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ENGLAND

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Inspiring Children with Live Music

Little Star
Music, Dance & Sensory Play for Young Children



Music Matters @ MOPS Term 2 Report

KEY:

Jingle Sing (JS)

Little Star (LS)

Rosie's Rainbow (RR)

Music Leader (ML)

Key Workers (KW)

Introduction

The Term 2 report for Music Matters @ MOPS explores the projects continuation into its second term and highlights the enthusiasm, development and engagement of the staff, ML's and children involved. It extends the ideas and observations discussed in Term 1 which explored (i) the positive benefits musical experiences have had on the children attending MOPS (ii) effective practise in ML strategies and approaches and how these have supported the children's progression (iii) the development of new musical skills and musical learning (iv) the impact musical experiences can have on communication (v) the benefits of ensemble experiences in promoting engagement, building confidence and providing opportunities to interact with peers and make music together. It also introduces new ideas derived from the Term 2 data, providing narratives and examples of the children's progress, development and enjoyment of the musical experiences.

The Term 1 report provided an initial overview of the positive impact musical experiences can have on areas such as (i) working in groups (ii) positive social interactions (iii) communication strategies (iv) building confidence to express ideas and preferences. In Term 2 these ideas were extended further to show examples of the children developing their confidence and independence though musical experiences and initiating musical interactions with staff, ML's and peers. These responses further reiterate the critical nature of musical experiences in this cohort and the benefits of collaborative and varied music making projects such as MOPS.

In Term 2 focus points include (i) the use of percussion and syncopation (ii) extended responses and musical learning (iii) developing independence in musical interactions (iv) sensory exploration (v) the use of familiar repertoire and adapting resources (vi) the inclusion of Makaton. Observations of three new children and their musical experiences are described in the Term 2 report as well as further examples of two of the focus children described in Term 1. This continuation of analysis explores the benefits of musical experiences over time, providing a developmental trajectory of musical responses, which will be discussed further throughout the project. Results are based on written observations, feedback from ML's and staff and video footage from each session, all providing a rich resource of information and knowledge of the musical responses and learning experiences of the children involved in the project.

Aims and Outcomes

Overall Aim: To develop children's participation in group & 1-1 music-making, improve workforce/children's Makaton skills with songs & rhymes & to share the results & benefits of this project.

The Term 2 report continues discussion on the first aspect of the overall aim: ***To develop children's participation in group and 1-1 music making*** and provides examples of new children and their musical explorations, participation and development across the different sessions of the project. ***Vignettes 1 2 3*** introduce these children and discuss the impact the musical experiences have had on their musical learning, participation and engagement in Term 2. Throughout the report examples of two of the focus children introduced in Term 1 will also be explored to provide a context to explore musical progression over time.

VIGNETTE 1

Child: DI

OVERALL

DI: often participates in music sitting in a supportive chair. He sometimes has a book with him as a preferred sensory support item. DI explores in a sensory way, tapping instruments on his chair, leg and book as well as holding them up to mouth. DI often taps his leg making a clear sound. This is at times random, however sometimes he begins to do this in time to the music. It appears to be repetitive in nature. DI is very engaged in the music sessions with examples from both JS and LS of his musical responses evolving, and confidence building.

DI JS - Cymbal Play + DI JS - Happy Shaking + DI JS - Joyful

Example of DI's engagement and musical understanding during a familiar song

LS: DI shakes tambourine and taps it on his chair while ML sings and plays a version of a familiar song on guitar. DI pauses when ML makes a sudden musical stop and looks toward ML then pats knees and explores the tambourine. At times this is in time to music. DI appears to be aware that the song will build up and pauses whole body in anticipation, watching ML carefully, and then as tempo increases plays/smiles and taps. Continues patting knees and exploring tambourine in a sensory way. DI becomes very excited when ML continues slower section and starts vocalising an 'uh' sound, almost sharing his recognition of the section and mimicking the ML's short syncopated vocal sounds, which occur in the faster section. DI continues exploring tambourine, patting knees and smiling. He is distracted by sensory play for a moment then smiles and moves in response to tempo increase and watches ML make short vocal sounds smiling.

DI LS - Following Musical Cues

LS: Term 2 data also included another example of DI engaged in this activity from the previous week in the LS session. A similar response was observed however more exploratory, responding more to the pulse and tempo changes than musical structure. This shows a clear extension of musical responses, anticipation and the confidence to independently share musical understanding.

Written Obs

VIGNETTE 2

Child: CA

OVERALL

CA appears to enjoy music and shares this enjoyment and her musical understanding through facial expressions and vocalisations. Through support from staff and ML's, CA has found systems of communication that allow her to confidently share her preferences and musical ideas. In Term 2 this was in the form of a switch, cued by the ML, and embedded with sounds relating to the songs and musical experiences of RR sessions.

Example of CA's engagement and musical understanding during a familiar song

RR: CA is lying on a cushion with KW holding one hand and ML on her right side. CA appears to recognise 'Hickory Dickory Dock' as ML plays and sings with guitar in an open tuning. CA expresses this familiarity and enjoyment of the experience through facial expressions, opening eyes wide and moving arms, particularly when ML runs fingers up her arm for 'the mouse ran up the clock'. CA has her left hand in an accessible position to a switch which has been programmed to make a tick tock sound. CA presses this in responses to 'the clock struck 2' after ML cues her for the ending. CA recognises her success and looks to KW for acknowledgement for which she receives positive feedback and encouragement. CA then moves focus back to switch.

CA 1, 2 + 6

This description is only one example of CA exploring the use of the switch in music. Her engagement, focus and motivation to share her musical ideas are representative of the musical experience itself, particularly the use of a familiar song. CA shares her voice in response to lyrical cues and the form of the song. At times there are signs of recognition of the structure through CA consistently initiating the sound just before a change in form and at other times CA appears to be sharing a request such as for the song to be repeated. In a separate RR session, the click had been set up to say hello and CA uses this to initiate the song and respond in the breaks, following the musical cues. At times she also moves her mouth in what seems like a hello pattern.

CA 3, 4 + 6

VIGNETTE 3

Child: MA

OVERALL

MA's responses this term show her engagement and enjoyment of the musical experiences, particularly through physical explorations and movement. MA has begun copy ML's facial cues and physical gestures and has become confident with many Makaton signs and symbols. MA explores instruments, copying ML's style, often reflecting the pulse. At times MA performs in time playing both single- and double-time pulse. MA also explores instruments in a sensory way, particularly the gathering drums, and appears to enjoy exploring different ways to play instruments. MA often moves along in time to the music particularly through swaying.

MA LS - Drums Vibrations + OVERALL SUMMARY OF VIDEO AND WRITTEN OBS

RR: MT feedback describes MA's fascination with the flute. She observed the ML playing the flute and mimicked this observation as she explored other instruments requiring a blowing action. This includes the Kazoo and Recorder and holding them, trying to play them like a flute.

Written Observation

Example of CA's engagement and musical understanding during a familiar song

LS: MA sways along as ML sings hello. MA appears to really enjoy this song and laughs at first 'hi yi' section and says 'more' loudly to signal more guitar playing from ML. MA follows the lyrical cues and tickles her tummy and begins to mimic the guitar playing action, sharing her enjoyment of this and perhaps showing she wanted it to continue. MA's facial expressions show engagement through wide eyes and getting excited and clapping. MA moves arms in time to the next 'hi yi' section.

MA LS - Hello Song, Moving, Makaton, Vocal

In Term 2 we also begin to introduce and explore the second aspect of the overall aim: ***Improve workforce/children's Makaton skills with songs & rhymes.*** The impact of the use of Makaton on the children's musical exploration and staff and ML feedback on its development thus far, is discussed in Outcome 3 relating to the workforce and effective practise.

Outcome 1 - MUSICAL

To improve group/ensemble music making experiences that enable MOP's children to develop performance skills.

Focus points which form part of Outcome 1 in the Term 2 report extend those ideas introduced in Term 1 including (i) musical responses and musical learning (ii) musical features and instrumentation (iii) sensory responses (iv) engagement (v) peer interaction. Term 2 also provides new examples and findings relating to (i) the use of percussion and syncopation (ii) more defined responses to musical cues including independent exploration, initiation and sharing of musical ideas (iii) sensory sensitivities.

These focus points reflect children's responses observed across JS, LS and RR sessions and how extended musical experiences impact children with SEN. Progression in musical learning and participation were underpinned by the planning, resources and approaches of the ML's and staff which in Term 2 included the use of Makaton to support and extend the children's musical experiences. The ideas explored in Outcome 1 suggest that continued musical experiences in group/ensemble settings can (i) support the development of new musical skills and learning (ii) impact independent exploration and musical interactions (iii) support sensory responses and needs. Development in these areas provide the foundations for increased performance skills and musical expression.

Musical Responses

Musical responses observed in Term 2 provide new examples and extensions of the responses described in Term 1. These include (i) free vocalisation and vocal sounds reflecting pitch and/or rhythm of a piece (ii) instrumental exploration (iii) physical responses (iv) responses to musical cues and performance of changes in tempo, dynamics and rhythmic patterns through vocalisation, movement and instrumental play (v) awareness of timbre (vi) anticipation of musical changes in form and structure (vii) initiation of musical interactions and sharing musical understanding (viii) representations of single and double time (ix) imitating and mirroring peers and staff in call and response musical interactions (x) sensory responses through instrumental exploration (xi) emotional responses such as acceptance of the musical experience, sharing musical ideas and preferences, showing enjoyment through laughing and smiling. **VIGNETTES 4 and 5** explore responses reflecting these extended musical explorations and the musical learning achievements observed for two of the focus children presented in Term 1.

VIGNETTE 4 Child: IE

DISCUSSION ON MUSICAL PROGRESSION

ML feedback suggests IE is now more engaged and aware of different ways she can respond and share her musical ideas. She has begun extending these looking at new ways to explore such as moving body on drums to different positions, using both hands to play instruments and making new vocal sounds. She has also begun showing preference for particular sounds, activities and instruments and shares this with staff and ML's.

Group Drumming

IE has extended her musical response from Term 1 through practise of the skills needed to initiate musical explorations and engage further in the musical experience. IE has become confident in her exploration of particular instruments and props and has begun to create her own independent sounds and movements in response to the musical cues.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF VIDEO AND WRITTEN OBS

EXAMPLES

RR from KW: IE engaged well today and joined in with drumming using her right leg to bang her foot on the drum. She also independently moved her finger (stretched it out) to make sounds on the guitar.

Written Observation

LS: IE is sitting without support. She sways and listens to the music. Her eyes are wide open and always looking in the direction of the sound, moving her head to get different views. She moves one arm at a time as if trying to conduct and express her engagement in the music.

IE LS - Violin Expression, Holding herself up and moving with confidence

FURTHER EXAMPLES DESCRIBED THROUGHOUT THE REPORT

VIGNETTE 5
Child: TE

DISCUSSION ON MUSICAL PROGRESSION

Feedback from LS ML and video/written observations suggest that TE has progressed significantly from Term 1 in both her musical responses and understanding and her confidence and independence in musical interactions. Despite some sensory sensitivities, particularly auditory, TE appears confident with the musical experience, the structure within the sessions and the ML's approach and style. This supports TE to explore new musical responses and practise her musical skills.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF VIDEO AND WRITTEN OBS

EXAMPLES

LS: ML describes that at the start of Term 2, before the warm up song had begun, TE had moved over to her and put her hand on ML's face. This response occurred during the 'Day Oh' warm up song throughout Term 1. ML had planned a different warm song for Term 2 however followed TE's initiation and performed the song. ML shared that many of the children really connected with this song. For TE this song allowed her to vocalise, share her voice and engage independently in the experience. The confidence she built in Term 1 has extended into independent responses and initiation.

TE LS - Day O repetition memory from last term

Concertini String Ensemble Performance Term 2 (Images): TE explores ukulele and shaker during the performance. She is watching the musicians. In one image she is blocking ears, which appears to be a sensory support, as she appears engaged.

LS: TE enjoys the sound of the horse sound instrument and reaches out to hold and play it independently.

LS: ML introduces the chime bar. TE holds it up to her ear and also lies it on the floor. ML suggest that in Term 2 TE continues to find new ways to play and explore instruments.

Written Observations

LS: ML has a slide whistle and TE holds ML's arm pulling down every time she moves body up to control pitch, bringing it back down. ML follows TE's physical cues creating a conducting moment for TE. It appears TE wants to experience the sound physically with the ML, she is very happy, smiling.

TE LS - Controlling the pitch

Regular and repeated musical experiences can support musical learning and the extension of musical skills. For children with SEN, this can provide the space and time needed to build familiarity with the musical experience and practise their explorations, building confidence and engaging in independent musical interactions. Musical features explored in Term 1 included anticipation and repetition. Results in Term 2 highlight two new musical features which appeared to impact the children's responses and support new musical understanding; the use of percussion experiences and syncopation. These two areas also form part of Outcome 3 in relation to effective practise and planning activities/repertoire which incorporate these elements.

Musical Features

Percussion

Many sessions across the project utilised percussion instruments including shakers and hand percussion, small and large drums and tuned percussion such as chime bars. Many of these percussion experiences accompanied songs and activities which were open to free rhythmic exploration of the percussion instrumentation. This freedom provided many benefits including opportunities to (i) explore different sounds and timbres (ii) listen to peers rhythmic and exploratory responses and copy these (iii) explore own musical skills and responses (iv) experiment with dynamics, tempo and single/double time pulse (v) perform favourite patterns (vii) enjoy practising new musical skills.

Percussion instruments are often utilised with children and are particularly accessible to young children with SEN as the freedom of play and musical responses as well as the wide range of possible instrumentation, means they can be used in multiple and unrestricted ways. They also allow children to engage and play together as an ensemble with all children participating in some way. Providing a variety of percussion also allows for exploration of different sounds being made at the same time, introducing the idea of timbre and exploring size, shape, pitch and dynamics. Percussion also allows for effective exploration of (i) musical changes (ii) performance of musical cues such as start, stop, tempo and dynamic changes (iii) responses to the musical structure (iv) playing in time together (v) vocal responses, all of which were explored by ML's in Term 2. **VIGNETTE 6** describes examples of some of these areas.

VIGNETTE 6
Session: Little Stars

LS: The gathering drum appears to be a favourite of many of the children, even though it is the loudest activity within the session. ML suggests when she signs the Makaton sign for drumming and uses the visual symbol, some of the children call out 'ooo yeah'. During gathering drum exploration children make eye contact with peers, play in time together, copy each other's responses and/or choose to do something the same or different. ML suggests that drumming together is enticing and social with the gathering drums allowing children to see their peers and sit at one level together. They can play on gathering drums with feet and hands and they can play hard and soft or anything in between.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF LS VIDEO AND WRITTEN OBS

Group Drumming

LS: ML shares a description of the children's responses during a group drumming song. One child has feet on the drums and as the song starts her facial expressions change. She becomes excited and smiles and raises her eyebrows. **IE** is very engaged and bends so her body is mostly on the drum, to feel the vibrations. Another child lays on the drum to feel the vibrations as children and adults play gently around him. ML plays 123 stop with a shhh sound, the children copy. They play 123 and lift hands in the air and shout 'hey'.

Written Observation

LS: MA tries to play one hand at a time and succeeds reflecting the pulse of the music. She then plays both hands double the speed before beginning to roll hands and watch them as she does this, moving them in time. This may be a repeated response to the warm up action rolling arms song which was performed previously in the session. A big loud group drumming sound then startles her, and she becomes re-engaged, feeling the vibrations as she leans down onto the drum to listen.

MA LS - Drums Vibrations

Syncopation

Data exploring the use of syncopation in Term 2 was taken predominantly from the songs and activities implemented in the LS sessions. The idea of syncopation is something to be explored further over the coming terms across sessions, however for this report syncopation describes musical experiences in which the accented beat or emphasis is placed on the off-beat such as in guitar accompaniment and irregular rhythms or percussive patterns which break up the pulse. This may include different genres, time signatures or varying the way a piece is played. It also includes moments where the musical accompaniment or melodic pattern changes in an unexpected way. Syncopation appeared to provide a 'freedom' of musical responses and access to different ways of exploring the musical experience. For example, finding a pulse may have been more approachable during moments of syncopation when the pulse was broken up into different subdivisions and rhythmic phrases. The use of syncopation appeared to impact levels of engagement, musical response, participation and musical learning.

VIGNETTE 7
Session: Little Star

OVERALL

Video examples from LS sessions include many examples of songs accompanied by off-beat guitar accompaniment and unexpected changes and the impact these had on the attention and musical interactions between peers, staff and the ML. These was prominent in guitar accompaniment to versions of familiar songs and playing on the off-beat during tempo increases. One song in particular was 'She'll be coming round the mountain' where the guitar accompaniments during the tempo increase was emphasising the off-beat. Both DI and IE were very engaged in this experience and enjoying the tempo changes.

IE LS - Guitar Play, Written Observation + OVERALL SUMMARY OF LS VIDEO AND WRITTEN OBS

SEE ALSO

VIGNETTE 1: DI Vocalising

VIGNETTE 11: LS

LS: ML feedback suggests that focusing only on music with a 4-part crotchet or quaver pulse may not be as motivating to the children as they almost become immune to it when it remains the focus of a whole music session. Songs with variations are exciting and energising and the children really have to listen to it to see where it is going, follow the musical cues and find the repetition within it.

Observations suggests that the use of percussion and syncopation positively impacted behaviours and concepts which are often challenging for children with SEN including (i) engagement (ii) sharing of instruments and peer interaction (percussion) (iii) prolonged participation and attention (iv) communication and vocalisation (v) consistent extension of musical responses. Other responses described in Term 2 relate to sensory musical exploration and sensory challenges which were observed in the music sessions.

Sensory Responses

Term 1 report suggested that the multi-sensory nature of music draws out musical responses through sensory exploration, including tactile instrumental exploration, auditory processing, and vestibular and proprioceptive movement responses. These sensory areas are all connected within musical exploration and results suggest that for those whose sensory needs may impact their engagement and focus, music may support new behaviours and responses. Musical experiences may provide an optimal setting to explore sensory sensitivities in an environment where responses can be much more free, individual, unrestricted, however still within a musical structure which is reassuring, consistent and repetitive. Music may provide the opportunity to change a sensory pattern and to practise new responses over

time. Results from Term 2 introduce examples of common sensory challenges observed in the sessions including auditory sensitivity and repetitive behaviour.

Auditory sensitivity is a common sensory need observed in children with SEND and can be difficult to support when in a music session. Auditory sensitivity may appear to be related to loud sounds, certain pitches or particular instrumentation. Some of the children in this project are supported by the use ear defenders which can help them feel control over the auditory stimulus and still explore it with the aim of becoming comfortable with it over time. Results suggest that aversion to sound relates more to the unexpected nature of musical sounds and peer responses and that through consistency in routine and careful introduction of resources, this aversion can be minimised.

Another area of sensory sensitivity which was present in Term 2 related to repetitive behaviour. Repetitive behaviour is connected to many areas of children's development and processing, however, is often accompanied by or present to manage a sensory difficulty and may be fulfilling a sensory need. The nature of repetitive behaviours observed in this project will be discussed further in later reports, however, in Term 2 we discuss DI's and IE's musical explorations which appeared to be connected to visual, tactile and auditory processing and often changed in response to music. Sensitivities may be supported by (i) the musical experience itself promoting engagement and interaction through its repetitious nature and structure (ii) effective practise in the repetition, routine and structure of the session and its activities/songs.

<p style="text-align: center;">VIGNETTE 8 Sensory Responses</p>

JS: DI ML describes an example where DI was using his sensory prop (Book) and found it difficult to engage in instrumental play as he did not want to hold an instrument while holding his book. DI often holds a book as a sensory support which helps him to remain calm. His sensory exploration of the book in JS sessions appears to relate more to the auditory domain as DI tap's it rather than tactile turning of the pages or visual looking at images. This is based on the music session data and may be different in other situations. (**Auditory**)

Written Observation

LS: DI explores instruments in a sensory way placing on lips, spinning them in his hands which appears to be a tactile and visual exploration. Although engaged in sensory play DI often looks at the music leader or off in another direction at peers and staff. DI often taps knees or chair creating a clear sound. He does this between instrument exploration, at times in response to music, and other times randomly more as a sensory behaviour. This repetitive behaviour appears to be exploring both tactile and auditory input. DI incorporates this sensory play into his musical play and taps instruments on chair or on book or plays instrument along while tapping knees. These responses are often reflecting the musical pulse or tempo and dynamic changes and may be utilised by DI to manage sensory sensitivity allowing him to engage and share his musical ideas and responses. (**Tactile, Visual, Auditory**).

DI LS - Mouthing Words to the song + DI LS - Following Musical Cues

LS: IE pulls herself up when the musical assistant begins playing the double bass. IE is sitting near the bass and feeling the vibrations through the floor. Staff support her to interact with the sound and the instrumental timbre by monitoring and acknowledging her response and position near the instrument.

Written Observation

RR: ML holds flute for IE to explore with hands. IE holds tightly and ML supports her to move hands over the flute to the keys and IE starts to explore independently moving hands over the keys, looking at the flute as she explores it.

IE RR - Flute Exploration

JS: ML describes a child in one session did not like the "ssh" sound in 'We All Play Together' and he became upset needing to leave the circle. The ML adjusted plan for the following week to just do the action for this rest/pause, putting finger to lips, without making a sound.

Written Observation

JS: ML describes two children who for some activities sit on the outside of the circle and observe, particularly for activities which they find sensory challenging including auditory sensitivity. ML has noticed more interaction over the term and many of the children becoming very engaged and participating with peers in activities they previously found challenging and at times upsetting.

Written Observation

LS: WITH MUSICAL ASSISTANT: During a session with a musical assistant playing the double Bass, LS's ML describes one child's excitement as they came running over to explore it. At first they were gentle, observing and listening. They then begun to become agitated and more forceful in their exploration until they became upset. ML describes this child's desire to explore some instruments can become so strong they don't know how to manage this excitement and it eventually becomes too much. This response was observed in many of the sessions and is an example of sensory overload. This response can be difficult to support as an experience can be so rewarding or sought after that it becomes too much. Musical experiences may support a balance by giving the child the opportunity to explore in a sensory way and practise the more challenging aspects of their sensory needs, including managing overstimulation. Over time and through consistent structure and support for ML's and staff, this may support new responses and behaviours to difficult stimulus. (**Auditory Sensitivity**)

Written Observation

Concertini String Ensemble Performance Term 2 (Images): TE explores ukulele and shaker during the performance. She is watching the musicians. In one image she is blocking ears, which appears to be a sensory support, as she appears engaged.

Summary Outcome 1

The Term 2 report introduces ideas and examples which reflect progression in the musical responses and learning of the children and aspects of the musical experience which promoted this. The idea of progression is difficult in this setting and is a concept which will be explored throughout the project. The challenges for some children, particularly sensory (**SEE VIGNETTE 8**) mean that progression moves in different ways with some breaks and bumps and time is needed to return and practise past skills. When exploring responses for children who have been involved in the project for two terms, we see these signs of progression. Musical experiences can support new skills and motivate children to continue engagement in an unrestricted way where new challenges, particularly sensory can be explored positively in the musical experience.

Outcome 2 - PERSONAL

To improve communication in a vocal, emotional or physical way in response to thematic music & singing sessions

The Term 2 report further explores focus points which formed part of Outcome 2 in Term 1 including (i) communicative responses to music (ii) effective tools and strategies in promoting communication. Progression was observed in musical and communicative responses through extended musical experiences and Outcome 2 provides examples of these communicative explorations.

Communicative Responses to Music

Music can be motivating and provide a free yet structured system where expectations relating to interacting with others and sharing ideas and preferences can be opened up and explored in different ways. The children's attempts at communicating, whatever this looked like, were celebrated and accepted as valid and important strategies of communication throughout Term 2. Musical experiences may draw out communicative responses which can help to develop the physical mechanisms involved in speaking which support further vocalisation and language.

Communicative responses observed during Term 2 add to those described in Term 1 including (i) vocalisation in response to musical cues and songs (ii) verbal communication reflecting musical ideas as well as singing/speaking lyrics (iii) non-

verbal communication showing musical understanding through physical actions (iv) verbal and non-verbal communication sharing preferences, making choices and showing enjoyment (v) interaction with peers; responding to, imitating and initiating verbal and non-verbal communication. Term 2 also introduces the idea of independent musical interactions in sharing musical responses, understanding and preferences and utilising technology to support these interactions. Communicative responses were also supported by the introduction of Makaton in Term 2 which is described in Outcome 3.

Independent Musical Interactions

Term 1 results provided many examples of the children's communicative responses to the musical experiences. Over time these responses were extended with many children building in confidence and sharing their musical ideas and preferences as well as initiating musical interactions. Examples from Term 2 suggest this extension is a transition due to the musical experience enhancing confidence through consistent opportunities to practise communicative responses. This transition can lead to independent musical interactions which is very important in the lives and wellbeing of young children with SEN, as opportunities to succeed can extend engagement, motivation and participation. **VIGNETTE 9 and 10** provide examples of these communicative responses and independent musical interactions.

VIGNETTE 9
Child: CA

RR: CA interacts with ML, vocalising as the ML describes what they are going to do in the next song. CA listens first then uses clicker to play. When CA begins pressing the clicker this is interpreted by ML to mean that CA would like to join in sooner and ML acknowledges this. CA presses clicker at correct times and is very engaged, looking toward ML often. CA appears very aware of her own responses and independent interactions with ML. ML provides space and is sensitive to CA's responses, picking up on what CA may be requesting and observing the positive response when this is acknowledged and affirmed.

CA 4

SEE ALSO
VIGNETTE 2 – RR: CA

VIGNETTE 10
Session: Little Star

OVERALL: ML suggests many of the children in Term 2 have developed independence in their musical expressions. Many have begun to approach ML or initiate musical interactions in different ways, requesting individual attention. For example, CA has begun to use a lot more eye contact and gaze to interact during the music sessions. ML has picked up that when CA flicks eyes she wants ML to come over to her to engage in a musical interaction.

LS: IE enjoys playing the ukulele and makes gurgling sounds during anticipated stops. These gurgle sounds are loud, and others can hear them clearly. This appears to be a purposive response to show independent engagement and involvement in the experience.

Written Observation

SEE ALSO
VIGNETTE 4 – LS: IE
VIGNETTE 5 – LS:TE
VIGNETTE 12

Effective Tools and Strategies in Promoting Communication

Both Term 1 and 2 reports highlight the importance of staff and ML's in supporting and promoting new communicative responses and providing opportunities to practise, consolidate and extend these communication skills. In Outcome 2 we continue to explore effective tools and strategies which support the development of communication skills. These are also discussed further in Outcome 3. In Term 1 we explored the use of familiar songs in relation to their potential to support communication. In Term 2 we explore this idea further and how continued use of familiar repertoire and making adaptations to these has on the children's musical and communicative responses.

Familiar songs

Each of the sessions involved in the project utilise the use of familiar songs in their sessions and ML's describe the positive results in both musical response and communication. Familiar songs generally included nursery rhymes and children's songs, plus variations of these. Results provide many examples where communicative responses were observed during familiar songs. For many of the children, familiar songs helped to build their confidence and support vocal, physical and emotional communication. In particular, familiar songs supported independent musical interactions and extended communicative responses.

VIGNETTE 11 Familiar Songs

OVERALL: JS ML describes the use of nursery rhymes and the children becoming more engaged in Term 2 with the use of these familiar songs. ML: 'Children do actions and have confidence to vocalise with familiar songs'. Some ML's changed familiar songs to suit themes within the sessions. By taking an already familiar song and exploring it in a different way encouraged children to extend their engagement through supporting confidence to explore new musical ideas within a familiar structure.

LS: ML describes her use of a new version of 'Dingle Dangle Scarecrow' to be part of the theme 'Adventure'. Many of the children recognised the melody of the song and appeared to instantly understand the different dynamics and musical features and lyrics. LS ML describes the Week 5 session and that the children had become familiar with the pattern of the song. They waited in anticipation and then began to shake instruments very fast, often smiling and laughing during tempo increase, aware of peers and exploring together. Results suggest the extension of a familiar song increased the children's the engagement, enjoyment and confidence in following musical cues.

Written Observation

LS: DI shakes and explores the sound of the shaker. He looks towards ML often who is playing a thunder sound. DI pats knee often between and during shakes. He swaps hands, holds shaker up to his ear and listens as he plays. Big reaction when ML starts familiar, adapted song, smiling and looking toward ML sharing recognition of familiar tune but also interest in this new version. This interaction extends through repetition of this adapted song and DI begins to anticipate the form and share this musical understanding.

IE LS - Engaged for long period shakers

ALSO SEE
VIGNETTE 1, 2, 3
VIGNETTE 5 – LS

Summary Outcome 2

Outcome two continues to explore the impact musical experiences can have on communicative responses. Examples across the Term 2 report provide an initial insight into how musical responses can change over time and move on from exploratory participation to purposeful musical play, which includes communicating musical understanding and preferences. We see the children developing their communicative skills and engagement in independent musical interactions through the musical experiences and resources provided across the different music sessions.

Outcome 3 - WORKFORCE

To develop MOP's Workforce Makaton skills to encourage children to sign, sing & hear songs & rhymes.

Outcome 3 focuses on the workforce including staff and ML's and explores the use of tools, resources and systems to support the participation, communication and musical learning of the children. Term 2 results provide an initial summary of the use of one of these systems by ML's and staff; Makaton and how it may have supported the children's musical explorations and communication skills. The impact of the use of Makaton over time, feedback from staff and ML's, and examples of the children's responses will be explored throughout the project. Term 2 results also continue exploration of effective practise and the approaches and strategies used by ML's and staff to support the children in their musical explorations and encourage musical learning, communication and ensemble progression.

Effective Practise

Effective practise in Term 1 described (i) supporting children to engage in the best way for each individual; allowing space and time for musical and communicative responses, challenging and extending their responses, and celebrating achievements (ii) freedom of exploration. These areas were also prominent in Term 2 with new examples of the children's musical progress through the planning, approaches and support of staff and ML's. Term 2 focuses on the use of particular

props and resources as well as adaptations made within the environment, to the musical experiences and resources. This will be explored further in later reports as the ML's get to know the children further, observing their musical achievements, and considering how to extend these based on the children's responses and needs.

Props and Resources / Adaptions

ML's and staff incorporate a variety of musical and sensory resources into their sessions to encourage musical play, participation, movement, communication and enjoyment. **VIGNETTES 12, 13 and 14** describe examples of (i) resources used in each session to support children's musical engagement, participation and learning (ii) adaptations made to ensure all children could access the musical experiences and share their preferences and musical ideas.

VIGNETTE 12 Little Star

LS: ML explored percussion, drumming and syncopation this term, which is discussed in Outcome 2. This had many benefits on the children's engagement, participation and musical learning. Considerations in planning and resources were needed however, to support accessibility and sensory needs. **SEE VIGNETTE 8**

LS: ML noticed that some of the children found it difficult to access and move to the gathering drums and made adaptations to the space and support provided so that all children could access the drums independently, unless they showed a preference to not play them that session.

Written Observation

LS: IE indicates through movement and attention during a verbal prompt that she would like to play ML's guitar. ML sits beside IE in an accessible position and IE begins to lift hand to play strings. ML adapts lyrics to IE's name and leaves musical gaps for her to lift her hand and play the strings independently which she does 3-4 times.

IE LS - Guitar Play

LS: Another prop introduced in Term 1 LS sessions was the microphone, presenting data which suggested that its use may have many benefits to children's musical explorations and communication. The microphone was not utilised as much this term as focus was on other musical explorations, particularly percussion. Discussion on this will continue in later reports.

VIGNETTE 13
Rosie's Rainbow

RR: ML utilised a technology system of a clicking device to support CA to explore musical responses and share musical ideas. Much time was given to explore these sounds and this setting (1to1) supported this. The impact of these musical interactions and the use of this technology in ensemble sessions will be discussed in later reports.

ALL RR CA VIDEOS

RR: ML provides an example of adapting the use of this resource to support extension of musical response. One example is where ML used different ways of singing hello for each person. ML suggests this worked well when there were two variables, however, when there were 3 variables it became confusing when alternating between. ML was aware of this and returned to 2 variables. It is beneficial to extend experiences and try out new skills as well as ensuring enough time is given to practise and explore familiar skills in different ways.

Written Observation

ALSO SEE

VIGNETTE 2: RR: CA

VIGNETTE 8: RR

VIGNETTE 14
Jingle Sing

JJ: uses 'Jo' dolls in each session for the children to use to imitate responses, encouraging imaginative and representational play. ML suggests that many children engage enthusiastically with this resource and others are not as interested. This may reflect the developing skills of representational play in young children and also the challenges with imaginative play some children with SEN may have. The option of having this opportunity to explore this resource and observe peers engaging in this type of play may provide many benefits.

ML suggests some children are more confident doing the actions with the 'Jo' doll or getting their doll to play the instrument as they build confidence. Others become distracted by this resource so it is about finding a balance.

Written Observation

JJ: ML shares one example during a bubble activity. One child was catching them using the 'Jo' doll she was holding.

Other props and resources which appeared successful this term included visual systems, images and guides, in particular the introduction of Makaton.

Makaton

Makaton is a unique language programme which uses symbols, signs and speech to enable people to communicate. Makaton can support children to understand verbal instructions, routines, and communicate with others confidently. The use of Makaton is one of the main objectives of the MOPS project in looking at supporting staff and ML's to confidently use elements of this system and reflect on the impact it has on the children's musical and communication skills. Staff and ML's were invited to Makaton training sessions to learn some of the signs and symbols. The Makaton foundation delivered four workshops in Term 1 and then LS ML ran refresher sessions with the MOPS staff. Staff at the centre have continued using Makaton signs and symbols away from the music sessions in their day to day work.

Analysis of the impact of Makaton so far is based on feedback from LS ML and video evidence from LS and JS sessions. Its impact and use over the following terms in all sessions will be discussed throughout the project.

VIGNETTE 15 Makaton OVERALL

LS: ML feedback on the use of Makaton so far provides many examples where children have built confidence in communicating preferences, musical understanding and using signs and symbols to perform songs, make requests and follow the routine of the session.

ML suggests that particular signs, symbols and songs have produced the most responses so far. One of these was the use of hand signs and symbols for the session timetable.

Other signs have not been as effective in the music session as they may be too complicated to perform during songs or are confusing for the children. One example is using a sign for musical instruments which may not be as effective as showing the instrument itself. Some signs are more accessible to the children for example 'music, singing and listening'. ML suggests it's about picking out the right signs and songs which are easily accessible to the children.

ML suggests one very successful song is 'Old Macdonald' which is sung accompanied by Makaton hand signs and was performed in both LS and JS sessions. ML suggests this is because it is a familiar song and the signs are very visual and can be accompanied by the words and sounds of each animal.

LS starts and ends with a Makaton song in each session using the hand signs which the children really enjoy and many copy. The staff are becoming very confident with the signs and encourage children to try them.

VIGNETTE 16
Makaton Examples

JJ: ML describes the use of Makaton in 'Old Macdonald' with staff singing and signing the animals during the song. Children respond to this with many vocalising animal sounds and mirroring the signs.

Written Observation

JJ: While singing Happy Birthday, one child uses the Makaton signs throughout the song.

Written Observation

LS: ML has introduced a Makaton lesson structure board which this term she has utilised throughout the session to cue the next activity. Each time a new section starts the ML shows the children the Makaton symbol, signs it and says it, for example 'It's time for Singing' showing picture sign, hand sign and saying it. ML describes the children's engagement with the Makaton board system with many children either vocalising the main word or attempting the sign. ML suggests the staff also found it helpful and enjoyed practising the signs to use across the setting.

ML suggests over the term the children have become more confident with the Makaton sign and symbol board and recognising the pattern of the session, anticipating what is coming next. ML suggests it has been a real asset to the sessions. One child was observed mouthing the words to the next section anticipating it, looking at the board.

Written Observation

LS: one child copies ML verbal cue as she signs and says 'It's time for listening'

Written Observation

LS: MA copies the warm-up song and at first copies ML's 'I love you' Makaton signs and facial expressions. The next time she anticipates the 'I love you' and points out towards staff. MA is very engaged smiling with accentuated facial expressions throughout. She laughs at the end. This is wonderful for MA to explore different ways of communicating with others and sharing this enjoyment with the staff.

MA LS - Skid Makaton

CONCLUSION

The Term 2 report for Music Matters @ MOPS explores the projects continuation into its second term and the impact continued musical experiences can have on children's musical learning, social and communication development and overall wellbeing. As outlined in the Term 1 report the aims and outcomes surrounding this project are underpinned by an understanding that for young children music is an inclusive, multisensory and motivating experience which can support the development of new skills and understanding. The Term 2 report highlighted the significance musical experiences can have on the lives of children with SEN, building confidence, supporting independent musical interactions and developing musical skills.