



### Songo and the Early Learning Goals

#### Tools and approaches to support practitioners

As we considered the content for the book Songo (for Children, Early Years Settings & Practitioners) it became completely obvious that the way in which the Songo programme links with and supports the Early Learning Goals should be referenced throughout, because this is the primary tool that practitioners are using to plan activities and assess children's progress. It is not enough to simply create a great music programme that is accessible and effective in its own terms. For it to be adopted and implemented by practitioners and settings and achieve a long-term impact it has to integrate with their daily working practice, be relevant to the needs of their children and their lived experiences.

To do this we undertook an in-depth analysis of the programme that we had devised and mapped that onto the Early Learning Goals, interrogating for each song how and where it would fit with and support learning and development in specific areas. This informed the way in which the songs and activities of the Songo programme were described and the structural elements of the book were designed.

#### Interconnection of PSED and Communication & Language

As mentioned in Section 1 of the WE ARE HERE!! Narrative Report an area of learning for us in this project was a greater depth of understanding of the interconnection between Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and the Speech and Language (referred to in the Early Learning Goals as Communication & Language). In the activities of the Songo Programme these two development areas are often working hand-in-hand, with achievements in PSED also marking progress in Communication & Language.

#### Creating training videos

The workshops that took place in settings following the training gave the practitioners the opportunity to see the songs and activities being delivered with their children, during which they could observe the reality of using what they had learnt in their training. By creating training videos that show the songs and activities being delivered by our team and by an early years practitioner we can illustrate key points, extend the development of understanding of practitioners, refresh knowledge and provide inspiration and new ideas.

We produced six videos to illustrate "Songo and the Early Learning Goals" in practice:

#### Two of these address **Communication & Language**

Pragmatics - looking at songs that support the development of pragmatics in early speech and language, that is to say the use and understanding of language in a social context.

Prosody & Phonology - examples of songs and activities that support young children with the development of phonology – producing and articulating the sounds of speech; and prosody.

One focusses on **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** – how the songs can be used for personal, social and emotional development in the early years.

Three are about **musical development (Expressive Arts and Design)** showing:

- a group of children progressing through musical activities that explore different sounds and textures on circle drums
- musical activities to develop the foundations of rhythm and a strong sense of musical pulse
- a group of children exploring and using a range of musical instruments to engage their creativity and develop their imagination.

We also produced four videos demonstrating the delivery of songs and activities from the programme.

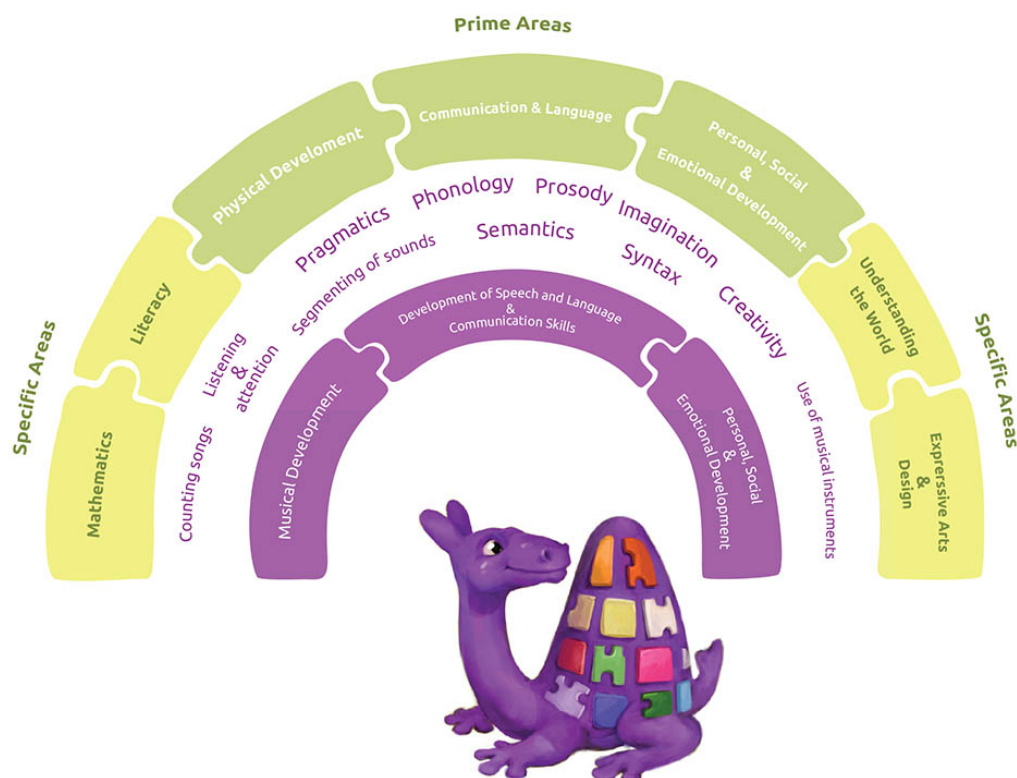
The training videos are available online: <https://vimeo.com/musikomusika>

### The songs

This project and the programme we have created would be nothing without a repertoire of great songs that we have composed. Songs that are well written so that not only do they serve the purpose of learning, but are enjoyable and fun to sing. We believe that the children and families we work with have the right to the same quality of music as we produce and perform in our other professional activities.

If the children and practitioners are not enjoying making music then we have not achieved our core mission. These are some of the comments from the practitioners about the songs from Songo:

- *“I love the songs and so do the children.”*
- *“One child loved the songs so much would not listen to any other song”*
- *“The CD is excellent and some of the songs are wonderful especially (Hi there) in my setting children feel joyful when we combine their names in the song.”*
- *“The songs are really simple therefore they are easy for the children to learn. They use basic vocabulary which helps the children especially those with English as a second language. They are able to take part and follow the session. The songs are a great way of supporting children*



## About WE ARE HERE!!

WE ARE HERE!! was created to provide an outstanding opportunity for 850 children aged 2 to 5 in highly deprived and marginalised communities in the south of Hammersmith & Fulham to secure the development of their speech and language skills through a musical programme specifically designed to address deficits in this critical area of early years development and improve their long-term personal, social and educational outcomes.

We planned to achieve this by the delivery of a specially devised programme based on the highly effective i am here!! model created by Musiko Musika in 2012-14 which is an evidence-based approach to the use of music to achieve significant improvements to speech and language skills in early years. In partnership with the borough's Early Years Advisory Team and the Lyric Hammersmith, Musiko Musika set out to work with local providers and families to deliver a comprehensive project comprising in-depth training, development and support for 72 early years practitioners; the development and delivery of workshops for two cohorts of local children (2 year old funded and 3-5 year olds); parental engagement projects leading to a festival day at the Lyric; and a package of resources created in consultation with speech and language specialists and the local community.

## About Musiko Musika

Musiko Musika is an artist-led music education and cultural charity, jointly directed by the musicians Mauricio Venegas-Astorga and Rachel Pantin who founded the organisation in 1998.

Our vision is that the wonderful and remarkable diversity of the world's cultures available in London, England and the world is creatively thriving and celebrated, and is valued and accessible to all as performers, creators, learners and audiences.

Musiko Musika has established itself as a unique and highly respected organisation using world music and the diversity of pedagogical approaches within those different cultures as a tool to connect with children, young people, families and the community and engage them with music as a powerful agent for social change, as a means of increasing our understanding of each other and giving creative and cultural expression to our lives. Our work is cited as an example of exemplary practice in music education and for the creative and social values of our approach to cultural diversity, encouraging and enabling participants to bring the sounds, songs and stories of their own cultural backgrounds into their music-making with us.

We are an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, and are proud to have Baroness Christine Crawley, Baroness Gabrielle Bertin, Martin Morales and Richard Harvey as our very supportive patrons. We joined the Lyric Hammersmith's group of partner organisations in 2015, other partnership work includes EFDSS and Middlesex University, the publishers Victorina Press and the international production music company West One Music Group. As well as projects based at the Lyric our work takes place in Hammersmith and Fulham, and in schools and communities in other areas of London. Our NPO funded programme includes touring projects and collaborations in other regions of England. International work in Chile is also a regular part of our activity.

## Project funders & partners:

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