

Youth Music - Westfield

'Engaging Sounds' - Increasing engagement of learning through music

Term 5 - Summer Term 2022

KEY:

ML: Music Leader

TML: Trainee Music Leader Buckinghamshire Music Trust

WPS: Westfield Primary School

KS1: Key Stage 1

KS2: Key Stage 2

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

OVERALL AIM

To enable Westfield Primary children to engage in high quality ensemble sessions that challenge, develop and progress musical, social and personal skills for life.

The 'Engaging Sounds' Project offers live group music making sessions and performance opportunities to the children attending Westfield Primary School (WPS). WPS caters for children experiencing difficulties in communication and interaction. Term 5 of the project consisted of the Music Leader (ML) and Trainee Music Leader (TML) providing weekly music sessions to six classes in KS2. The project will run for 6 terms alternating between KS2 and KS1 class. All sessions for Term 5 were face to face with no restrictions.

Term 5 consisted of 4 sessions a week on a Thursday working with Years 2, 3 and 4 with the addition of 2 sessions each Monday for Years 5 & 6. On Mondays the ML provided the sessions solo and adapted the lesson plan and session structure to engage and support the age and needs of the children. Term 5 focused on (i) musical differences which became the theme for each session (ii) learning simple chords on the ukulele (iii) group rhythm with drums (iv) improvising and songwriting using a Japanese instrument and other percussive instruments.

The following structure and outcomes were the basis for KS2:

Welcome -

Zimbole

- Singing or moving to a repeated song
- Finding and playing the beat with body percussion
- Creating music as a group

What's your name?

- Sang simply with Makaton signs. The children in turn would sing or make a vocal sound/ eye contact back.

Group Playing -

Every two weeks we changed the theme/musical difference and used a variety of instruments and songs to enable the children to hear, listen and feel the differences.

These included:

- Fast & Slow (We don't talk about Bruno)
- Pitch (Sometimes I get a good feeling)
- Dynamics (I bounce to the beat of my own drum)
- Crescendo and Decrescendo (I feel good)
- Major & Minor (Spiderman)

Group Ukuleles -

Songs: Shake it off, Shotgun improvised playing

- Learning different strumming patterns and rhythms
- Learning chords Am, C, and G
- Playing as a group
- Playing in solo

Moving

Improvised by TML using the theme of the week e.g. fast and slow

- Awareness of musical difference and responding with movement
- Moving and engaging creatively; independently and as a group
- Improve gross motor skills and physical response to the music
- Interacting with TML - TML noted in the moment responses and improvised around them

Rhythm

Songs: Everybody play along, Samba, Ta, TiTi and Shh rhythms, Improvised patterns, Can you copy my rhythm

- Playing in time and feeling the rhythm/pulse
- Following musical cues
- Playing untuned percussion in solo, duet or as a group
- Improvising rhythmic patterns using simple notation

Songwriting & Listening

Led initially by the TML who brought in two Japanese homemade instruments made from coke cans which let water drip through creating watery sounds. As the weeks progressed the activity was led by the ML who guided the children in creating a piece of music with words.

- Reacting to the sounds of the instruments
- Writing a song about the River in Japan
- Using the theme/musical differences to embed musical learning
- Using tuned and untuned percussion to create a piece of music together

Singing & Goodbye -

Sky Full of Stars

- Singing, eye contact or making sounds to repeated song
- Singing their own name back to ML
- Recognition that it's the end of the session

- Following musical cues

The structure was the same as last term creating familiarity for the children and helping them with transition from the previous term. The first couple of weeks, especially during drumming, the children preferred to explore previous repertoire but after this time they were comfortable exploring new activities and songs. The ML would allow the children to sing the familiar songs and then move on, supporting engagement and confidence in exploring new musical ideas.

OUTCOME 1 - MUSICAL

To improve rhythm, pulse & tempo skills using group musical activities

This will be explored by:

- *Playing untuned / tuned percussion in solo, duet or as a group using musical games*
- *Improvising rhythmic patterns using simple notation*
- *Moving and dancing with a variety of props/instruments to different tempos*

This term we focused on rhythm using the Kodaly method of Ta, TiTi and Shh. The children enjoyed writing out the rhythm syllables and working together as a group to identify each value. We did this in various ways such as laying out dots on the floor with the syllables written on each one. The children would move around to a simple tune and then change and play either Ta or TiTi. The children would then find the syllables on the floor and stand on it and move accordingly. We also lined up the dots across the hall floor and each child in turn would jump on the long line calling out the rhythm. We sometimes did this with instruments e.g., a shaker.

The children also enjoyed being the leader and writing on the whiteboard their rhythm for the whole group to play back to them on their drums. We encouraged finding these rhythm syllables in each part of the music lesson structure e.g., playing ukulele.

This term we carried on playing our ukuleles with the colours to help the children identify chords quickly and easily so we could create simple melodies all together. We supported those children who needed extra guidance but as a whole the children remembered what they had learnt last term and made speedy progress in learning new songs. We incorporated musical differences such as fast, slow, loud, quiet, crescendo and decrescendo as well as practicing our rhythm syllables.

In Drumming we focused on our Ta, TiTi and Shh rhythms and Samba. The children really enjoyed the Samba song but it took some time (almost until the end of term) for us to play the rhythm together. Using Ta's and TiTi's in a different sequence felt unfamiliar to the children but nevertheless the children were determined to play the rhythm as a group. The children were delighted and very proud when they had mastered this new skill. It is useful to note that the TML and also the classroom teachers found the rhythm difficult to master and were often led by the children on the rhythmic pattern.

Movement this term again focused on musical differences led by the TML playing on her melodica, harmonica or piano. The TML confidence and leadership continued to grow this term as she comfortably moved each group around the hall allowing them to feel the music as well as hear it.

OUTCOME 2 - PERSONAL

To improve language and communication through composition and songwriting

This will be explored by:

- *Singing and sharing favourite pop, folk and world songs together with instruments*
- *Writing topical songs together led by the children*
- *Sound making games*

Our goodbye song this term was a Sky Full of Stars from Sing 2. The children loved this song and quickly learnt the words through call and response. There were some real highlight moments when individual children sang through the microphone with beautiful tones, pitch perfect and with feeling. As a group it always drew out dance moves and the children especially liked to sing the last line 'I think I saw youooooooooo' with energy and lots of emotion.

The songwriting and listening section was a definite favourite of all classes this term and the anticipation seemed to build to get to this part of the lesson. The children were introduced to a Japanese instrument brought in by the TML made of coke cans taped together with tops and bottoms removed to let the water seep through. The ring pulls of the coke cans could also be plucked offering a variation of the sound.

The sound was very enchanting as the water gugged and whirred through the metal cans. The cans were decorated in traditional Japanese pictures and writing. The water in the cans was also from a river in Japan. The children thought this was fascinating and this really engaged them before we had even let them hear the sound.

The first two lessons we simply walked in front of and behind the children so they could listen to the sounds. The children were immediately quiet and listened carefully to the sounds. It was very special to watch the children be still and listen so intently. After a while the children would shout out what they thought they were hearing and talk about how and what the instruments were made of.

"It's water"

"Is it trapped inside?"

"Where is the water from?"

"It's coke cans I can see them? is it cola?"

"It sounds like rain"

"I love this sound"

"It's so peaceful"

"It makes me happy"

After the first two weeks we moved on giving the children other instruments such as wind chimes, tongue drum, thunder drum, rain stick, octochime and cabassa. We started to talk about the instruments and the River in Japan where the water had come from. The children initiated 'What animals live on or in the River?' We took their lead and for the next few weeks we made different animal sounds vocally and with our instruments to create mini stories about the animals.

Thereafter we worked on putting some words together using the whiteboard which the children either wrote or drew on with what they wanted to say. We incorporated these words/drawings into a song led by the ML playing a simple melody on the guitar, we also fed in musical differences depending on the animals.

Each class wrote their own unique variation of the 'River in Japan' and each child had their own instrument which represented the animal chosen by them. This enabled each child to have a solo moment performing to the class and at sharing concerts as well as playing as a group for the chorus. Every week we would begin the songwriting and listening section with the sound of the Japanese water tubes as it had such a calming and reflective effect on the children.

The lyrics the children wrote were as follows:

Example 1	Cherry 1	Cherry 2
<p>Intro On the river In Japan There lived some animals, many animals</p> <p>The animals got louder The animals were quieter On the river in Japan</p> <p>Final Verse All the animals went to sleep And all we could hear was the river The river in Japan</p>	<p>There was a Crocodile, Fish, Monkey, Frog, Turtle, Snake And the wind and the rain were making their sounds</p> <p>The Crocodile was fishing The Fish was eating weeds The Monkey was playing among us The Frog was playing Roblox The Snake was playing Minecraft The Turtle was playing Mario Cart And the Wind and the Rain were making a funny sound</p>	<p>There was a Snake, Caterpillar, Crocodile, Butterfly, Bird, Hippo, Panda, Fish</p> <p>And the wind and the rain were making their sounds</p> <p>The Snake was munching on some leaves The Caterpillar was eating The Crocodile was swimming The Butterfly was playing with his friends The Bird was eating seeds The Hippo was splashing The Panda was shaking The Fish were swimming And the wind and the rain were making their sounds</p>

Pear 1	Pear 2	Pear 3
<p>There was a Snake, Bird, Frog, Lion, Turtle, And the wind and the rain were making their sounds</p> <p>The animals were swimming The animals were drinking up the river The animals were playing The animals were diving</p>	<p>There was a Shark, Elephant, Octopus, Fish, Crocodile, Gruffalo, And the wind and the rain were making their sounds</p> <p>The Shark was hungry And he wanted to eat the Fish The Gruffalo trapped the Shark The Shark bit the Gruffalo's tail The Octopus came and he squirted ink at the Shark They fed him hot dogs and spaghetti Bolognese Then the Shark went on holiday and ate some pudding</p>	<p>There was a Crocodile, Pig, Hippo, Piranha Fish, And the wind and the rain were making their sounds</p> <p>The animals are having a tea party The Shark said 'Let me get that for you princess, let me get that for you princess'. Singing rock and roll solos with their mums whilst riding a skateboard And they hang out with Mr. T at golden time The animals got louder The animals were quieter On the river in Japan</p> <p>The Crocodile is chilling in the sun The Frog is chanting om om om The Monkey is playing among us</p>
Pear 4		
<p>There was a Fish, Frog, Snake, Butterfly, Caterpillar, Otter, Turtle, And the wind and the rain were making their sounds</p> <p>The animals were sometimes sleeping Lying down and sleeping The animals had dance All the animals loved each other The animals were having fun playing uno, lego, connect 4 The Caterpillar and Butterfly talk to each other</p>		

CHILDREN'S FEEDBACK

The children's feedback highlights how they have settled and engaged in the music sessions with most appearing to really enjoy the sessions. The children were also keen this term to share their ideas for further songs to explore in Term 6.

1. What do you like about music sessions?

Dancing x3
Drums x 2
Ukuleles x2
Playing fast songs
Water from Japan song
It's funny
The songs
Sky full of stars
Singing
It's so amazing
I like them because they are rock n roll

2. Is there anything you don't like about music sessions?

Playing the ukulele
Bells
No x 6
People not playing properly
The song from Sing, I don't like gaps
Drumming

3. What instrument is your favourite?

Drums x 5
Ukulele
Thunder drum x3
Uke
Ocean drum x2
Any x 3

4. What song or activity have you enjoyed the most during music sessions?

Dancing x 2
Writing raps x2
Playing uke with my friend
Zimbole x3
All of them
Sky full of stars x 4

5. What new songs would you like to explore during Music Sessions?

Symphony
Samba
Eye of the tiger
Don't mind
Yellow Submarine
Coconut song
Reach for the stars
You got a friend in me

A whole new world
Never look back Sing 2
Shake it off
We will rock you

6. Which emoji best describes how you feel during music sessions?

     
9 6 2 1 1

TEACHERS FEEDBACK

'My class absolutely love the music sessions and look forward to them every week. The structure and pace of the sessions allows them to engage and stay regulated. The sessions allow the children to express their individuality and unleash their inner Rock n Roll. The ML makes the children feel valued and talented. My class are far more confident as a performers because of these sessions'. Pear 4 Teacher

'The sessions have been very good and I've seen a real improvement in the children's ability, concentration and musicality'. Pear 1 Teacher

'All the children can access the lessons at their own level'. Pear 3 Teacher

'I like the fact that they are learning musical terms which enable them to start playing instruments rather than just banging'. Cherry 2 Teacher

TML FEEDBACK

1. What challenges have you encountered?

Finding right materials and instruments for the theme for this term.

2. Was the session well prepared and supported by the Music Leader?

Yes. Clear direction to what theme to follow and creative elements were well planned and delivered.

3. What did you enjoy about the sessions?

Music making process with improvisation elements.

4. Is there anything you would change to make the sessions more effective?

No

5. Would you be able to lead a session yourself with the support of a music leader?

Yes

6. Is there anything you don't enjoy during the sessions?

No

7. What have you learnt from this project?

I applied ideas for singing/percussion that has been introduced in the session and structure of the workshop to my own workshop session after this term.

ML REFLECTIONS

This term we held our first sharing concert for the families. Unfortunately, we have been unable to hold these until now due to COVID restrictions. Sharing music with the children's families was a real highlight of project. It also motivated the children to work towards a performance, help each other and perform confidently as they anticipated the performance to their families.

The sharing concerts were structured but also allowed for the children's families to either sit next to them or at the side depending on what supported their child the most. This allowed families to offer their child/ren support if they needed it. It also meant that families could join in with some of the simple chants. Performance and sharing is very important to allow each child to feel proud, motivated, confident and explore the power of performing and the feelings this evokes in them as the child, but also on their families.

The families really appreciated the session and were just as excited as the children to see what they had achieved. During the sharing concerts families were laughing, smiling, encouraging, and crying tears of joy as their child and their peers performed with pride, confidence, and musical flare. Most of the children excelled at the performance which was heartwarming to see and gave the families the opportunity to see how far and how much each child had achieved in such a short space of time. The teachers were also so proud of each class as they worked hard, showed determination and courage to perform in front of so many families. Many staff members commented that they had not experienced such an engaged performance at the school before.

The power of performance is essential to any project such as this as it enables each child to grow musically and emotionally, develop new skills in confidence, support their peers and feel an emotional connection to the musical performance. It also allows for all the work throughout the term to be shared and commented on by families and teachers. I am so glad we finally got to hold a sharing concert and I look forward to Term 6 and our grand finale performance as we conclude our project.

CONCLUSION

Term 5 highlights the ever-increasing proficiency and experience of the ML and TML in delivering musical programmes based on reflective planning and wide-ranging musical activities and resources and the impact this has on embedding musical learning. We see activities which are consistently engaging for the children resulting in new and extended musical responses and learning as well as connection, engagement, and interaction. The sessions provide experiences which are explored in a multitude of ways, tapping into the multi-senses, exploring musical concepts, sounds and ideas through moving, touching, playing and listening; repeating this in different contexts and experiences.

In Term 4 we noted increased understanding and performance of musical differences. In Term 5 we see this develop further and can reflect on the impact these multifaceted musical experiences can have on holistic learning and musical achievement. The children explored these musical concepts through hearing, feeling, moving, visual supports, discussion, and composition, in an environment which provided the time, space and support to engage freely.

In Term 5 KS2 continued with the music sessions from the previous term. The ML skilfully supported the transition into the new term by incorporating the children's musical interests and requests for familiar repertoire into the sessions and sensitively introduced new activities and experiences in a familiar way. Term 5 saw the introduction of rhythmic notation using Ta Titi rhythmic syllables which the children connected with and enjoyed exploring through movement, instrumental play and creating their own visual representations and patterns. This learning activity extended the musical opportunities for the children and connected them to music in a new way through the introduction of notation.

In Term 5 we also saw the continued development of composition in both the experiences, resources and approaches utilised, as well as in the children's engagement and leadership during the songwriting section. Again, the songwriting experience was approached in a multi-sensory way with many experiences and sounds explored as part of the process. This resulted in the children not only looking forward to this section of the session but confidently sharing ideas and taking ownership and pride in their songs and achievements.

The ML highlights the successes, enjoyment and importance of performance opportunities for the children at Westfield and that Term 5 was able to support the reintroduction of this experience through a sharing concert at the end of the term. We clearly see the benefits and impact on the children's musical learning, confidence, connection and interaction during the sharing concert and this opportunity surmises the holistic approach delivered throughout the term and project as a whole.