

Measuring quality

Musical inclusion guidance

What makes for quality in a music education for all children and young people?

If we want to embed musically inclusive practice fully into music education and therefore throughout Music Education Hubs, we need to find ways to discuss quality. Formal music education has clearly defined ways in which it assesses quality, both of outcomes and of practitioners. But different measures are required for a more holistic music education which reaches all children and young people.

This document discusses some of these areas and is intended to support conversations in hubs about quality practice. It is based on evaluation findings from work funded by Youth Music¹.

In this document:

1. What is musically inclusive practice?
2. Why can't we apply the same quality judgements (indicators) across all types of music education practice?

3. Ways of knowing: quality indicators for all music education

4. What makes for quality in music educators who are musically inclusive?

5. Further reading

1. What is musically inclusive practice?

All children, wide-ranging genres and styles

Musically inclusive practice ensures that all children and young people who want to can make music. True musical inclusivity can only happen if there are opportunities for all children and young people to be supported as musicians. This involves embracing a wide range of genres and styles, achieving social and personal outcomes as well as musical ones, and having practitioners who understand young people's needs and worldviews and are equipped to help them on their

individual learning journeys. Part of being musically inclusive may therefore involve challenging our ideas of what music is for, who music is for, and what role it can have in all our lives.

The importance of social and personal outcomes in achieving musical ones

Sound Sense's evaluation of Youth Music's Musical Inclusion programme², found strong related links between musical development and socio-personal development. This reinforces findings in Communities of Music Education³ (Saunders & Welch, commissioned by Youth Music, 2012), which compared the features of excellent out-of-school music provision with Ofsted guidelines for music in school.

It also reported that **teaching styles focusing on personal and social development as well as musical development are more likely to lead to positive outcomes** around inclusion and attainment, particularly for young people at risk of low attainment,

disengagement or educational exclusion.

These young people often suffer from a negative sense of who they are and what they are capable of. They often feel unable to do things that others can do, and become disengaged from their own ability to learn and achieve. They may find it hard to function well in a group and have challenging behaviour. All of this can act as a self fulfilling prophecy and lead to poor quality engagement and consequently poor musical outcomes.

A quality music education experience for these young people can be transformational, resulting in increased motivation not only in achieving quality in music making, but also in the rest of their education – the 'intrinsic motivation' that is so critical to learning.

A range of music leaders, and broader understanding of quality

Being musically inclusive therefore requires a range of music leaders

– teachers, tutors, community musicians and group leaders – so that there is a music education workforce which can work with young people of all backgrounds, needs and interests. This involves being able to support not just those who are ‘extremely vulnerable’ or ‘gifted and talented’ but the full diversity of all young people, and to work together to signpost young people to suitable provision and progression routes.

It also involves understanding that measures of quality must be and appropriate to the situation, rather than ‘one-size-fits-all’.

2. Why can't we apply the same quality judgements (indicators) across all types of music education practice?

Formal music education is follows a set path, and is clearly graded and assessed. It is relatively simple to understand quality within that field because it is judged largely on technical instrumental skills and

performance techniques.

Musical inclusion work has developed in large part from grassroots projects centring on the needs of young people. It is complex, because it is about not only musical, but also social and personal outcomes. It uses a flexible (and diagnostic) approach that is tailored around young people's interests, needs and capabilities, and their social, personal and musical development, and therefore employs a range of different genres and styles of music making. The work tends to follow the evolving interest of the young people, and to be a collaboration between music leader and participant rather than the traditional teacher-pupil relationship. Defining the quality within the work is therefore not a simple task.

It isn't appropriate to apply the same quality standards to both, even though there may be some common elements. This is because formal music education tends

to be about performance-based skills and outcomes (see Ways of knowing boxout), whereas in inclusive practice, other outcomes, and therefore additional skills, are required.

However, there is a growing body of work (research, evaluation frameworks, and publications) by organisations such as Youth Music, the Institute of Education, Arts Council England and Paul Hamlyn Foundation (through their ArtWorks programme) which show the importance of measuring quality in music education by using a range of indicators.

3. Ways of knowing: quality indicators for all music education

One way of framing judgements across different forms of music-making may be to say that there is a range of different 'ways of knowing' in music education:

- **Learning (executive)** Knowing what to do because something

similar has been done before. For example, knowing how to play an instrument well, having command of pieces, being able to read music.

- **Learning (conceptual)** Knowing how and why things are done: for example, understanding how chords are put together, understanding song structure, knowing about different reverbs.

- **Performance** A reflexive knowing of what to do in the moment based on dynamic interaction within the music, with the audience and with the other musicians, combined with a knowledge of performance conventions.

- **Judgment** The ability to make improver judgments, e.g. editing recordings or realising new sections are needed in songs.

- **Creative assuredness** The ability to produce, with reasonable confidence of outcome, good quality original works either by themselves or with others.

4. What makes for quality in music educators who are musically inclusive?

Sound Sense's evaluation of Youth Music's Musical Inclusion programme⁴ found a range of qualities that musicians working with children facing barriers to music education need to possess. These emphasise creative and emotionally intelligent behaviours and skills and include:

Personal & Social	Musical	Process-based
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding that social and personal outcomes are central to young people's engagement and development • authenticity • flexibility • ability to work well in partnership with non music specialists • ability to build trust, particularly with vulnerable young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being responsive to young people's musicality and interests, and having an ability to draw that out to help a young person find their musical voice • improvisation • composition • listening • pitch for singing • background knowledge of music • understanding of diatonic harmony • good sense of timing • vocabulary of achievable rhythms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching and feedback, enabling young people to develop greater understanding of their learning • ability to reflect and adapt in response to their own experiences of teaching, and young people/other people's feedback • appropriate facilitation and understanding of pedagogy • experimental approach/process • differentiated learning • planning • Purposeful music-making activities related to outcomes

Research and development work by Arts Council England, the National Foundation for Educational Research, Youth Music, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation through ArtWorks, supports these findings and a series of useful frameworks and resources have been developed:

The National Foundation for Educational Research's report *Raising the standard of work by, with and for children and young people* (commissioned by Arts Council England, 2012) examined 31 quality frameworks from a number of settings around the world, and drew together the common themes into seven core principles. The **Arts Council has since produced a range of resources** to support practitioners.

Youth Music has distilled this research (together with its own evidence collected since 1999) into **Do, Review, Improve: a quality framework for music education**. The framework outlines essential criteria for quality and can be used as a tool for self-reflection, peer-observation and planning by all music educators.

Sound Sense's **music education code of practice** is also a useful starting point for practitioners, based around a series of quality statements concerning all aspects of music learning. It is aligned with another code of practice and set of resources developed by the Paul Hamlyn-funded programme, **ArtWorks**.

5. Further reading

- XxXXXXname of Musical Inclusion final evaluation report & hyperlink XXXXX
- **What is 'quality' in music work with children in challenging circumstances?** Interview with Phil Mullen, community musician and community music trainer <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/groups/musical-inclusion/discussions/what-%E2%80%98quality%E2%80%99-music-work-children-challenging-circumstances-in>
- **Arts Council England quality framework resources** <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/our-priorities-2011-15/children-and-young-people/quality/>

- **Do, review, improve – a quality framework for music education** <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/learning/resource-packs/do-review-improve-quality-framework-music-education>

- **Music Education Code of Practice**

Helps to ensure music practitioners provide high quality music making and learning experiences for the people they work with, by providing a set of quality statements concerning all aspects of music learning. By adopting the code, practitioners demonstrate their commitment to quality work. By using the code as a benchmark, employers and hirers of practitioners demonstrate their commitment to requiring high-quality practice of those who work for them. The code is aligned with the ArtWorks code of practice principles, see below.

<http://www.soundsense.org/metadot/index.pl?id=25842>

- ArtWorks quality resources for participatory arts
<http://www.artworksphf.org.uk/latest/research-findings/>
<http://www.artworksphf.org.uk/>

[evidence/promoting-quality](#)

- **Communities of Music Education**, Saunders & Welch, commissioned by Youth Music, 2012
<http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/research/communities-music-education>

- **All about musical inclusion** – section on the Youth Music Network with information and resources <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/learning/musical-inclusion>

References

¹ *The evaluation and networking module funded as part of of the Musical Inclusion programme, see XXXname of final evaluation report and hyperlink to itXXX.*

² *See above*

³ *Communities of Music Education, Saunders & Welch, commissioned by Youth Music, 2012*

⁴ *See above*

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Sound Sense

Sound Sense is the UK professional association for community musicians.

It leads this Musical Inclusion evaluation team

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The voice of community music

