvement, noting the development of musical skills and creativity through music:

> [Young musician] developed leadership skills, makes decisions confidently, can work confidently in a team, works confidently autonomously, he's creative, works well under pressure and he's opened to learning new things. [Young musician] achieved a 6 in his Music GCSE and in his words, "*I couldn't have done it without Kinetika Bloco"*

Alongside these positive musical and social outcomes for the young musicians, Kinetika Bloco noted changes to their pedagogical approaches to music delivery. This is significant as the team reflection process has become an embedded part of their practice.

> The educational and pedagogical practices of Kinetika Bloco has developed in a great way. Creative meetings now happen regularly throughout the year to continue discussing our vision for projects, to develop ideas and discuss the learning process…we question our methods and as a team look for ways to improve it. Thinking about everything from the pace of the session, to the location of the session. We go over feedback from the young musicians we teach and the staff.

Building on this reflection, Kinetika Bloco identified significant organisational learning and saw Exchanging Notes as having reaffirmed the direction of their activities.

> This project has really affirmed what we believe Kinetika Bloco should be doing – and that isn't formal education. We are good at working alongside the school to deliver a practical experience in playing music. The project worked best when we had the scope to play to our strengths, delivering engaging and relevant music activities in a safe, supportive atmosphere…The project has been about meetings of the mind and collaborating creatively, using the knowledge they are gaining in school but with a sense of creative freedom.

Kinetika Bloco's team has therefore reflected on their own Exchanging Notes journey, and that of the young musicians involved, to identify their pedagogical strengths and build on these successes. They report that this increased understanding of other musical sectors has served to crystallise the core pedagogical philosophy of Kinetika Bloco.

Accent Warrington and Halton Music Education Hub

Delivered by Score Creative, this project engaged with a core Exchanging Notes cohort of 21 young musicians, alongside their peers. A total of 100 young musicians took part in Exchanging Notes activities, working alongside 9 music leaders and 4 music teachers. In its latter stages, this project saw increased involvement of the Music Hub. Throughout the project, Score Creative helped new music leaders to develop their skillset in a long-term setting, which helped to build trusting relationships between tutors and the young musicians. Score Creative noted:

> Pupils at [school name] were supported to move freely between activities, locations and environments whilst the consistent tutor team helped the project to provide important familiarity and stability.

This is an important feature of the provision offered by Score Creative, especially as Exchanging Notes operated across both school and youth club settings. The young musicians were supported to present original compositions and performances, and to create music in a social group outside of the school setting. Indeed, engagement with industry professionals and access to professional recording studios also contributed to the musical development of the young musicians. Levels of engagement were high, and students who might not have normally taken up musical activities were participating:

> Students showed an enthusiasm and dedication to school rehearsals/concerts and during class activities were keen to stay 'after the bell' to complete work.

To support musical development, Score Creative established systems to monitor the progress of the young musicians, allowing outcomes to be shared with significant people in their lives:

> We have developed systems to monitor progression and share feedback against performance evidence. We have designed a digital platform which follows the young musician around and brings all their activity together in one place for themselves and any invited, significant people in their musical, family or social groups to see.

Along with music leader skill development and progression monitoring, organisational learning was a big part of the Exchanging Notes journey for Score Creative, especially around the need for musical provision to be joined up with other aspects of the young musicians' lives:

> We have learnt that to make our musical interventions more effective we need to do more than just work with young musicians for a few hours per week in a community setting. Our planning and delivery needs to connect and, where possible, involve everybody involved in the young musician's musical life.

The music teachers involved in Exchanging Notes also identified impacts of this work on their practice, especially around reflection on activity and to think about the content of curriculum:

> What sort of curriculum would inspire students and increase practical ability? How do we share practice with the local community of musicians we have in Warrington? Are we actively engaging with the local music scene in Warrington or do students see music in school/home/Youth Club as separate entities?

SoCo Music

SoCo's Exchanging Notes activities took place across two different settings, one being an inclusion unit attached to a mainstream secondary school, and the other being a free school for children and young people with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). The differences between these settings resulted in varied relationships across the project. In the PMLD setting, the Headteacher noted:

> reflection has been more consistently embedded in our collaborations with teachers…the coordination between session delivery and staff training enabled a deeper communication between [music leader] and the teachers.

For the inclusion unit setting, although challenges were acknowledged, relationships between music teachers and music leaders were constructive and positive:

> The partnership…has been extremely positive, more so during this year, as it has taken time to build trust, develop understanding and to collaboratively nurture positive outcomes for our participants.

Exchanging Notes activities have caused music leaders and teachers to reflect on their own understanding of the musical potential of these young musicians:

> It has been particularly interesting, to allow the way our participants made music to inform, or challenge, how, as practitioners in a music delivery organisation we identify, understand, or describe creativity or expressivity.

This is significant, as similar reflective processes have also been identified by the young musicians, who observed the benefits of expressing their emotions through music:

> This has helped me a lot, the music, because I can write it down and sing through it or rap through it. It has helped me so much…It's helping me to deal with my anger.

Broader educational outcomes were also identified by music leaders and teachers in relation to music, especially around the ownership of musical activity:

> Ensuring that our delivery was 'person centred' enabled us to tailor individual learning that took into consideration a young musician's specific needs to create exciting and rewarding music sessions that broadened horizons and appreciation for the benefits of music-making.

The music organisation reported areas of organisational learning in relation to working alongside academic research. This has led to new developments for the future, and has given confidence to the organisation in its approaches to learning:

> Exchanging Notes has enabled us to better understand the impact of our programmes of work and advocate the benefits of music for children and young musicians in challenging circumstances. In light of this, we have begun to make links with Southampton University, which is seeing us explore a potential collaboration that will fit squarely inside their core academic offer.

CHAPTER 4: PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

4.1 QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF MUSIC DELIVERY

The Exchanging Notes project has enabled the teachers and music organisations involved to reassess what constitutes quality partnership in music education. Quality partnership and music education extends beyond that which can be easily measured, such as test scores, attainment levels and behaviours. Instead, it focuses attention onto the relevance of the curriculum, and how that has been made accessible to young musicians. Throughout the Exchanging Notes project, it has become evident that successful pedagogies include each young musician's acquisition and development of musical skills, knowledge and understanding. Alongside this, acknowledgement of the social impact of learning, cultural understanding and creative processes are important for teachers and music leaders. The roles of teachers and music leaders include helping the young musicians become metacognitive, being aware of how they go about learning, doing, and thinking.

4.1.2 In what ways have the quality and standards of music delivery improved?

New pedagogical practices

A crucial part of this process is the continued professional development of music leaders and teachers. During the project they learnt from each other about planning mechanisms, pedagogical approaches and skills:

> What I saw the project as was something that was going to be collaboratively planned and collaboratively delivered and we needed to learn from each other's best practices. But also learn from each other's mistakes. I wanted to be told things that they'd thought about. (Music Leader)

> They've expanded our thinking in relation to what we now see children can do. I think we were quite narrow before. We are now more ambitious. (Teacher)

> It's nice to have the flexibility, nice to have the freedom, just to do something very different and maybe see what sticks, or see how that can be reintegrated into what you might considered a typical lesson. (Teacher)

> [Music leader] is a composer, we had many sessions [music leader] did a load of work on compositions with the pupils. It is an area I've always struggled with at school especially at GCSE, and given that that's their area of expertise it was quite interesting to watch [music leader] deliver sessions. It was actually quite interesting for me to then put that into some of my other lessons in Key Stage 3 and 4 in the way they did it. Some of it worked, some of it didn't but that's what this is all about. Trying something new. (Teacher)

It was also recognised that the curriculum must not only be musically relevant, but extend knowledge beyond young musicians' initial interests, by developing musical skills that address future needs. A good curriculum should engage young musicians in a breadth of knowledge appropriate to their developmental stages**:**

I think that it's about providing people a way to connect to music first. The making process almost unlocks the connecting process. I think for me it's got to be that balance. I think making, drives the ability to connect. (Music leader)

I think we would hopefully agree that approaches to music have categorically changed over the last four years. I think we've learnt that by having that element of student negotiation and the element of group work and giving them responsibility for getting from one point to another. I think we were a little nervous about trying that at the start - now we see it work and the students have valued that opportunity to step up and manage their own events and make those decisions, I'm hoping that that's a model that we will continue moving forward between the school, provider and hub. (Hub Leader)

I feel that the model and the type of work that has come from it, both in terms of developing the music providers teams skills and enabling the school's music department to look at alternative model, both those have been really, really successful (Hub Leader)

Broader perceptions of success, progress and progression

For many projects, assessment became more than a simple input-output modality; as Finney (2006: 2) notes it is 'far beyond the attainment of task criteria, for completing a task in itself irrelevant to what I am thinking of as a richer learning'. It actually included the emotional impact of music making, alongside the social and cultural:

And they can think about doing it (music) for the rest of their lives, whether it's just a hobby or a profession. We're sowing the seed for the future whether they move forward with it in school or not. (Music Leader)

We need to find a way to bridging the gaps, through language and conceptually as well to understand the wider aspects of this work, the social, emotional… (Music Leader)

I guess, because of the rigidity of a system which is so based around structure and evaluation and valuing through a marker system, there actually is a freedom that comes with young musicians with being part of something which is not based around that kind of system. Oh, you got a C, you got an A, you got a merit, and you got a distinction. You know, it becomes much more about a personalised journey and the value that comes from the self and, therefore, it becomes about you. (Teacher)

The success criteria which the various stakeholders in music education hold are very different, and this had the potential for creating tensions. One of the most significant factors which affected the ways in which all of the various stakeholders viewed the Exchanging Notes projects relates to outcomes, and how these are conceptualised. In schools, it is attainment and progress that are the key indicators of successful outcomes. For the music organisations, however, there was a different imperative, what mattered was engagement. Achieving engagement was something that needed to be worked at, and so music organisations were less concerned with delivery, assessment, and progress, and more with the individual children and young people being involved in what was going on. During the

project, there were many conflicts between perceptions of measures of success. These included:

- Uptake of GCSE music;
- Joining outside of school music activities;
- Engaging in school and wider school activities;
- Progression on an instrument;
- Music qualifications, including Arts Award;
- The social impact of music making;
- School attainment.

Holdhus and Espeland observe that in some artist in schools programmes, there can be issues concerning what the principal focus of each stakeholder is:

> …we suggest that there is a missing consensus about quality concepts that is paradigmatic by nature between what might be labelled an art paradigm and an education paradigm, where the major goal of the first one is the communication and transmission of the art work and the accompanying artistic experience. …the major goal of teachers co-operating with artists is "learning"… (Holdhus & Espeland, 2013 :5)

This distinction matters, as in itself it was a potential source of tension between schools and music organisations, especially in the early stages of some of the projects. This point needs recognising, and requires all parties to think about – and explain to each other – what their various imperatives are.

> In musical inclusion work, therefore, musical quality must address socio-personal issues as well as musical ones. It brings questions of judgement in both the individual areas of development as well as in the overall development of the young person. And, by the same token, addressing socio-personal issues requires musicians in particular to enable participants to be the best they can musically; both individually and collectively. Working in three domains (musical, personal, social) at the same time is a complex business and raises a number of issues. (Deane et al., 2015 :80-81)

What this means for the Exchanging Notes participants is that they were each coming to the projects with different 'baggage', different thoughts about what constituted success, and different views as to the primacy of attention.

> It is the absence of shared expectations that can hinder collaborations among participants enculturated in communities with different value systems, goals, and identities…(Bresler, 2018)

Deane *et al* also noted a similar issue that was also occasionally noted in Exchanging Notes in this regard:

> In (a very small number of) cases, workers felt that the personal and social developments rendered judgement on musical quality irrelevant. For them the individual transformations for children on the margins were so important that making judgements on the quality of the music seemed carping. (Deane et al., 2015 :81)

This is discussed in more detail in the observations and discussions section of this report, but is useful to raise here, as the various stakeholders were operating with differing views, which were standard across their own contexts, to such an extent that they were often implicit, rather than voiced. At their simplest, and most extreme, schools were concerned with learning, evidence by assessment of attainment, and music organisations were concerned with participation, evidenced by engagement.

The quotes below highlighted some of the perceptions of the music leaders and teachers regarding measures of success and challenges they faced during the project:

> The school has never doubted that it has been having a positive impact, which is not always measurable in the ways that we're collecting data, necessarily. Maybe their attendance was always okay, but they were just very different around school and things like that. Or maybe their grades were okay but there were other issues that we encountered with them. So, I don't think necessarily the tangible impact that we see in the life of the student, necessarily reflects in the data that we collect but it is recognised, and it is seen, and it's noted that the students do spend far less time in places like PAC [exclusion in school] and exclusion meetings and things like that. (Music leader)

> I think the closest dialogue and the most regular dialogue we have is about the make-up of the group, the bonding of students, what's working and what isn't working, rather than the musical side of things, I would say. (Teacher)

> And the issue was that none of them had progressed enough to access the new spec of GCSE music. (Music leader)

> Usually in school we very much have certain skills we need to cover, get certain grades and it is very much target driven. Whereas this is far more looking at the individual needs of the children, which we try to do in a class but you can't to certain extent when they all play keyboards at once. So we are looking more at the pastoral side of it, setting targets with the students. (Teacher)

In one of the projects, the progression of the young musicians was deeply dependent on health and wellbeing. The young musicians attending this school either have a statement of special educational needs, education health and care plan, or attend school on an assessment placement. Success in this instance was reliant upon on a number of factors as described by the music leader:

> …conventionally the areas of progression and improvement don't really apply here that well, when students might have an operation or if they have epilepsy, there could be a significant change in their medication and that will dramatically affect the way they live and in the way they play music. So, that might look like music didn't have a good impact, when in actual fact, you know, what music is doing, is trying to make the most out of the state they are. If their state has deteriorated, then music, in our school be thriving, because they're still managing to do a lot with music, even though it's less than what they used to be. But, in relative terms, it's actually more. (Music leader)

It was the fact that these various underlying paradigms were frequently implicit that caused some friction in some projects at the outset, with some schools not being able to understand

why music organisations did not seem overly concerned with learning and progression, and some music organisations not seeing why schools were so bothered about planning and attainment, when what mattered was getting children and young people involved. It was the reconciling of these views that became one of the powerful factors of Exchanging Notes, when each group took on board characteristics from the other.

Greater involvement of music hubs

A number of the projects worked alongside music hubs in the delivery and monitoring aspects of the project. When the music hub was fully involved, progression routes and extracurricular activities were initiated and supported. In some cases, the music hub also played the role of mediator, bridging relations between the schools and music providers, maintaining the sustainability of the partnership and ensuring quality. This meant that some hub leads observed sessions as well as play a strategic role in project management. The hub leaders discussed the importance of their involvement for increased the visibility and progression of the project:

> I don't think any of us are under the illusion that the delivery of this project has been easy … but what it has done is made sure that we've had lots of dialogue in our meetings happening every half term. So that's been important. It's totally changed the way in which we're working in the region, I would argue (Music Hub Lead 2)

> I think it's really important for the hub to engage with the provider, and it would have been better if they (music organisation) were a key partner in the hub so that that information about the project could be shared. I think from our point of view we felt one step removed from the project, and it's probably a number of factors that have contributed to that. (Music Hub Lead 1)

In taking on a liaising role, the potential is that hubs can advocate for music in schools and be involved in discussion with senior leadership teams. Having an insider-outsider role, enable them to meet senior leadership teams and, on occasions, defend project outcomes and aspirations, ensuring value was given to music in schools and that the agreement of the project partnership was met:

> For us I think it's really helped us to manage a challenging relationship between the hub and the school and it's made us realise that we're not frightened to stand up for what we believe in, and we're not frightened therefore to really advocate for a project that has brought so much value to the young musicians. I think it has given a strong message to the other secondary colleagues across the hub. (Music Hub Lead 2)

The opportunity to explore new models of pedagogic partnership was described by one hub leader as an important part of the learning to be taken forward from Exchanging Notes:

> I think the role of projects like this are going to have a future in enabling practitioners and schools to not be afraid of maybe looking at alternative models. I think the value of this type of project is that for us, that it's just enabled a completely different model, and that the impact for us of measuring the formal and informal work. It's broken down a perceived barrier between the formal and the informal, and that it's almost empowered the formal sector, to look at alternative models and not be afraid to run with it because they can really benefit from it. Also there are lots of music leaders

and practitioners out there who could help school settings to realise these sorts of pedagogies … some key things for us to learn about are how young musicians have engaged with this programme over four years and what they've got out of it, and therefore what they'd like to see in some of the weeks of tuition, some of the weekly ensemble programmes that we're running day to day. (Music Hub 2)

Alongside pedagogic partnership, both hub leads discussed the challenges and affordances of such a project between schools and music providers:

> …it is significant at a time when colleagues around the borough are struggling to get their exam classes together. I'm very hopeful that music GCSE is seen as a strength but the school is in quite a challenging situation and in a state of flux (Music Hub lead 1)

> Children at risk don't necessarily see that they can be involved in things like that, they don't necessarily have the resources at home for their parents or carers to support them being involved. So I think things like this that are different, that are specifically targeted at young musicians that are at risk are very important. (Hub leader 2)

Closer multi-agency working to improve outcomes for young musicians

As well as joining up practices between schools, music organisation and hubs, developing multi-agency partnerships has been an important part of the quality and standards of music delivery. Multi-agency practices extended and joined up knowledge, building trust and developing personalised approaches to teaching and learning, best suited to the particular young musician involved. We have collated a list of other professionals who were involved in some way with the Exchanging Notes project:

- Social workers,
- Carers,
- Independent reviewing officers,
- Music therapists
- SENCOs
- School pastoral staff
- Learning support teams
- Medical professionals

Openness in sharing information concerning progression, and personal educational plans was the most difficult aspect of joined-up practice. Often, the school agencies knew about Exchanging Notes, but music practice was obscured and remained hidden. Information and knowledge sharing therefore was difficult. This often meant that without communication, the music leader did not receive vital information about the young musicians' educational and emotional needs, nor were the music leaders enabled to build relationships with those other professional people who looked after the care of the young musician. Barriers to successful multi-agency working in the early stages of the project were due to lack of professional understanding, a mismatch between the "vision" of practice, anxieties about increased information sharing and the exploration of new ways of working. One music leader noted:

> We tried to break into that network and into that small frame of people. They are not expecting to hear from artists, we are cropping up in their inbox and they don't know who we are and they read it and they think that it is not important. We can often get lost. (Music leader)

Over time the barriers into these team structures gradually broke down to include the music provider. This was mainly due to young musician's enjoyment, which affirmed and increased the visibility of the project to other professionals. One music leader explained their facilitation process:

> It is important that the young musicians are directing the process and we help them develop. In some cases we have built such strong links with the young musician that everyone began to recognise their engagement and enjoyment. Therefore all the adults encouraged this interest. (Music leader)

Observing the impact, not only on the young musician's personal, social and emotional wellbeing, but enjoyment at school, attendance and engagement in education, meant that professionals recognised that in order for knowledge and expertise to be maximized and distributed within and across teams, an interdisciplinary approach needed to be created. This was noted by one Headteacher:

> Collaboration is the hardest thing, especially when the young musicians have a complex network of various people around them. But I think that it provides an opportunity. We are opening up conversations where joint planning doesn't exist normally. (Headteacher)

And here by another Headteacher:

> We were realising that when Exchanging Notes music leaders attended the meetings the project started to grow some roots. With one young musician for example that collaborative planning around their education and the bringing together all the different agencies involved in his education enabled us all to recognise the importance of music in their life. It became evident that if the work develops through Exchanging Notes was taken away from this young musician's provision that it would've been detrimental to them. (Headteacher)

New pedagogies and value attributed by wider school teaching teams

Three of the projects employed a whole school approach to CPD to not only up-skill music and non-music teachers, but increase project visibility and understanding. These sessions were offered either in school time during INSET days, or as opt-in twilight sessions. In these sessions, music teaching strategies, pedagogy and learning were discussed and explored to help increase understanding and knowledge. Alongside this, teachers also got to experience music sessions and consider ways that these approaches could be used in their lessons, even if they did not teach music. One music teacher noted the large uptake of the CPD offer:

> I discussed our idea of CPD with our SLT and we were offered an hour and half session. The senior leadership at the school told me they wanted to focus on NQTs, Teach First, year care teams and people who deal with challenging behaviour around the school and the kind of students that are being focused on in the core group in

Exchanging Notes, and so I sent an email out. We had a good response, many of them responded very quickly, very keen to come along to it. (Teacher)

By offering CPD, the project no longer existed just within the boundaries of the music classroom, but practice was shared, discussed and constructively critiqued:

I think validating the project and expanding it so that more people were aware of it was important. They were all in support. (Teacher)

The importance of visibility and shared knowledge has been evidenced as a key aspect for engagement in school. The projects that took specific steps to increase awareness and reinforce the value of the project managed to change perceptions held by the wider school community, not only of the value of music, but the value of the music sessions for the young musician's educational engagement.

I ran a CPD for the teachers, we got a good turnout, maybe about 18 teachers. It definitely reinforces the value of the project and the value of this kind of work. I think the value of it is definitely increased. I think music making can often be made to suffer by it appearing to be some kind of extra-curricular hobby and there's not often a lot of regard for its educational value really. People can accept the social value sometimes, you know, and I think or a project like this needs to interact with the school in this way and to really kind of be part of school life, it needs to be understood as actually an intellectual endeavour as well as a social endeavour as well as a fun thing. (Music Leader)

This in turn raised the aspiration of the young musicians as the wider school community were more aware and engaged in their musical progress:

We've been doing occasional gigs out in the courtyard, just in lunch breaks and stuff and we always get a really good crowd, teachers too. (Young musician)

Another music leader describes here the longitudinal impact of increased visibility of Exchanging Notes:

It has a favourable impact in the engagement, not just in Exchanging Notes project but the whole school. It is quite interesting to see how you can have this knock-on effect. You start working with a number of individual young musicians, but they belong to different classes, have different teachers, but crucially if you then have a head teacher who is proactive in serving those outcomes, then they will try to capitalise on that. That's what the CPD has done, it's engaged and expanded the impact of the project. (Music Leader)

The music teachers in the schools played a key role in these CPD sessions through organisation, sharing their experiences with their teaching colleagues and through the CPD, explaining the wider implication of involvement in activities on the young musicians. In some of the schools the teaching staff continued to offer CPD sessions, which helped to increase music's visibility:

I have run a number of training sessions for other teachers of different classes who are interested in the music schools and what we have been doing. I would say the community effect of this is positive. (Teacher)

Moving beyond in-school training, one project engaged the local school music network. The music leader describes the aims of the network meetings being to share practice, critique learning, develop links, and offer critical reflection on the opportunities offered to these young people in the community and how participation could be extended:

> They are going to come here in end of June/start of July. I think we need to listen to what the other schools are asking for and doing currently. We can show documentary style of what's been happening here, show videos and progression of assessments through the years. Then open up for discussion about what we're doing, why we're doing it and how we can change things to better things, and what it might look like in other people's schools. You know, explore different models. (Music leader)

4.1.3 What practices led to the improvement of quality and standards?

In a study that explores teaching and learning it is important to understand how teachers, music leaders and young musicians perceived themselves, the factors that contribute to these perceptions and how meaning was created. Cooper and Olsen (1996) describe this as a self-evaluation process, where identity is informed, formed, and reformed through experiences and interactions with others. The notion of 'becoming' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) is important in Exchanging Notes because it offers us a way to think about development, especially in partnership work. 'Becoming' sees identity as something that is diverse and open to possibility. It recognises the impact others have on our identity and the potential these interactions have to help us to see things differently, and be critical of our pedagogies and practices. We explore the notion of becoming in relation to teachers, music leaders and young musicians.

Becoming Teacher-Musician

The concept of identity is complex, especially music teacher identity, where the self is continuously shifting within social, cultural and political contexts. Secondary school music teachers' identities are shaped by undergraduate degree courses where they explore their musician identity. After their degree, they move on to post graduate teacher training courses and then enter the profession. Over the course of a teacher's career they are likely to experience various school settings, each holding different values and ethos. These experiences, alongside their musician identities, shape practice, and affect relations within the classroom.

Pitfield (2012) claims that subject knowledge is given little prominence in the development of teacher identity, focusing instead on assessment processes, management and planning. The construction of an identity as a music teacher therefore includes multiple dimensions and systems. It can often be discontinuous, fragmented and may have to 'mobilise a complex of occasional identities in response to shifting contexts' (Stronach et al., 2002:117). This complexity was evidenced by some of the teachers at the start of Exchanging Notes when they discussed their role as teachers:

> We have in school this constant every half term - we need data, we need to know what these kids are doing. That is frustrating for us as teachers, and it is an issue. We are super accountable for them. The kids are given targets from English and

maths figures, and they are meant to be getting that in music. And it is like 'no that is not how this subject works'. (Teacher)

The focus on data and getting observed all the time means that sometimes you forget about the music. (Teacher)

I'm like torn between a rock and a hard place because we're under a lot of pressure to improve results here. (Teacher)

I think that's the difficult thing balancing school needs and priorities in the job against what we can try and do and what I would like to do. That's probably the biggest battle or difficulty for me personally so far on the project. (Teacher)

I'm aware that we can be quite isolated in our music room. This has opened up that space and discussion with others… I really value that. (Teacher)

Practice-sharing and other activities over the four years of Exchanging Notes meant that many teachers no longer felt static, or that their pedagogy was fixed. Instead, they entered a state of constant 'becoming' where they re-engaged with their musician identity, and explored what it meant to be a teacher-musician:

…being able to get involved and show the kids that even I don't know everything either and I was able to just pick something up and give it a go. They did laugh at me a little bit but it was quite nice to do something a bit different from the normal stuff that we do here. (Teacher)

It was nice to input some of my own experience and work with the music leader like you would do with other musicians in an ensemble or band or something…(Teacher)

I've learnt more ways to handle challenging students than what the rules state and that sometimes it takes a bit of calm, nurturing and quietness to find a completely different route. (Teacher)

… it's been a reminder that it is possible to get through to even those most challenging kids and also to challenge their musical skills and their learning skills that they can do, even more complex things than you might sometimes assume that they can do. (Teacher)

What Exchanging Notes has done is it has helped me a lot to arrive at what I consider to be a sustainable model for music practice in school and different ways in which you can train and include a range of members of staff and encourage them. In a way, to create a sustainable music practice that they can transmit themselves. (Teacher)

Well I think it's about knowing how to integrate what they do [music provider] into the curriculum because I think often when they might visit a school and bring in a programme it can often feel like an attachment and I'm not quite sure how it's fitting into the bigger picture. I think however with this, we have got quite a clear mind of how all the work they're doing fits into a bigger school picture of what a student is doing and how it supports them actually going for their GCSE. Also how it supports me and allowing me time to re-engage in that mode of thinking. (Teacher)

Becoming Music Educator- Teacher - Musician

It is increasingly common that musicians' work moves them into the education field, where they may teach in schools, colleges, universities and community contexts. They are 'multi-skilled' (Musicians Union 2012) and exploit a range of 'musical creativities' (Burnard 2013). Although these people may have not had higher education based teacher training, many musicians who have come from universities or conservatoires will have had the possibility of exploring education as part of their program (Burnard and Haddon 2015). Much like teacher development trajectories described earlier, this can cause tensions for music educator development.

Just as the teachers in Exchanging Notes had to re-engage with their musician identity, the music leaders had to develop their understanding and knowledge of the formal classroom, and appropriate approaches to pedagogy. This was a process, which required them to 'let go' of previous personal theories or prior experiences of formal education, and work with the teachers to explore new models and new forms of practice:

> [The teachers] really focus on evaluating ongoing progression, and recording the achievements of the students. I am now also trying to do this. It not something I have thought of before, I mean I thought of it, but not the impact of it long term. (Music leader)

> I have learnt how to question what I am doing. I am really looking at how are they [YP] working; are they making progress? Is there any way that we could look at problem-solving or looking at past issues that might be stopping them achieving? I talk to the young musicians, try to get to know them and get feedback on what they have been doing or how their work is going? Or where is it going? For me though all this now is not just session by session based but I actually see progress over a longer period of time. (Music leader)

> I realise actually I can apply to my own experience in ways that I don't really expect it. So, as a person, as a musician, whether I would regard myself as a music leader or facilitator, or just somebody who is playing, that's quite profound, and not something that I would have expected to happen in a school, so that's nice. (Music leader)

> I think the project has changed my practice hugely, I don't really recognise myself. (Music leader)

Catering for variations of musicality in the formal classroom, interest and skill required different teaching and learning approaches. For some of the music leaders, their focus on other projects had been on set and predetermined outcomes. However, in Exchanging Notes, a greater understanding of the development of whole class progression and differentiation was needed:

> This summer we sat down and planned. We spent a good couple of hours talking about short-term, medium and long-term planning. The teacher came up with a basic structure of what they want to do term by term and we discussed pros and cons of doing certain aspects within the classroom. We then jointly planned and thought about how each young musician would develop. (Music leader)

> For example (pupil) is very low ability and he struggles with most concepts and understanding difficult sentences. How they differentiate for different pupils might be different to what I would have planned, The teacher suggested pairing them up with someone who can assist them to keep them going and group specific young musicians together to help with differentiation. Typically I would allow students to pair together with their friends. But things like this have made me think about what I do and if there is a different way to structure it. (Music leader)

> I now really aspire to plan for learning. Sometimes with music it's tricky because the technique can often be flattened out into playing in time, on beat, counting, and so I'm always trying to push for that, but the pace of the class is often difficult in that respect. In terms of planning, I would say we are focused on learning as well as doing, but I also think we focus on other wider social outcomes and is the learning taking place more in terms of interactions with others and more general musicianship rather than, notes on the page. That's certainly the angle that I prefer to take now. (Music leader)

There were many musicians working on Exchanging Notes who did not come to musical activity through university systems, neither did they have had any formal teacher training for in-school practice. They had however worked as music leaders for community and non-formal educational programs. For them, learning extended to new musical skills, as well as theory and practice:

> I studied music at college but not to a high level, I am a musician and have worked on projects as a musician and been trained by [music provider]. There has been lots I've learnt about teaching throughout the project, I didn't even know what pedagogy meant before. (Music leader)

These examples show the diversity in the non-formal music sector. The learning from Exchanging Notes has been critical for development in the sector as highlighted by one music provider lead:

> I think we are all now better equipped to go into schools and speak their language and that's a great outcome for us as part of the project. That understanding of teacher demands, curriculum and how we can work with them, it's so important. (Music leader)

4.1.4 What does a successful Exchanging Notes pedagogy look like?

Becoming pedagogical

As we have discussed above, although the classroom teachers had received formal teacher training, and many music leaders had benefitted from receiving other educational training for the context they work in, in Exchanging Notes, both groups were 'becoming pedagogical' (Irwin and Ryu 2015). Throughout the four years they were engaged in research, which meant that they were constantly reviewing and inquiring into practice and pedagogy. This research approach invited new outlooks, to 'come as you are – and read with a different attitude' (Hurley 1988: iii). This is explored in this quote from a music leader:

> Within this project, perhaps quite strikingly, what we see is in this work between a music organisation and a school, is development of the pedagogy and the approaches to gathering data. We come from a non-formal background, working in community settings. Engagement is understood in different ways and I think that's something quite significant, and I think that the non-formal process and practice that our music leader is offering within a formal context can look quite different. But this is something that has always been in discussion with the teacher. (Music leader)

When a relationship of reciprocal acceptance and respect was developed, an affective and pedagogical bond was established. This created a favourable atmosphere for teaching and learning:

> It's very, very different from any other project I've worked on, in that respect, and I wasn't expecting that at all. I've worked places for three or four years, but not in terms of this, and not in terms of constantly evaluating the situation. (Music leader)

> I think it's about that fluidity between doing and learning, through making, learning through thinking and thinking through learning. It's that kind of fluidity that's maybe a little lacking in school. (Music leader)

> The power of a long term relationship. That journey I think, is really important. Being able to be vulnerable and then being able to grow from that vulnerability into a new sense of learning, a new sense of confidence and new kind of centre, if you like, within yourself. I think that comes from long term relationships. (Music leader)

This led to the establishment of an authentic educational relationship between all participants. This meant valuing the knowledge that young musicians already had and creating conditions for them to express them. The young musicians' prior musical experiences became the starting point for pedagogical work:

> It's been very much student-led, if there's an idea where they want to go, we will help them achieve that. (Teacher)

> We try to engage young musicians as much as possible in what we do, through conversations in sessions and after sessions. (Music leader)

> If that means challenging myself a little bit and stepping out of my comfort zone and there's a compromise to make sure they (the young musicians) have the best musical experience possible. (Music leader)

The ethical requirement

In this pedagogical process there was also an ethical requirement for the teachers and music leaders to reject authoritarianism and on occasions put aside their own preconceptions, so that knowledge of the young musicians could flourish. They had to step down from a position of being more knowledgeable other, and approach pedagogy with humility, showing that they themselves were willing to take part in the learning process. This was observed by these music leaders:

> That has been the most interesting, I think, just to see how, over a period of time, the students change or sometimes don't change, while some things remain very much

the same, where others change quite abruptly. Also, to give me the chance to see the effects of sustained provision, sustained intervention, when something is done over and over and again. (Music leader)

It's young musician based, then things will be changing according to the different feedback you get from the children, or the feedback they get from you. (Music leader)

I guess, because of the rigidity of a system which is so based around structure and evaluation and valuing through a marker system, there actually is a freedom that comes with a young musician with being part of something which is not based around that kind of system. Oh, you got a C, you got an A, you got a merit, and you got a distinction. You know, it becomes much more about a personalised journey and the value that comes from the self and, therefore, it becomes about them. (Music leader)

Trust and time

The longitudinal nature of the project allowed teachers, music leaders and young musicians to develop positive and trusting relations. This investment had a positive outcome on those young musicians, who, on the whole, were willing to invest in the project. The young musicians had a range of factors which would classify them as 'at risk' of educational exclusion. To break down these barriers the projects had to develop trust within the partnerships. Building trust takes time and was not necessarily an easy process for the teachers or music leaders, this involved getting the school to trust the project aims as well as the young musicians:

It's about ensuring that the culture of the school embraces the arts and that it's not something that is an add-on. (Teacher)

If you're not working with a school that is totally invested in it and are happy to roll with the punches and try out different things and take a bit of a risk with it. If you haven't got that and you haven't got somebody that really values it and really sees that actually, in the end, this is going to be worth it, so any problems you come up against is going to be worth it…without that, you wouldn't be able to do it. (Music provider lead)

I think over time I liked the sessions, I didn't at first but that changed as I got to know them better (Learner)

Trust was developed through groundedness in knowledge, reliability and understanding. These factors enabled the teachers and music leaders to engage with the young musicians in relationships and interactions, which had a level of commitment:

[Music leader] and I have built a really good working relation, grounded in an understanding of each other strengths and that we will support one another and try to help each other develop as practitioners, musicians, teachers. (Teacher)

Because, we are just people working together and, I think, when people feel, you know, you don't need to be from one particular area or background or anything, that we can build these connections based upon mutual respect. Then, suddenly that opens the door for learning and, I think, it's really clear that any of these guys could

have had the same experience in any lesson that they had here, once they believed that they were having a dialogue with the teacher. (Music leader)

Consistency in relations was also an important factor. Many of the music leaders and teachers changed roles throughout the four years, which on occasions did have impact:

We have had a lot of teachers but [music leaders] have been with us all the way through, and I am grateful for that really. (young musician)

Over the four years there has been a lot of staff changes, and that can be unsettling for the pupils and for maintaining the partnership. (Music provider lead)

We've had a complete change, two or three senior leaders that left at the end of last year that were really big into music, and have got some different ones now. I know [music provider] met with the head and explained about the project and where it had come from, but I'm not sure how much they're aware of the project, other than it's in the back of their heads. (Teacher)

Maintenance of trust is therefore important. Aligned with this is the need for some rules or requirements for mutual expectations and obligations. If this is not agreed, negotiated or defined, trust diminishes. This was expressed by one of the music leaders who worked on one of the projects, which did not complete the four years:

The school didn't really engage in anything at all, and it was a very difficult project. I learnt the hard way because there was just myself with all of these kids sat who didn't really want to be there because the school didn't value them, their musical learning, or gave us the space and time to work with them effectively. This impacted trust all round. (Music leader)

Other projects faced similar problems with school engagement and stability:

We had our head in our hands to say, how is this going to work because the school wants what it wants, and we work in a completely different way, how can we convince them that the two can complement each other? I think it was at that point that we had this epiphany to say, that means that this project is placed in exactly the right place. And we will work with them, to show them the impact this can have. (Music provider lead)

I think it's totally sustainable, doable and a really good idea to have long term partnerships. And that's been a totally new experience for us. I think where it doesn't work is where you don't have that teacher or that relationship with the school. For us, Exchanging Notes has been hard work because the music teachers kept changing and the school is in a difficult place. However, the model of, working together, is really good. It has just meant for us that we consistently had to build new relations with new teachers. (Music leader)

For the future, one music provider lead noted their requirements for working with a school:

I think it's definitely a great idea and a great way of working, but it's just so key having that relationship with the school, whether it's through the music teacher or whatever, someone really needs to champion it in the school. Part of the problem with schools at the moment is the teaching staff, they're changing at such a rapid rate. So we've even said to one partnership we are currently looking into developing

'Yeah, we'd really like to do this project but we need to know if you're about to leave in the next year or two'. You need to tell us because it's not going to work if we don't have that. So it's really totally dependent on the relationship I think or putting into place more than one teacher who knows about the project and works on it so that if someone does leave then there is always that connection with the school. (Music provider lead)

Hall et al., (2007:617) identify that the most effective forms of collaboration are when pedagogical practices intertwine, this, they state: '…relies on teachers and artists being willing to work together as partners, to respect one another's expertise and to give time to exploring theoretical standpoints and analysing pupils' work'. We have already discussed the importance of trust, but importantly Hall (ibid) identifies the importance of time given so that this relation can develop and be productive. We know that music teachers in schools give up a lot of their time for extracurricular activities, for some of the Exchanging Notes teachers this also meant finding ways of collaborating with their music provider, even though barriers to their engagement were impacted by school timetables:

Unfortunately I teach my GCSE group at the same time that Exchanging Notes is happening, so I haven't been able to be in the lessons. That's a real shame. But we do talk to one another and I tried to implement some of the work they doing into my classes. One thing I have done which is successful is I have got the Exchanging Notes young musicians to peer teach, including teaching me which has been a great thing. (Teacher)

We have over the year increased the amount of time we spend thinking things through together but we see this as being really important. (Teacher)

Development has been able to happen because we've been given the time and because we've trusted the process. (Music Leader)

Time was a major factor in the projects, not only for building relations between professionals but also with the young musicians:

Students from our area struggle to put in that extra effort and struggle with hobbies, so that was a challenge. Even getting the students acclimatised to that was a challenge. Because whenever anyone else new comes in they're always a bit wary. But because this was a longitudinal project there was time for us to develop that, which out I don't think we would have the outcomes we have got. (Teacher)

The significant thing for us is that sustained contact with the young musician and the relationship that has been built up between the music leader and the young musician and that longevity and the support and learning that can happen on both sides. (Music Leader)

Curriculum thinking and planning

We noted in our year three interim report (Kinsella et al 2017) that mid- and long-term planning is something that the majority of music providers had not considered previously, compared with teachers who are monitored by schools on their planning and classroom

objectives. However, through collaboration new planning processes emerged. One teacher noted the importance of joining formal and non-formal approaches in planning:

> What I see in the Exchanging Notes programme is that ability to bridge all of that. So, it's like you're bringing all of that theory that stays in the classroom that set of music out into their real world. (Teacher)

Schools planning process can often be highly controlled. This can reduce creativity due to imposed intentions outlined by school measurements. Often planning would be content-oriented, producing curriculum documents that prescribed in detail what educational contents teachers could address during educational work, how much time they could spend on each item and what activities they could perform. However, in this quote we can see how, over time these processes changed:

> The work put in to creating equity, a sense of equity between leaders and kids cannot be underestimated. It has taken us, I would say, near the whole time of the project, four years, to reach a point where I think we listen to the kids, take account of the demands of the curriculum but also are informed and led by the non-formal approach of the music leader. (Teacher)

The conditions for a successful methodology for curriculum planning needed to be carefully considered. Part of successful project planning was the involvement of young musicians to ensure that curriculum accounted for their needs, interests and development. This provided a safeguard against exclusion. Importantly, it was not a matter of the dichotomies between formal, non-formal, informal and pedagogy, but knowledge building:

> Yesterday we had a meeting with a few of them (young musicians) because we were talking about their music and music they want to do and the music we're bringing to them. They were like 'Yeah, the music is OK but we want to do our own'. They're included in the decision making for what happens in the sessions. They have to have a voice in it and they have to have some say in what is going on. Without that, it's a bit empty. You can make it prescriptive if you feel like it, but it's not necessarily going to suit. (Music leader)

The projects therefore needed to realign curriculum and planning, not to disadvantage those whom they aimed to advantage:

> I think a big part of it, the success, is the fact that we've had open conversations and we've planned it together, and we've delivered it, it's worked. It's worked and it's exceeded expectations. That's because at the heart of what we plan is for the young musician, their interests and musical aspirations. (Music leader)

> It's interesting because a lot of schools still classically deliver in music education in a way that doesn't really engage a large section of young musicians that are interested in music, so there's, you know, most young musicians are very interested in music but don't see the connection between their interest in music and their music lessons. (Music leader)

> One of the most difficult things working in partnership with the school is the approach to delivery. The ethos and often the outcomes are exactly the same, we are looking

to help people and wanting them to achieve. But often school protocols hinder. We need to try to find a model of working, I thought that there was too much constraint and that we needed more freedom to let the young musicians go. (Music leader)

The space that we created was different to classroom music, it wasn't about following a set curriculum but more open. (Teacher)

4.2 TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE PRACTICES BECOME EMBEDDED IN THE MUSIC ORGANISATION, THE SCHOOL AND BEYOND THE PROJECT?

Learning and effective practice has been embedded in schools and their music partner organisations to varying extents across the Exchanging Notes projects. One central element of the project was to investigate what partnership between formal and non-formal organisations could look like, and to consider their value for musical and educational outcomes for young musicians. In this section, we explore the variety of different elements that made for a successful partnership, but also the challenges posed across the four years. We also investigate the opportunities for development, teaching and learning that were offered.

A partnership does not necessarily involve collaboration

Throughout the interviews with teachers and music leaders various notions and outcomes of partnership have been described:

> I feel very much part of the school's music delivery. I think it feels very much like partnership. Having conversations with the SLT, having conversations with the actual music department themselves. (Music Leader)

> The work you have to put in to creating equity, a sense of equity between leaders, teachers and kids cannot be underestimated. (Music leader)

> Development has been able to happen because we've been given the time and because we've trusted the process. (Music leader)

> I'm aware that we can be quite isolated in our music room. (Teacher)

> I think the project has changed my practice hugely, I don't really recognise myself. (Music leader)

> I realise actually I can apply to my own experience in ways that I don't really expect it. So, as a person, as a musician, whether I would regard myself as a music leader or facilitator, or just somebody who is playing, that's quite profound, and not something that I would have expected to happen in a school, so that's nice. (Music leader)

> I think this project has given them a different appreciation for what it's like as a classroom teacher. (Teacher)

> I think there's still some work to be done in terms of what I really imagine of being a complete co-delivery model. (Teacher)

> We're coming into their world, we don't want to be…and I have this in anywhere I work. I'm not interested in coming in and taking away from the work that they're doing. We want to be playing into it and supporting it. (Music leader)

These differing experiences of 'partnership' have made the research team question the term itself and whether there are different modalities present within Exchanging Notes. Building on the data we have from this work, we have come to consider two definitions:

> Definition 1: Together but separate

The notion of partnership requires a relationship which is based on a commitment between two or more parties who join together to achieve a common goal and combine their respective expertise to accomplish this outcome. However, as Hallam et al (2010) note, relationships can be in the form of a cooperative, or any one of a number of partners could be a 'lead' person or organisation. This notion of 'lead' can mean that projects form partnerships, but, due to hierarchies, power relations that are unequal limit collaboration and do not result in shared discourse.

Definition 2: Collaborative and inclusive

Partnership with collaborative decision-making processes is a more inclusive way of working that incorporates a broader range of people involved in young musicians' musical and educational wellbeing, who come together to work towards outcomes, which are learner focused. In this partnership, learning is shared and developed by all involved, including the young musicians. Ultimately this approach led to positive outcomes for young musicians but also offers the potential for sustainable legacy of learning in schools and music organisations.

All partners worked together and participated in a range of activities that moved towards addressing the aims and objectives. The power relationships in the second definition of partnership are more equal. As Wolf (2008: 90) notes 'in the best partnerships, teachers and artists become colleagues, collaborating on projects that will encourage creativity based on the expertise of all involved and focused on the children's talents and needs. A similar view is noted by one music leader who stated:

I think quite often arts and music projects can arrive for a couple of months and the young musician will see those as the cool guys coming in to do something really exciting, but nothing to do with the rest of the school. That's the opposite of what I would want. I want to build connections. (Music leader)

Another music leader notes:

Partnerships makes me think of organisations coming together or people working that out. Of course that's collaborative, really collaborative and that's what makes it work. There's also something about partnerships which suggests that one person is bringing a specific thing and another person is bringing another specific thing. So it feels like it's almost like a sharing and a kind of communication of a perspective in a way. Then that becomes collaborative, but maybe the initiation is more about...there's a kind of reason for people to connect and there's a kind of need for a bit of understanding from both sides...and all of that's present in collaboration (Music leader)

School constraints

Within schools, some teachers and learners may recognise the constraints posed by school structures, but exist within them. Often practices become internalised, are reproduced daily and unquestioned. In partnership work, these practices can also be internalised by the partner organisation, because no one sees them as not being legitimate. There were two main forms of unquestioned practice in Exchanging Notes, which were either teacher or music leader focused. The first of these related to school leadership teams who exercised

power and control on the teacher. Some leadership teams prevented teachers from taking part in the music partnership activities. They also pre-selected CPD opportunities for teachers driven by Ofsted and exam objectives, reducing teachers' experiences to examination and performative outcomes:

> Due to timetables I can't be in the sessions, it is frustrating but I try to engage in the project in other ways, like after school and externally. (Teacher)

> I am timetabled to teach at the same time, so I can't be in the sessions, I've tried to change it but there is nothing I can do (Teacher)

> For me, Exchanging Notes is the only CPD I get in terms of music. In school, CPD is targeted around Ofsted, but for a practical subject it's not always applicable, most of it is talking about literacy. Yes, I'll support that, but you're left there thinking as a musician I don't really know what school has given me to say and how they want to develop you. (Teacher)

In addition, there were instances where performative and assessment regimes dominated practice, denying music leaders the opportunity to explore non-formal pedagogies within the classroom:

> I just want it to be right for them (the young musicians) and I really want to do the best for them so every time people (from the organisation) are like 'you've been spending ages on that lesson plan' or 'you've been spending ages on the term overview' and I'm like, because I want it to be designed in a way that they get the most out of it. I feel like, I don't know, it's made me really critical of the things that I do. It's made me think about the way in which I teach, the way in which I talk to them, the way I relate to them, what things I know, what things I don't know, how can I do this, how can I do this better, how can I do this with that without them feeling like it's too much. When I go home that is all that is on my mind. Did I do that well? How can I make this better? over and over… (Music leader)

> Most of the time I enjoy it, though there are some times when I don't, and it's normally when I'm trying… I've met an issue that I'm not used to, usually something that's more school focused and I'm kind of like how do I fix this? But often I don't know how fix it or approach it, I've never done it before…(Music leader)

In conversations with music leaders about school assessment, performativity and planning mechanisms throughout the project they stated:

> ….it mutes me and then I'm like what do I do with this? I would like to do it like this, but I can't. I don't feel like I should be doing it that [the schools] way. (Music leader)

> …I'm not able to tick the boxes and I feel like I'm becoming the tick box person. I don't like it [Laughter]. But you see in my other sessions outside of this, I'm not a tick box. I'm a 'how good do we feel afterwards?', and 'how much did you enjoy doing that?'. (Music leader)

> …it's [assessment and planning] always on my mind. Are they learning enough according to the school for me to do those things I would like to do with them and be able to point out what things they did better according to the school? I do think that's important but using music as a way for them to learn that. If you're going to become a

> musician you need to learn how to work with people. And so it's those little things that I feel are important, but then I'm not always sure how do I sell this to the school? And then I'm not always, I don't know…I don't know… it's a challenge. (Music leader)

The power exerted through these constraints drew attention away from the pedagogic aspirations of the Exchanging Notes programme. They enforced teaching and learning approaches, which were not only enacted by the teachers and music leaders, but young musicians. We know that building partnerships is difficult, this was particularly evident within the first year when many of the projects were impacted by competing agendas and imbalances of power. Issues of trust and mistrust were prevalent in the beginnings of the projects, as evidenced in these reflections from teachers and music leaders:

> It's not been a success at all. Hurtful, I suppose because I feel like we have been able to offer something to the school and to the young musicians, but I'm not sure if that's a two-way process. (Music leader)

> …it takes time to build up the trust and I think that at the beginning we didn't know where we both stood. (Teacher)

> …it just didn't work with one of the music leaders, we just didn't gel. But the new music leader we are working with is different and I think we are both on a similar wavelength. (Teacher)

> … I was coming from one perspective, they were coming from another and it all just takes times for those things to be ironed out. (Music leader)

Instead of seeing things from different viewpoints, these early relationships were often premised on defence of practices. These power imbalances, conflicting interests, priorities and accountabilities, all evident in the reflections above, were a barrier to communication. The projects need to create open dialogue situations, premised on rules of engagement, which were completely free from coercive influences. These ideal speech situations needed to begin between key individuals, most notably the teachers, music leaders and young musicians:

> … It's about sitting down and being open with one another. It's about constructive criticism but that doesn't come straight away. We both observed each other's practice and then were able to understand each other better. (Music leader)

Over time relations evolved where trust in the individual, their commitment and capabilities, were shared. This resulted in pedagogical reciprocity, where teaching approaches were observed, reflected on, and constructively critiqued.

When partnerships break down

Exchanging Notes began as ten projects. At the end of the four years, seven projects remained. A significant aspect of learning from Exchanging Notes has been from projects that did not continue. To explore reasons that affected the discontinuation of projects, the research team engaged each partner organisation in interviews; this included the schools, the music organisations and hubs. We can report some key themes from these interviews.

There were varying degrees of understanding from school partners concerning their understanding of the project aims, aspirations, and their responsibility as project partners, as highlighted in these quotes from music organisations:

> We had conversations about the projects with the schools and I think you get a lot of nodding heads, you think you're getting an understanding, a buy-in and commitment and then can turn out to be more superficial when you get further down the line. I think that's often when things break down. (Music leader)

> I also think school buy-in was a problem…I don't think the teachers were always seeing the relevance. I think there were varying degrees of understanding from the schools. (Music leader)

School timetabling and value of the arts in schools also conflicted with project aims:

> In the original bid, the school had said that we would deliver three hours of curriculum time and four hours out. That was actually physically impossible because with the new principal coming into the school he had reduced the amount of arts provision in the school down to two hours, so and we were struggling to get any engagement out of school hours at all. (Music leader)

> Unfortunately the arts are just not valued. (Music leader)

Conflicting objectives were a continuous challenge for these projects. School curriculum and aims did not necessarily readily align with those of the music organisation, nor were they resolved collaboratively in a way that offered the young musicians opportunities to become musicians.

> We were trying to meet the curriculum demands and sort of try to meet their assessment demands as well of what they needed, to have a target in every session and all of those kinds of things, but then we needed to benefit from the project as well so we needed to meet our objectives. (Music leader)

> It was getting reduced and their budgets were cut and all these different things and I just, they didn't seem to value it as a subject. (Music leader)

One project discussed the need to consider the types of partnerships they form and engage with these partners on their roles and responsibilities:

> We need to be more selective on who we partner with… (Music leader)

> A real partnership should be about consultation, on everything. On how we engage with the children. We can't go in there all guns blazing. They've got all the knowledge about how the culture of that school works. Every school is different. (Music leader)

Having school buy-in and trust is central to building an environment for creative collaboration where risks can be taken and new approaches trialled:

> If you're not working with a school that is totally invested in it and are happy to roll with the punches and try out different things and take a bit of a risk with it. If you haven't got that and you haven't got somebody that really values it and really sees that actually, in the end, this is going to be worth it, so any problems you come up against is going to be worth it…without that, you wouldn't be able to do it. (Music leader)

Relational Ontologies: When partnership moves towards collaboration

Human inter-personal relations are complex; especially those in educational contexts that are further surrounded by cultural, political, and social webs that impact interaction. The notion of relational ontologies places human relationships, in this case between teacher, music leader and young musicians, at the centre of educational exchanges. Learning and development is not a product of solitary experience but driven by relations with others who share their knowledge. In Exchanging Notes, this was born out of co-teaching and learning where teachers, music leaders and young musicians shared their expertise and thus expanded the learning opportunities for all involved. Learning, through a relational ontology, is therefore more than merely rote learning, informing or passing on knowledge, but an activation of curiosity. This is noted by these teachers and music leaders:

> I feel like, through this process of developing and understanding and reflecting upon what is actually happening, and learning how to communicate that, is really, really invaluable for us. (Music leader)

> …it is much more…it's much harder, in a way, to, kind of, unpack the specifics of what we are doing but we constantly question one another. Why are you doing this? And for what reason? What's the learning? I would have done it like this, what do you think? (Teacher)

> I think the programme was able to be changed and adapted, and that was really valuable, you know, that we weren't held to account for every single outcome we said we were going to achieve, but there's been this kind of real understanding of changing, an ever-changing kind of context, that it's flexible. (Music leader)

Part of the development of a relational ontology was the inclusion of the young musicians' voice as pedagogical change makers:

> …we build connections based upon mutual respect. Then, suddenly that opens the door for learning. I think it's really clear that they (young musicians) are having a dialogue with the teacher and me. (Music leader)

Developing a relational ontology is not an easy accomplishment, nor is the space of relationality easy to occupy; it takes courage and requires risk-taking. To exist in a space where questioning was accepted, critical relations had to be at the centre of pedagogic practices. Throughout the four years critical relations between teachers, music leaders, wider school staff and the research team were developed. As noted above, this moved critique from beyond reflection in and on practice but towards honest re-appraisals that were sometimes uncomfortable, but enhanced teaching and learning:

> It was hard the first time we did an observation and got feedback. It's easy for me because I get them in school so its run of the mill, I know what the crack is, but when as a group we were observed, it was weird because we never had that before. The feeling was always like we're all in this together. (Teacher)

As those who were responsible for learning, the teachers and music leaders had to immerse themselves into the life worlds of their collaborators:

> I feel now at the end of the project that I have a really deep understanding of the demands of the curriculum and how to work with schools in the future. (Music leader)

And as one music teacher notes:

> I have learnt a lot about their (music organisation) practice and their approaches to teaching and learning that has come directly back into my classroom. I think it's also helped the pupils see me in a different light, they know now that I'm not just a teacher but I am also a musician too. (Teacher)

The more teachers learnt about non-formal pedagogies the closer they were to understanding and enacting these practices, and conversely, music leaders' knowledge of formal pedagogies developed, moving them both closer to aligned understandings. This was important for the creation of meaningful learning environments.

More inclusive school environments

There was evidence that Exchanging Notes helped develop schools' own inclusion policies, in addition to more inclusive approaches to pedagogy and assessment that have already been discussed. Some of these approaches are described here:

> …it contributes to our diversity policy and our inclusion policy. We look at engagement and assessment differently, thinking about the whole educational development of the child. (Teacher)

> I think what Exchanging Notes has done is to provide an evidence base for the instinct so many of us held, which is the impact of music on our learners. And that's been based on our experience, ongoing through Exchanging Notes, and witnessing it in practice. (Music leader)

> I think it's provided us that actual, legitimate data that is really seeing the impact, and I think it's also by making it a focus, it's been about demystifying the specialism of music and demystifying what inclusion means. It's actually about acknowledging what people are already doing, and how our children communicate and express themselves. It's just enabled people to bridge the gap and not feel like they have got to be a music specialist to actually realise its impacts and seeing and observing and crediting the impact. (Teacher)

Redefining assessment practices that are inclusive was explored in particular by one of the projects. This Headteacher emphasised the importance of having a wider sense of what assessment for inclusive practice actually looks like for young musicians with diverse and complex needs:

> Sometimes, you know, the day-to-day life of school can get in the way. But I think on most things, the life of school does get in the way. But I can't think that I've felt an obstacle. I think the data itself has been a challenge because of the very nature of our pupils. And what data means in the world of PMLD/SEND is quite a challenge. And because by the very nature of the young musician, you're not going to see significant change in development even over a longitudinal study of four years, so it's very much on that personal rate and development. I think the approach…has been to say that actually the softer data, the anecdotal and the impact statements on the people who were involved have been given a higher weighting than the actual numbers. I just think that whole demystifying this process is the bit that will just carry on here. (Headteacher)

During the course of the Exchanging Notes project the Youth Music Quality Framework went through a revision process, and this resulted in a renewed focus on how it can be used in contexts where a young musician may have complex or diverse needs or disabilities.[1] Drake Music, one of the Exchanging Notes project organisations, worked alongside Youth Music to adapt the quality framework so that it was more suitable for understanding a diverse range of communication and musical needs. They took the original quality framework and built upon it by adding extra information offering practical insights and suggestions for making music with young musicians with additional needs.

The interlocutor

The word 'interlocutor' derives from the Latin *interloqui*, meaning 'to speak between'. For some of the projects, a project manager was employed to coordinate the partnership. This often involved activities such as event organisation, arranging timetables, observing practice, planning and administration. They also talked to teachers and music leaders separately, receiving feedback and offered feedback to the school on progress. As one music provider lead stated:

> I see my role as maintaining and managing the relationship between the school and us. I've been to meetings with the Headteacher and school governors as well as talk to the music hub about this work and the wider music community. (Music project lead)

One key aspect of this role was their distance from direct teaching. This distinctive position blurred the boundaries of insider and outsider. Having been involved in education and music they were not absolute outsiders. Their appreciation of both the role of the teacher and the music leader allowed them to relate to participants with empathy and a shared level of understanding. The project managers had to successfully use both formal and non-formal language to communication and interact as well as be technically and socially competent, and promote teamwork so that the partnerships could dynamically and creatively work towards the objectives. We can see here in this quote from a teacher the complexity of relations that needed unpicking, and that the project manager was central in the process:

> I think a lot of it stems down to a fundamental misunderstanding of what the project was or what their role was, or what the school's role was, or what the teacher's role was, and perhaps they saw it more, perhaps I'm putting words into their mouths, but more as they're coming in to do something that's going to improve music. What I saw the project as was something that was going to be collaboratively planned and collaboratively delivered and we needed to learn from each other's best practices. (Name) really helped us to begin conversations about this. (Teacher)

Senior leadership role

We know that in the seven schools that saw the project through to its completion, Exchanging Notes had impact both within and beyond music in these schools to varying degrees. Most significantly, the partnerships that had the biggest impact were supported by head teachers and senior leadership teams. These senior leadership teams were not only advocates for music, but a driving force for encouraging and having enthusiasm for partnership work. We can see this in their comments from interviews:

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[1] The revised framework is to be found here: https://network.youthmusic.org.uk/do-review-improve-quality-framework-music-education

I'm passionate about music and I'm passionate about the impact it can have. (Headteacher)

One Headteacher continued to explore this in light of the current performative and assessment regimes:

It's really difficult, because there is so much pressure on schools for children to perform in maths and English and when inspectors come in to schools, like ours, they want to see data on children's maths, English and science. That's what they're interested in. (Headteacher)

Another Headteacher also noted this, and observed the importance of keeping music as a subject in the curriculum:

It is our job to make sure that it is a priority and it's not lost in the day to day running of the school. To make sure that music happens regularly, that it doesn't get overwhelmed by everything else that happens in a school day or a school term and to give it that proper priority and the time that's needed. I think that's our job. (Headteacher)

Some of the head teachers were also aware of the responsibility and commitment needed to be involved in a project like this:

I think if you're going to make a decision to take something on, then you invest in it. (Headteacher)

I think probably you need to be sure when you're taking on a project that it's attuned with other things you're trying to achieve in the school. You know, that you're not sort of just keen to get some free funding for something, and that actually it ties in with other things that are going on that the school is trying to achieve. (Headteacher)

One of the key findings from the Headteacher interviews is the increased importance of music in schools, along with the importance of the project for embedding music within the wider school community:

I think that one of the keys to success is that it is so embedded in the school. It has enhanced the school. And I think it's enhanced the lives of the young musicians, not just those that were on the project. (Headteacher)

Another core strength of the project has been partnership and collaboration between teachers and music leaders. Their shared pedagogical approaches and developing understanding was noted by one head teacher who stated:

I think it's about partnership. I think that. I would say that's the absolute strength. [Music leader] is just part of the team and that's how they are referred, so that'll be quite strange to think of not having them popping in on a Tuesday and…mm, haven't really thought of that. It's quite odd. (Headteacher)

For many classroom music teachers it is often the case that they can be the only music teacher working within a school (Daubney and Mackrill, 2018). The Exchanging Notes project opened up communication with others working within the field, which was not only beneficial for young musicians, but offered dynamic conversations and CPD for teachers. One Headteacher stated:

> One of the major things for me is the confidence that it has given my music lead, who is isolated within school, because they are the only music person, as it were. I think the project has really given him a huge amount of confidence to deliver what I think is now a really strong curriculum, and to develop that. (Headteacher)

This was further considered by another Headteacher who explored the notion of cultural capital, not only for learners but the teachers:

> The range of music and that expertise and the fact that they've got so many other contacts that you can exploit, if you know what I mean? Or the children can get an experience of. The cultural capital is massive. I don't think people necessarily always understand how much subjects like music, bring to the cultural shift in a school. That's really important. (Headteacher)

At the heart of the project is the young musician, and their personal educational and musical progression. The head teachers commented on the social as well as educational benefits of the project:

> I think one of the big things is the project has expanded our thinking in relation to what we now see children can do. I think we were quite narrow before. (Headteacher)

One Headteacher noted the difference in pedagogical approaches between in school and out of school provision stating:

> It was being delivered by practitioners who were used to more project type work, and then they were having to teach in a model close to what a teacher has to deal with. In other words, you know, you have to teach all-comers, not necessarily everybody wants to be there. If you're teaching a short-term summer project, obviously people are self-selecting, they want to be there, they're invested in it being a success. Whereas if you're just a classroom teacher, you don't have that. The students are kind of forced to be there. Well, you know, in the nicest possible way, but they don't have a choice. (Headteacher)

The research team were also interested to explore the Headteachers' perceptions of their role within the project. We know that a number of the schools embraced the project, and that Exchanging Notes has had a significant impact on music within the school. One driving force behind this was often the Headteachers' own enthusiasm for music and the arts. They, as leaders, served as ambassadors for the music within the school:

> I'm a real advocate for music, so I play the piano and flute and I can play the organ. I've always believed that music isn't just about being able to play a musical instrument, it's about all the other things that music brings you. I put quite a significant proportion of my pupil premium budget into ensuring that all the Year 7s…because we're over 60 per cent pupil premium…had access to free music lessons. So, that was something that I was very passionate about. (Headteacher)

One Headteacher continued to explore this in light of the current performative and assessment regimes, in which schools are made accountable:

> It's about ensuring that the culture of the school embraces the arts and that it's not something that is an add-on… It's about, for me as a leader of a school, to ensure

that we balance that [maths, English and science] with making sure that all those other rich cultural things are included. That's my role, to make sure that we keep the balance there. (Headteacher)

The projects recognised that SLT were central to success and thus long-term impact within their school ultimately rested with them:

I just feel that the people we need to impact are at the top of the hierarchical threads and I feel that the people who are in touch with this landscape already, you know, it's preaching to the converted, in a way. I feel, like, it's the headmasters the headmistresses it's the, kind of, governing bodies of educational systems, it's the policy makers, these are the people that need to be informed of this work. I hope that what we have done here is a resounding, commentary about the fact that this is about music, this is definitely about music and it's definitely about music as an important part of education. (Music leader)

So, I think just having the Director of Music there, as part of their dialogue and their evaluations, is probably going to have had an impact throughout. (Teacher)

I'm not sure it's (music) a priority. That's the feeling I get, which is a shame. (Music leader)

Aligned to the successes of the project one Headteacher noted the increased awareness of the impact music has, not only academically but socially, for young musicians:

I think it's about a new-found understanding that…of the power of music for our school community. So, everybody in the school, whether they're involved in music or not, have seen the impact that music has had on our students. It is actually quite profound. So, I think the legacy is that people now understand that that's a really important tool, in terms of peoples' learning, peoples' communication, peoples' wellbeing and peoples' self-esteem, because they have seen it for themselves. (Headteacher)

However, some head teachers were not engaged, nor did they have much by way of insight to the projects, as noted here:

I am not sure exactly about the learning but I have been to the concerts. (Headteacher)

When asked 'Exchanging Notes finishes at the end of this academic year, what do you think you might take forwards into next year as a result?' some of the head teachers responded:

I can't answer that one, sorry. I've no idea. (Headteacher)

I don't know, you would have to ask the head of music. (Headteacher)

Relational Ontologies and Ethics

Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Goals of Education) states that: 'Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest.' (United Nations, 1989). Young musicians therefore have a right to an education that develops their talents and abilities and to be encouraged to explore a diverse, personal and

culturally relevant music curriculum. In many education systems mechanisms of control often exclude many children and young people from music education. An ethical approach therefore requires an understanding of the role of music education in the wider curriculum, its value going beyond performance or school measurement to its potential for personal and social transformation.

This section of the report has considered the challenges and successes of partnership working, in particular the findings have interrogated and explored the roles and responsibilities of all involved in the partnership, and, ultimately, the collaborations that follow. Within all this, ethical approaches to partnership have been at the centre of successful projects.

4.3 THE IMPACT OF EXCHANGING NOTES ON EDUCATIONAL AND BROADER DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

The opportunity to offer a four-year musical programme of activities and opportunities for young musicians is unusual in the arts sector. In Exchanging Notes, the majority of young musicians have been able to engage in constant provision across this time period, others have disengaged and then re-engaged, and a few have left the project altogether due to contextual factors often beyond the control of the schools and young musicians. For many of the young musicians, musical skills have been developed throughout this time period, along with wide ranging educational and social outcomes.

This part of our analysis draws together multiple sources of data to analyse the outcomes for the young musicians. Our data sources were:

- Attainment and attendance data provided by schools
- Perception surveys completed by music teachers, music leaders, and young musicians
- Interview data from reflections with music teachers, music leaders, young musicians, and school leaders

Through the collection of this mixture of quantitative and qualitative data, we were able to identify and explore these outcomes. In broad terms, these fall into three main areas: educational, social and emotional, and musical.

4.3.1 Contextual overview of educational and broader developmental outcomes

Educational outcomes

One of the ways that the Exchanging Notes research investigated educational outcomes was by using data that schools are already required to report on, specifically attendance data alongside literacy and numeracy attainment data. Earlier in this report we discussed the issues that performativity is having on school accountability in England. This is an important factor to bear in mind in the context and definition of educational outcomes. Educational outcomes as measured by schools are heavily informed by governmental accountability measures such as the EBacc and Progress 8:

> Progress 8 was introduced in 2016 as the headline indicator of school performance determining the floor standard. It aims to capture the progress that pupils in a school make from the end of primary school to the end of key stage 4. It is a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the progress of other pupils nationally with similar prior attainment. Every increase in every grade a pupil achieves will attract additional credit in the performance tables. (DfE, 2019:9)

Such accountability measures have been criticised for causing a decline in music in schools (Daubney and Mackrill 2018, Savage & Barnard 2019). In addition, as we have seen elsewhere in the report – use of a relatively narrow range of success indicators can limit school perceptions of 'success'. Particularly at the start of the programme, this impacted on how Exchanging Notes as a programme was viewed but also in some cases, it affected school or teacher perceptions of young people's capabilities. As noted in our interviews with school staff:

> I think one of the big things is the project has expanded our thinking in relation to what we now see children can do. I think we were quite narrow before. (Headteacher)

> … it's been a reminder that it is possible to get through to even those most challenging kids and also to challenge their musical skills and their learning skills that they can do, even more complex things than you might sometimes assume that they can do. (Teacher)

EBacc and Progress 8 accountability measures could be said to have particularly negative implications for the young people Exchanging Notes was designed to help, i.e. those at risk of educational disengagement, low attainment or exclusion. Leckie & Goldstein (2017: 194) note that:

> Concerns have also been raised about increased anxiety and stress among schools and pupils, as well as pressures on oversubscribed schools to 'cream skim' pupils who are likely to do well on these tests and select out those likely to do poorly.

There is recent evidence to suggest that this selecting out process is indeed a reality. An Education Select Committee July 2018 voiced 'concerns about the over-exclusion of pupils' and 'an alarming increase in 'hidden' exclusions' caused by a 'school environment [which] means that schools are struggling to support pupils in their schools which is then putting pressure on alternative providers'. This in turn can impact on access to and quality of a young person's music education:

> Because we are in the inclusion unit we don't get to do music that much. (Young Musician).

Social and emotional learning

Humphrey (2013: 9) lists three key components of the benefits of what he terms "social and emotional learning" (SEL), these are:

- Preventive utility, whereby SEL helps to 'inoculate' children and young people from a variety of negative outcomes, such as emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- SEL promotes a range of desirable outcomes, such as increased social competence.
- These two properties are thought to make children more effective learners, thus increasing academic attainment.

These three interrelated points are significant in the ways in which Exchanging Notes has been both conceptualised and operationalised. The impact on social and educational aspects of learning on the core cohort of children and young people is what lies at the heart of this research.

Alongside the SEL classifications, Humphrey sounds a cautionary note relating to the impact claims of intervention programmes:

> …the view of SEL as a universal remedy is complicated by several factors. SEL programmes are extremely heterogeneous. They vary greatly in their nature, audience, settings and expected outcomes. This makes prescriptive claims about their benefits rather problematic, especially given the variety and different forms they

may take. It is fair to say that no single SEL programme has been proven to improve all (or even most) of the outcomes listed above. This does not stop the claims being made.... Humphrey (2013: 10)

Whilst Exchanging Notes was not explicitly designed as a SEL intervention programme, there were many social and emotional developments that accrued across the course of the four years. The quotation from Humphrey cautions that any claims made need to be reviewed carefully against the research evidence provided, which we have attempted to address throughout this report. It is not our aim to present a victory narrative; we explore the successes as well as the challenges.

The nature of social and emotional outcomes under investigation is a contested arena in terms of the variety of definitions that exist and in particular that of wellbeing. In their systematic review for the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), Blank et al. (2009:5) discuss the notion of wellbeing, which has close links to what is being investigated here. They include:

- Emotional wellbeing (including happiness and confidence, and the opposite of depression/anxiety)
- Psychological wellbeing (including resilience, mastery, confidence, autonomy, attentiveness/involvement, and the capacity to manage others and to problem solve)
- Social wellbeing (good relationships with others, and the opposite of conduct disorder, delinquency, interpersonal violence and bullying).

These are all highly significant in the ways in which Exchanging Notes was working to address social aspects of learning. Indeed, as we will see, many of these key phrases that Blank et al employ were used by music organisations and school teachers to discuss the effects of the interventions that they were working with.

Barriers to learning

The Exchanging Notes programme was targeted at young people at risk of educational exclusion, disengagement, or low attainment. The young people experienced a number of separate, although in some cases interrelated aspects that placed them 'at risk'. These included:

- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) and having Education, Health and Care Plans
- Looked after young musicians
- Young musicians learning in inclusion units
- Young musicians from areas of significant economic deprivation
- Young musicians with challenging home circumstances.

At the outset of the programme there were several barriers preventing their participation. Gorard et al. (2006) identified three types of barriers to educational participation, these being; situational, institutional and dispositional. Although Gorard et al.'s work is based on challenges for engaging in higher education, their framework is relevant for Exchanging Notes.

Examples of situational barriers for Exchanging Notes included:

- Previous musical engagement and opportunities;
- The ability of the curriculum to meet the needs of the young musician;
- Opportunities for musical interventions inside and outside of school;
- Cost and time needed for participation, inside and outside of school;
- Geographical location of where suitable musical activity takes place;
- Lack of suitable musical activity taking place at all.

Institutional barriers included:

- Assessment and performativity measures that did not offer flexibility;
- Prescribed and institutionalised notions of what it means to be a learner;
- Curriculum timetabling and structures;
- Lack of suitable resources;
- Lack of knowledge of local music organisations offering different approaches to music making and participation;
- School isolation from informal music making that was taking place in the locality.

Dispositional barriers included:

Young people

- Lack of motivation and attitude to learning;
- Absence of suitable opportunities or poor previous experiences of education;
- Perceived deficiency in music due to not playing an instrument or musical skills.

Teachers

- Close focus on the performativity agenda to the exclusion of other music making potentials;
- Being unaware of non-formal music making activity in the locality;
- Being isolated from non-formal pedagogies in music.

Music leaders

- Being unable to gain ready access to schools;
- Being unaware of school performativity agendas;
- Being unaware of the importance of articulating learning when in discussion with SLT.

This brief consideration of the theoretical and contextual underpinnings of our analysis provides some insight into how we have analysed and communicated the research data to tell the in-depth story of what was taking place.

4.3.2 Data and methods

The government and schools attach great importance to the use of data to raise standards. High quality data is seen to be key to monitoring performance of both young people and their teachers and is a means for identifying areas for improvement. Effective school data can promote self-evaluation and high standards of teaching and learning including; identifying achievement and target setting, tracking performance and progress, identifying

underachieving groups, narrowing achievement gaps and celebrating success. However, as we have seen, much data collected by schools does not focus on the young person's wider developmental needs and aspirations. Instead, such data focuses on institutional and national measurements, which contains a limited set of explanatory variables that do not account for wider aspects of educational experience, such as social, emotional, and wellbeing factors.

When designing the methods for this evaluation, the research team wanted to collect a range of data that came from different stakeholders: young people, teachers, schools, music organisations, music leaders, and policy makers. It was important to reflect on the diverse range of young people's circumstances who would be engaging in Exchanging Notes. In order to address these aspects, a mixed methodology was chosen so that the research aims could be interpreted through a multitude of perspectives.

The rationale to collect attendance, numeracy and literacy data was decided in consultation with schools because they were already required to collect this data for other purposes. This was considered to be the most consistent and readily-accessible form of progress monitoring across the projects. All the mainstream schools held data on these three aspects of learning, meaning it could be collected in the same manner across all the schools simultaneously.

A different approach was chosen for the PMLD setting, where other measures were collected based on young musicians' communication and sensory development. Because of the unique nature of this setting in the Exchanging Notes project this different approach was arrived at after careful consultation, and explored in depth the educational and musical progression of the young musicians involved. Throughout the four years, it became increasing evident that the mixed methodology was crucial to understanding the complexity of the young musicians' experiences and progress educationally and musically. It is therefore important to note the potential limitations of school data being viewed in isolation.

Schools attainment data is based on normal distribution, which does not take into account the young musicians' ranges of prior learning experiences, the diversity of their lives, or the challenges they faced both in and out of school which affect their educational experiences, progress and attainment. This is noted by Gorard and Siddiqui (2019:7) who observed:

> In general, younger, poorer, male, FSM-eligible (or missing FSM data), SEN, and White pupils (or with missing ethnicity) were predicted lower KS4 scores from their first year at school onward, when all other variables are held constant. All other groups had better average attainment outcomes, including all recorded ethnic minorities and those not known to have English as a first language. None of these categories is perfect either in theory or in the allocation of cases, and there may be pupils with poor English, or who are younger in their year, misclassified by their schools as having SEN, and so on. ... poverty and learning challenges are key determinants and need to be emphasized more in policy, practice, and school "performance" measures.

Throughout this section of the report, we will therefore discuss the findings from all the data sets in conjunction with one another. This triangulated approach increases the trustworthiness and validity of the data and strengthens the quality and credibility of the findings, and is especially important in Exchanging Notes as it worked with young musicians

with complex needs. Reliance on any single data source would have presented inherent limitations.

During the course of the research, emergent analysis of data was shared with project partners at national meetings, as well as in interviews for further reflection and consideration. It was important to discuss the emergent findings in collaboration with and between each of the projects, so as to best represent the differing understandings and meanings of success from the teachers, music leaders and young musicians various perspectives, and how by working in partnership, a re-framing of what educational and musical outcomes are could be critiqued and explored.

The detailed analysis that follows provides new insights into a raft of participatory, teaching, learning, social, and other outcomes for the participants, to which we now turn our attention.

4.3.3 Educational outcomes

In this section, we explore the wider implications of the project beyond the music sessions, and the impact the project had on young peoples' engagement in the project and in school, on their attendance, and their literacy and numeracy attainment.

Engagement in education

A key indicator of the educational engagement of the young musicians can be seen in the responses to the perception surveys from music leaders, music teachers, and young musicians. Looking first at the perceptions of music leaders and music teachers, both of whom were asked to rate the extent to which the young musician:

- Tries hard in music sessions

- Views the project as worthwhile

- Enjoys the music project

Respondents were asked to respond to these statements on a Likert scale (1-lowest, to 5-highest). We were able to collect data from music teachers and music leaders for 70 young musicians (just under half of the core cohort). From young people themselves we collected 51 responses. The chart below shows the mean average perception scores for music leaders and music teachers at the end of the project, compared with the scores collected in the first term.
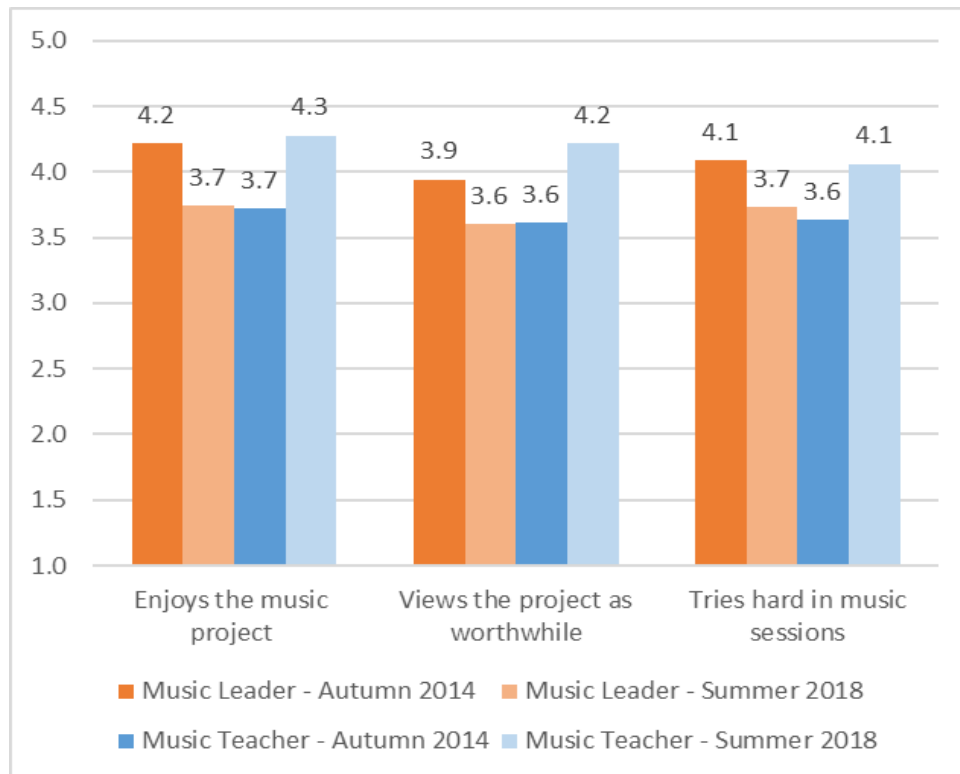
Figure 1 - Comparisons of music leader and music teacher perception scores for educational engagement

It is clear that both groups felt that educational engagement remained high across the project. However, the data shows clear differences between the music leaders and music teacher perceptions between the two data points. Whilst the teachers noted a clear improvement in scores between the beginning and end points, the music leaders suggested a decrease in engagement over time. The decrease perceived by the music leaders is consistent with the young musicians' own perceptions. We have already discussed the close relations that were forged between the music leaders and the young people; the fact that their perception scores are closely aligned could suggest that the music leaders had a sophisticated knowledge of the young musicians'' engagement and were attuned to their feelings about the project. It could also be related to teachers having a more informed perspective of whole school engagement, in comparison to the music leaders who may only see engagement in the music lesson:

> …he's [Music Teacher] got a bigger perspective, you know, interacts with the students, these participants, every day all through the week. (Music leader)

The young musicians were asked to rate (on the same 5-point Likert scale) their response to the questions:

- I am enjoying the Exchanging Notes project
- I am learning new things
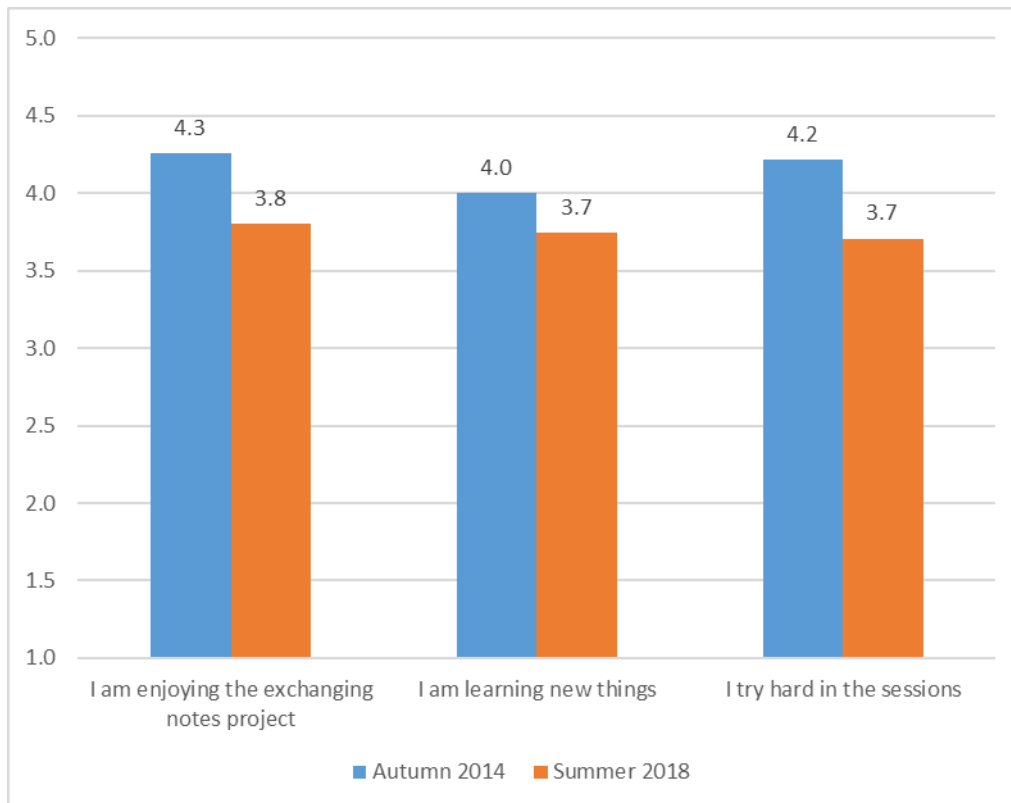- I try hard in the sessions.

Figure 2 - Average perception survey scores from the young musicians

Their scores are positive overall, ranging between 3.7 and 4.3 on the scale. However, there is a decrease of up to 0.5 points between the two data points. If the data from the music leaders and young musicians is to be taken at face value, then the young musicians' engagement with the project decreased over time. This may be indicative of the pressure upon young people as they moved closer to their GCSEs with increased stress making Exchanging Notes less of a priority in their school day. It could also raise questions about the ability of project-based work to maintain engagement levels over a longitudinal period.

Another possible explanation is linked to the creation of trusting relationships and spaces between young musicians and music leaders. With increased levels of trust within the project, young musicians may have been more likely to think and speak more critically about their involvement in Exchanging Notes at the end of the project. They may also have been subject to 'illusory superiority' at the outset of the project, linked to the 'Dunning-Kruner effect' (Kruger & Dunning 1999). This suggests that without the self-awareness of metacognition, people cannot objectively evaluate their competence or incompetence. This theory could account for the decreases in perception scores over time if the young musicians had improved their meta-cognition over the same period, exemplified by this interview quote from a young musician:

> I used to think that things would come to me easy. But not everything comes easily. I used to think I'd come here, play the music, read the notes, and be out of here. But it takes forever to learn and I like to be able to come back and be able to play it off by heart. I have to practise in my own time but that's ok, I enjoy it now and I want to do more.

Schools data

We were keen to understand whether musical interventions of the types seen across Exchanging Notes correlated with changes in attendance and attainment data as collected by schools.

Even though these data are part of statutory monitoring, a number of issues have arisen regarding their collection. Although overall most partnerships have supplied significant data as part of this evaluation, the picture is somewhat patchy in terms of the longitudinal aspects. Factors beyond the control of all projects have played a part in this patchiness, with the complex lives of the young musicians involved in Exchanging Notes leading to changes of school, and some young people withdrawing from mainstream education. Other factors affecting the levels of recorded data have included difficulties in obtaining data from school partners, changes in project staff, and the breakdown of effective partnerships, both in terms of the delivery of activity and the sharing of learning. Taken together, these factors have combined to contribute to an overall school-supplied data picture which is probably best described as 'patchy'.

That said, the research team have been able to collect longitudinal (i.e. over the four year period) data on attendance and attainment for around 50% of the young musicians. This is a valuable contribution to the evidence base, given the time period over which it was collected, and the fact that the Exchanging Notes core group were at risk of educational exclusion or disengagement.

Attendance

Attendance statistics are a key dataset collected for the Department for Education on an annual basis. To understand patterns of attendance for these young musicians, and whether engagement with Exchanging Notes provision correlated with improved attendance, schools were asked to provide attendance data at the beginning and end of each academic year. We collected attendance data for 163 young people in total, and have sufficient data for 84 young musicians to compare their attendance at the beginning and end of the four year period. This dataset also includes attendance data from young musicians who were in an alternative education setting, and engaged in Exchanging Notes activities through a virtual school. It does not, however, include the young musicians from the PMLD setting, because the health of the young musicians had a significant impact on their ability to attend school regularly.

As has been established, the core cohort of Exchanging Notes faced varying challenges to their educational experiences meaning that they had significantly higher chances of disengagement from mainstream education than the 'average' pupil. Comparisons with national trends should therefore be considered in this context.

Both the mean and median averages were calculated in analysing the attendance data over the four-year period. Over the timescale, mean average attendance for went from 95.0% to 89.9% (a decrease of 5.1%). The mean at the end of the project was compared to national figures (Department for Education, 2018) and found to be 4.7% lower than the average secondary school population, 2.8% lower than the average school population on free school meals, but 8% higher than persistent absentees.

In plotting the start and end attendance data points it is clear that a number of outliers at the end of the project has had an impact on the mean. Seen in the figure below there are some obvious outliers from the main cluster which have an attendance percentage of 55% or below on the 'y' axis, compared to only one at the start of the project (showing zero on the 'x' axis').

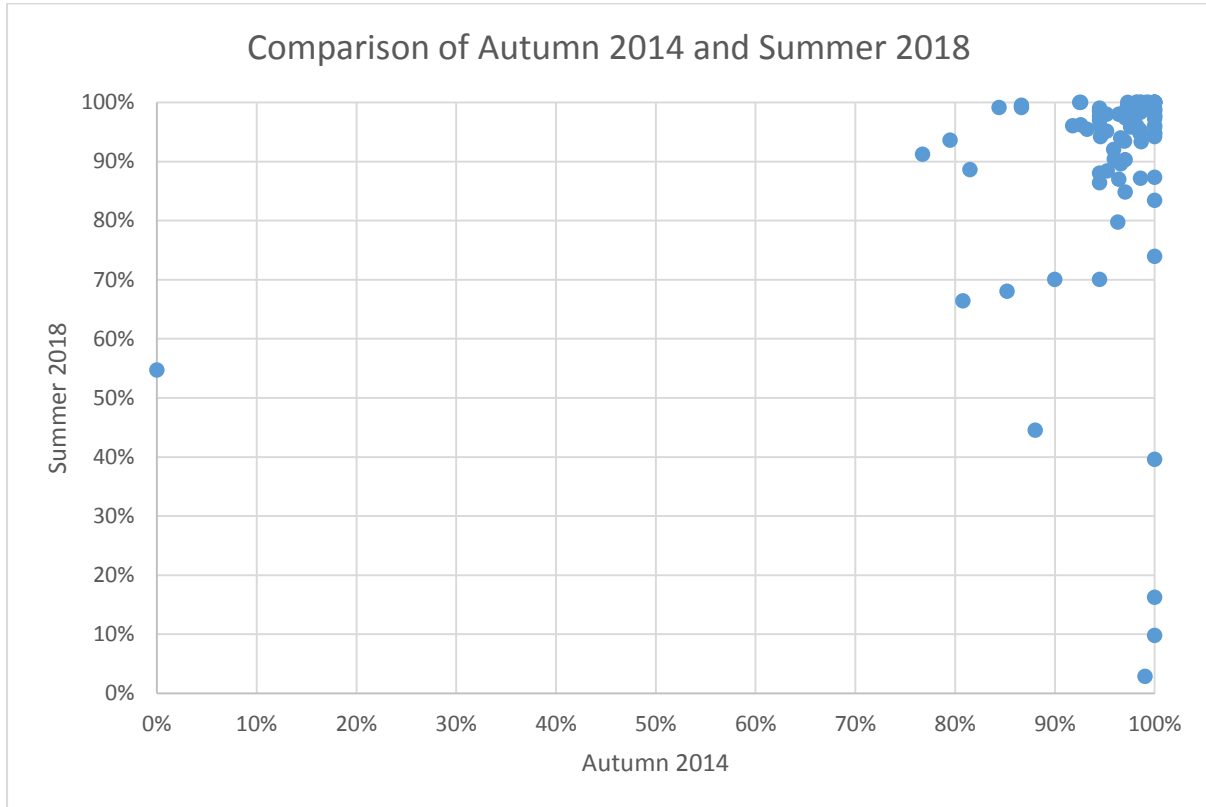*Figure 3 - Comparison of Autumn 2014 and Summer 2018 attendance data*

This is a limiting factor on the comparability of the Exchanging Notes data with national school population data due to the relatively small Exchanging Notes sample size being more significantly affected by outliers. If these were removed, then the mean score for summer 2018 would be 94.3% - just 0.3% lower than the secondary school mean.
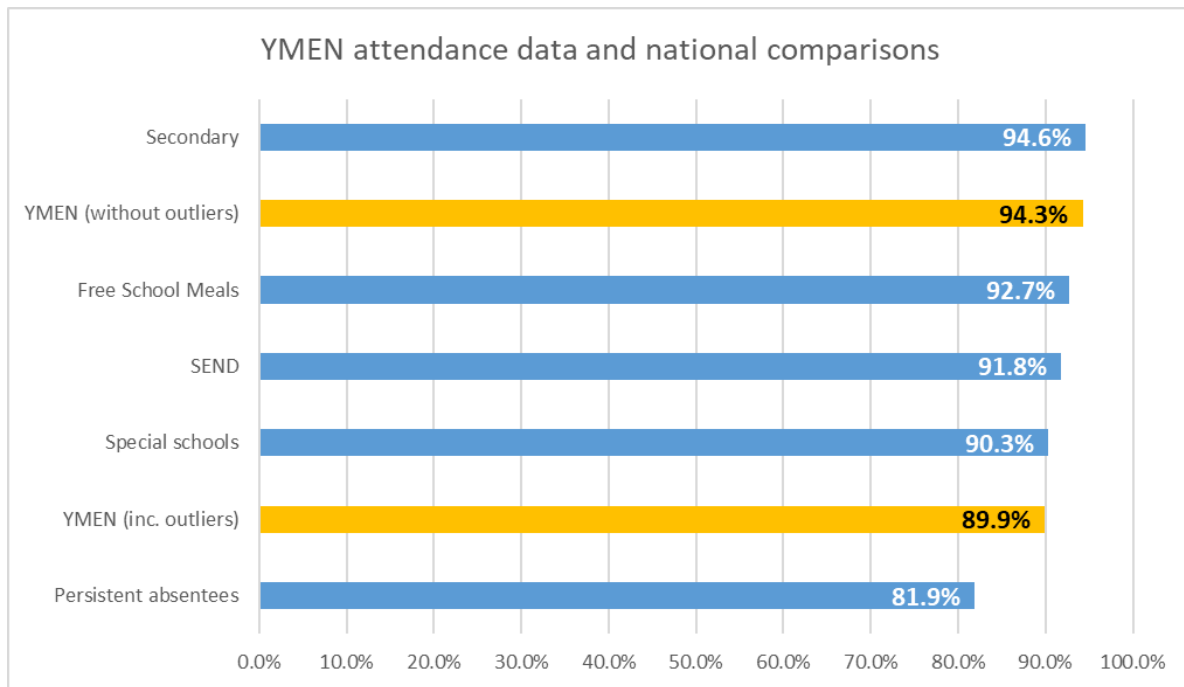
YMEN attendance data and national comparisons

Secondary	94.6%
YMEN (without outliers)	94.3%
Free School Meals	92.7%
SEND	91.8%
Special schools	90.3%
YMEN (inc. outliers)	89.9%
Persistent absentees	81.9%

Figure 4 - YMEN attendance data and national comparisons.[3]

Taking the median average (less susceptible to the influence of outliers), longitudinal attendance data shows positive picture. At the end of the project, the median attendance was 97%, slightly higher than the median attendance of the national school population, which is 95.8%.
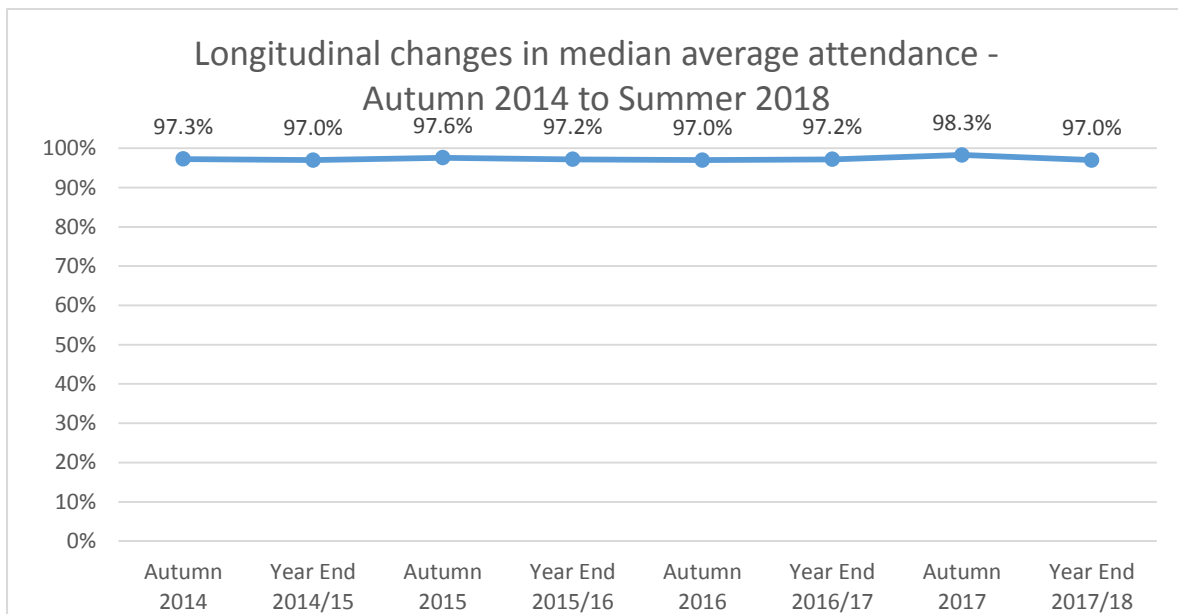

Longitudinal changes in median average attendance - Autumn 2014 to Summer 2018

Autumn 2014	Year End 2014/15	Autumn 2015	Year End 2015/16	Autumn 2016	Year End 2016/17	Autumn 2017	Year End 2017/18
97.3%	97.0%	97.6%	97.2%	97.0%	97.2%	98.3%	97.0%

Figure 5 - Longitudinal changes in median average attendance - Autumn 2014 to Summer 2018.

We are able to report on longitudinal data across all eight data collection points for 74 young people. This profile of attendance shows that the majority of young musicians retained consistent attendance patterns across the four years of the project.

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[3] Outliers were deemed to be those whose attendance was below 60%. This accounted for 6 young people.

What we are unable to tell from the school attendance figures is whether Exchanging Notes activities had a more localised impact. For example, we cannot deduce from the datasets provided whether an individual pupil's attendance on a particular day of the week improved on the day that their Exchanging Notes session took place, or if attendance improved around specific time periods of more intensive Exchanging Notes activity.

However, qualitative interview data collected throughout the project does suggest a positive localised impact for some young musicians:

> I know it will happen every Wednesday, it gives me a reason to get up. I'd be like 'I've got in today I've got Exchanging Notes'. It's something to look forward to and it's something I love to do. Say if I've had a bad Monday and Tuesday, on Wednesday I'll say I'll come in because I have Exchanging Notes. (Young musician)

> …if they have not been receiving it, then goodness knows where they would be now. So although their attendance might not have improved for some of them, although for some of them it has, had they not had this Wednesday to come in for, then it would have been worse. (Teacher).

In some cases, the approach taken by music leaders in Exchanging Notes helped young musicians to re-engage in education, with an existing passion in music acting as an engagement 'hook' which was then nurtured and helped to improve attendance:

> They had been at risk of all forms of exclusion. Nor had they been in education for about seven or eight years. They were just not engaged. What we did have at the very start of the project was a very healthy interest in grime music. That was all they would listen to. So that was our starting point. (Music leader)

> Through the music engagement they are now almost on the full timetable and in other forms of education. When we knew that they were attending something, that was massive, they were getting out of bed and actually going to the music sessions. That was about a year ago and now. Their engagement has grown out of the music. This is major progress (Teacher).

In other contexts, both music teachers and music leaders observed positive changes to a young musician's relationship with school, leading to a fuller engagement with school life:

> I think their relationship with the school has progressed a lot. I mean for example, the fact that some people have even bothered to come in and do a school concert was progress for them. They would never have considered being part of a school opportunity. (Music Leader)

> So many of the people are fractured from school, so they haven't necessarily got a good relationship with the school that they're in, with many of them not engaging with the school. We've succeeded in some cases by being a bridge between working with the young person and getting them back into school. (Music Leader)

In one case, the quality of school engagement increased despite no improvement in overall attendance. A music leader from an Exchanging Notes project based in an inclusion unit noted:

The school has never doubted that it has been having a positive impact, which is not always measurable in the ways that we're collecting data, necessarily. Maybe their attendance was always okay, but they were just very different around school and things like that. Or maybe their grades were okay but there were other issues that we encountered with them. So, I don't think necessarily the tangible impact that we see in the life of the student, necessarily reflects in the data that we collect but it is recognised, and it is seen, and it's noted that the students do spend far less time in places like PAC [exclusion in school] and exclusion meetings and things like that. (Music Leader)

Even in the context of attendance being affected by factors beyond the control of the young musician, such as family and domestic complications, the attendance data paint a positive picture. Whilst a causal link is difficult to prove, the combination of qualitative and quantitative data do suggest that engagement in Exchanging Notes musical activities helped to increase attendance at school and/or helped to bridge the gap between disengagement and participation in mainstream education.

Attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy

Literacy and numeracy attainment data supplied by schools in relation to the young musicians took the form of an indication of whether a young musician was working 'below', 'at', or 'above' their target grades, as determined by statistical KS2 attainment data. In order to investigate and report on this, it is important to establish the differences between 'attainment' and 'progress', and what these terms signify in this discussion. Attainment refers to the marks, grades, levels, or judgements of standards a specific young musician is working at. Progress refers to the changes made between attainment snapshots, often expressed with some sort of indicator of speed, such as 'rapid progress' or 'slow progress'. For example, a young musician who has an attainment indicator of 'below' and then moves to 'above' at the next data point can be said to have made progress; the 'above' indicator does not in itself constitute progress, but represents comparison with a notional average level of attainment, normally cohort-referenced.

It should be noted at this juncture that this data is based on teacher judgements and not on examination or test outcome gradings. We know from the work of Wynne Harlen that teacher judgements can be open to distortion, as she observes, there is "evidence of low reliability and bias in teachers' judgements made in certain circumstances" (Harlen, 2005b), and we know that the circumstance of the Exchanging Notes cohort warrant particular care in considering this. It also important to observe that these attainment findings should not be taken to indicate, or be predictive of particular GCSE examination results.

We have end-point attainment data for 84 young musicians, and longitudinal profiles for 72 young musicians.

Comparison of beginning and end point data

Figure 6 (below)shows the numbers of young musicians working 'below', 'at' or 'above' their target grades at the beginning (Autumn 2014) and end of the programme (Summer 2018) for literacy and numeracy data combined (the data have been combined as the differences between the two subject areas are relatively minor and show the same type of change). In total, this data relates to 72 young musicians.
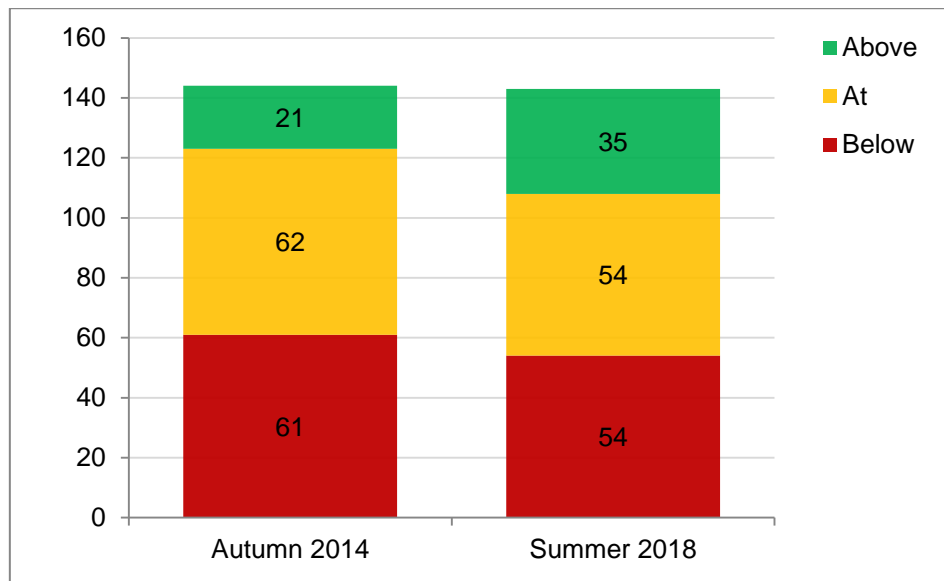
Figure 6 - Combined literacy and numeracy attainment outcomes at the beginning and end.

There is a small amount of positive change between the two data points. For both literacy and numeracy, the numbers of young musicians working *below* their expected grades was lower at the end of Exchanging Notes; and the numbers working *above* their expected grades increased. The overall numbers of young musicians working at or above their expected grades was higher at the end of the project, with two-thirds of young musicians at or above their expected grades at the final data collection point. Whilst this increase is a positive finding, it is not possible within the scope of the data to demonstrate a causal link between Exchanging Notes activity and improvements in literacy and numeracy scores.

The longitudinal picture

We are able to present longitudinal profiles for 72 young musicians (nearly half of the core cohort). Looking at longitudinal attainment in English and Maths reveals that progress for these young musicians was not at all linear, echoing findings made by the FFT education data lab that:

> The predictability of progress and attainment as children pass through schools is particularly poor for those with low levels of attainment at Key Stage One. For children achieving a Level 1C, B or A at this stage, their development is so unpredictable that most will either outperform or underperform any Key Stage Two target that might be set.

> The vast majority of pupils do not make linear progress between each Key Stage, let alone across all Key Stages. This means that identifying pupils as "on track" or "off target" based on assumptions of linear progress over multiple years is likely to be wrong. This is important because the way we track pupils and set targets for them influences teaching and learning practice in the classroom, contributes to Headteacher judgements of teacher performance and is used to judge whether schools are performing well or not. (Treadaway, 2015)
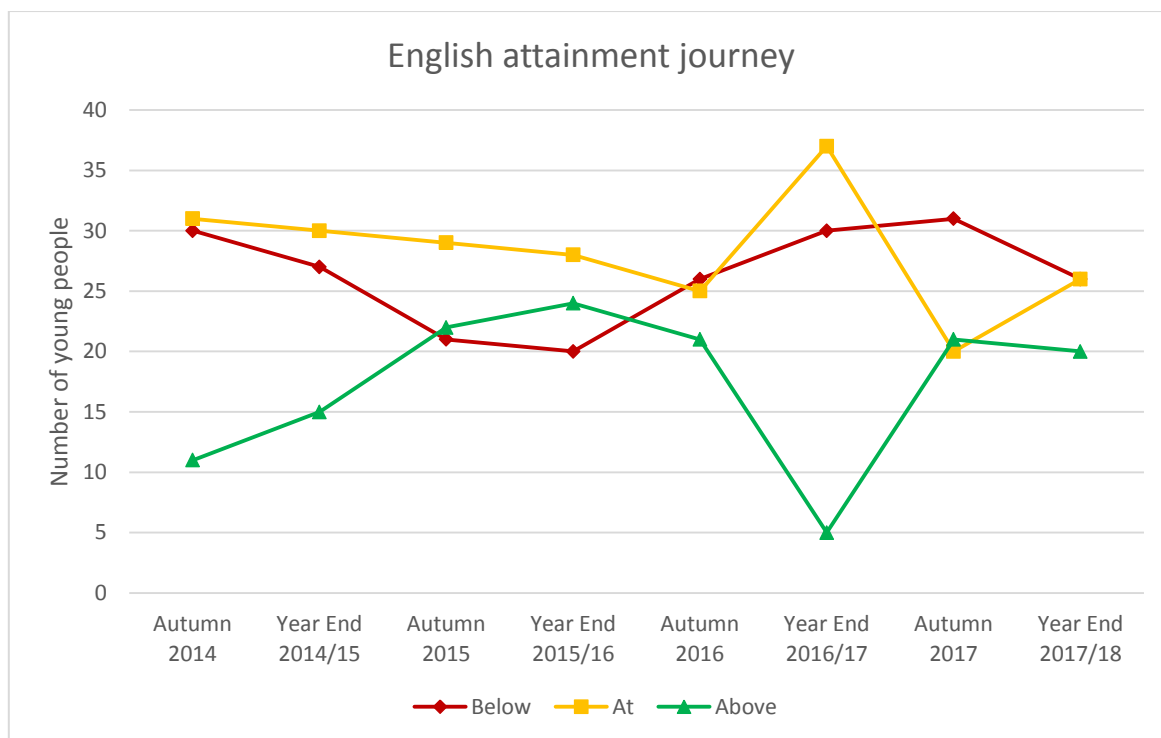
English attainment journey

Figure 7 - Attainment journey across Exchanging Notes – English.

Maths attainment journey
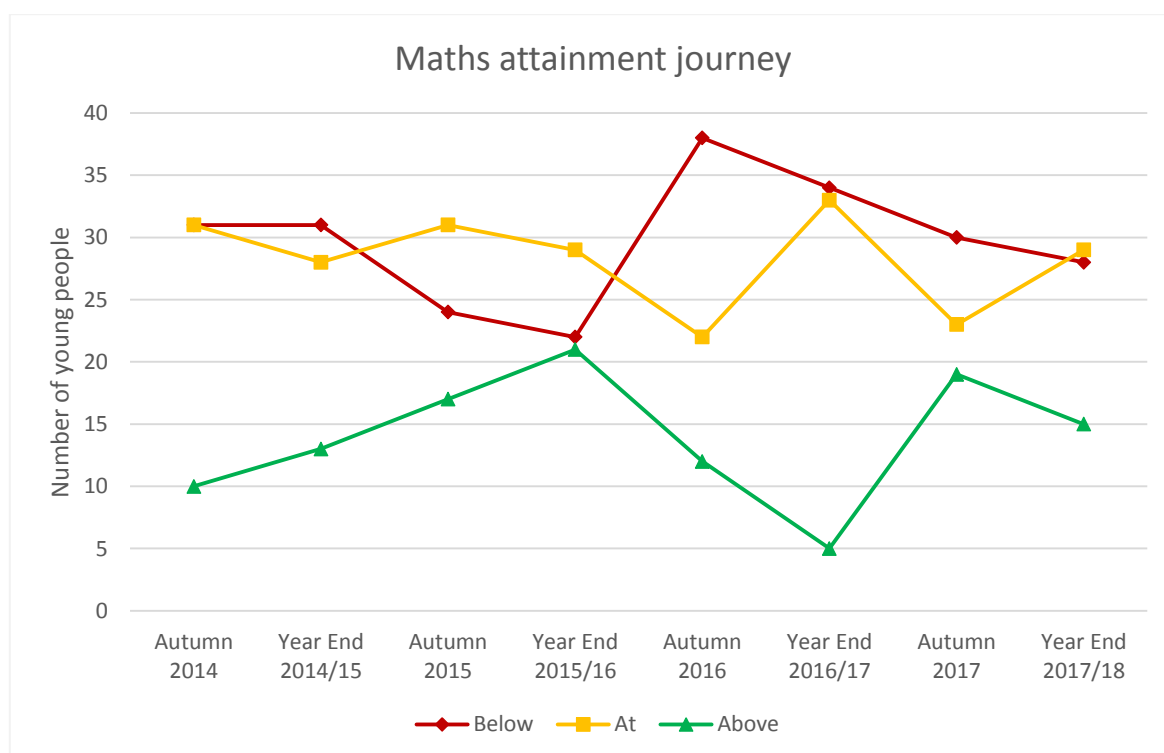
Figure 8 - Attainment journey across Exchanging Notes - Maths.

Whilst it is difficult to claim any causal link between engagement in Exchanging Notes activity and improved progress in literacy and numeracy, unpicking these data journeys is interesting. In particular the *lowest* levels of young musicians being recorded as working below their targets are to be found in the middle of the project, at the Year End 2015/16 data point (which for most represented the end of Year 8). This data point coincided with the shift

of some young musicians into GCSE phases at their school, especially in contexts with a condensed KS3 stage. As identified in project case studies, this phase proved to be challenging and, in some cases, required structures and organisational relationships to be reconsidered. What we then see in the GCSE phase are *higher* numbers of young musicians working below their target grades, which continues to the end of the project. It should be noted that as young musicians neared their GCSE examinations, assessment became more rigorous, and possibly more accurate, as teachers would be able to employ actual GCSE past papers to gauge attainment levels. Increased scrutiny around attainment grades, and progress towards targets is a likely feature of this period of the project. This is an important picture to bear in mind given issues associated with the performativity agenda already discussed, both for music as a subject area, the impact on young musicians working below their expected grades, and the periods in school where additional social or emotional support may be required.

As Gipps notes, "…to see assessment as a scientific, objective activity is mistaken; assessment is not an exact science…" (Gipps, 1999 :370), and so there are multiple interpretations of the assessment data we have from Exchanging Notes. The positive aspect to note is that these young musicians were still in the education system, and still engaging. This section raises some interesting questions about the narrowness and limitations of schools-based data, which clearly can only ever provide one part of an overall picture:

> I couldn't see a significant difference in their progress and attainment to students who hadn't been doing it. They weren't suddenly making leaps and bounds. I think it supported kids who perhaps wouldn't necessarily be involved with things like student leadership otherwise, and so some of the kids went to primary schools and showed the primary school kids how to play the drums, and they got involved in music outside of school. I think that's where it did well, and to get some of the kids who were really disengaged and were at risk I suppose. (Teacher, May 2017)

> There are young people whose support staff have also attended sessions, they know the young people and say that (the young person) is always out of lessons, and then they're gob-smacked they are here. One participant in particular, sitting and writing, which is unusual for them, staying in one place on one chair in one room, not causing problems, writing and absolutely focused on the rap that they were doing, for a whole afternoon. (Music Leader).

4.3.4 Broader development outcomes

Wellbeing and resilience

The broader development outcomes observed in Exchanging Notes were those of wellbeing and resilience. Evidence of the three facets of wellbeing discussed earlier – emotional, psychological and social – were all present in the data. In addition there is evidence to suggest that the programme had a strong impact on young people's resilience. The term 'resilience' is derived from the Latin *resilire*, meaning 'to rebound or recoil', and is generally associated the ability to 'bounce back' from difficult or traumatic events. According to the Young Foundation (2012):

> … resilience has come to be associated predominantly with 'defensive' qualities that enable people or systems to cope, survive and get by in the face of adversity.

Following this theme, we often hear about 'protective' factors that can help ensure survival or mitigate the damage of an adverse event.

The American Psychological Association (2019) states:

Many studies show that the primary factor in resilience is having caring and supportive relationships within and outside the family. Relationships that create love and trust, provide role models and offer encouragement and reassurance help bolster a person's resilience.

They list several additional factors associated with resilience, including:

- The capacity to make realistic plans and carry them out
- A positive self-view and confidence in your abilities
- Skills in communicating and problem-solving
- The capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses.

There is evidence that all of these factors were developed across the course of the programme. Wellbeing and resilience are closely linked. Traditional wellbeing measures capture a psychological state at a point in time. Resilience, on the other hand, is more dynamic – it is possible for a person to build resilience making them more likely to cope with problems that may arise in the future, thereby 'future-proofing' their wellbeing.

During the project, many of the young musicians discussed the broader impact of Exchanging Notes on their social wellbeing. The principle that music is an inherently social activity has underpinned Exchanging Notes activities. Small's (2011) notion of 'musicking', which he describes as participating in practical music making, holds relevance here to the dialogic relationships between music leaders, young musicians, and the music they make. Through participating in such activities, or 'musicking', the young musicians have engaged in patterns of social interaction that have helped to establish trusting relationships with other young musicians and adults. The development of these relationships has been an integral part of the successes seen in Exchanging Notes projects.

A key indicator of the social outcomes for the young musicians can be seen in the high scores on perception surveys from music leaders, music teachers, and young musicians. Three questions on the perception surveys related to social outcomes:

- Joins in with peers
- Makes friends easily
- Makes decisions confidently

Respondents were asked to respond to these statements on a Likert scale (1-lowest, to 5-highest). We were able to collect data from music teachers and music leaders for 70 young musicians (just under half of the core cohort). The chart below shows the mean average perception scores for music leaders and music teachers at the end of the project, and compares these with those collected in the first term of Exchanging Notes. Looking first at the perceptions of music leaders and music teachers, it is clear that both groups felt that social outcomes for the young musicians remained high and increased across the project.
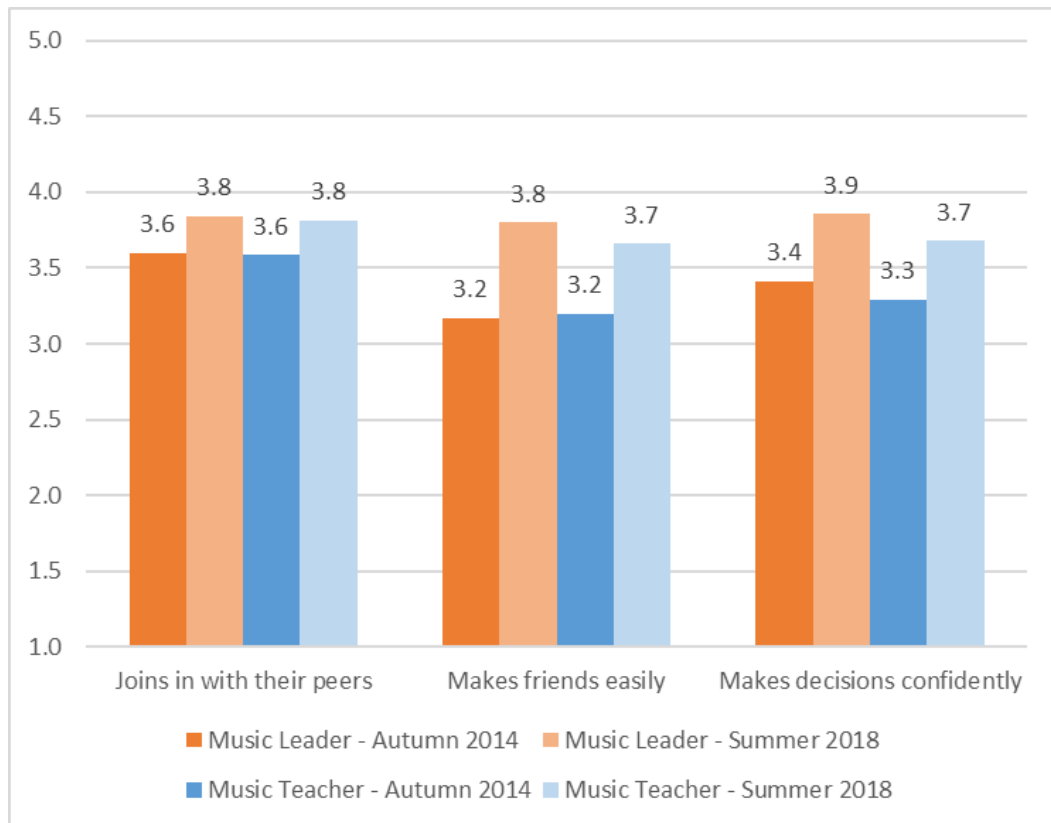
Figure 9 - Comparisons of music leader and music teacher perception scores for social outcomes.

Indeed, this is an area where both music teachers and music leaders identified particularly positive results for the young musicians. The young musicians themselves were asked to respond to similar questions on the same Likert Scale:

- The group is friendly
- I feel happy to share my ideas with the group

We collected 51 responses. Whilst the young musicians' scores were fairly high and similar to that of the music leaders and teachers, they did not show the same progression between the start and end of Exchanging Notes. Indeed, they decreased slightly between the two data snapshots:

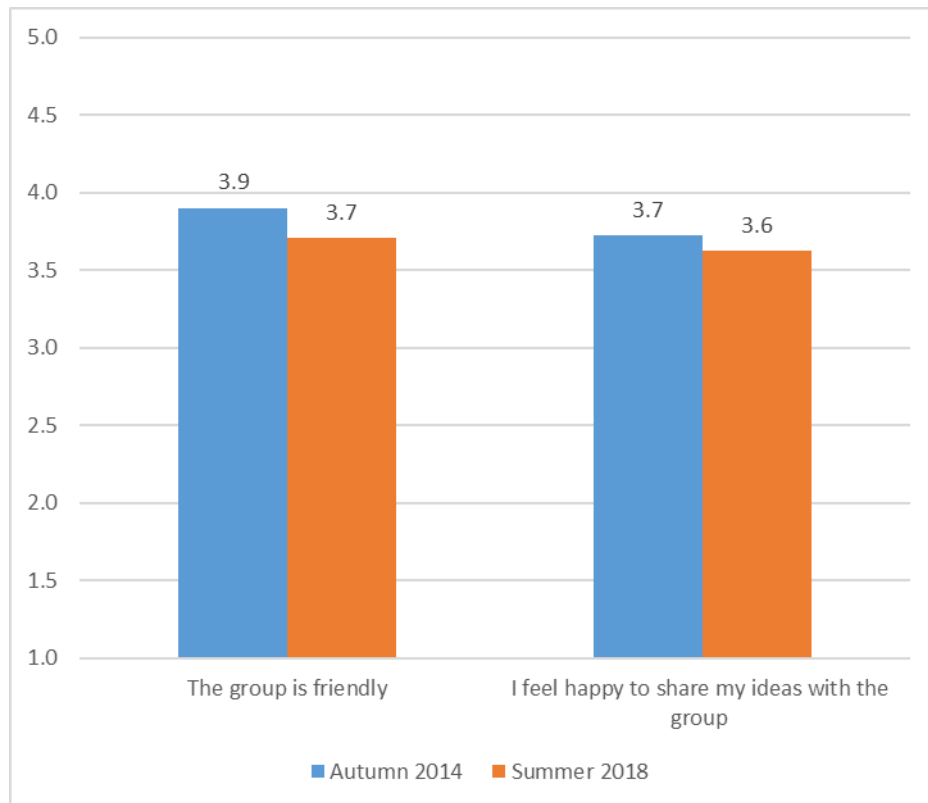*Figure 10 - Comparisons of young musicians' perception scores for social outcomes at the start and end data collection points.*

It is significant that music teachers and music leaders identified that young musicians had developed their ability to make friends more easily and to join in with their peers, across a time period when young musicians may have faced complexities in other areas of their lives and an increasingly pressurised school environment. The slight decrease in the young musicians' perception scores, although not significant, is not wholly reflected in the data collected during our interviews with them:

> Although we only have one session a week, you get to know everyone in that session. You always work together no matter what. I've made good friends with the rest of the group. (Young Musician)

> I've been playing music for four years with my friends, and every time I get better. Use music as a friend. (Young Musician)

> I've learnt how to open up to new people. (Young Musician)

> …another good reason to have friends around is that they can listen to you as well. So they can also point out your mistakes and you can also improve from them. Like if they see you doing something wrong, they will help you and try and make you better. (Young Musician)

Young musicians clearly identified building social relationships as a key success of their involvement in Exchanging Notes. According to one music leader:

> It is about them forming that group identity and being able to work with that. (Music Leader)

These group identities increased levels of peer support and cooperation and in turn this impacted behaviour and motivation in pursuit of better quality musical outputs:

> At the beginning of the year I always wanted to go on my own but now I have overcome that and I've been able to work with others. And working with others has helped me with things that I can't do. (Young Musician)

> At the start, some people didn't get along. So, for example, if someone that you don't get along with was talking you might have done something kind of stupid to distract them. Then because we're all in a group we learnt you had to listen to each other and work together to actually produce something. So we learnt that we just, you know, we had to get along to make music.

> Everybody gets along. You find in other lessons kids are naughty and stuff. But no one is naughty in there. Sometimes people get a bit hyper and things, but we are all together because everybody is having fun there isn't any time when nobody is bored. Everybody is having fun and enjoying it. (Young Musician)

Young musicians frequently spoke of their enjoyment of the programme. Its impact on their emotional wellbeing was highlighted:

> Sometimes you don't have a good day but by the end the session you normally come out feeling better. Like if I've come in with a screwed up face and angry by like the time the session's over I've got rid of it.

> It's a relief. Especially in these last two years definitely, its relieved stress and that could be the past, work stuff with school, all of that in your life. So there will be times when you feel like… I don't know how to explain it…closed in. Then coming to these sessions, it's like a way out.

In some of the earlier interviews with young musicians, we heard how playing instruments helped to release anger and enabled them to better manage their feelings. For these young musicians, the music sessions went beyond the development of skills but deeper into their emotional well-being:

> I can take my anger out on the drums.

> I love music because it makes me feel happy…it makes me let out all the stress and pick myself up so that I can engage in lessons.

> I don't really play that many instruments but I love to sing and when I sing it really calms me down and I am certainly aware of what's in my environment because it just settles me.

> Music really teaches you how to play and you can enjoy it and no one can really tell you whether it's right or wrong…I find that music calms me down if you are angry as well. It is enjoyable.

Elements of physiological wellbeing and resilience were developed through the programme. Having positive relationships with adult and peers led to increased social cohesion whereby young musicians were motivated to learn, enjoyed the sessions, were more autonomous, cooperative with one another, focussed, and confident. These quotes from young musicians highlight these attributes, with many also recognising distance travelled since the beginning of their engagement:

> In the first year or so it seemed less free, like we were expected to come along, but now we really wanted to do it because we come off our own backs, we could be doing other stuff but we've kept that commitment and it's our choice. We want to come to the sessions and enjoy them. I think it's the fact that you're surrounded by really positive people, that and the teachers are really nice.

> We are now patient with ourselves and we have confidence in ourselves as well because before we would have just wanted to give up.

> They have taught us that this other stuff is not as important as when we channel ourselves to music we come to understand that we need someone to share it with not to just do it on our own.

> Personally I think I'm someone who doesn't really try but when it come to this I actually think I have put in quite a lot of effort.

> When I first started I was very distracted like I'd go into lesson and instantly just start talking to one of my mates I wouldn't really care about learning. Coming to this has taught me that if you're not going to focus, you're not going to learn anything.

> …now I've learnt to stay on task.

As the young musicians became more competent, confident and better able to manage their own feelings and emotions they were able to take on leadership roles:

> I've learnt how to motivate people. Sometimes others will have been sitting next to me and annoying me, or they wouldn't get it. Now I'm able to teach them music and stay calm.

> because when we get to lessons we normally just start smashing the drums, we got them into a circle and made them play something like that. Then we taught them something simple. We all helped the other kids and were all leaders really.

4.3.5 Opening the door for learning

Earlier sections of this report outlined the ways in which the partnership approach to the programme helped to improve the quality and standards of music delivery and embed new pedagogical practices in schools, teachers, music leaders and music education hubs. Elements such as trust, time, openness and a culture of reflection were all important in developing new approaches and forging new identities. There are also particular facets of the Exchanging Notes approach that have proved important for creating positive outcomes for the young musicians and that have – to borrow a quote from a music leader – helped to open the door for learning.

The importance of longitudinal engagement

A central aspect of Exchanging Notes has been the longitudinal engagement in musical activities. Over time, many of the young musicians' perceptions of the project and engagement in learning increased. This was due to the time given to the development of relations with others, leading to new outlooks on what it means to be a musician and increased opportunities for participation. This discussion between researcher and a young musician highlights the need for long-term engagement:

Young Musician: At the start, I didn't want to come but like they actually like pushed me to come along.

Researcher: How long did it take for you to change your mind?

Young Musician: I think it was like a year

Researcher: What changed for you?

Young Musician: I don't know, I started liking it, I realised it's not so bad, cause that first year like, I didn't, I didn't hate it but I just didn't want to come but then I don't know, I guess when I got moved into the band that's when I really started to enjoy it. Yeah and got better.

Kenny and Bledsoe (2005) found that students' perceptions of educational barriers are affected by peer beliefs and support. These young musicians express the importance of good relations for breaking down barriers to learning, impacting their engagement with school and musical agency and fostering a sense of belonging:

There's also a bond there. Like they're not just like "do this, do that" they're like accepting of our ideas. (Young Musician)

…and the teachers were always just like oh they always nag me about coming along so I thought, so I thought maybe if I come to here I might see a change and when, that's when I started to enjoy it I did. (Young Musician)

I enjoyed being able to share my ideas with the group that could put them together as a piece, having the support from the group leaders and their advice on what we could do to make it better. And then being able to explore these professional environments, recording studios and that, and live venues. I think it's really good to see what you can do when you get out into the world of music. (Young Musician)

I didn't know some people in there (the music classroom) but now I do and we are mates. I enjoy playing music with them because it is something that we both like to do. (Young Musician)

We do it together and I want to do it and be part of it. (Young person)

Socially I think was a big one for me, as, a few years ago, I was kind of, I don't know, I didn't really like, sort of, go out of my own way to talk to other people or meet new people or make new relationships but through the project I feel like I've been able to talk to people in this room, talk to people at [music organisation], and sort of develop my own social skills as well as relationships with other people which has been nice. I've along joined other outside groups and I really want to go on and go to college to study music. (Young Musician)

These rich descriptions demonstrate clearly that many of the young musicians felt Exchanging Notes helped them move beyond institutional, situational and dispositional barriers, changing their perceptions of learning and of themselves.

Relational ontologies

In order to motivate Exchanging Notes learners, teachers and music leaders needed to create a framework for engagement. We have already discussed the concept of 'relational

ontologies' which in Exchanging Notes placed human The relational ontologies created a rich environment for social and emotional development. This environment included key aspects such as listening to leaners, developing safe spaces for peer-to-peer interaction, agency, and independence. The role of learners was re-defined: they were not just recipients of learning, but part of a collaborative pedagogical process:

> But when we get to be creative and make our own it's like we're not doing what we already know. We're doing what we want to do. (Young Musician)

> Like, there's no right or wrong with it, everyone's different so it's not just one way of doing things. There's no copying, nothing like that. (Young Musician)

> …Yes [we try hard]. We enjoy it as well. We do a lot of work but because it is enjoyable. Especially as we are creating our own piece… but we don't think it will reach the charts. (Laughs). (Young Musician)

The redefinition of the role of young musicians in the Exchanging Notes sessions was negotiated in many of the projects. Young musicians were seen to offer a legitimate perspective and be part of an inclusive pedagogical process. Therefore they were able – and enabled – to play an active role. When asked by the researcher 'Are your ideas listened to?', young musicians responded:

> We bring in our own music because it allows us to express ourselves (Young Musician)

> We always have our own say as well. (Young Musician)

> Of course. When we were writing a song, we were all talking about it, everyone was saying ideas, and then we made sure that everyone was included. (Young Musician)

> I feel like it's been a good opportunity, like I know that before the project I was quite like closed off in terms of music, and I didn't really like playing as part of an ensemble and I didn't really have much experience with it. But through the project I've sort of got to meet a lot of other like, great, young musicians and I've also been able to play in an ensemble, develop my confidence, and now I've sort of reached a point where I guess that it's just kind of normal to play and sing in an ensemble and share my music which I think has been quite nice. (Young Musician)

In this quote the young musician clearly expresses their feeling of acceptance to be part of the creative musical process through their phraseology of 'being allowed':

> We give our own opinions. We get to try different things. We are allowed to give our opinions and our own ideas and then we share them. That's how we created our song. (Young Musician)

There is evidence from the young musicians that Exchanging Notes was different to the educational experiences they had in other parts of school. Central to this experience was the relationship forged between the music leaders and the young musicians, seen to be less hierarchical than a traditional teacher – student relationship. The following quotes demonstrate the music leader's focus on engagement, participation and enjoyment discussed earlier has been important in forging strong social connections with the young musicians:

> … sometimes we talk about our troubles that we are having. (Young Musician)

> [They are different to our teachers] they don't like us calling them sir, we call them by their names and it is very chilled out. (Young Musician)

> No matter what you do they don't start shouting at you if you do something wrong, they are always accepting us. They are there to help…to inspire to do more and achieve more. (Young Musician)

> You get to do more fun stuff and they are a bit more down-to-earth. They are more like friends that you can get on with easily. (Young Musician)

This in turn helped to foster a mutual respect and engage young musicians in the musical development process:

> They'll motivate us and then, say if I'm not trying hard enough, they don't embarrass me but they'll say it and I'll realise that I'm not doing hard enough and because I want to do well, I'll try harder and harder. (Young Musician)

> I think turning point was when I realised that they were treating us a lot different from other teachers in school, they you know were saying that we're respected, and that was different because we were only year 7 then. (Young Musician)

> Yeah you get a bit more independence. I like the fact that they don't speak to you like other teachers speak to you. They speak to us as if they are one of us. They are just like us and we are all having a good time. (Young Musician)

> … music we have in school, you have to play piano and the teacher tells you what to do. I don't like to say it but they are not as relaxed, they are more like 'you have to do it this way. (Young Musician)

For young people at risk of low attainment, who may have had difficult experiences in education, this relationship was particularly important to help re-engage young people through creating in them a sense of belief, value and trust:

> Yeah I think, I wouldn't say I cared about school, like I was like just getting on with it, and [music leader] made me like want to be here, like I stood for something (Young musician).

Creativity

Central to creating a framework for musical and social development was an encouragement to be creative. As most of the projects were predominately based in schools, there were some boundaries and curriculum outlines that needed to be explored as part of the young musicians' learning journeys. With this in mind, the projects had to consider what they perceived as the framework for creative development. This often started with the teacher and music leader identifying their creative processes in collaboration with one another and then negotiating a way forward:

> …the creative process is, seems to be being negated in favour of reputation and kind of a very top down educational process. I think creativity for us is about access and I think its access to the tactile feeling of something, the tactile experiential kind of process of absorbing information that happens through a creative action. (Music leader)

> I think throughout the project we have both observed creative approaches from each other and also talked about it in reflections. I think for me it has enabled me to take more risks, to try things out and not worry as much if it doesn't go to plan. But I think you also have to bring the kids on that journey otherwise they might feel that they have failed. But that's also part of the process, knowing that failing is not necessarily a bad thing but how you move on from that. (Teacher)

> With Key Stage 3, there's no reason why it should be so rigid. That's the choice of that school. You need to give them the core skills to be able to do GCSE if they want to do it, but actually it doesn't need to be that rigid. I think what we have done is more creative and we have really thought about the best way of getting them (the learners) to understand that music is a creative process. (Music leader)

Burnard (2012) suggests that teachers are 'creativity generators', and this was evident in Exchanging Notes. The notion of 'generator' is important here as it does not mean that teachers or music leaders defined outcomes, but helped to generate creative possibility. In this group conversation between one music leader and two pupils we can see how creative possibility is enacted in partnership with one another:

> My favourite moment when I'm teaching, is dialogue. I'm learning as much from them as they are from me. (Music Leader)

> Really, most teachers learn more from the students than they give. If you're teaching stuff, we're learning and you're learning as well. (Young Musician)

> I'm learning new stuff, you're learning new stuff. I'm telling you stuff, you're telling me stuff. It's kind of like that. (Young Musician)

Woods (1995) states that during creative learning pupils have control over their learning processes, and ownership of the knowledge produced, which is relevant to their concerns. This highlights the centrality of the learner in the development of creativity, where emphasis is on the process of learning rather than the creative output. This is a process of creative negotiation:

> In the creative process you're not only responding to your own instincts but you're also having to then negotiate other people's instincts. (Music leader)

And this is noted by the young musicians, as expressed here:

> …so (music leader) would like never like take control of it, they would like give us like tips and advice on how to like write about it and like tell us to think back on what it's about and then if we got stuck they would help us, like it'd all flow again and then if we were ever struggling we could just ask them what could do with it so we could put it in and then we'd make up the rest of it. (Young Musician)

Within Exchanging Notes the significance of relationships between teacher, music leader, and learner was integral. They had the responsibility of encouraging learners to become more creative individuals. An environment was created that allowed self-discovery leading to self-actualisation, and through the creative process the young musicians developed a sense of mastery and competence which are important components of wellbeing:

> What does being creative mean to you? (Researcher)

> I think it's like creating stuff from scratch and building up the process and trying to make it better. Not always getting it right but just trying something out and seeing. (Young Musician)

> Do you think you're doing that with the music you're creating? (Researcher)

> Yeah. We're progressing every time we're going along. You just get to try things out and see, and then either go with that or not. It's fun and sometimes not so serious too, like, you get time to just play. (Young Musician)

The development of more inclusive musical environments, supported by frameworks for practitioner reflection and development, contributed to the social development of young musicians over Exchanging Notes. The possible impact of these changes in pedagogical practice can be identified most clearly in insights gathered from the PMLD school, where engagement resulted in significant social outcomes:

> The music has really moved him forward to thinking "there's a world out there, and it's not just that insular world that I'm in, it's out there and it's a safe world" (Teacher)

> The progress he's made is phenomenal, especially with communication. He's been able to express himself emotionally in such a way, it's been really empowering for him. (Music leader)

> It's empowering him to say "this is who I am, I can make this music my way, I can show you my emotions". It's absolutely lovely. (Teacher)

Such comments show the profound impact of this type of work upon the young musicians in one educational setting. For these young musicians, involvement in Exchanging Notes has contributed significantly to broadening horizons, both musically and socially, and to identity formation.

Lack of agency leading to disengagement

Where projects were too 'top down', they restricted young peoples' agency and autonomy. This meant that young musicians were unlikely to view the sessions as a joint endeavour, making them more likely to disengage. In one instance, their status was reduced to one of compliance and dependence:

> Would you like the opportunity to offer up your own ideas in the sessions? (Researcher)

> Yes… most of the time they show us what to do. I would like more choice. (Young Musician)

> They could ask everybody what they like and could do combination of everybody's ideas. The music leader was like 'you get that and you get that', and then Miss was like writing down which instrument you're on, 'you're there, you're there, and you're there'. You don't get to choose what instrument you want. You don't get to give your vote or anything, they do it all for you. (Young Musician)

Some of these quotes are very revealing of young musicians' perceptions, and we offer these quotes as ways to highlight the need, in particular for young musicians who are considered at risk, for the opportunity to share learning and opinions, and, ultimately, for

them to be listened to. In this instance the focus groups with the young musicians led to follow-up conversations between the funder, music organisation and the school which resulted in the programme ending early by mutual agreement.

4.3.6 Supporting learning and development outcomes for young musicians with complex needs

In some of the projects, the young musicians had a range of profound and multiple learning difficulties. In this section, the teachers and music leaders share their perspectives of the young musicians' development. It is important to note musical processes and pedagogies were similar or identical to the other projects in that learning focused on young musicians' preferences and creative approaches were used to engage them in sound creation and musical development. This normally entailed collaboration between music leader, teacher, and young musician. Learning activities were designed to support young musicians to progress musically in appropriate ways that respected their preferences and ways of communicating.

Some music sessions were conducted on a one to one basis over the four years but were also supported in later years by wider group sessions. Over this time the young musicians explored a range of instruments, sounds, developed their responses, control of sound and movement:

> [Young musician] has a box with lots of activities that they will explore in a different ways or forms. So sometimes this is loud, soft, smooth, quick, fast sounds. The way that they are exploring different instruments and sounds. This has been a big growth. (Teacher)

> It's just so good to see [young person] coming out of themselves. There world can be quite small and it's definitely growing and getting wider. In the session, it's about stimulating activities; banging or tapping our foot, humming. I see it when I come to see [young person] in the music session, there is another world that can be opened to them and I can also see how I can take it back into the class. (Music leader)

> With some young people, we have short-term learning curves, where we have an open approach to sensory engagement. I've observed a series of movements that they make when they are excited about something, they are voluntary, but they can't control them very well. We realised within a session the more you engage together through movement and sound, eventually the movements become more controlled bit by bit. (Music leader)

> Exciting thing about the way that we are working is that we've got the opportunity to change the positioning of our pupils, which is really key in terms of how they access instruments and embody musicality. (Teacher)

The teacher describes the impact this had on engagement in wider group sessions:

> Their confidence has really increased, it means when we are in group sessions, we can use those strategies explored in the music sessions, that we know will engage them.

A carer of one of the young people describes the development of resilience, confidence and musical growth:

> I really do feel that because [young person] is at my side constantly, they need to be away from me. [Young person] has a range of complex needs so being able to go

into a room with other people and act in an acceptable manner is a key developmental step. I've made sure we're here, and really I've let [young person] come and do it as themselves. They can be themselves here, they have developed more than I could have imagined. They work in small groups with others and work with others to make music.

Over time and through interactions a shared learning experience was created:

I think with intensive interaction it is about a shared control. We call that the moment of the dance and I've seen that with [music leader] and [young person]. (Headteacher)

We have discussed earlier in this report the importance of the development of a relational ontology between teacher and music leader. Sharing of knowledge and experience was crucial for the projects working with young musicians who had complex needs:

As a team, we have exchanged ideas. We take that back into the classroom environment. When you see something working you want to replicate that and want to give it a go. If I read something that said try this musically, you would say to me 'do you want to try this?' I wouldn't have tried because I would be thinking how do I do that? How do I interpret that? But you have modelled a lot to me and that's been really good. (Teacher)

It's part of a wider set of engagement, sensory and social engagement. The way we do that is by working quite closely with teachers and TAs, who again have this perspective, in a way how to measure, how to observe and frame what the students do and what the students need, and they have a similar way to observe the music sessions. We all share our experiences. (Music leader)

The work we do is always part of a wider conversation that I have with teachers about what they do. (Music Organisation Lead)

It has been very helpful to work with people who have the bigger picture. In some projects there is a particular outcome I meet but here it is part of a much bigger project and we have an interest in sharing. From the Headteacher to the class teachers and that has, in a way, made it possible for my work to be held to account more rigorously than it usually is. Where medium and long-term outcomes are observed, not just the impact what people can see during the sessions.

Alongside this, the teacher and music leader had to remain open to change and be flexible with outcomes. Due to health reasons many young musicians progress would change week to week, being responsive to young musicians needs was therefore crucial.

Health and wellbeing were also major factors in the music sessions, this meant that the music leader and teacher had to constantly reflect on their pedagogical approaches and what they considered to be a meaningful outcome for these young musicians:

There has been an increase in seizures and change of medication, and that's partly associated to things that really engage in. We have to really reflect on what's best for the young person. (Music leader)

One of the students was at hospital for a long period of time, so we have to take it slowly when we reengage and I have to reflect a lot on the explorations we do. (Teacher)

> I wouldn't say there is a fixed outcome, the outcome can change quite dramatically after the first few minutes of the session. We know that the child might not be in a very good place at that particular moment. For some their mood is quite changeable. Their sensory processing can be all over the place. I remember within one session one young person's mood changed quite abruptly. So the overall outcome has to be informed by weekly inputs. But I keep these in small diary reflections, which in a way keep myself up to date as for what's happening. (Music leader)

The approaches used by the music leader were observed by the Headteacher who stated:

> [Young person] has a very complex profile because they have three registered levels of disability; profound and multiple learning difficulties, visual impairment and on the autistic spectrum. At any one time, in an engagement, any one of them can peek. So the real challenge is about how to engage together. [Music leader] becomes sophisticated communicator because they change what they do in order to be reflective of their needs at any point. So sometimes you are a leading and initiating, other times you are receiving and learning from them. [Music leader] changes what they do according to the feedback that they are getting from [young person] so all the time you are offering feedback.

The music leader managed these changes by keeping a reflective diary, which also allowed them to track musical progression over time:

> [Young musician] is very curious they will pick up sound devices in a number of different ways. I take notes of different ways in which they are playing and see if there is any development over time. Whether they are using it in the same possibility or the same way or if they keep on looking for new possibilities.

This was also a process that the teachers used to share practice with parents and receive feedback:

> We have a home-school book that we write stuff in and if there's something really exciting that has happened then I'm on the phone and trying to make sure I engage with them so that they know what's happened. This is particularly important for parents that find it more difficult coming in. I just give them a little phone call and say I wanted to share this with you and have you tried this? I like to ask 'What do you find is working at home?' (Teacher)

The complexity of the young musicians' needs required the partnerships to reflect constantly and rethink approaches throughout the four years. In some instances, progress was made and then regressed due to health complications. However, the sustained partnership offered the young musicians the opportunity to explore and communicate in new ways, develop their ability to recognise and respond to sounds as well as engage with musical instruments. Without the longitudinal nature of this project, these experiences would not have been possible:

> …sometimes change happens very slowly and sometimes change happens really, really fast. Here things change week to week and the longitudinal nature of the project has been important for progression. (Music leader)

> Practice, which is about responding, is important. It is about communicated behaviours and that's what's been able to be established over time. (Music leader)

> I would say is a very interesting example of a very clear progression that is only possible to achieve over a long-term intervention because I would say quite a clear case for sensory-activation. (Teacher)

Not only did this affect the young musicians who were directly working with the music leader in the Exchanging Notes project but also the wider school cohort of young people:

> It is quite interesting to see how you can have this knock-on effect. You start working with five individuals, but they belong to different classes, different teachers but then if you have a head teacher who is proactive in serving those outcomes, then they will try to capitalise on that and the timing, the timing is crucial. (Music Leader)

4.3.7 Development in and through music

Development of *musical* skills in the young people

The sessions in which the young musicians were engaged were, as we have seen, complex and wide-ranging. However, within this complexity we were able to discern a range of skills that were developed by the young musicians as they traversed the various projects involved in Exchanging Notes. With the complex diversity of provision it is fair to say that these did not necessarily develop equally in all instances, but nonetheless there was an important commonality that was observed. These skills included:

Improvisation

Many of the projects involved the immediacy of improvisation in making music in the moment. This is an important area of musical activity, and is one that can be overlooked in some forms of classroom music education. As Burnard (2000 p.21) observed some years ago: "Our aim as music educators should be to facilitate a form of music education that focuses on genuine experiences of children being improvisers". This was evidenced in many of the projects observed. It links closely to the next item…

More developed improvisatory musical structuring knowledge and skills – jamming

Jamming involves being able to make improvisatory gestures and contributions in the moment of creation. It involves rapid processing and decision making in the moment (Pressing, 1984; 1988), and is a key skill, which is backed up be considerable cognitive activity, along with knowledge and understanding. This is another area which is not always included in some forms of classroom practice at KS3 and 4. Jamming developed significantly in many of the projects observed, and was a key developmental aspect for the children and young people involved.

Composing knowledge, skills, and understandings

Composing "…refers to the act of creating new music with the intent of revising the created music to suit the composer's intentions" (Brophy, 2001 p.34). It often arises from improvisation, especially in the work observed, and is also a key component of the National Curriculum. Developing composing has sometimes been said to be a problematic area for classroom teachers (Berkley, 2001; Fautley, 2014). Within the Exchanging Notes projects composing often arose naturally and seamlessly from the work that was being done in the projects.

Developed skills and understandings in what the National Curriculum refers to as the 'interrelated dimensions' of music

The National Curriculum states that children and young people should:

> understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations (DfE, 2013 p.217)

These are obviously key aspects for all sorts of music, as well as being on the National Curriculum. All of these aspects were developed during the projects.

Enhanced listening skills – Communication verbally using appropriate musical vocabulary

Using appropriate musical vocabulary is frequently a key learning outcome, and is vital anyway if young musicians are to move to becoming full participants in a community of practice of musicians. The Exchanging Notes projects used musical terminology as a matter of course; it was like a target language, one that involved talk and discussion using appropriate musical terms. This meant that the young musicians involved were fully inducted into the community by using and being able to use appropriate vocabulary. This may sound like a minor matter, but using the language of the domain is key to full engagement in and with it, and this aspect was developed throughout the Exchanging Notes projects.

Young musician's perspectives

Some of the young people's initial barriers to musical development related to perceptions of their musicality and musicianship:

> I didn't do music before really, well this is like the only music that I do.

> I don't think I was very good at music, well I never really done that well in that lesson so didn't think it was for me.

> Before like, music weren't really my thing.

> I didn't play an instrument.

> Never been given the chance before, we have lots of opportunities in this, that I didn't have before.

Part of the success of Exchanging Notes was using leaders who young people identified with, and whose cultural and musical identities were relevant to their own backgrounds. We have heard how the music that young people were passionate about offered an initial way in to the learning process. The world cloud (Figure 11) shows those key words which featured most prominently across all of the narrative data collected in student perception surveys across the four years. The relative size of the words is determined by the number of times they were used across the comments, with the most popular words being the largest. Note: comments have been filtered to remove names, organisations, and commonly featured words such as 'and', 'the', and 'I'.

Figure 11 - Word cloud of young musicians' perception survey comments.

'Music' is the word used most frequently, unsurprising given the focus of the programme but interesting when viewed against the other frequently used words. Apart from the subject-specific words such as 'music', 'group', 'drum', 'beats' and 'song', the other most frequently used words are positive words affirming attitudinal responses to the provision such as 'enjoy', 'good', 'fun'; and words associated with competence, self-belief and development, such as 'confidence' 'think', 'can', 'able', 'new', and 'now'. These descriptors point towards young musicians being able to identify changes in their outlook in relation to Exchanging Notes and, perhaps, that music has been the catalyst for this. Positive descriptors of 'can' and 'able' suggest an identification of new skills and approaches that have allowed young musicians to realise aspects of their potential they might not have before.

Over the four years, there were many changes in the young musician's engagement in, skill development and knowledge of music. Earlier, the importance of the creative process was discussed as a central factor in fostering social and emotional learning. Creativity is not easy and the young musicians had to balance the process of the creative struggle with an outcome:

> …we had to like really get our creative brains on and like think in depth on what we would think this piece is going to sound like and I think another difficult part was lots

of like ideas were coming out but we could only put like certain things into it otherwise it'd just sound like this whole mess of like a speech or something! I thought it was quite good, there are good things about making the music with struggles, so…(Young Musician)

…yeah and you know if there were any struggles it was, it was for a good a thing, you know (Young Musician)

yeah, yeah we'd always like overcome them and find out a solution of how to get past and make it like into a really good piece. (Young Musician)

Composing has been described by some as the highest form of musical creativity (Rogers and Hallam, 2010), because it builds on musical experiences, combines influences, allows experimentation, explores process and often leads to a composed piece. One key musical aspect of creative development in Exchanging Notes was composing:

…we'd write the lyrics and then we would like kind of make an intro on Garageband and then like start making a chorus and a verse to it and then build the song up and then record it in the recording booth and then add harmonies and things like that and just really like make it a really good piece … so everyone was in it, and everyone had like a main like part of it and no one was like had a little bit or a big bit, it was all equal and everyone was like really happy with what they'd made as well. (Young Musician)

Songwriting was a form of composing that was explored in different ways in a number of projects. Although this was approached through different perspectives and activities, the process of writing songs linked directly to the young musicians' personal experiences and allowed them to deeply engage with music at the same time as reflecting on their own life experiences:

…you can express your own thoughts and put them into songs (Young Musician)

…when I'm recording a song with them like it's my ideas, it's my theme, it's how I want it to sound and then they'll just like help with like putting it all together at the end and making it sound like an actual song. (Young Musician)

From the first sessions that I engaged with (Young Musician), they was quite insular and shy. They hadn't opened up to me yet so it was quite hard getting information out of them, there was a lot of shrugging shoulders but as the sessions gone on they are engaging with me a lot more, we are making music more and they are expressing them self. We have focused on lyric writing and song writing because it allows them a space for them to tell me about them self. This makes the sessions more personal and has allowed them to express themselves. (Music leader)

In one case we have focused on lyrics. The young person felt that they could express themselves in the sessions, they would often say that it wasn't just about words but that it was from the heart. I think this broke down a barrier within them. By talking about these things in their music, they were processing things in their mind, all these memories and experiences that they had previously not been able to process. Alongside this they were progressing musically and found they were good at something. (Music Leader)

The development of new identities

Over the course of Exchanging Notes, working with the music leaders and teachers led to changes in perceptions of identity, which entailed a greater understanding of what it means to become a musician. In our interviews with the young musicians they discussed at length changes in their identities, the ways in which Exchanging Notes had made them feel more musical, the sense of pride they have from being involved, and some of the ideas they had for the future. This offers an important perspective on perceptions of sessions and activities, with young musicians taking ownership of their own musical development. They said:

> …'cos we work with different styles, styles that we might not necessarily listen to and might, might not like, but it keeps us working together as well as musicians because in the school like after our year there's like a, there's a massive dip in musicians and people that actually appreciate music and what we do... so [it] kind of keeps us, keeps the momentum going. (Young Musician)

> I think that music's always going to be a big part…I'd definitely like to carry it on in the future. (Young Musician)

> I didn't think we would be performing outside of school and at weekends. It's a good experience and means it's more than just for this project. (Young Musician)

> I feel like I do quite a lot outside of school, practising independently sort of composing my own things here and there, I know that on my phone I've got a load of like different sound memos that have just sort of eaten away my storage and space! (Young Musician)

Over the four years of Exchanging Notes the young musicians went through processes wherein they began to see themselves not only as learners, but also as musicians. Learning implies some sort of change, which we have seen in the young musicians' perceptions. They took the musical knowledge offered to them, embodied it and made it their own. In this long passage from a young musician during an interview the importance of music is explored:

> … I was new into foster care and I remember being told about Exchanging Notes at the start, and I was like 'no, no that's not my thing' and, it took me a couple of months actually to be like, 'actually I think I'll try it'. Then honestly it was probably the best decision I've ever made, because being part of Exchanging Notes has made me a lot more confident, it's like offered me a lot of opportunities to like go on stage and sing, go to awards and sing, do projects, perform to my family, record my own songs, do covers of songs, be parts of like projects, and if I didn't do this, then I would never think of like doing stuff like that, I wouldn't know who to contact, I wouldn't. I don't think I'd even think about it. I wouldn't just sit up and be like 'I'm gonna go and record today!' (Laughter) but I did and it's, I think it's really helped me as well, because music's became a really, really big part of my life. It helps me relieve stress, so if I'm, like, ever stressing I know that I can like ring up (music organisation) and ask them if they have got any like time, or any projects coming up, where I can, like, come and record, and there's always a space where you can like come and record and just sing. (Young Musician)

Becoming Learner-Musician

Understanding identity formation in order to appreciate the developmental process from adolescence to young adulthood is important, especially in this longitudinal project. The period between adolescence and young adulthood is characterised by the development of a self-image and this has been an important process over the four years, with many of the young musicians towards the end of the project seeing themselves as 'musicians'. Part of this process is their vision of a 'possible self' (Cross & Markus, 1991). Cross and Markus describe how possible selves can be developed and motivate a young musician:

> The adolescent who has been praised for her musical abilities may develop images of herself as an accomplished pianist, performing in the all-city talent show. Such possible selves become the incentives that fuel long hours at the piano practicing scales, new techniques, and chord patterns. With time, she may begin to define herself not just as 'someone who plays the piano' but as a 'musician' or as a 'pianist', and this label will provide a focus and organization for an increasing number of her actions (1991: 232).

In this next quote from an Exchanging Notes young musician they describe how they developed self-belief, started to enjoy the session and develop their musical skills, which affected their self-image towards becoming a musician:

> Before I never thought, I would see myself as a musician. I didn't take it seriously. As time went by though I realised, why I don't give this a try. I like playing the drums so much now. (Young Musician)

Building a positive future through music

In the final interviews with the young musicians, we found that they had high levels of aspiration and diverse goals for their futures. Many of the young musicians describe the positive outcomes of Exchanging Notes as helping them develop a stronger sense of direction for their future:

> I've got a college place where I'm studying travel and tourism and then hopefully I'll go into my dream job would be to be like a holiday rep and like entertainment in hotels where I could also use my singing for like shows.

> I'd really like to get some music out there and like produce have like albums and things like that or a song on Spotify or something like that and just like have like little tours in the U.K.

> I tell people I'm a musician and I aspire to become, like not famous, but like known for my music.

> It's kept me out of trouble to be honest and made me see myself in a better position and the school they support me as well. It's shown me that I could do more than just a normal job, I could use what I've learnt in here and take it further.

> I want to become an architect, I just love like buildings and stuff but I feel like this has helped me, I will remember what it's done for me and for my confidence. It can help you in the future as well if you know what I'm trying to say. Everything that we've learnt here for example communication, focus and listening that could actually help you get somewhere and you can always reflect back like where you got it from.

> I don't know exactly what I want to do but I know that I want to go to college… I probably wouldn't have said that if you asked me before.

> I'm not sure about others but, I've achieved something because when I was younger I never thought I'd be performing in front of people, playing and doing what I'm doing now… I think I can use that in the future when I want to do something, I just have to try and put in effort.

The young musician-centred approaches to music in Exchanging Notes extended music experience beyond that of the classroom. This impacted many young musicians' attitude to school, self-esteem and confidence. In the final interviews with young musicians, teachers and music leaders, the notion of embodied experience was explored; in particular the dispositions, characteristics, value and musicality they have developed over the four years and how this impacted not only their musical, but lifelong learning:

> …for some people in the arts, they only see it in terms of formal qualifications, not the broader good of the work and how transformative it can be. This is about the impact on the children and giving them an opportunity to express their emotions and how that then gives them access to vent their feelings and let people know what things are difficult for them. That ability to respond to music and the feeling that it evokes. (Teacher)

> There is a different set of goals, and I think that's the point. That's what sometimes I think people miss in this, especially in the current ideas around education. These things can be high achieving and can influence you wanting to do 'well', whatever 'well' means, and 'well' sort of takes on a new meaning. All of that stuff is existing at the same time as other ideas of quality…which are based on collaboration, movement forward and of collective experiences. So, I think all of that stuff can be accredited to this environment without a marking system; it becomes much more personal. (Music leader)

> Music is a big part of my life (Young Musician)

> Music is just in me now (Young Musician).

4.3.8 The requirement for a new success narrative

This section has drawn together the evidence of educational and broader developmental outcomes, showing how the programme supported young people to engage and re-engage in their school education and develop a wide range of social and emotional outcomes. Alongside the development of communication techniques, teamwork, empathy and creativity, they became more resilient – helping to future-proof their wellbeing, and re-authored their own stories, picturing their future selves with a new-formed musician identity.

As we have heard, many teachers and schools had a different view of 'success' by the end of Exchanging Notes:

> So, I think the legacy is that people now understand that that's a really important tool, in terms of peoples' learning, peoples' communication, peoples' wellbeing and peoples' self-esteem, because they have seen it for themselves. (Headteacher)

> Usually in school we very much have certain skills we need to cover, get certain grades and it is very much target driven. Whereas this is far more looking at the

individual needs of the children … so we are looking more at the pastoral side of it, setting targets with the students. (Teacher)

…the teachers (in school) now see a different side to me. (Young Musician)

Taken together, the data paint a positive picture. Had the schools data (on attainment and attendance) been viewed in isolation, however, then the report would read very differently. Had the projects solely focused on exploring educational development through school data, it could be interpreted as having a narrow or inconclusive impact on the young musicians' progress. We know from the data that was collected that Exchanging Notes had significant impact in a multitude of ways on the young musicians. This raises serious questions about how standard data collection undertaken by schools may be obscuring young people's broader developmental outcomes; and that structures imposed by the performativity agenda exclude the most vulnerable learners and actively work against having music in the school curriculum.

Through 'musicking', young musicians fostered new patterns of social interaction that helped to establish trusting relationships with other young people and adults; acting as the foundation or springboard for a range of other learning outcomes. Through this study, music has shown to be particularly effective in promoting social and emotional outcomes. Yet its place in the school curriculum is at risk. This does present a clear case for the introduction of broader school success indicators from policy-makers, together with the delivery of an ethical music curriculum focussing on social and emotional wellbeing:

it's the, kind of, governing bodies of educational systems, it's the policy makers, these are the people that need to be informed of this work. I hope that what we have done here is a resounding, commentary about the fact that this is about music, this is definitely about music and it's definitely about music as an important part of education. (Music leader)

4.4 THE YOUTH MUSIC QUALITY FRAMEWORK

Music teachers and music leaders work within fields which have their own sets of beliefs, practices and pedagogies. Dwyer (2015:2) notes that music teachers:

> … have most often engaged with the formal knowledge of their subject area for a number of years prior to or concurrently with their teacher-education program, and thus hold strong beliefs about what comprises valuable knowledge and skills in the subject area.

This can also be said for the music leaders who similarly form strong subjective perspectives and practices where 'one's subjectivity is like a garment that cannot be removed' (Peshkin, 1988: 17). For both the music teacher and music leader these intrinsic subjectivities can become fixed; they are 'situational…and context bound' (Fautley and Savage 2007:125). Because of this, pedagogies and approaches to learning and doing can often be bound by innate practices that tend to go unquestioned. Pedagogical approaches can become 'invisible' 'ritualistic' and 'taken for granted' (Kinsella 2014: 307). Therefore, it is important for teachers and music leaders to reflect on their practices, explore the foundations of their understandings, knowledge development and meaning making. A significant element impacting openness to new methods was their engagement with the quality framework.

The Exchanging Notes projects utilised the Youth Music Quality Framework as a way to explore session content, teaching and learning methods, and the musical and social environment. The Quality Framework was most effective when it was used to help teachers and music leaders reflect on their work and on young musicians' progress. It then became a shared dialogue that enabled teachers and music leaders to focus planning, and consider aspects of the music sessions both in-school and more widely.

We reported in our Year Three Interim Report[4] that because there was no set guidance on how the Quality Framework should be used, a variety of different bespoke approaches were being taken by each of the projects. Some used it on a termly basis for specific observations aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of sessions (much like what occurs in a typical school classroom observation, where an observer offers constructive reflections aimed at improving teaching and learning). Some focused on a small number of specific criteria per session. Others used it not only as a reflective device, but also as a planning tool, where they considered all the criteria across the short, mid and long-term. Doing this helps to develop session activities and pedagogical approaches that are young musician-centred, and to ensure that sessions take place in environments which are best suited for young musician's progression. As described here by one music leader:

> Is there a 'best' way, or a 'good' way, an 'ideal' way? But what way is the best way? To make this happen I have decided that I will to try to use it in a different way each term, to see if I can identify a particular method that suits me best, as I'm sure there would be many different ways to use it. For example, pre-lesson/session checking your plan/space/skills against the descriptors, or after the lesson/session in a more

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[4] https://network.youthmusic.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/research/Exchanging%20Notes%20Interim%20Report%20-%20Year%203%20-%20Youth%20Music%20and%20BCU_0.pdf

reflective way to help plan for the next week. Or maybe picking one or two descriptors each week to focus on, before and after the session. (Music leader)

Critical conversations

The quality framework worked well to enable critical encounters between teachers and music leaders. Fostering critical conversations about teaching with trusted partners yielded useful insights into pedagogy and music activity. It helped break down divides between formal and non-formal practices. More often than not, a sense of diversity became apparent in conversations which led to helpful and constructive dialogue regarding the exploration of alternative pedagogies and practices, opening new ways of seeing and thinking about practice.

> It's important to listen carefully to musical preferences and respond appropriately. One example I can share is of a young musician who I thought preferred to play keyboard during our weekly lessons, as it was the instrument she initially showed preference for. For a long period of time I was trying to find different ways in which to engage and support her in playing keyboard, then after talking about it with colleagues (it's good to talk to colleagues!), I realised that she had actually been showing a strong preference for singing, not keyboard. This drastically changed the shape of the music session and she seemed happier and more engaged to be singing in the microphone each week, rather than playing keyboard, although she may well come back to the keyboard again at later stage. (Music leader)

Young-people focused sessions

One aspect of utility of the quality framework that was strong throughout the project was its ability to allow the teachers and music leaders to see themselves from the young musician's perspective. It broke down the teaching and learning process into observable forms that put the young musician at the forefront. This often revealed ways of interpreting practice that neither the teacher nor music leader had considered before:

> It makes us really aware to involve the young musician in their learning and allow them to share with us their perceptions and thoughts about where they want to take their learning. (Music leader)

Investigating pedagogy and practice

Alongside reflecting on the young musicians' perspectives, the quality framework allowed teachers and music leaders to consult and re-visit their own autobiographies, perspectives, musical preferences and experiences. Investigating pedagogy through an exploration of personal preference was a reflective step that enabled them to move beyond implicit and underlining assumptions:

> We use the quality framework as a focus for review meetings and for learning group meetings where we have a variety of music leaders come in from the community and other educational settings come together. (Teacher)

Throughout the year we have been able to, literally, exchange notes on students, our plans, what is working and not working, the idiosyncrasies of the school etc. (Music leader)

The need to explore the wider implication of our work

The quality framework was a useful tool to reflect on teaching, learning, progression and partnership. However, in the early stages of Exchanging Notes some projects did not plan for consistent structured reflection between all those involved. This lack of scheduled and consistent structured reflection meant that they sometimes did not take into account the wider implications of their work. In the early stage of the Exchanging Notes project many opportunities were missed without these regular reflections. Where reflection was lacking in the partnerships, there was often miscommunication and differing expectations between schools and music providers. In some cases this meant that a shared dialogue was not created, joint ownership not established, and this led to the project not continuing.

Engaging in critical reflection means understanding experiences in the social context, and also to understand how it can develop practice. This is what Eraut (1995) referred to when he stated the importance not only of reflection in and on action, but more importantly the notion of reflection 'for action'. Reflection is identified as a major element of successful Exchanging Notes partnerships. Once the projects began to build trust, share dialogue, and then reflect together, responsibility for sessions was shared, distributed, and constructive criticality developed as noted by this music leader:

We think about what the young musicians are learning, what's the point in what we are doing? If you took away the concerts, what's the point in the session? And that is hard sometimes because you're aiming for the concert, and you're like 'You need to learn this entire song', but actually in sessions what are you teaching and why? (Music leader)

Over the years we have planned more time with each other. So we have reflection first thing in the morning where we have conversations like: 'No. This didn't work last time.' This is not about challenging each other or saying you're not allowed to do that, but just being really up front with one another about the best approaches instead of letting it go on for a few weeks and saying 'It's just not related to the learning. It's not pushing them'. I think, we all have learnt to be able to say 'What's the point of that? Why are we doing that?' and challenging pedagogy more. (Music leader)

This was not an easy process, as noted earlier in this report, but it was significant for the seven projects that lasted the full duration of Exchanging Notes.

A focus on learning, participating, and doing

Learning is the most important aspect of what should take place in classroom music lessons in schools. However, music as a subject is complex, because learning is also tied up with the *doing* of music. 'Doing' is important, but activity is not a substitute for learning. As we have observed elsewhere in this report, prior to Exchanging Notes many of the music leaders had not worked in a significant longitudinal fashion. Instead, they were often previously funded to work with schools for a specific amount of time, working to clearly defined goals, and, importantly, often with what can be classified as an object-orientated outcome.

> Previously we didn't look at the learning too much in our projects because I think our focus was getting them doing. I think it was intrinsically in there but it was definitely not part of the planning process of our learning outcomes. (Music leader)

This Exchanging Notes project, being over four years, was very different. The music leaders and teachers had to consider their pedagogical and participatory approaches to teaching and learning over an extended time-frame. The alignment of the quality framework with discussion with teachers on the curriculum helped to focus the sessions on learning and young musicians' needs, preferences and progression.

Over time, in the successful Exchanging Notes projects, these viewpoints became more closely aligned, and both learning *and* participation were jointly viewed as being important in involving the children and young people concerned, and in taking them forwards in what they were doing and achieving.

A joined up approach

The connection between the school and music provider is crucial to planning for learning and doing. A joined up approach is important, so that the ethos of the school is not out of alignment with the ethos of the music provider. When this does not happen, tensions develop. One aspect that impacted the projects in the early stages was the different approaches to planning by the school and music organisations:

> To change and improve teaching practice and to enhance learning… this is extended into training for staff to enhance leaning outcomes. (Music leader)

> Until everybody's on the same page there won't be planning for learning or planning for doing. It's just planning for planning. I feel that the school needs a lot of paperwork. It feels like I'm just being drowned in paper and words and loads of jargon. (Music leader)

> We use the quality framework as a way measure up against. And for our after-school sessions we make our own notes and then come together at the end and evaluate what's happened over the week. (Music leader)

However, both schools and music organisations described how having one document, in this case the quality framework, that includes both formal and informal language, impacted positively upon understanding, communication and learning within and beyond the sessions.

Observing wider social and cultural implications of the music sessions

Although musicianship, musical knowledge and skills are important, as well as doing and learning, other wider social and cultural elements were also identified through the reflections posed by the quality framework:

> In a lot of the conversations that we have, we focus more on the wider outcomes. Like the interactions with others and more general musicianship rather than, notes on the page. (Music leader)

> Actually having the framework to work with, I can say that it has really changing things and made sure that things are relevant and everybody is getting an equal

opportunity to engage with the music. We are quite limited with time for (the teacher) and I to talk. But the response from school it is that the quality framework fits with what they're expecting. (Music leader)

You have to keep pushing, I don't think you could accept anything on the surface, that's why the quality framework has been so important for me, certainly I hope for other people, because there are less things that people take for granted. (Music leader)

…suffice to say that (teacher) is in his second year as a classroom teacher, and is still subject to regular assessment of his planning, delivery, evaluation, and pupil progress, and his criteria for success is fairly black and white. However, in contrast, the Youth Music evaluation framework fosters self-reflection, designed to 'explore and celebrate' as well as assess; there are no boxes to tick. It has I think allowed both of us to not only value young musicians' work but ours too. (Music leader)

4.4.1 THE QUALITY FRAMEWORK AS A METHODOLGICAL TOOL

Table 1: The Youth Music Quality Framework

Young musician centred	Music leader practice
Y1 Music-making reflects the young musician's interests, with recognition of their existing musical identities. **Y2** Young musicians experience equality of engagement and no participant is discriminated against. Their views are integral to the session. **Y3** The young musicians' musical, personal and social development are monitored, and achievements are celebrated and valued. Young musician are supported by music leaders to set their own goals and targets. **Y4** Young musicians receive clear feedback on their work, identifying next steps for individual improvement. Young musicians are encouraged to participate in this process through structured peer and self-reflection. Comparison to others is only made where appropriate. **Y5** The music leader and/or project staff identify the need for any additional pastoral or other support, and seek to provide or signpost to this.	**M1** The music leader has relevant musical competence, and is both an able practitioner and positive role model. **M2** The music leader has a clear intention and has planned the session accordingly, while retaining room for flexibility. **M3** The music leader plans sessions that enable young musician to make progress and nurtures their understanding of what it means to be a musician. **M4** The music leader regularly checks young musicians' understanding. They reflect on their own practice: activities are reviewed and adapted over the course of the session according to how the young musicians respond. **M5** All project staff are actively engaged with activities. Music leaders and other project staff communicate before, during and/or after the session and collaborate in planning activities. Roles and responsibilities are clear to all involved.
Session content	**Environment**
S1 Activities are engaging, inspiring and purposeful. They are clearly explained and/or demonstrated to the young musicians. **S2** Ownership of session content is shared between the music leader and young musicians. Participants contribute to decision-making and have the opportunity to take on leadership roles where appropriate. **S3** Young musicians are supported to create and make their own music, and broaden their musical horizons over time. **S4** Activities are designed and delivered in a manner that is accessible to all and tailored to each individual whenever possible, taking account of their starting points and aspirations. Group dynamics and pace of learning have been considered.	**E1** There is a suitable ratio of young musicians to music leaders (and other project staff where required). **E2** Consideration has been given to the physical space, with available resources being best used to make it accessible and appropriate for the target group. **E3** There are sufficient materials and equipment to support the activities.

4.4.2 Research observation visits

As part of the research process, each Exchanging Notes project was visited by the research team up to three times per year. Members of the research team would observe at least one session per visit. The pattern of these observations was designed to stimulate specific and supportive structured reflective conversations with practitioners, teachers, and young musicians, to document changing perceptions of musical identities, pedagogical approaches, and to discuss challenges as they emerged. These observations formed a key part of the contextualisation of individual projects, the models of partnership developed, and the extent to which a two-way flow of information supported meaningful collaboration. A total of 75 observations were conducted across all of the projects for the four years of Exchanging Notes. As has been described earlier, although 10 organisations were involved at the start of the project, only 7 completed the four years. For these 7, 61 observations were conducted over the four years, spread across the project lifetime as follows:

Project Year	Number of observations
Year 1 (2014/15)	15
Year 2 (2015/16)	20
Year 3 (2016/17)	16
Year 4 (2017/18)	10
Total	*61*

To stimulate reflective conversations, and help practitioners to think deeply about their approach to young-people centred sessions, the research team used the Youth Music Quality Framework (YMQF) as an observation framework and springboard for structured discussions. In its initial form, the YMQF placed a red-green scale next to each point to allow leaders to make critical judgements on their own practice. For the Exchanging Notes evaluation, the research team used a similar scale, labelling these numerically from 1 (red) to 5 (green).

Figure 12 - Observation indicator scale used by research team

Although indications of between 1 (development needed) and 5 (fulfilling YMQF point) were given for each point of the Quality Framework, it is important to note at the outset that this should not be considered as any form of 'marking' or graded session observation of the provision being offered. These figures were collected to allow the research team to consistently track changing patterns across the four years of Exchanging Notes. The diversity and complexities of project offers, contexts, delivery models, the needs of the young musicians involved, and partnerships between school teachers and music leaders

make direct comparisons of only limited use. Instead, these observation indicators were used to help projects and practitioners to reflect on their activities and pedagogical approaches to refine and develop their practices across the lifetime of the project. The YMQF was therefore used to offer guiding principles for collaborative observation and reflection experiences, rather than a checklist for each observed session. As such, all charts and analysis provided in this section of the report use the red to green scale as the vertical axis, with numerical comparisons omitted in the spirit of supportive observation rather than performative assessment.

Considering these indicators in isolation reveals an upward trend in the extent to which project activities were meeting key points on the YMQF.
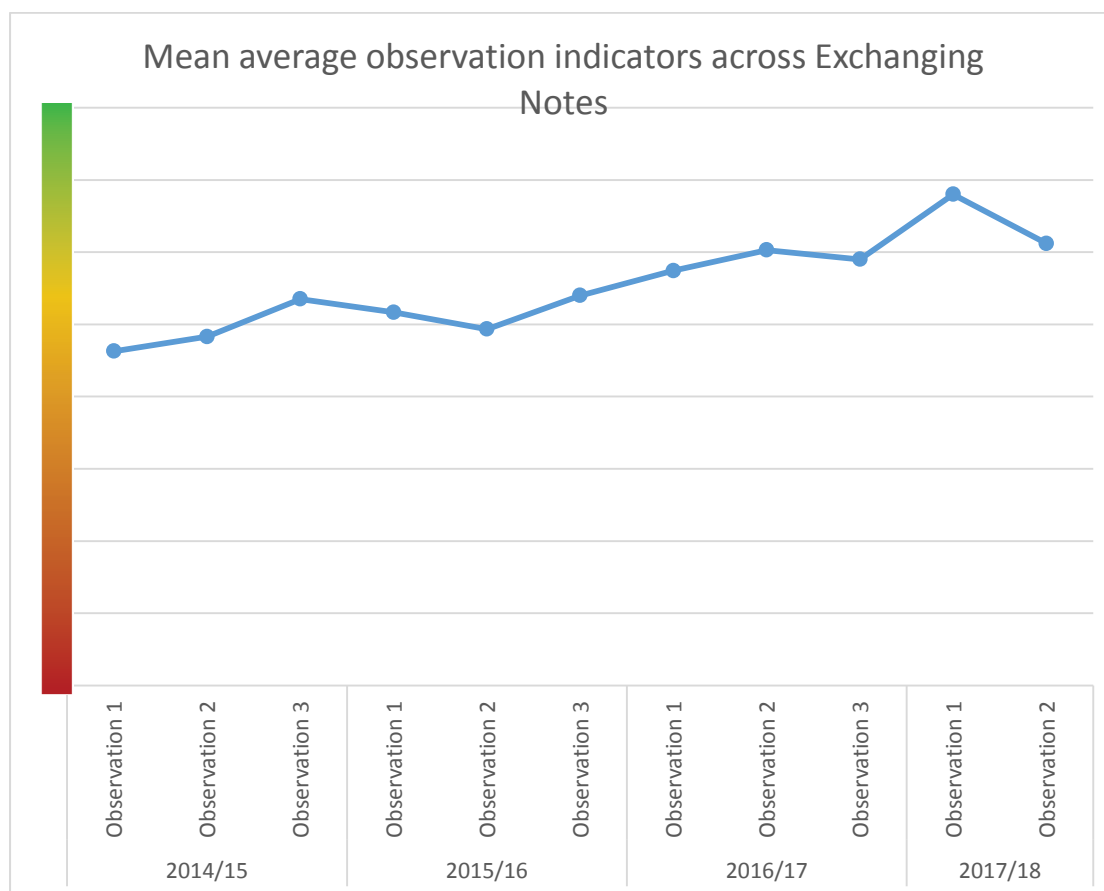
Figure 13 - Mean average observation indicators across Exchanging Notes

Figure 13 shows an increase in the mean average observation score across the four years of Exchanging Notes, with overall indications moving from orange at the start of 2014/15 to green regions of the scale at the end of 2017/18. Whilst this in itself does not demonstrate that the experiences of young musicians improved across this timeframe, or that projects were more impactful in the later stages, it is indicative of an uplift in the quality of provision and practice as observed and recorded by the research team. This is further emphasised when minimum and maximum observation indicators are added (see Figure 14).
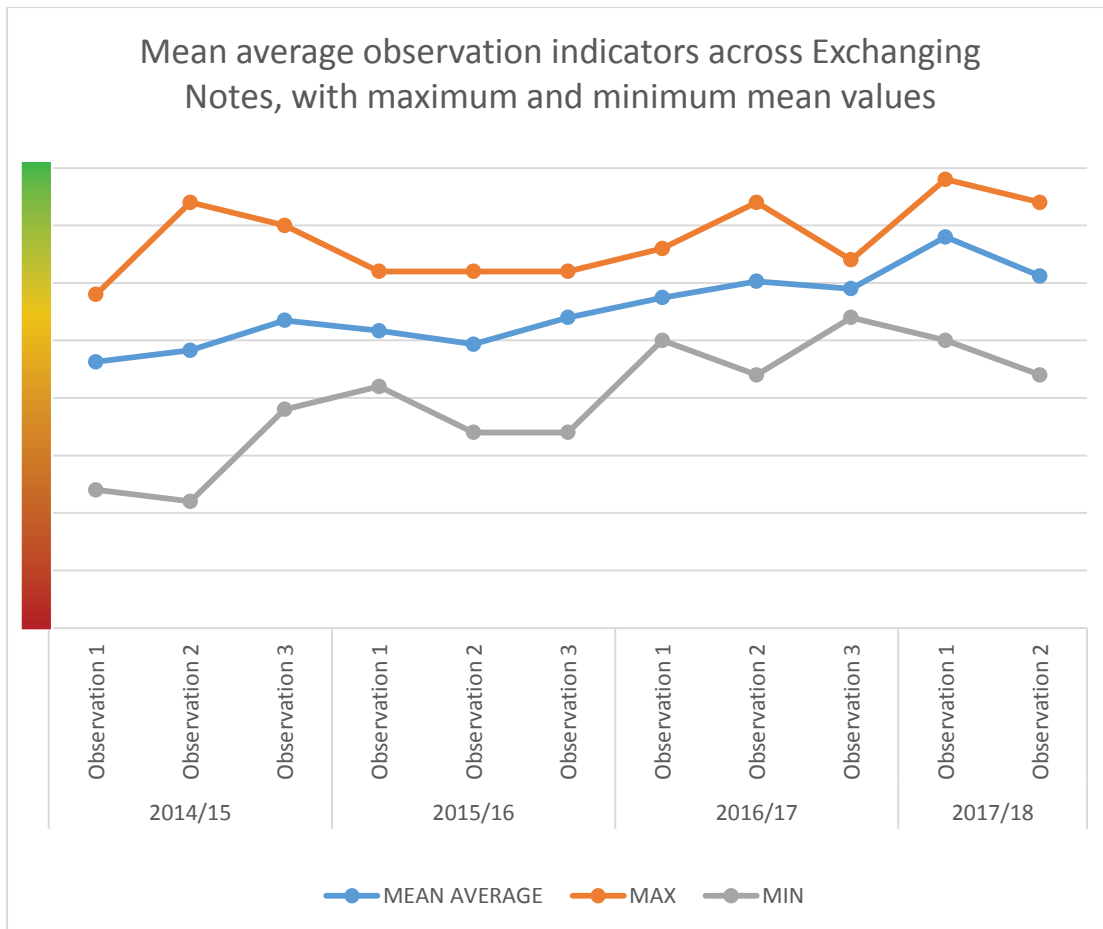
Figure 14 - Mean average observation indicators across Exchanging Notes, with maximum and minimum mean values

What Figure 14 shows is that there has been a general uplift in terms of both the lowest indicators recorded during observations, and the highest values. By the conclusion of the project, the mean average observation indicator was higher than the maximum value recorded at the start of the project. In the first observation of 2017/18, one of the projects was rated as being 'green', achieving nearly 100% 'green' ratings across the observation period. Both of these points are to be celebrated. It is also significant that the gap between maximum and minimum values remained remarkably consistent across the lifetime of Exchanging Notes. This points towards an overall increase in the levels that observed sessions were fulfilling the guidelines set out in the YMQF, and suggests an increase in overall quality observed in Exchanging Notes sessions. This is an important finding that correlates with outcomes from other areas of data collection which saw music leaders, music teachers, and young musicians increasing their understanding of new approaches to music making, and the needs of all parties involved in musical and pedagogical exchanges taking place throughout the project. This also reinforces findings about closer partnership working, an improved understanding of the contexts for these young musicians, and development of stakeholder practices to plan for both short and long-term project activity.

Observation of YMQF categories

As noted above, the use of a red-green scale alongside the quality framework was only a small part of observational data collection. Each of these indicators was accompanied with contextual details to provide site-specific notes on the ways in which particular aspects of the YMQF were being addressed in different locations. Following the model of the YMQF, this next section discusses these narrative details in greater depth, considering findings in four key areas allied to those outlined in the framework:

1. Young musician-centred
2. Session content
3. Environment
4. Music leader practice

Young musician-centred

The observation sections that represented young musician-centred considerations in the sessions are as follows:

- Music-making is placed within the wider context of the young musician's life, with recognition of the young musician's existing musical identity
- Young musicians experience equality of engagement: no participant is discriminated against
- The young musician's performance and technique are monitored, and achievements are celebrated and valued
- Feedback on young musician's practice is given, with next steps for improvement made clear (though not necessarily through spoken instruction). Where possible the pathway for improvement is identified by the young musician and their peers
- Achievement and excellence are measured in terms of personal progress and a comparison to others is only made where appropriate
- The music leader and/or project staff identify any needs for additional pastoral or other support, and seek to provide or signpost to this as appropriate

In terms of the observation indicator recorded by the research team, there was a clear uplift across all of these areas of session activity across the four years of Exchanging Notes. This shows that young musicians became more integral to session activities as Exchanging Notes progressed, pointing towards refinements and developments in the session practices observed. Such changes may have been facilitated by the establishment of trusting relationships between young musicians and music leaders, which allowed for a deeper understanding of the needs and musical identities of these young musicians.
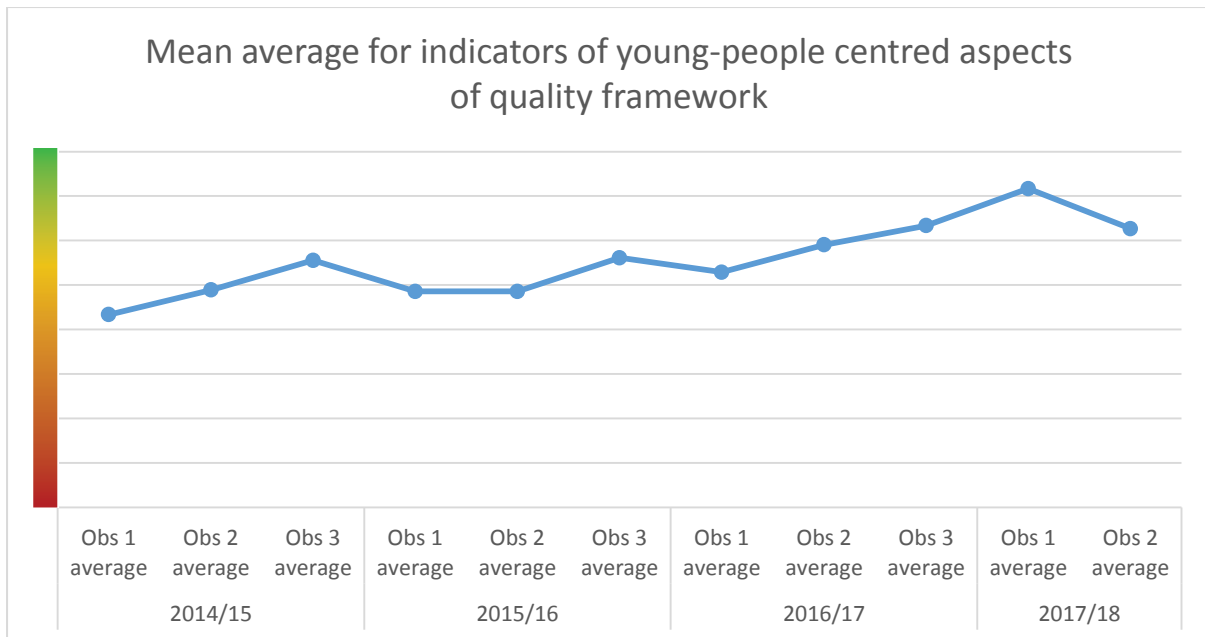
Figure 15 – Mean average of young-musician centred aspects of the quality framework.

This increase, which did not follow a strictly linear trajectory, demonstrates a positive shift in the success of Exchanging Notes sessions when viewed alongside the YMQF. Such a finding is also indicative of ongoing learning from those involved and may be a result of reflective thinking for long-term progression. Although this is just one indicator of improvement, the research team were keen to understand the ways in which projects evolved to place young musicians at the centre of activities. Copious field notes were taken in each observation, and a representative sample cited here demonstrates practices observed across the project.

In the early phases of the project, the research team recorded the following observations in relation to this area of the YMQF:

> Feedback is continual throughout, and this is done through questioning by the music leader. Sometimes the young musician may not understand the question being asked but often this communication is very useful and productive. Once the relationship between Music Leader and Young People is more cemented it will be good to see if the young musicians ask each other these questions. (Observation note)

Later observations yielded different outcomes:

> The ML understand the wider social aspects of the YP lives and therefore takes a more holistic approach to learning, creating a safe space and relaxed space for the YP to work in. The music leaders spoke confidently of the needs of the young musicians and would have been well-placed to address/refer these on if they had arisen. (Observation note)

Across these observations, an increased understanding from the music leaders of the needs, behaviours, and musical identities of the young musicians was clear to see. This was an important contributing factor to developments in session activities, and the enhancement of musical experiences for these young musicians. As noted elsewhere in this report, the relationships between music leaders and the young musicians occupies an important

pedagogical space that, in many cases, sits between formal and non-formal practice. The development of these relationships was founded upon a detailed understanding of the young musicians, and this was used to great effect by some of the music leaders to sustain interest and engagement in musical activities. Recognising the value of such bespoke musical approaches, although seemingly self-evident, was central to the success of Exchanging Notes in some areas.

Session content

Related in many ways to considerations of young-people-centric thinking from those involved in Exchanging Notes delivery, the second area of the YMQF addresses session content specifically. It offers the following criteria:

- Activities are engaging and inspiring and allow young musicians to achieve their full potential
- The musical process (and what is expected of the young musician) is clearly explained and demystified
- The young musicians' views are integral to the session
- Young musicians are supported to progress their musical skills, and other skills through music,
- Sessions have an atmosphere of collective learning; music leader and young musicians support each other to develop and excel
- The intent for the session is clear and reinforced, although not necessarily through formal spoken instruction
- Young musicians are supported to broaden their musical horizons through listening to and understanding other musics, as well as making their own
- The music leader recognises and nurtures the young musician's musical development, as well as their wider understanding of what it means to be a musician

Indicators for these criteria were compiled and demonstrate a moderate, but observable increase in overall indicative scores across the four-year period of Exchanging Notes. This suggests that positive adaptations were undertaken in the nature of session content. This data is presented in Figure 16.
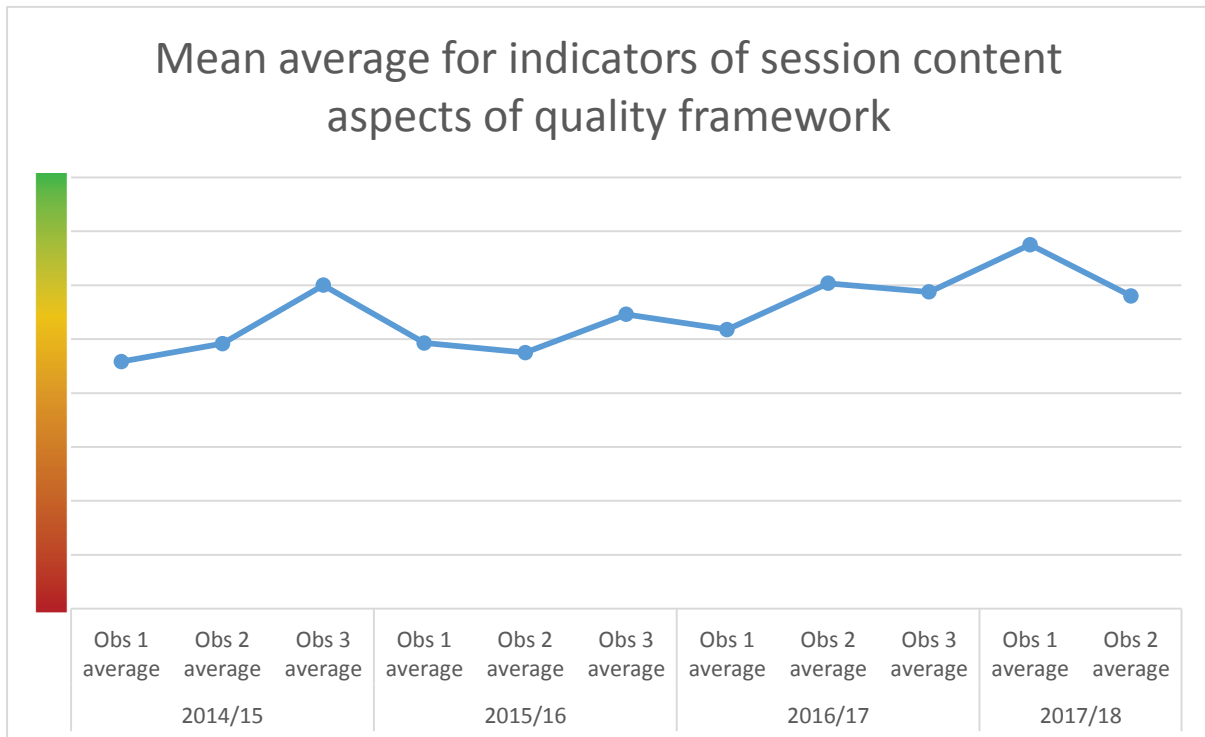
Figure 16 – Mean average for indicators of session content aspects of YMQF

Following a similar pattern to that seen in Figure 16, there was an increase in the indicators noted in observation field notes by the research team. Again, the profile of this progress was not linear, with points of increase and normalisation being identified across the course of the four years.

> Young musicians make decisions on the lyrics and the sounds created. It was very student-led and often went in a different direction than discussed day. The Teacher and Music Leader pursue young musician's suggestions. (Observation note)

> The young musicians' developed their musical skills but also softer skills of communication and physicality of playing the switches. Softer skills are important for building a safe and trusting environment. (Observation note)

> The young musicians are supported to work as a team, share ideas and listen to one another. Their social skills and life skills are being developed alongside the music. (Observation note)

Across our observations, themes of student leadership emerged, with observations pointing towards activities that develop the musical identities of the young musicians. Notions of collective learning were also clearly evident across the observations conducted over the four years, with numerous instances of sessions being dominated by atmospheres of collective learning. For some projects this has been a key element in successful wider learning. Even in cases where music leaders occupied stronger leadership roles in sessions, all providers worked hard to ensure that collective learning was happening. It is also interesting to note that evidence of changes in planning practices were also noted in observation field notes, with one observation questioning whether a key part of music leader expertise had been neglected at the expense of trying to form effective partnerships with school staff.

> The music leader is trying to extend their musical understanding. The music leader has listened to the school and planned lessons. However has planning now gone too far where there is not room for the creative process? Where is the informal learning which the music leader came to the project with? (Observation note)

This draws attention to the importance for all involved in a partnership to recognise the mutually beneficial skills and experience that they can bring to pedagogical and musical exchanges, without compromising the integrity of the musical identities involved. Music leader and music teacher need not, as effective partnerships have shown, be placed in dichotomies; their roles are 'often overlapping and interrelated' (Kenny & Christopherson, 2018 :22).

Environment

The third section of the YMQF relates to environmental considerations of sessions, such as activity spaces, ratios of adults to young musicians, and appropriate resources in terms of equipment and session time. The descriptors are as follows:

- The ratio of young musicians to music leaders (and other project staff where required) is appropriate
- Consideration has been given to the physical space, with available resources being best used to make it comfortable and appropriate for the target group
- There are appropriate and sufficient materials and equipment to support the activities
- The duration of contact time and depth of engagement are sufficient and appropriate

As with other sections of the YMQF, indicative ratings of red to green were given by the research team for each of these points. When averaged, these show an overall increase across the four years of Exchanging Notes, however, they also present a quite different longitudinal progression from Figure 15 and Figure 16.
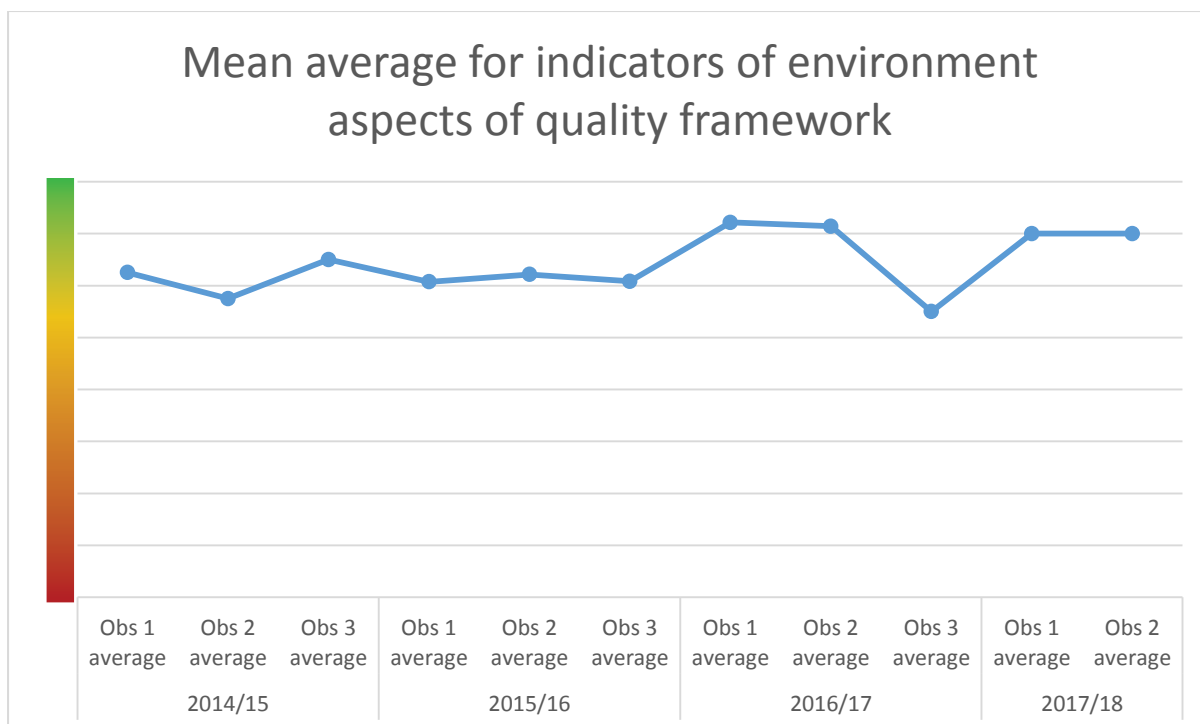
Mean average for indicators of environment aspects of quality framework

Obs 1 average	Obs 2 average	Obs 3 average	Obs 1 average	Obs 2 average	Obs 3 average	Obs 1 average	Obs 2 average	Obs 3 average	Obs 1 average	Obs 2 average
2014/15			2015/16			2016/17			2017/18	

Figure 17 – Mean average for indicators of environment aspects of quality framework.

The profile shown in Figure 17 shows retains a relatively level trajectory, before an increase between years two and three of the project. The largest decrease is found at the third observation of 2016/17. Following this decrease, observations return to similar levels to that shown earlier in 2016/17, suggesting that lower indicative ratings in the later part of 2016/17 are a 'blip'. It is interesting to note that this 'blip' coincides with other areas of decrease in attainment scores discussed in this report, though a clear causal relationship cannot be established. Observation notes included:

> A classroom space has now been introduced to the sessions. This changes the environment. It is still an issue in the cabin due to nature of the [musical instruments] taking up a lot of space - plus care needs to be taken on the young musicians' wellbeing - in reference to noise and ear guards. (Observation note)

> Physical space has improved over the years. The group now work in a classroom which is away from other classrooms, so that they do not have to worry about disruption of the drumming and the impact of the sound travelling. (Observation note)

Working outside of the school environment proved to be a successful element for increased engagement for many of the projects. The ability for pupils to work in professional music spaces enabled the young musicians to view themselves as musicians, be inspired, use instruments and equipment not available in school and go beyond making music to explore production:

> [Going to the studio] was really good. It was really posh and was dead fancy. From outside it looks like a tiny building but then when you went inside and you went down some stairs it was a massive room. There were lots of chairs and tables and there was a lamp that was made out of guitar picks. There were some more rooms and you could record in one and you could chill out in another. There was a famous band

recording upstairs and a few days later they released one of the songs that they had done there. (Young Musician)

[Going to the studio] is a lot more different because you had to focus a lot more. Because you have to get it done quickly. In school we just all do it and sometimes you don't get it all done. But there we did. (Young Musician)

By and large, environmental concerns were considered carefully by projects, and any issues arising were rectified speedily to ensure that these did not have a detrimental impact on the musical progress the young musicians could make. The research team were sensitive to the time pressures projects faced from competing commitments within school timetables and after-school sessions, and observations were always made with these factors in mind. As the observation excerpts cited above demonstrate, projects made changes to the structure of their sessions to improve the musical progress of the young musicians, and went to great lengths to ensure that any additional physical needs were appropriately supported.

Music leader practice

The final area of the YMQF relates to music leader practice. It is important to note here, that there was a turnover of music leader staff across most of the Exchanging Notes projects. Some music leaders had significant experience of working in formal contexts, whereas others were at the beginning of their music leader career, resulting in a range of experiences that emphasised the ways in which roles could overlap with music teachers in liminal pedagogical spaces. Therefore, references to music leader practice do not necessarily refer to the same music leader or practitioners at similar stages of their professional development. Instead, they report on changes in music leader practice more generally. The outline guidance for this area of the YMQF is as follows:

- The music leader has demonstrable appropriate musical competence, and is both an able teacher/facilitator and an inspirational role model
- The music leader has an appropriate understanding of the young musician's starting point. Activities are designed and delivered in a manner appropriate to the musical and other needs of the young musician
- The music leader reflects on their practice: activities are reviewed and adapted over the course of the session according to how the young musicians respond, and the music leader takes time after the session for self-evaluation
- The music leader has up-to-date knowledge of progression routes appropriate to the young musician
- Project staff - beyond the music leaders - show commitment to the activities, and music leaders and other project staff communicate before, during and/or the session

As with other areas of the YMQF, indicative observation ratings increased across the four years of the project, pointing to positive developments that music organisations and schools made to improve aspects of the musical experiences for these young musicians. The mean averages for this part of the YMQF for each observation are shown in Figure 18.
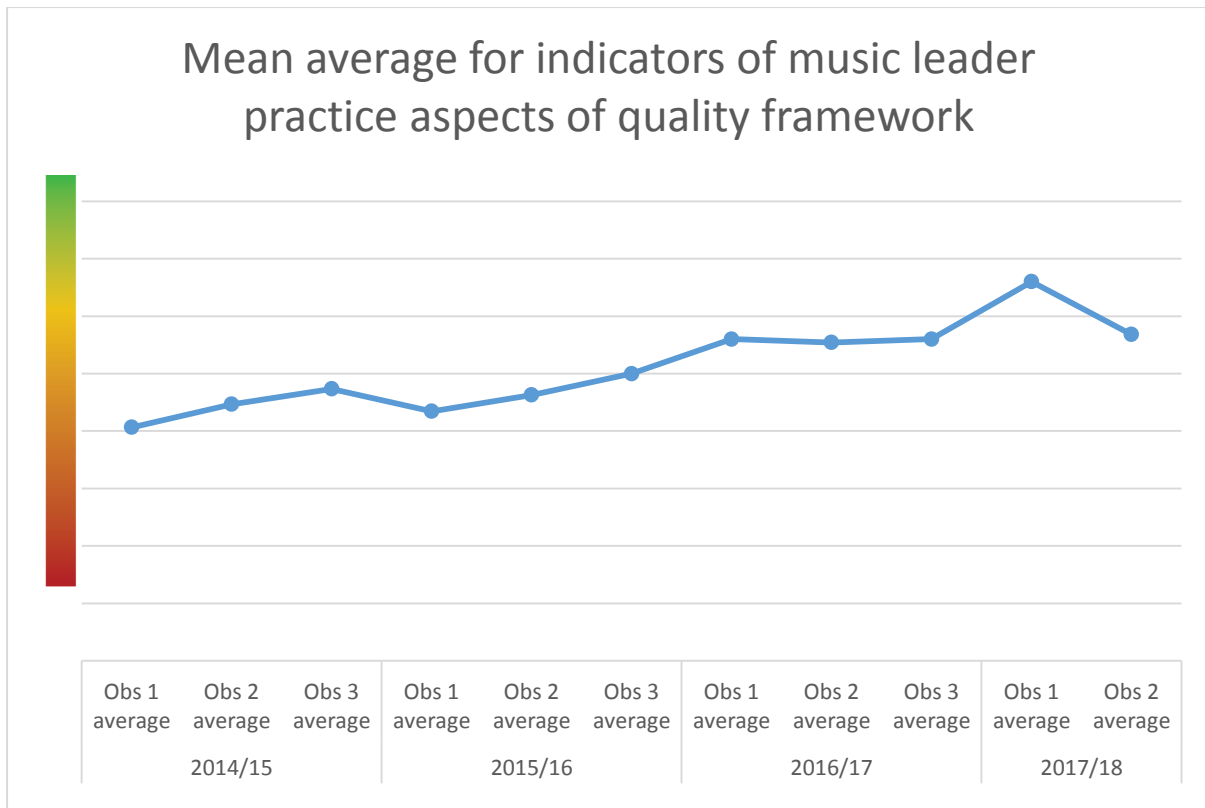
Figure 18 – Mean average for indicators of music leader practice aspects of quality framework

The profile of Figure 18 is very similar to that of Figure 15 and Figure 16, with a general upward trend, seeing only minor point of rebalancing in the final phase of the project. However, at their high point, overall indicators in this area of the YMQF are not as high as in other parts of this analysis. Increases in this aspect of the YMQF were not quite as significant as in the young-people centred areas of activity. The incremental improvements in music leader practice indicators are reflected in field notes from these observations, especially as some projects and practitioners developed their approaches to longer-term progression:

> The music leader and class teacher reflected together on their own learning and practice after the session. This was quite detailed and clearly a relationship of mutual respect. (Observation note)

> The music leader is unsure of the musical routes available in the immediate area to the school, other than the focus on the YP going to college. This is something that will need further investigation for the continuation of the project especially for these young musicians, as opportunities may be more limited due to their educational needs. (Observation note)

It is interesting to note that observations reported on mixed levels of engagement from school representatives. In some cases, the research team were able to observe rich and fruitful exchanges between music leaders and music teachers, leading to the development of joint understandings of longer-term musical and personal progression. However, some music leaders had taken on sole responsibility for the project, with school staff either there as supervisors, or in some instances not present at all. In these cases, engagement with the

young musicians may have moved from weekly contact to a more extended contact, but on a less frequent basis. These developments raise questions around the extent to which music leaders and music teachers were fully able to engage in pedagogical, musical, and inter-personal exchanges and participate in meaningful partnerships, as discussed elsewhere in this report.

In the early stages of Exchanging Notes, it was interesting to observe that music leader practices were being changed significantly to build more positive relationships with schools. This was, in some cases, to the detriment of music leader expertise, and perhaps evidences a lack of confidence from non-formal practitioners working in more formalised environments. It could also be due to the stifling environment of the performativity agenda in schools. By contrast, one observation in the latter stages of the four years saw music leaders and music teachers reflecting together in great detail, and feeding these reflections back into planning for subsequent Exchanging Notes provision. This provides a tantalising insight into the pedagogical possibilities of a formal/non-formal exchange on mutually respectful terms.

It is clear that in many projects, music leaders and music teachers have made significant steps towards incorporating detailed reflection into their practice, and have taken on board the principles of the YMQF. Instances of co-planning and supportive relationships were observed with increasing regularity as the project developed, and this enhanced the musical experiences of the young musicians involved. However, this contrasts with instances of school-based staff becoming increasingly disengaged with Exchanging Notes for some other projects, either due to a drop-off in overall engagement in the project, or due to changes in the delivery model that made attendance more challenging for teachers.

Summary

Observation data gathered across the four years of Exchanging Notes points to significant developments and refinements in practices and activities that impacted positively upon the musical and interpersonal experiences of the young musicians involved. The collation of observation data has revealed uplifts across the enactment of each area of the YMQF over the four years of Exchanging Notes, with the most significant gains being seen in aspects young-people centred thinking and changes to music leader practices. It is significant that evidence of pedagogical exchanges and developing relationships are recorded in observations. Growth in music leader confidence when working in formal settings, and the associated affirmation of pedagogical identities, is also an important finding emerging from these data.

4.5 IMPACT OF THE ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

It has been important during Exchanging Notes to question, reflect, and critique practice and pedagogy. Both BCU and Youth Music have been conscious that this project is not seen as an example of a "victory narrative" (Christophersen and Kenny 2018), but an opportunity to question and investigate what partnership work and its aligned pedagogies might look like in the future. For this to take place, the projects needed to have an open-minded approach and reappraisal of the specific dilemmas they face in their context, as well as share the successes of their approaches. Throughout this project, all partners engaged in activities that challenged preconceptions, modes of working and went on to deeply explore aspects of participation, knowledge, and understanding in music education.

The Action Research (AR) component of this work involved the research team feeding back findings, and doing this in ways which made a difference to the programme as it unfolded over the four years. Over the four years the research team continually fed back to projects via:

- After session observation reflections. Reflexivity and reflection in and on action (Schön 1983) were central to the exploration of activity. By having reflexivity as a key element to this research, the teachers and music leaders were given the opportunity to consider their own subjectivity. A reflective approach allowed them to explore both their teaching and activity's impact on learning. By being more critical the potential for future change is increased.
- Two national meetings were held each year to allow all the projects to come together to explore and share practice. This offered the projects opportunities to feedback to one another and as a joint research community to evaluate, define, and describe challenges and success, alongside investigating contextual matters, interpreting and explaining them. It also enabled reflection on teaching, learning, and engagement, looking at areas of success and any issues or problems. This allowed the Exchanging Notes community to resolve issues and jointly formulate solutions.
- The research team also held a number of online webinars with the projects, however these were not always well attended. Although these took place in evenings, only a small number of music leaders and/or teachers were able to engage with them. However, those that did welcomed the opportunities they afforded for joint systematic reflection.
- The research team regularly engaged with teachers and music leaders during the project, and were often a 'sounding board' for the projects.

The impact of the action research for schools and music organisations

Engaging in research for many of the teachers and music leaders has been an important part of their development as described here:

> … what goes into research in a project, the kind of things you've asked me for and the data and looking at and analysing what the impact is, that's been an interesting process because I've not been involved in research since my own college days. So, that's been a reminder and interesting. (Teacher)

And by being part of the research process many music leaders and teachers began to analyse their pedagogical processes:

> We are quite in touch with the work that we are doing, and we've been doing it for quite a while. However, I think, the really wonderful thing for us, which we hope to take further, is learning how to look from a research perspective, how to, analyse maybe the processes that are going on in a more formal way. I'm really interested in where we can go in terms of developing a relationship with research. (Music leader)

> Four years to really, kind of, form a partnership with you guys (research team) and, kind of, working out how to, how to communicate some of the things and elements that perhaps are sometimes non-verbal. (Music leader)

> I feel like, through this process of developing and understanding and reflecting upon what is actually happening, and learning how to communicate that to other people, is really, really invaluable for us. (Music leader)

> …we could really dig deep into the, kind of, the ways we use form and structure and, kind of, musical information as a means to, kind of, grow certain things. And, that becomes a really, direct pedagogical conversation. (Music leader)

> And, I feel like, it's really wonderful and intriguing to have this more formal relationship with the university, research university that can begin to disseminate information, but also test theories but also, kind of I mean, we want to have an impact. (Music leader)

One teacher describes how engaging with research through the national meetings and conversations with them regarding specific school issues, alongside debating and questioning issues with project colleagues has had impact on their practice and the discourse they now have with SLT. For example, one teacher described the impact this had on their use of assessment data within the classroom:

> We have, in school, this constant, every half term we need data, we need to know what these kids are doing. That is frustrating for us as teachers and it is an issue. We are super accountable for them. The kids are given targets from English and maths figures and they are meant to be getting that in music. And it is like, 'no that is not how this subject works'. This research has given us a bit of strength and backup. We have had many difficulties in school and it has given us the support really to say look how wonderful these lessons are without levels. (Teacher)

Some of the head teachers also communicated the importance of being engaged in a research project stating:

> I think every school should be a place of research and development. (Headteacher)

Many found that this engagement aided reflection in and on learning:

> From the research perspective it's been interesting, it hardly ever happens to have that length of time to do something like this. For us to be able to talk, to reflecting on nearly three and a half years of experience of living with this, it's just…it is really…It's so unusual. (Headteacher)

And this was also shared by one music hub leader:

I think what Exchanging Notes has done is to provide an evidence base for the instinct so many of us held, which is the impact of music on our learners. I think it's provided us that actual, legitimate data that is really seeing the impact, and I think it's also by making it a focus, it's been about demystifying the specialism of music. (Music hub lead)

CHAPTER 5: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF MUSIC EDUCATION?

This report has discussed various impacts of formal and non-formal discourse, power, control, pedagogy, practice, identity, relationships, musical knowledge and understanding. These aspects have either impacted projects, in so far as they could no longer continue partnership working, or have had to be unfolded and unpacked so as to allow new concepts of music education to emerge or be questioned.

Young musician outcomes

This Exchanging Notes report has shown the benefits of partnership working between schools, out of school music providers and young people. We have seen that in the young musicians' perceptions throughout this report, they developed their musical knowledge, skills and understanding. This was achieved through support and guidance offered by the teachers and music leaders, personalised approaches to teaching and learning, the creation of engaging and collaborative pedagogies that accounted for diversity, inclusivity, creativity, personalisation, and ethical approaches to music making.

As well as these musical outcomes, they also explored the social, emotional and wellbeing effects of engaging in music, which improved their attitude to school, self-esteem, mental health, physical health and confidence. For many young musicians this enabled them to re-engage with education.

It is reasonable to state that these outcomes would not have been achieved were it not for the extended timeframe of four years, where strong relations were formed between young musicians, music leaders and teachers.

Educational spaces

Delivery of Exchanging Notes projects involved various modalities of working, which included:

- Curriculum based sessions, in school, jointly led by teachers and music organisations
- In-school sessions, outside of curriculum time, led by music organisations
- In years one and two of the project working in schools, with teachers and music organisation working together, but moving to work outside of school in the final years in cultural venues with the music organisation as the lead, and on some occasions including the music teacher.

Drawing on the work we have seen in Exchanging Notes we can state with some certainty that it is important that projects like this continue. At the same time, questions need to be asked about the place, situation, position, *raison d'être*, and value of music in schools. Off-site sessions in professional music spaces proved inspirational and focussed learning, but such provision should be designed to be complementary to the core schools-based curriculum and as adding value. There is a danger in the current climate than off-siting replaces the music education offered in schools, thus reducing access points for young people to do music. Also, if partners who provide access to off-site venues are not

embedded within schools, then learning and expertise is less likely to feed into the curriculum:

> The work we have done is directly fed back into my work in the classroom and also generally music in the school. Because we have also done some work with our feeder schools it is also now a part of the school that they know about and want to be a part of. (Teacher)

This does raise questions as to what a 'good enough' partnership entails. Swanwick (2008:1) talks of the 'good enough' music teacher, maybe there is a need for a conceptualisation as to what a 'good enough' partnership entails. Key in this would seem to be some sort of mutuality; in other words operating separately but in parallel is not the same as operating in tandem. Whilst it is appreciated that the luxury of a four-year longitudinal partnership project is not possible in many circumstances, nonetheless working in a conjoint fashion has had clear benefits for all stakeholders, and improves outcomes for the young people concerned.

Rethinking educational spaces

Although there were multiple differences between the projects in their locations, contexts, and spaces of learning, further discussions regarding partnerships and collaborations that inhibit or promote transformative practice are needed. For those projects that remained within school, pedagogic behaviours shifted away from institutionalised notions of pedagogy and instruction towards something more social, cultural and expansive. There was a distilling of the institutional instinct into more mutual, reciprocal and interdependent practices.

These spaces open up new possibilities, practices and forms of learning. In particular the young musicians were enabled to access new, and in some cases previously closed-off, and therefore inaccessible ways of thinking and being a musician. Three important changes in learner perspective have been observed in Exchanging Notes, which can be defined and labelled as transformative, integrative, and re-authoring:

- Transformative: there has been a shift in young musicians' musical and extra musical perspectives,
- Integrative: participants now have new understandings of music, education, and the self in ways of thinking and doing
- Re-authoring: for the majority of the young musicians these new practices are unlikely to be forgotten, or unlearned. This has led to a re-authoring of the self, where new forms of discourse, and understanding of being a musician are internalised.

In this report we have discussed issues surrounding pedagogical knowledge, the dominance of performativity and assessment discourses causing a divide between theory and practice. Projects that continued to offer opportunities for pedagogical and professional development, with one another through questioning and critique, also found that the teachers and music leaders re-authored their understandings of what it means to be and become a teacher-music leader-musician-researcher and began to create non-hegemonic alternatives to music education, which had a positive impact.

Challenging educational hegemonic thinking

The research team endeavoured to observe and explore influences that impacted the participants' music education practices and processes. We were also interested to investigate the power structures that enabled or restricted them. To explain this further we need to introduce the notion of hegemony. Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony refers to the ways in which dominant classes are enabled to maintain their power by convincing those that are oppressed that established order is in their interest. This means that dominance is maintained without those, who are being dominated, being fully aware that it is happening. Wetherell and Edley (1999:336) argue that:

> Hegemonic ideologies preserve, legitimate and naturalize the interests of the powerful, which marginalises and subordinates other groups. Hegemony is not automatic, however, but involves contest and constant struggle

During the four years of Exchanging Notes there were many ways in which the projects countered educational hegemonic thinking, including educational discourses, teaching approaches, learning assessment regimes and educational spaces. In order to create a resistance to the mechanistic and formulaic structures that were a feature of the hegemonic practices within the school environment, projects had to find ways to explore new approaches that were democratic, relational, collaborative and constructively critical.

Many of the Exchanging Notes projects re-evaluated knowledge production going beyond measures of success based on musical standards, or level of skill, but rather, taking account of musical, communicative and discursive practices. Therefore, challenging hegemony involved entering conversations that explored new ways of thinking, being and doing. These critiques went beyond victory narratives or and merely highlighting what was good, better or more advantageous, but offering a way for thinking differently. This challenged traditional understandings of the nature of musical knowing.

For many of the Exchanging Notes projects these processes have enabled them to begin to move towards a realignment of music education as being socially, culturally and politically conscious and a change in practice and policies for accounting for progress and progression.

Valuing the research process

Understandings of research were not evenly distributed throughout the projects. Indeed, understandings of the differences between research, evaluation, and success were not evenly distributed either. This has relevance to an observation made by Kenny and Christophersen, of the aforementioned 'victory narratives':

> Too often, however, such initiatives within education tend toward "victory narratives". These dominant discourses ascribe the success of music-in-education initiatives to musicians' presence and artistic abilities alone, thus ignoring what musical cultures, expertise, and knowledge already exist within these settings prior to the intervention. This is perhaps due to a perceived (or real) need to serve greater political agendas, satisfy multiple stakeholders, create employment opportunities, and attract increased funding. Or perhaps it is due to a lack of criticality in the overall aims, functions, and inherent values of such projects that are often presented as a "magic bullet" for music education. (Kenny & Christophersen, 2018 :3)

There are a number of important issues raised in this extract. As Kenny and Christophersen observe, for some of the music providers, 'evaluation' had often previously involved the generation of 'victory narratives' to suit the requirements of funders. Such 'victory narratives' are commonplace in music education projects particularly linked to external communications outputs, for example the production of glossy videos showing rapid-cut sessions of young musicians engaged with fast-paced activity and with high engagement levels, interspersed with positive 'talking head' shots. But these victory narrative videos, important though they may be for the reasons Kenny and Christophersen outline above, are not what a systematic and methodologically robust research programme will entail. Here a fine-grained investigation should be designed to look beyond the surface, engage with problematising assumptions, look for instantiation beyond the superficial; questioning, and finding *evidence* for any claims made.

At the outset of Exchanging Notes, close proximity to a methodologically robust framework involving external agencies was felt by some schools and music providers to be uncomfortable. However, by the end of the project most had come to recognise the value of an external standpoint, and engaged thoroughly with the processes, finding them very helpful in developing their own ways of thinking. Indeed, some of the schools, music hubs, and music providers expressed interest in developing their own links with external research agencies to continue this aspect of their work. This links to another important aspect raised by Kenny and Christophersen, that being the notion of *criticality*. As we have observed elsewhere in this report, it takes time to establish trust within partnership projects. This is also true regarding the place of research within them. Research involves *critique*, which is not the same as *criticism*, in its pejorative sense. This involved new processes for the music organisations, maybe less so for schools, where lesson observations and Ofsted are an established methodology. But support with thinking about 'aims, functions, and inherent values' was welcomed by many of the projects, and the addition of a number of 'fresh pair of eyes' was felt by many to be a useful component of the Exchanging Notes projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has shown the complexity of partnership working between schools and non-formal music organisations, and the ranges of impact that these partnerships can have on educational and musical outcomes for young musicians. Through honest dialogue with all the participants, we have been able to unpick practice, pedagogy and learning. This has enabled us to imagine what a future model of partnership might look like and what the outcomes for young musicians could be.

Recommendation 1: The value of music in schools should be recognised by Government and policy-makers and a collaborative action plan developed to sustain school music departments

The Exchanging Notes programme has helped to provide evidence of the broad-reaching outcomes that can be achieved through learning music in school. With EBacc and Progress 8 measures widely perceived to have led to a decline in music in secondary schools, the Government, OFSTED, DCMS and other bodies with an influence on school policy, should work collaboratively to develop a clear action plan to ensure the sustainability of music departments in schools. School success measures should go beyond their current narrow focus to include broader developmental outcomes especially social and emotional wellbeing.

Recommendation 2: A new 'model' for music in schools is conceived, delivered through partnership working and with a greater emphasis on social and emotional learning

Most school music departments contain only a small number of music teachers, and many have only one (Daubney & Mackrill, 2018). Exchanging Notes has shown that schools and music providers working in tandem have beneficial impacts on the children and young musicians concerned, and can leave a lasting legacy in the schools where this takes place. Teaching, learning, and musical practices can be developed, content updated, and new musician role models encountered.

Music as a subject is well-placed to support the development of social and emotional learning. The engagement of young people and the creation of educational spaces that foster social and emotional outcomes should be more central to music curriculum planning. Charities and the youth sector can play an important role here, in addition to multi-agency partners.

The role of music industry organisations can provide inspirational learning environments and support a forward-looking curriculum. This all comes with a cost, but it would be a useful way of developing new curricula fit for the 21st Century by involving true partnership working between schools, music hubs, music providers, and other agencies. The music industries – that benefit from the talent pipeline that is developed in schools – have a role in helping to resource such programmes.

Done well and working in a properly joined-up fashion, multi-agency working can make a real difference to the wraparound provision for the 'at risk' young musicians, but also, by extension, for all children and young people. Multi-agency working involves stakeholders such as social workers, SENCOs, parents and carers, learning support teams and medical professionals.

Music education hubs should be aware of partnership work that takes place in their locality, and, possibly, be involved in project planning. It may also be appropriate for the hub to take on the role of interlocutor, or be involved in organisational aspects. Hubs can play a key role in signposting young musicians to appropriate progression routes and wider musical opportunities in their area. They also have a remit to coordinate musical activity taking place across their regions, and should therefore be well placed to share the learning from projects across their whole range of partners.

To work well, these partnerships require joined up thinking between those involved.

Recommendation 3: The music curriculum at KS3 requires immediate attention

It is not currently clear what the purposes are of music lessons at KS3. We know that there is 'assessment backwash' from KS4 music influencing what is taught at KS3, and that KS3 music is being used as preparation for GCSE music. However, we also know that in 2018 music was only taken by 5.95% of the cohort entered for GCSE examination entries that year (All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education et al., 2019, p.15). An implication of this is that KS3 needs rethinking in terms of completeness both in itself, and as preparation for GCSE. The KS3 curriculum is often thematic, project or topic based, and predicated on sequential modes of delivery (Fautley, 2016a; b; Fautley et al., 2018; Anderson, 2019). The Exchanging Notes work has shown that where schools come into contact with different musical modalities, fresh thinking can produce novel curriculum ideas. Building on the work of Exchanging Notes, a fresh look at the KS3 curriculum so that it involves a wide range of partnership working would seem to be a timely and helpful contribution, as would a de-coupling of viewing it solely as a preparation for KS4, as for the vast majority pupils it is not. Re-conceptualising KS3 music in this way has the potential to have much wider benefits, and is likely to raise both engagement and quality, key aspects of teaching, learning and participation.

We know that curriculum development is a matter, which Ofsted will be looking into in their forthcoming inspection cycle. There is currently little subject-specific music guidance for the content and planning of music lessons, especially at KS3, where there is no guiding examination syllabus to inform curriculum planning. At the time of writing, a model music curriculum is being developed by ABRSM for key stages 1, 2 and 3, which will provide schools with a 'sequenced and structured template curriculum' (DfE, 2019). It is important that these curricula are musically relevant, extended knowledge, develop musical skills, address future needs, and engage young musicians in ways appropriate to their developmental stages. This means that they need to:

- Retain enough flexibility to allow participation and engagement alongside learning and progress
- Draw on young people's existing musical tastes to ignite a passion for classroom music, and enable them to have ownership over their musical journeys
- Be designed to standalone, i.e. are not written solely as a pathway into Key Stage 4
- Exploit the aspects of making music that promote social and emotional wellbeing
- Be future-facing – helping to develop the skills that young people will need for a future music industry for those who wish to pursue that route.

Recommendation 4: The Youth Music Quality Framework should be adopted across all Music Education contexts

The Exchanging Notes projects utilised the Youth Music Quality Framework as a way to explore session content, teaching and learning methods, and the musical and social environment. The Quality Framework was effective at enabling teachers and music leaders to reflect on their work and on young musicians' progress. It helped them develop a shared dialogue, be critically reflective, focus planning, and consider the wider implications of music activity both in-school and in the community. The YMQF was found to be a really helpful and highly supportive document for music providers and schools to engage with when thinking about the work they were doing. The focused reflection enabled and promoted by the YMQF was significant. Its continued use every time a session is planned for and delivered is recommended. Honesty in its completion helps, though, when this is self-reflection! It provides a means for focussing reflective conversations between observers and session deliverers based on an objective framework of useful and sensible criteria. It is suggested that the YMQF can be extended to be used for classroom music lessons in and by schools. This would involve liaison with QTS aspects, but has the potential to focus music teacher and school thinking very closely onto the curricular *musical* content of music lessons. It will also be useful for music hubs and music services delivering instrumental sessions.

Recommendation 5: Young musicians should be empowered to shape the construction, direction, and progression of their music education

Learners should not be viewed as 'empty vessels'; but as complex individuals with a range of likes, dislikes, attitudes, and values. Listening to young musicians is vital, and with music, which is so closely bound up with matters of personal identity, especially so. Children and young musicians cannot know what they do not know, and therefore a framework around their decision-making needs support and careful consideration, nonetheless empowering them to have a voice in the construction, directionality, and progression of music projects is vital. Clearly young musicians are not a homogenous singularity, but it is important that they are listened to, that they know they are being listened to, and that their views are being acted upon.

Recommendation 6: Planning for participation and planning for learning should be undertaken jointly by schools and music organisations

It has been observed that at its simplest, music organisations are concerned with participation, evidenced by engagement, and schools are concerned with learning, evidenced by documented assessment of attainment. When music organisations are discussing prospective partnership working with schools, emphasising activity alone may not be sufficient to justify a place in a crowded curriculum; they need to be able to articulate the learning that will be taking place. We have evidenced that developing trust with 'at risk' young people takes time, and that evidentiary requirements for 'rapid progress' may prevent the ability to build rapport with young people. This should be taken into account when planning future programmes, and should be part of the dialogue between music organisations and music teachers.

Planning for participation involves different imperatives from planning for learning, and many music organisations were well-equipped to think about what this would entail whilst sessions were in progress, as well as planning for a range of inclusive activities in advance of

sessions. Schools tended to be more concerned with planning for learning and progression, with detailed paperwork involving this being available at all stages. It is recommended that music organisations and schools think carefully about the various aspects of participating, learning, and doing, which will occur during a project. This will also involve a consideration of differences in language between partners, expectations, measures of success, policies and practices, alongside thinking about what and how much documentary evidence is appropriate to produce in advance of a session.

Sufficient time needs to be dedicated to this from the outset of programmes and projects, taking local conditions and considerations fully into account.

Recommendation 7: A greater use of systematic and methodologically robust research and data should be adopted in music education work, to go beyond narrow success measures or a 'victory narrative'

The place of research concerning musicians in school projects warrants attention. True research is concerned with a systematic and methodologically robust research programme intended to explore evidence beyond the superficial, and engage with problematising assumptions, questioning, and finding evidence for any claims made. Understandings of the place and role of research takes time to embed, and trust needs to be established so it can take place effectively

For schools, longitudinal action research such as the type undertaken through Exchanging Notes can provide a more rounded picture of educational and broader development outcomes than standard schools data can itself provide.

For future funded projects, organisations should be clear about the differences between victory narratives and success stories to ensure further funding, as opposed to the fine-grained problematising and critiquing that can come from research and robust data analysis. Good data and good analysis of such data helps music providers, schools, and hubs to evaluate musical and project work, and think about systemic improvements.

Data collection should not be seen as an optional extra, but as an integral component of projects. A full range of data sources – both quantitative and qualitative – are important in providing a full picture. It may not always be possible to employ a research partner on funded programmes, but in such instances funded organisations should consider how to incorporate an element of objective rigour within their evaluative processes.

But data collection is only one step in the process, for it to be meaningful then it needs to be accompanied by robust data analysis. Data analysis takes many forms, but, done appropriately, it can make a real difference to the successful outcome of a project. Data analysis tells us things that simple impression-collection cannot. Perception data, attendance data, attainment data, progression data, interview data, observation data, all of these and more had a part to play in the Exchanging Notes projects. The fact that these were reflected on systematically as part of the action research approach meant that 'corrective' changes could be implemented on an ongoing basis, thus contributing to the success of the programme.

Recommendation 8: Data collection and sharing protocols should be agreed at the outset of any funded project

Exchanging Notes was cast from the outset as a *research* project, yet there were difficulties in obtaining data throughout. Despite the data collection requirements being made within the funding criteria, many partnerships underestimated the requirements or had not discussed the mechanisms for sharing data. In future projects, partnerships should receive a full briefing as to the data requirements (including the rationale and purposes of the data collection) and agree data sharing protocols. Discussions as to the mechanisms for providing data should be an integral part of project planning. After this, ongoing data collection should become embedded as a normal part of the work of music education projects.

Recommendation 9: Partnerships projects should plan in time and resource for partnership development and maintenance

Working together in a functioning partnership, with all aspects of expertise equally recognised and valued, requires time and effort. Often the willingness is there, but needs time to embed. Schools are complex places of diverse activities, many of which may be unobserved by the occasional visitor. Similarly music providers will have multiple simultaneous projects and musical activities that all need tending to, and schools may not recognise the time constraints this involves. Time is needed to build up a partnership which works well for all parties concerned, to begin to see how the worldview of the 'other' can fit with their work and workload. This should not be seen as a 'bolt-on' activity, but should be integral to the very ways of working which good partnership working should entail.

It should be noted that the greater the number and diversity of partners, then the more time and resource is likely to be needed for partnership working. We saw in Exchanging Notes that multi-agency working took time to establish, and required constant maintenance to function well.

Recommendation 10: Planning and reflection should be adequately resourced and budgeted for in programme design

The role of planning needs thoughtful consideration in music education projects of this nature. Given the diversity of partnerships and perspectives it is recommended that sufficient time for joint partnership planning is built in and funded prior to the commencement of any music delivery. Time should also be allocated to reflection activities to embed an informal 'action research' process into projects, encouraging greater use of data analysis to reflect on outcomes and inform ways of working.

Recommendation 11: Partners should seek to understand different standpoints and be open to and respectful of different perspectives

One of the interesting pieces of sharing that resulted from Exchanging Notes was that the various stakeholders came to a greater realisation of what each other actually did! This may seem like a simplistic outcome, but underlying it are issues of ideology. Realising that the work of teachers was hemmed in by regulatory requirements and accountability on the micro level was not always appreciated by the music providers at the outset of the work. In a similar vein, realising that the music providers were working to multiple deadlines and that music leaders had complex portfolio careers was important information for schools. Ideological conflict is something that closely links to many of the other recommendations in this report. This is an area that warrants careful handling, and the ways in which this is done requires tactful and sensitive awareness of the ontologies of others. A 'throwaway' comment

could wreck an emergent partnership, and being inadvertently dismissive of others' situations could be problematic. As Björk (2019) remarks:

> Two cartoonesque, worst-case scenarios are immediately available. Musicians may sail in with an attitude that says, 'Hello, inferior human beings! Bow to the star/genius.' Teachers may roll their eyes at the pedagogically and socially inept artist who 'doesn't know anything about children, classroom management, or the music that is relevant to young people.' But we need to remember that these images are indeed caricatures.

Being open to understanding and sharing ideologies is vital for projects if they are to succeed, and if they are to be of mutual benefit to all parties involved in partnerships. Where conflicts in ideology occur this needs careful handling, of which the first stage is recognising that it is this which is an impediment to fruitful progression.

Recommendation 12: Programmes of this nature should include dedicated resource for the interlocutor

In a number of the Exchanging Notes projects an interlocutor (often the Project Manager) was employed who acted as a voice between schools and music providers. This role is an important one where complex multi-agency working is involved. The projects benefitted from having someone in this position, and this is recommended for consideration when future complex multi partner projects are established.

Recommendation 13: the role of school SLTs should be embedded from the outset

SLTs play an important role in the smooth running and effective workings of a school. It is imperative that the SLT knows, understands, and sees the worth of partnership working in music education. At the very minimum, it would be useful for SLTs to have met the music leaders. Admittedly, SLT work involves juggling multiple priorities at the same time, and matrix management of this sort is a demanding activity. But for music projects to succeed the SLTs need to be fully informed and onside, from proposal stage to implementation. In some of the Exchanging Notes projects significant SLT personnel changes occurred during the lives of the projects. This is inevitable, as is personnel churn generally, but having a supportive SLT transpired to be an important aspect of Exchanging Notes embedding itself into schools successfully. Involving SLTs from the outset is an important recommendation from this research work.

Recommendation 14: Forward planning should be undertaken in all project-based work

All of the music organisations involved in Exchanging Notes felt it was important to have a legacy in place for the end of the project. Legacy could take a number of forms, but forward planning for this – undertaken with core partners – can help to maximise the lasting impact of project activity. It can also then have impact on a wider range of young people beyond those directly involved in partnership projects of this nature.

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