



MOPS Take 2 Music Matters @ MOPS - Summer Term 2022

KEY

ML: Music Leader

LS: Little Star Group Music Sessions

KW: Key Worker

The Term 5 report was completed by Kath Borer (Project Leader and ML) and reviewed by Kirsty Mees (Evaluation Officer)

OVERALL AIMS

For MOPS SEN/D children to engage & grow with high quality music, singing & sensory sessions and access live concerts & performances.

All sessions for Term 5 were face to face with strict health and safety measures still in place however face masks and visors were not required. We held a live music concert and a sharing concert for the children and families both of which were face to face without restrictions.

Provide MOPS workforce with the tools to become self-sufficient in music making sessions, using tuned percussion & ukuleles.

There have been some challenges, reflections and discussions around this aim which are discussed further in the report and will also be explored in Term 6.

OUTCOME 1 - PERSONAL

To improve communication in a vocal, emotional or physical way in response to group music sessions & concerts.

This term the children and their families attended a concert by 'Quintessentially Brass' and also had their summer sharing concert. Both were well attended, and the families participated freely with their children.

Saturday 11th June: Quintessentially Brass

The children and their families were delighted by the concert performed by Quintessentially Brass. The repertoire ranged from familiar movie songs to contemporary children's songs such as the Peppa Pig theme tune and Paw Patrol. The children played along with percussive instruments and sensory props. As soon as they heard a familiar song they would often stop and stare, become animated and excited and for those who were vocal, verbalise or make sounds.

Extracts from the concert can be seen on the MOPS facebook page. See link below.

[Quintessentially Brass](#)

Wednesday 20th July: Sharing Concert

We yet again had a wonderful morning and afternoon with all of the families and children at MOPS for our summer leavers and sharing concert. The parents were highly motivated and joined in all the songs and activities with their children. The parents sat with their children on blankets laid out in the garden, engaging, moving around space, clapping, listening, supporting enjoying this musical time with their children.

Photo's from the sharing concert can be seen by clicking the link below.

[Sharing Concert](#)

Below are two examples of children engaging in musical experiences at MOPS.

[Playing the piano with feet](#)

[Rolling - Wheels on the bus](#)

Observations from Group & Music Therapy Sessions for L, A and Z

This term we focused on 3 children who all had different needs and diagnosis. L and A have both been at playgroup for a number of years and are very comfortable with music making. Z had just started playgroup but was known by the ML for over a year as she taught him in another setting. The findings provide further evidence of the impact of a positive, interactive, and supportive learning space where the children feel comfortable, are well supported by ML and KW and appropriate, engaging repertoire and activities are supplied. In this space children with different needs actively want to participate and communicate with the ML, follow instructions in their own way and be challenged by a range of musical concepts.

L has been at playgroup for a number of years and is familiar with the ML. She often greets the ML as she enters playgroup by saying 'hello' and waving. She makes lots of sounds and says hello numerous times if the ML has not heard her.

Week 1

L loves to say 'hello' and sings and verbalises excitedly throughout the hello song.

L explored the chimes today by looking under them and around them before moving them with her hands. L understands the different patterns in the chime song of quiet and loud. She moved her hands more vigorously for the end part which was loud and more gently for quiet.

L wanted to play the cabassa independently without the ML holding it for her, she also vocalised choo choo as we sang our train song.

We played the ocean drum and L swayed from side to side with it to make the sound, she also shook it with vigor to make a splash sound. L listened and followed instructions brilliantly.

I asked L to play a shaker and a bell, one in each hand. She listened and responded for the first few times with the correct instrument each time!

L really enjoyed the sound and vibrations from the tongue drum on her hands. We played this together for a few minutes just enjoying the sounds and then sang goodbye.

L is easily distracted by the MOPS environment, other children, and my bag of instruments. She finds it challenging to focus on an activity for more than 30-60 seconds. For each activity the ML stretches the focus time for as long as possible. Often L will demonstrate new musical skills if the activity is repeated, and time extended, as she has the space to process instructions and share musical preferences.

Week 2

Today L vocalised Star, Hello, Choo Choo and Bye. She also made other vocal sounds such as kisses and shhh.

She was able to sit and engage for longer for each activity today instead of getting distracted and pointing to my bag numerous times throughout the session.

She really enjoyed the tactile beads on the cabassa and joined in with choo choo by rolling the beads. She also scratched, tapped, and made a small vocal sounds into the microphone when given an instruction.

Week 3

Today L sang and played the guitar without any instruction from the ML. She was straight in there!

L really enjoyed the texture of the pattern on the rain stick today and liked placing her hands on it and moving it from one side to the other. When she first heard the sound, she made her mouth into an O sound. She was excited to hear it's sound. We then sang rain is falling down, and she moved rhythmically with the rain stick from side to side.

We sang the same song with the drum with an emphasis on down. She liked scratching the drum with her fingers to make the pitter patter sound. She occasionally banged the drum on down.

L was very vocal today making lots of sounds throughout. She said down, star, oooaaahh, hello and goodbye.

We sang reach for the stars with chimes, L was very vocal as if singing along to the song with sounds I had not heard her make before. She loved the texture and sound of the chimes and wanted to play independently.

We again used the Microphone which she enjoyed scratching and tapping. L vocalised a choo choo sound today but does not seem overly keen on making a sound with her voice through the microphone. She prefers to scrape or tap it or hear my voice through it.

L engaged for longer periods today without being distracted!

Week 1

We started with the Hello song and A followed instructions so very well by either waving hello, clapping, stamping her feet and wiggling. I followed her lead for a while as she stamped and clapped at different intervals.

A clearly understands the difference between quiet and loud. I showed her the Makaton signs of quiet and loud which she signed back to me. We used the Chimes with a simple song and the first part was quiet and the 2nd loud. She followed all instructions and would often take a big breath before making the loud sound.

A took the lead whilst we played the Cabassa, I followed the rhythm she played whilst singing the song. I then stopped and signed A is playing Fast and Slow. We then repeated a few times to her delight, and she played fast and slow in the correct points in the song.

We moved onto the shaker & a bell. I asked her to play in turn one or the other. She listened and responded by playing both in the first instance. She then realised it was easier for her to follow the instructions if she put one instrument down. She did this a few times picking up and playing the correct instrument in turn.

A enjoyed being in charge of the piano and playing how she wished without any cues or instructions.

A expressed with smiles and vocal sounds that she enjoyed the sound and vibrations on her hands when using the tongue drum. We played this together for a few minutes just enjoying the sounds and then sang goodbye.

Week 2

A started the session by moving the body part she wanted me to sing about in the hello song. I followed her lead which she was delighted with as she was smiling and moved those body parts with vigor.

A likes the sounds of the chimes and today we played a game looking for A through the chimes. She parted the chimes with ease when I said where is A.

We then played the Octochime. At first she seemed to enjoy it's sound and liked rolling her hand and beater around the inside. She quickly then signed finished and pushed it away. However, I persevered and played the song with her a few more times which didn't seem to agitate her.

We then played with the microphone. We scratched and tapped. She then signed finished again. Again, I persevered and sang can A make a sound in the microphone. To our surprise she made an ahhhh sound quite loudly. We repeated this a couple of times and she repeated the sound. She then signed finished again so we stopped.

We then played listen to the bells on two hand bells. She wasn't sure about the sound but again I persevered as I was starting to feel she was just signing finish because she was hungry and wanted to go to snack time. She played the bells in turn either by tapping the top or swinging it in her hand.

Week 3

A was so focused at the beginning of the session and immediately lots of eye contact and giving me instructions on what to do next either by clapping her hands, moving her body, or stamping her feet.

We moved onto the Rain stick and sang Rain is falling down. A was a little hesitant at first but started to place her hands on the stick and enjoyed the texture and patterns on the rain stick. She then started to feel more comfortable and helped me rock it from side to side. A also vocalised down a few times.

We repeated the song with the drum. A followed the musical cues and tapped the drum on the down. She also scratched the drum on pitter patter.

We used the piano with a simple I play, now you play song. A waited until it was her turn to play the piano and wiggled her fingers up and down the keys. She was smiling lots and making eye contact.

We scratched and tapped the microphone again. I then sang 'A make a sound. She did this by blowing and oooo. When repeated this however she did not want to make a sound. I then sang the beginning few lines to a variety of songs e.g. wheels on the bus, row row, miss polly. Each time I left a pause at a word I knew she could fill or make a sound with. She did this brilliantly making a sound of vocalising each time.

However, if the same song repeated, she did not want to make a sound, her preference seemed to be a new song each time which was short.

We finished with the Cabassa. I signed fast and slow and A chose how to play the Cabassa by signing back to me. She played the cabassa as she suggested each time.

A comment from her key worker ...

'I have been with A for her music sessions and it has been so lovely to see A grow in confidence. At A's first session she was a little unsure but in her second session A was really engaged following all the instructions the ML gave and was so happy. In A last session she remembered some of the sequence from the week before and would do the next section before being asked, also when the ML was singing and paused A would verbally fill in the gaps from some nursery rhymes'.

**VIGNETTE 3 - Child: Z - Hydrocephalus, ACC, L1CAM
ML Observations**

Week 1

Hello song - Z was very determined to move his hands to play my guitar.

Chimes - Zoom Zoom - Held above Z and he moved his hands to find where the sound was coming from. He also listened to musical cues through the phrasing of the song e.g. first part quiet, zoom loud. He moved his hands more vigorously on the zoom.

Cabassa - Runaway Train. I left lots of gaps for Z to find the cabassa and for him to make the choo choo sound. He did this beautifully and every-time I left a gap he filled it by moving his hands over the cabassa. I then asked Z to show me with his voice his choo choo sound. I kept repeating the sound close to his ear. To my amazement he changed his sound which seemed to come from the back of his throat with a sound that resembled choo choo!

Ocean Drum - We played this together. I helped Z put his hands on the drum. We made lots of splashing sounds together. Z vocalised with raspberries and clicks throughout the song appearing to make splashing sounds.

Tongue Drum - At first Z seemed to be transfixed by the sound but this quickly turned and he indicated by screwing up his face and moving his body that he didn't like the sound or perhaps the vibrations from the drum made him uncomfortable. I persevered for a few more moments but it was clear this was not his preference so we moved on.

Ukulele - We ended the session by singing goodbye. Z used his vocal clicking in rhythm at the end of the song!

Week 2

Today we combined Z's session with Physiotherapy which completed both activities and which Z seemed to enjoy.

Z was moved onto his side, and I lay almost next to him playing the guitar so he could move his hands when he wanted to. Upon calling his name he rocked from side to side to try and place his hands on the guitar and stings. We did this a few times and it was evident he was really trying to find my guitar and play. We then sang reach for the stars with the chimes. Immediately Z swung his hands round so he could find the chimes. He moved his fingers sometimes gently and sometimes with force.

We then made lots of Choo Choo sounds whilst I moved the cabassa close to his ear. He made the same sound he had previously from the back of his throat and also the raspberry sound which he appeared to be making in time with the rhythm.

I gently helped Z move his hands over the cabassa whilst stroking it and eventually sang open your fingers and hold on tight. Almost immediately he opened his hand and put it flat on the cabassa and moved his fingers gently. Z was very determined and we repeated this numerous times with Z moving his hands and fingers in different positions trying to make a sound.

I then placed the microphone near his mouth so we could make some vocal sounds. We continued with choo choo and he made again very small back of the throat sounds. He then found that he could move his fingers to make a scratching sound which he showed me he liked with a smile.

We then sat up and played the bells. I sang Listen to the bells, listen to the bells ding, dong, ding, dong whilst making the sounds on the bells. Z flicked his eyes each time on the ding dong but kept them still on the listen part. Clearly wanting to use a different part of his body to show me he was listening and following instructions. I then helped Z to play the bells. I held his hand over the top of the bell and he tried to press down each time by moving his hand ever so slightly.

Week 3

Z was very vocal as soon as the session started. Lots of clicks, and the now familiar sounds from the back of his throat.

Z found and played my guitar with his fingers during the hello song.

Rain stick - I placed this very near and at times on his cheek so he could feel the vibrations. He really enjoyed the sound and vibrations and told me this by making sounds and moving his hands around the instrument

Drum - Rain is falling down. Z listened to the song and found the drum. He scrunched up his hand and really banged the drum loudly. I left lots of time and pauses for him to find the drum on the down in the song. He did this beautifully and was also singing along making lots of sounds too.

Chimes - Z appeared to want to listen for the first few times around to Reach for the stars. On the third time he found the chimes and played using his hands and fingers.

Mic - Z made so many vocal sounds. I sang lots of different songs and left gaps for him to fill which he did with many sounds, clicks and teeth grinds.

Tongue Drum - Z loved the vibrations of the drum today which was different to previous weeks. He listened to twinkle little star with his hands just placed on top. We repeated rain is falling down and he chose to make his own sounds by lifting his hands each time.

Using the Sounds of Intent Framework music leaders & MOPS staff will document individual communicative responses and engagement and track how children interact/progress/learn in a group setting and how this effects them individually.

This term we focused on Child L. Child L throughout her time at playgroup has gained in confidence, strength, and in expression of her ideas and preferences. L often can be heard saying 'Hello' to the MOPS team and ML's and familiar people she knows. In Music Therapy and group sessions L would often be distracted by sounds, other children or anything that was in her direct sightline. L has made huge progress and can engage for longer periods of time in 1-1 music and group sessions as well as her everyday activities during playgroup life.

Below are some examples of KW's notes on child L and her data from the SOI framework.

VIGNETTE 4
Data Captured from Sounds of Intent Framework for Child L

Domain R Note

L showed interest in the songs, especially those that were familiar to her. Lots of actions, babbling and touching the instruments.

Domain P Note

L was able to copy some sounds through songs. She picked up the last sound of a word like eeee and oooo.

Domain I Note

L imitates a simple beat using the instrument accordingly. It takes a while sometimes for her to respond but she will do it when she is ready and concentrating.

General Notes

L has had a lovely time today at music therapy. She enjoys exploring the various musical instruments. Shows different emotions and facial expressions to ML. Good listening and interaction through eye contact.

Domain R Note

Recognised changes in dynamics and tempo

Domain P Note

Played her chime bar throughout the song, playing with the leader and independently

Domain I Note

Actively played her shaker in group music today. Lots of eye contact and consistent playing.

Families will report on communicative responses developed as a result of music sessions through informal discussion at sharing sessions / concerts.

It was wonderful to have all the families together once more for our third live sharing concert. This term Sing and Sign and Little Star jointly presented songs and activities to the families and the children. The session took place in the garden as we also celebrated those that were leaving playgroup and moving on to other settings. The families actively participated with their children and for those children who are new to the playgroup enjoyed the variety of musical opportunities on offer and could see first-hand the benefits of music making opportunities for children with a variety of different needs.

Families commented:

'We will miss all the music at MOPS, we hope her new setting will support her as much as MOPS have with music and sound making'

'R found his voice at MOPS we hope he continues to do so at his new school. Music has definitely helped him'

'Already I can see that M is joining in more with musical sessions. He was unsure at first but coming here today I can see now that he is so engaged, dancing and moving about and coming up to you. He obviously feels more comfortable and happy now and able to participate how he wants too'

The project will document the development of communication responses within the group and individually.

Weekly observations and written notes have been documented throughout Term 5 by the KW's. Some examples relating to Child L, A and Z as discussed earlier in the report are noted below. MOPS playgroup leader and KW's also reflected on Singing and Signing sessions delivered by Sing and Sign and how these sessions seemed to only support a few of the children at playgroup.

VIGNETTE 5
Observations from MOPS Team - Child L, Child A and Child Z

Child L

L truly enjoys all her sessions in Music Therapy. She is improving a lot when it comes to her concentration. Good listening with lovely eye contact. She uses her body movements in responding to the ML's simple request. L also showed interest in various instruments. She is confident in exploring each one of them through banging, shaking, tapping, etc.

L can sometimes make a rhythm using the instrument provided while listening to ML. Lots of copied words have been observed all throughout her session. These are mostly the last word of her familiar songs and lots of signing too.

L always gets excited every time ML is in the room. She always made sure that she will be noticed by saying 'hello and by waving'. She associates ML with music, singing and dancing which is very sweet.

L enjoys all of our music sessions that we offer and she will engage in them by moving to the music and signing to a familiar song. However, she is easily distracted by other things going on around her, she will try and play with the child next to her or she will seek to get an adult's attention and then smile and wave to them. L is often unsupported in a music group, but I don't think that an adult would keep her focused on the group I think she just has a fleeting attention span.

Child A

A was always very vocal within these sessions using vocalisations more than her Makaton signs. The length of the music sessions was never a concern for A as she was always engaged throughout taking her lead from ML not needing any other adult support.

A always loved anything music related, and would join in enthusiastically by vocalising and signing, She would always make sure the adult lead was aware that she knew songs, colours or what was coming next in the music session.

Child Z

Z benefited greatly from music therapy as he communicated both physically and verbally throughout the sessions.

He played the chimes using both his hands with his head at midline.

He smiled several times when he felt the vibrations of the guitar and drum.

Z clicked when ML said hello and then in rhythm to the goodbye song consistently.

He made new sounds with his throat in response to ML saying 'did you go choo choo'.

Uhhhh sounds particularly with the rainmaker and the microphone.

Opened his right hand fully to touch the strings on the guitar.

Z banged the drums several times with a right fist then copied ML by scratching the drum in his left hand.

Stilled and listened to ML singing rain is falling, when she paused Z moved his hands onto the drum for down.

Z was engaged, happy and relaxed throughout.

Z was so engaged with music therapy, but I don't think he engages so well in general music sessions particularly if he is in the group unsupported.

VIGNETTE 6
Observations from MOPS Team - Sing and Sign Sessions

'I think the majority of us thought the content was not geared to most of our children. Those children whose communication and attention skills were more advanced gained the most from these sessions. The delivery was too quiet and too quick with lots of short songs in rapid succession. The children would have benefitted from the songs being repeated. The children seemed to respond to 'Jessie' the cat. The ML was lovely and did try to take on board our suggestions, but it certainly would not have worked well with our new cohort of children in Sep 2022'.

'In general, I think sign and sign just didn't appeal to all, some of the mobile children would gravitate to the box that Jess the cat sat in and pull the cards out as that was the part that they wanted then it stopped the non- mobile children seeing what was going on and caused a distraction. I had thought because we are a Makaton environment that it would make sense to all the children but retrospectively, I think it was relevant to our children who sign but was lost on the wider group who probably need to see signing close up for it to have a relevance to them'.

'A was probably the one child who fully engaged with sing and sign and I think it was because she is a Makaton user and can sign effectively. A always enjoyed sing and sign as it was very much her world of Makaton signing. Although this session was well delivered I felt the broad scale of our children's needs, meant they got very little out of this half an hour session losing focus very quickly'.

OUTCOME 2 - WORKFORCE

To develop MOP's Workforce musical skills to enable them to become a self-sufficient music making setting.

It has become apparent that during such difficult times to be working in settings with COVID restrictions still in place e.g. extra cleaning and safeguarding matters, that MOPS team find it difficult to have regular training sessions and to follow up the practice and lesson ideas that have been provided. As music is so embedded in MOPS everyday practices such as singing, playing instruments, making music and singing during story time etc. the team already provide such a wide range of opportunities for the children to engage in regular music making and sound making activities appropriate to their needs. Therefore, any further training and support needs careful consideration on how to implement and support the team without making extra work and time for the team to engage.

We have started to implement training KW's during Music Therapy sessions on how to use instruments with each child depending on their needs and also through discussion detailing what activities work best for each child.

This has worked really well and KW's are using instruments in different ways to evoke responses from the children they work with. Short discussions at the end of each session allows time for reflection and how to adapt, support and take things further for each child.

We will continue to work in this way during Term 6 and allow further time for discussion and practice.

CONCLUSION

Term 5 of the Music Matters at MOPS project not only provides insight into the many benefits of long-term musical experiences for young children with additional needs but also into staff/ML cohesion and the impact consistent, collaborative, adaptive and enjoyable musical experiences can have on individual growth and achievement. The musical programmes included in the project are reflected upon in ways which explore what is best for each individual child and the group as a whole. The staff at MOPS are remarkable in their musical approach to daily experiences and this is reflected in the children's joy and musical achievements as well as in family engagement and active support during sharing concerts.

Observations and reflections in Term 5 focused on respect, awareness of and acknowledgement of children's preferences and on providing opportunities and support for children to share and express their ideas and needs. This focus resulted in children becoming more confident, comfortable, and motivated to engage. The children engaged through moving, vocalising, playing instruments, making choices, and interacting in self-initiated ways appropriate to their needs, which supported communicative and musical outcomes. ML's and KW's provided space and time to explore in ways each child felt comfortable with as well as sensitively extending and challenging this exploration, resulting in new musical responses.

Term 5 observations also describe examples of children's individual communicative goals extending through successfully processing different cues and instructions. We can reflect further on this as we consider the way in which music supports the processing of verbal and gestural cues through musical activities exploring instrumental choice, theoretical extremities – fast / slow, loud / soft, pauses, phrasing, solo / group playing and performance.

Term 4 outlined progression in the utilization of Makaton as it became embedded into daily practice. Term 5 highlights further extension as its use has become a natural part of the settings teaching approaches. Staff, ML's and KW's have become confident using Makaton and we see examples of the benefits it has for many of the children in understanding and accessing communicative tools. We also see the importance of its use as an inclusive system promoting learning for all. As the use of Makaton has continued to grow, we start to see the impact it has over time and in Term 5 observations and reflections suggest that the children appear to engage with Makaton which is tailored to their needs in terms of complexity, visual interaction, and opportunities to practice. Feedback from the MOPS team on the Sing and Sign sessions extends this new understanding and provides examples of how not all children respond to certain signs and activities in the same way as they may be accessing it in different ways or require differentiated approaches.

The staff training element of the project has needed to evolve from the original objectives to best meet the needs of the setting and be achievable within daily practice and availability of the staff. ML notes that adaptations are needed which reflect and extend the already existing musical approaches implemented consistently across the setting. This will be discussed further in Term 6.