



Voices

Voices Foundation
Impact Report 2020/21

Contents



1	Introduction	2
2	Our Purpose	3
	• Benefits of music activity	3
	• Why does Voices Foundation exist?	4
	• How we aim to make a difference	5
	• Our approach to music learning	7
3	Our Impact	8
	• Activities & Participants	8
	• Quality	9
	• Outcomes	10
	• Change for pupils	14
	• Looking ahead	16

Introduction

Manvinder Rattan, CEO



At Voices Foundation we are dedicated to making the power of singing accessible to every child. Over the past year, we have worked diligently and creatively to minimise the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and maximise our impact for every school and participant that we work with. As a result of the monumental commitment and dedication from our supporters, schools, and workforce, we have worked with 1,405 school leaders, teachers, parents, and education professionals over the past year, benefitting over 45,000 pupils. The quality of our work has been enhanced and the feedback from our teachers, school leaders, and pupils has been humbling and awe-inspiring.

We are delighted to share our impact report with you, which comprises two parts. The first outlines the need for Voices Foundation, our key ambition, and how we believe that this ambition can be achieved. This work is the result of conscientious and in-depth thinking, reflection, and discussion, which has taken place over the course of several months. The second part highlights the key results from our evaluation and learning activities, including findings about the quality of our work, the outcomes that have been achieved by the teachers, school leaders, parents, and education professionals that we work with, and the resulting impact for their children and pupils. We are thrilled with the immense impact that has been created for our participants over the past year, and on behalf of Voices Foundation, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to and been involved with this vital work.



Our Purpose

Benefits of music



Why do we need music?

Music is central to the human experience and present in the everyday lives of people of all ages and cultures.ⁱ A wide variety of research shows that engagement with music can profoundly affect children's learning, development, and personal skills.

Research about the benefits of music

Many of the brain functions used when taking part in music activity are also utilised by children to achieve key developmental milestones. Speech and music, for example, have several shared processing systems. Musical experiences can therefore impact language perception, which in turn affects learning to read.ⁱⁱ In fact, engaging with music may enhance several cognitive functions that are key to children's learning, such as planning, working memory, inhibition, and flexibility.ⁱⁱⁱ

Studies have found that children who participate in music activities perform better in English, maths, and science, regardless of their socioeconomic background and previous academic record. In some cases, the difference between children who do and do not participate in music activity can equate to several months' academic progress.^{iv} Children who participate in long-term musical programmes have also shown higher empathy than similar children who do not.^v Plus, research has found that children who take part in tasks involving music are more likely to be spontaneously helpful afterwards, as compared with children who take part in similar tasks but without music.^{vi}

Music is a form of communication that can convey meaning, regardless of whether it includes lyrics. Through music activity, participants can share emotions and express themselves non-verbally. Music activity, therefore, creates opportunities for children to be heard, and it may consequently improve children's self-esteem and confidence to express themselves in non-musical ways too.^{vii}

Music doesn't only benefit the communication of children, it also provides educators, parents, and guardians with an additional form of communication too. Adults can quickly and powerfully communicate instructions or set a mood by giving a musical signal or playing a particular song. As a result, they can use music to help children to regulate their behaviour, calm their emotions, prepare to start or finish a specific activity, or coordinate a collective effort to achieve a task more efficiently. This can result in a more productive use of time, improved focus, and increased learning.^{viii}

Why does Voices Foundation exist?

To address this societal level problem:

Despite a wide variety of research demonstrating that participation in music is highly beneficial for children, the current generation of children are being starved of a meaningful, quality music education. The value of music activity and learning is poorly recognised in the education system in England, and as a result, music is not a priority in curriculum delivery.

To address this school level problem:

Teachers are not given the initial training or ongoing learning opportunities needed to equip them with the skills and confidence to deliver high-quality music education. Consequently, children do not have equal access to an area of education that is fundamental to their learning and development. This disproportionately affects children from disadvantaged backgrounds attending schools facing additional challenges or with fewer resources.

Despite the unique and important role that music activity plays in children's education and development, music's place in the school curriculum has deteriorated, music makes up just a few hours of Initial Teacher Training, and relevant Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL) for teachers is hard to come by.

Although there is a National Curriculum in place for music, academies and free schools are not statutorily required to follow it. As a result, 46.8% of pupils receiving state-funded education in England attend schools where there is no requirement to provide music education. Even in statutory contexts, the National Curriculum is extremely limited in scope and the new Model Music Curriculum provides non-statutory guidance only. National assessment influences curriculum design and teaching, and accountability measures for maths and English results have placed pressure on other areas of the curriculum, leading many primary schools to deprioritise music education or fall short of delivering their planned music provision. In a recent survey carried out by the Incorporated Society of Musicians, more than 50% of primary schools who have music as part of the curriculum reported not meeting their curriculum obligations to Year 6, citing the pressure of statutory tests as a significant reason.^{ix} Children experiencing disadvantage, and particularly those with literacy and numeracy challenges, can be even more acutely affected as they are often withdrawn from the music provision that does exist for additional practice in 'core' curriculum areas.

Music is also not prioritised in teacher training. At the time of writing, a Manchester Metropolitan University student receives four hours of music education as part of a one-year Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), and a mere six hours throughout a three-year undergraduate degree leading to Qualified Teacher Status. Students on the University of Sussex's primary PGCE course receive only two hours.^x Disappointingly, music has not been included in the Department for Education's Initial Teacher Training funding for the 2021/22 academic year, which is likely to further exacerbate the problem.

Poor access to music-related resources, training, and professional development opportunities mean that teachers also do not receive adequate support to deliver music activities once in post. Despite successive Ofsted reports indicating a correlation between a lack of CPDL and poor classroom practice, more than nine in ten teachers report facing barriers that prevent them from accessing CPDL.^{xi} This is bad news for pupils, as quality teachers are a critical determinant of student achievement.^{xii}

Whilst the lack of access to quality CPDL is a problem across all subjects, for music, it is made more acute by the lack of initial training that teachers receive.

For those attending schools facing additional challenges or with fewer resources, the problem is magnified. The quality and reach of schools-based music education is unacceptably variable and inconsistent, and it is overwhelmingly children from poorer backgrounds who miss out.^{xiii}

How Voices Foundation aims to make a difference



Our Vision:

Transforming music education so every child can find their voice.

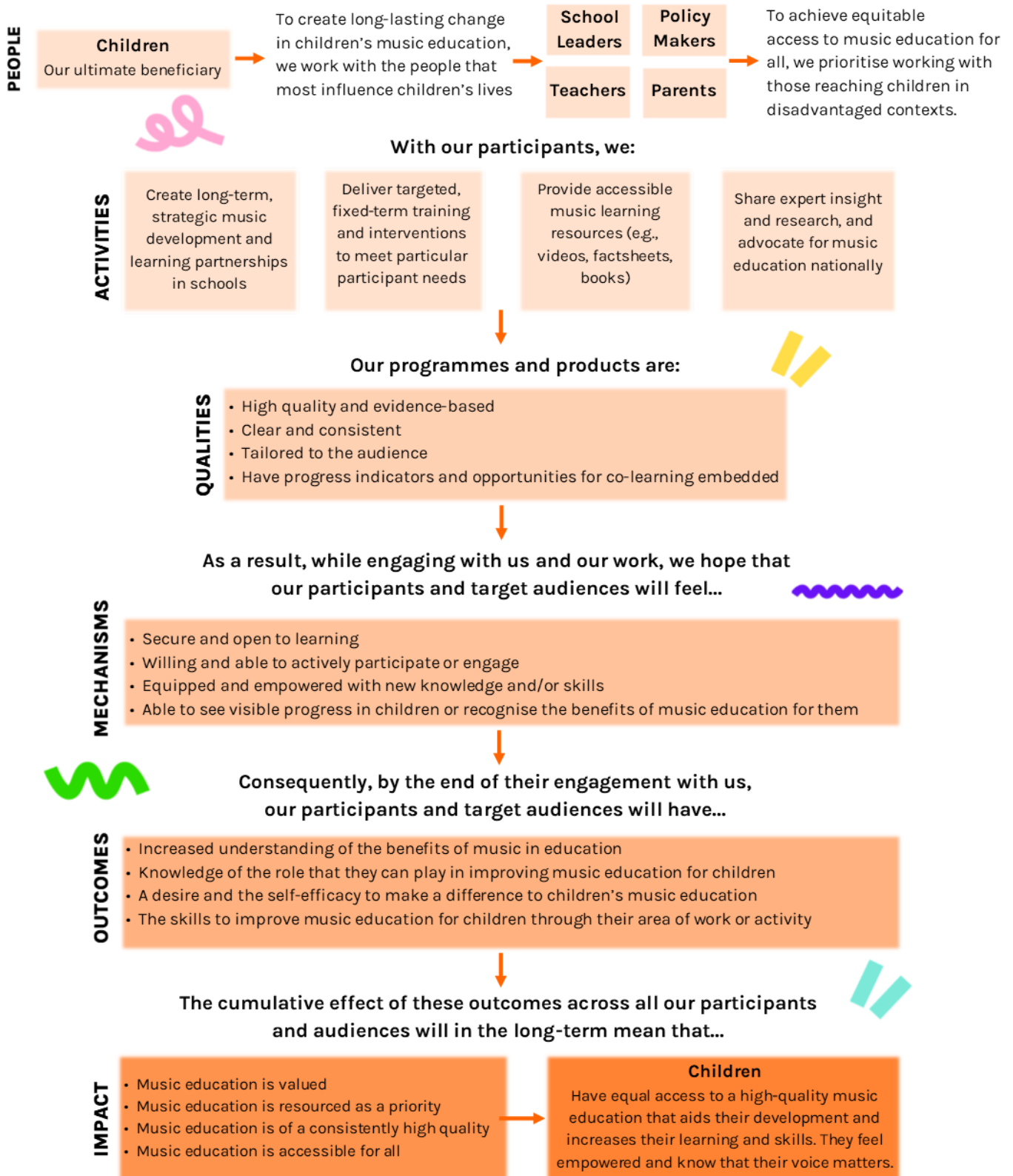
Voices Foundation believes that every child should have access to a high-quality music education, and we are committed to transforming music education so that every child can find their voice. To better understand how we plan to achieve this aim, we created a Theory of Change. A Theory of Change helps us to describe the process through which the change that we want to achieve will be created. In our case, our Theory of Change explains how we plan to address the two problems summarised on the previous page and provide all children with access to a high-quality music education.

To achieve long-lasting and sustainable change for children, we focus on working with the people that most influence children's lives – senior school leaders, teachers, parents, and policy makers. By equipping these participants with the learning and skills to improve children's access to high-quality music education and to share that knowledge with others, we dramatically increase our impact for children, today and in the future. Training one primary school teacher to deliver high-quality music activities in their classroom, for example, could benefit up to 900 children over the course of that teacher's career. Once confident to share their learning with other educators, this impact is further multiplied.

By the end of their engagement with us, we aim for all our participants and audiences to have an understanding of the benefits of music in education, and the desire and skill to improve children's music education through their work or activities. The cumulative impact of these individual outcomes across all our participants will be systemic change to the quality and accessibility of children's music education in England.

The diagram on the next page summarises our Theory of Change.

How Voices Foundation plans to transform children's access to high-quality music education: Our Theory of Change



Our approach to music learning



Voices Foundation's vision is that all children have access to high-quality music education. Primarily, we work to achieve this by equipping teachers and schools to provide a high-quality, sustainable music education for all pupils. Our model of teacher development provides iterative Continued Professional Development and Learning, developing non-specialist teachers' knowledge, skills, and confidence in teaching music through side-by-side work with Voices Foundation practitioners. In addition to delivery in schools, we provide inspiring and accessible music learning resources. We also aim to build conversations around music education that will influence policy makers, with the support of high-quality evidence and insight.

Our pedagogical approach to music education is as follows:

- Voices Foundation uses singing as a tool to improve children's access to music education because it is practically universal (almost every child has a voice), accessible (there are no equipment/instrument costs and you can sing anywhere), and a powerful way for children to become proficient musicians.
- Inside Music is our progressive, evidence-based framework for teaching and assessing musical skills and concepts from Early Years to Key Stage 2.
- Inside Music is informed by the Kodály method – a child-focussed, developmentally-appropriate approach to music education, which focuses on learning through immersion and interaction with music itself. In the same way that children's language development involves immersion in auditory environments before they learn to read, Kodály sees kinaesthetic experiences with music as an important pre-cursor to learning about music notation or theory. Research has suggested that music education programmes founded on the Kodály method "offer a superior contribution" to holistic child development "that is statistically significant."^{xiv}
- Performing music, listening to music, and thinking about music are therefore essential components of Voices Foundation's pedagogical approach and give children the tactile experience of being 'inside music'. An understanding of musical concepts follows naturally from this tactile musical experience with a diverse and broad variety of songs.

All Voices Foundation practitioners use this methodology, and our accompanying Inside Music resource books are award-winning.



Our Impact

Our Theory of Change sets the parameters for our evaluation – it shows us what we need to measure in order to understand whether we are creating the change that we want to achieve. The remainder of this report shares details of the learning and evaluation activities that we have undertaken over the past year to help us assess our progress towards achieving our vision.

Activities

With our beneficiaries over the past year, we have delivered and produced the following activities and resources.

- 26 long-term in-school partnerships
- 3 bespoke partnerships with large Multi-Academy Trusts
- 5 fixed-term training interventions, delivered for Music Hubs, Multi-Academy Trusts, or other school partners
- 24 Virtual Singing Assemblies on our YouTube channel and 17 accompanying resource sheets
- 1 Early Years training course
- 1 Choral Essentials training course
- 1 online Voices Connect platform, providing teachers, school leaders and other educators with remote access to 16 training videos covering key musicianship and choral skills
- 1 online Inside Music Song Bank
- 3 webinars discussing topical sector-wide issues
- 4 taster workshops for new schools
- 1 briefing paper sharing in-depth learning from our programme evaluation

People

Through our activities, we have worked directly with hundreds of school leaders, teachers, parents, and education professionals to improve children's access to high-quality music education. We have reached thousands more through our high-quality digital resources.



Disadvantage – increasingly working with those most in need

Voices Foundation's aim is that all children in England have access to a high-quality music education. Given that children in disadvantaged contexts are at particular risk of poor access to music education, we continue to prioritise our resources to supporting teachers and schools working and interacting with these children.

In our long-term school partnerships:

- 28.3% of Voices pupils are eligible for free school meals – compared to the national average of 20.8%
- 28.5% of Voices pupils have English as an additional language – compared to the national average of 21.2%
- 1.63% of Voices pupils have a SEND statement – compared to the national average of 1.6%

Quality

In order for our programmes and products to be successful, we believe that they must be high-quality, clear and consistent, tailored to our participants, and have indicators of progression and opportunities for co-learning embedded. Below are some of the results of our evaluation.

High-Quality

94% of senior school leaders and school music leads in our long-term school partnerships rated Voices Foundation practitioners as very good or excellent for the overall quality of their delivery

“[The most successful thing about the programme has been] the quality of CPD during Voices Foundation-led staff meetings and the expertise of the Voices Foundation practitioners” **Senior Leader**

“As our school's Voices Lead, I received excellent training during the last academic year from our [Voices Foundation] choral practitioner, for which I am very grateful.” **Music Lead**

“The team that we have worked with so far have been so professional and hard-working. Nothing is too much trouble.” **Music Lead**

“The support offered by Voices Foundation has been exceptional” – **Music Lead**

Clear and easy to follow

94% of senior school leaders and school music leads in our long-term school partnerships rated Voices Foundation practitioners as very good or excellent for the overall clarity of their sessions and feedback to staff

“I joined the school at the end of October and had a session in November with the Voices Foundation practitioner. It was wonderful and very supportive, the children really enjoy the songs, [it's] great to have a clear programme to follow.” – **Classroom teacher**

“The Voices Foundation programme provides structure and guidance which allows us as staff to incorporate singing within the school day.” – **Teaching Assistant**

“I have found that the children have really started to enjoy their singing lessons and we incorporate singing into everyday lessons and class time.” **Classroom teacher**

Tailored to our participants

100% of senior leaders in our long-term school partnerships felt that Voices Foundation practitioners had been a good fit for their school

88% of senior school leaders and school music leads in our long-term school partnerships rated practitioners as very good or excellent for their ability to adapt training to suit the needs of teachers and pupils

“Working with [the Voices Foundation practitioner] has been really great and she is very knowledgeable and engaging. She is really good at adapting her support to reflect our level of existing knowledge and confidence.” **Classroom teacher**

“[The most successful thing about the programme has been] collaborative teaching with the Voices Foundation practitioner! Great coaching in terms of what I need to do next.” **Classroom teacher**

“[The most successful thing about the programme has been] the Voices Foundation practitioner's individual feedback in response to my teaching” **Classroom teacher**

Has progress indicators and opportunities for co-learning embedded

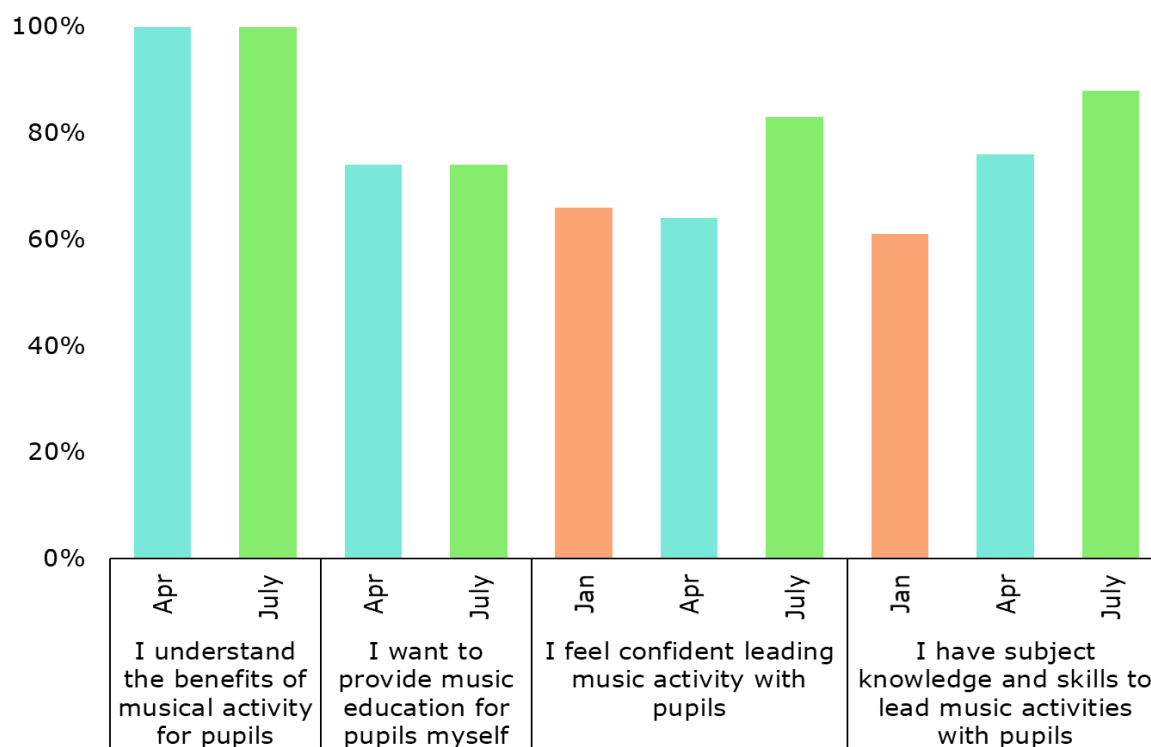
82% of senior school leaders and school music leads in our long-term school partnerships rated Voices Foundation practitioners as very good or excellent for their ability to support teachers to understand pupils' progression

“Using musical vocabulary in context has improved pupils' understanding and they are able to discuss concepts confidently.” **Classroom teacher**

Outcomes

By the end of their engagement with us, we aim for all of our participants and audiences to have an understanding of the benefits of music in education, and the desire and skill to improve children's music education through their work or activities.

Chart showing the percentage of participants in our long-term 2020/21 in-school programmes who agree or strongly agree with the statements below



N.B. Data for Jan 2021 wasn't collected as our Theory of Change was still being developed.

Spotlight on the Partnerships Pathway: Improving participant outcomes by creating collaborative, co-learning partnerships with our schools

"Where a school commits to a whole-school approach to the Voices Foundation programme, all staff understand 'the why' of the programme, and senior leaders are seen to be fully involved. This is evidenced by the way that staff can articulate how the programme fits into whole-school priorities, by the general presence of music in the school (for example on displays and children singing in corridors), by the support of the governing body, and by parental responses to music in school."

- Voices Foundation programme evaluation, led by Sound Connections and Birmingham City University

The Partnerships Pathway was created following an evaluation of Voices Foundation's long-term school programmes, which was led by Sound Connections and Birmingham City University, and undertaken in collaboration with the pupils and staff at six David Ross Education Trust primary schools based across Hull, Grimsby, Northampton, and Kettering.^{xv} This evaluation found that in some cases, teachers and senior leaders in our school programmes did not fully understand the rationale behind the Voices Foundation programme or its potential outcomes, which led to lower levels of buy in and commitment. This presented a significant barrier to maximising the potential



impact of the programme and ensuring that music teaching and learning would be embedded in the schools long term. In order to address these barriers, we created the Partnerships Pathway.

The Partnerships Pathway is a collaborative Continuing Professional Development and Learning tool that enables us to explore, plan, and reflect with schools on the learning and impact that our programme is enabling. It is designed to be used by all programme stakeholders: senior school leaders, class teachers, teaching assistants, school support staff, and Voices Foundation staff. It aims to give everyone a clear, shared vision about the intended programme outcomes.

By meeting with all school staff at the very beginning of the partnership to discuss the learning and development goals of the Voices Foundation programme and how each person involved can contribute to achieving those, we aim to help everyone to understand the important role that they play in the programme and its success. We then have termly check-ins with the school's senior leaders and music leads to track progress and adapt the programme as necessary in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

Over the past year, we have piloted our Partnerships Pathway process with five Voices Foundation schools. Analysis of feedback gathered from those schools revealed that the Partnerships Pathway:

Generated increased knowledge among our school partners about the importance of music for pupils and the role that they can play in improving music education for children

"I think definitely in the first meeting, highlighting the importance of music was really useful. I think sometimes that can get lost in schools so I think that was really important to have and it's become an ethos across our school now definitely, once we've been up and running and doing some music, it's good to see that the classes have all really taken that on board, the importance of music."

School Music Lead

"Those initial starter meetings are really useful because that's about sharing the vision isn't it, the vision and intent for what we want the curriculum to be like and feel like for the staff and the children."

Senior Leader

Helped to maintain a year-long focus on achieving the programme's intended outcomes

"I found the check-in meetings really helpful because it gave you fresh targets and things to aim for, and just to make sure that you're on the right track with things. Also it's a chance to evaluate what's happened, and what would benefit our school going forward."

School Music Lead

"Having that check in was really useful to see where we were, where we still need to go, and actually it allowed me and SLT to reflect on how we want music to go moving forward at that point as well."

School Music Lead

"It's really helpful to be clued in on what's going on, so we don't go off track, we stay focused on what we wanted to get out of this year, so that's been really helpful."

Senior Leader

Developed an equal partnership, where the expertise and experience of all partners is valued and utilised to achieve success

"It's been a good partnership, it hasn't been, you know, anyone leading the way or saying 'oh no you should be doing this'. I think what we've done is we've worked together to ensure that we are getting the best that we need as a school and then you've shared your experience, so I think it's been a really good partnership, it's worked well."

Senior Leader

"I think it's a meaningful partnership where you've both worked on it from both sides, from the school and from Voices Foundation. It's been lovely to see that side of it and working together"

Trust Music Director

Spotlight on participant confidence: Empowering all voices through empathic and collaborative ways of working

As part of our programme evaluation, led by Sound Connections and Birmingham City University, we explored the barriers that teachers and school staff can face when participating in and leading singing, and we considered how we can work with them to overcome these challenges. For many school staff, these challenges were significant – past musical experiences, such as being told they can't sing, they



can't sing in tune, or they're not good enough, had significant psychological effects and impacted the way that they used (or didn't use) music in their classrooms.

"When we first discussed the idea of the Voices Foundation Singing School programme, there was a lot of resistance. [Staff were] very hesitant because of their own subject knowledge and their own history of singing - I personally remember my first day in secondary school being asked to sing by the teacher which was painful - those experiences live with people." **Senior Leader**

Interestingly, this anxiety was heightened when singing in front of other adults. Children, on the other hand, were seen as being non-judgemental.

"I will happily sing with the pupils but the thought of singing in staff meetings or with the [music practitioner] causes immense stress and anxiety." **Teacher**

Voices Foundation aims to help teachers to value their musicality and feel confident using their singing voices. After taking part in 18 months of the Voices Foundation's programme, 86% of survey respondents agreed that they were confident to lead music activity, compared to only 69% at the beginning of the programme. Furthermore, 88% of survey respondents agreed that singing was embedded in their school culture, compared to only 49% at the start of the programme. Through our programme evaluation, we gained insights into how we can best support teachers to feel confident delivering music activities.



Collaboration with Voices Foundation practitioners

Firstly, an understanding of the diversity of each other's musical experiences, and where applicable, a deep consideration of and empathy for the barriers faced, is needed to bridge the gap between music practitioners and those without musical training, whose prior musical experiences are often worlds apart. Voices Foundation's practitioners work side-by-side with teachers in a flexible way to meet every individual's needs.

"Confidence has been a personal barrier, however the Voices programme and the collaborative work with practitioners in both choral and musicianship teaching has significantly helped improve my own practice and skills, giving me a lot more confidence to lead sessions." **Teacher**

A whole-school approach

Secondly, adopting a whole school approach to singing helps to support staff confidence. This can create a supportive culture of 'we're in this together', help to normalise singing as something that all staff can take part in, and result in teachers feeling less isolated when tackling barriers to singing.

"Some staff have been a bit scared starting the programme. What the staff have done so far is take it on wholeheartedly. They are all having a go." **Teacher**

Regular practice, little and often

Furthermore, committing to delivering music activity regularly can help to keep anxieties at bay and serve as a consistent reminder to teachers that they are able to lead music.

"Now it is done daily in the classes, slowly the staff are coming to enjoy that time." **Teacher**

Focusing on pupils

Finally, focusing on pupils and seeing their perspective can help teachers to feel less concern about their own technical ability.

"It's not about how good a singer you are, it's about understanding how to show it to the pupils." **Teacher**

"I love singing, even though I can't sing in tune, and enjoy the joy and happiness it brings to the classroom. Pupils are able to remember things better through song/rhyme." **Teacher**

Hearing Children's Voices – Change for Pupils

Children's voices are important to us. Our ultimate aim is that we improve their access to a high-quality music education that aids their development and increases their learning and skills. We want all children to feel empowered and to know that their voice matters. The quotes below are from our pupils.

Pupils' perception of impacts

82% of children report that singing makes them happy

78% of children report that singing can help them to remember things

75% of children report liking school more when they do singing

Singing helps learning:

"There are so many songs that help you to remember stuff... if you need to remember something, think of a small song about it, like a small beat."

"Sometimes we'll have competitions, who can make the best song about English, who can make the best song about maths, about science, about RE. Or maybe Miss will incorporate it with our learning."

"It's fun to sing because you can learn different things."

"When I do singing I feel calm. It's learning different songs that I haven't learnt before. It's like learning and I love learning."

Increasing wellbeing:

"When I sing, I feel relaxed, and when I have some stress, singing takes it away."

"I love singing, and it's nice to sing, it calms me down, and it makes my heart glow."

"That's how I feel when I'm singing – there's no worries on me, I don't feel stressed."

Making school a livelier and happier place:

"It's just really fun to see everyone singing together and smiling and being happy because it's not always like that. Sometimes some of us are sad and down, and suddenly, we're all singing, and we're all lively and happier."

Feeling proud, brave, and confident to use their voices:

"When I sing, I say that I'm brave. I can do whatever I want."

"Some of us limit our voices and that's mainly the thing that choir encourages us not to do, they bring us out of our zone, they make us see that it doesn't matter what your voice sounds like, you can sing, you have the potential, even if you feel like you can't and everyone in this school, I know can sing."

"When I sing I feel calm and proud of myself for how far I've come."

"I love singing because it makes me feel better at school, because it makes me feel that I'm safe and people get to hear my voice."

Teachers' perception of impacts for pupils

100% of senior school leaders and teachers in our long-term school partnerships report increases in pupils' wellbeing, confidence, and self-esteem

97% of senior school leaders and teachers in our long-term school partnerships report increases in pupils' social and communication skills

93% of senior school leaders and teachers in our long-term school partnerships report increases in pupil learning and attainment





What this looks like in practice: Case studies from our schools

Kingfisher Primary School, Griffin Schools Trust

Kingfisher Primary School is based in Kent. From Reception to Year 6, 32% of children are eligible for free school meals, and 10% have English as an additional language. Both of these levels are above the national average. On entry, assessments show that pupils start in their early years provision with skills that are below national expectations.

The school took part in the Voices Foundation's Singing Schools: Choral Excellence programme. They wanted the programme to help their staff to feel confident leading music activities with their pupils, and for the whole school to have opportunities to sing together. As a result of the increase in staff skills and confidence, they wanted pupils' confidence to sing to increase, and for pupils to feel able to use singing to express themselves.

During the year, we reflected with Kingfisher's senior leaders and music lead on the change that their programme was creating. They reported that the Voices Foundation's practitioner's work had had a big impact on staff confidence. School staff had been able to lead singing with their classes and the whole school was singing together (over Zoom when needed). Furthermore, pupils' confidence had grown. Singing had supported the transition back to school after the pandemic, giving pupils a boost and incentive to want to be in school. There is now a culture of whole-school singing at Kingfisher, which filters through all aspects of school life.

"The impact that Voices Foundation has had at our school is profound. The growth in confidence of pupils and staff can be seen throughout the school, and most importantly it can also be heard. A culture of high quality singing is now at the heart of Kingfisher School and it takes place throughout, from the classroom to the playground and even in the dining hall. We are proud to have partnered with Voices Foundation and I am excited to see how Kingfisher School continues to grow as one of our flagship 'Singing Schools' at the Griffin Schools Trust"

Lewis Delivett – Director of Music, Griffin Schools Trust

Next year Kingfisher Primary are continuing their Voices Foundation journey to further embed music into school life and cascade their knowledge to other schools.

St James Hatcham CE Primary School



"Before [Voices Foundation] we did sing, but I feel like some people were very shy about it, they didn't really want to sing... when Voices Foundation came in, they made sure that everyone, each class, were participating, you know. We played fun games... they make us see that it doesn't matter what your voice sounds like, you can sing, you have the potential, even if you feel like you can't. I know everyone in this school can sing... So when we all come to sing together we're always smiling, always excited to learn a new song, and as soon as we learn a new song, we won't stop, you'll keep hearing it every day and we'll just keep singing it and singing it."

Year 5 Pupil, St James Hatcham CE Primary School

St James Hatcham is a Church of England Primary School in Lewisham, South London. The school serves a community of high deprivation with 33% of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium. The school has just finished its third year of a Voices Foundation Singing Schools programme, and over that time, the culture around singing in school has been transformed. School staff use singing to support pupils' learning in daily school life, and pupils sing throughout the school day, both inside and outside of the classroom. This year, St James Hatcham's Voices Foundation programme culminated with a whole-school Singing Celebration. In front of an audience of parents and school governors, school staff led their pupils confidently in a series of thrilling performances, giving everyone in the school the opportunity to showcase their achievements and learning.

Looking ahead – Improving the way that we understand our impact

Over the past year, Voices Foundation has been working alongside experts at the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) to understand how we can improve the way that we evaluate our work and understand our impact.

Looking ahead to next year, we aim to:

- Pilot new evaluation tools that link teachers' experiences and pupils' experiences together, creating a richer source of data to interrogate the exact nature of school staff's changing music teaching experiences, and the corresponding effect for pupils.
- Better utilise naturally occurring data that is already being collected (e.g., feedback forms that Voices Foundation practitioners write for school staff at the end of a CPD session) to support evaluation and learning activities and gain greater insight into the processes of change for school staff.
- Increase our understanding of the longer-term impact of our programmes. Through the Partnerships Pathway tool, we will document schools' cumulative progress across multiple years, enabling analysis of longer-term patterns. We will also adapt our regular participant feedback surveys to explore more concrete and textured questions about what information and attitudes about music participants are retaining.



Notes

ⁱ Welch, G.F., Biasutti, M., MacRitchie, J., McPherson, G., & Himonides, E., (2020). Editorial: The Impact of Music on Human Development and Well-Being. *Frontiers in Psychology* 11.

ⁱⁱ Hallam, S., (2010). The power of music: Its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people. *International Journal of Music Education* 28, 269-289.

ⁱⁱⁱ Dumont, E., Syurina, E., Feron, F., & van Hooren, S., (2017). Music Interventions and Child Development: A Critical Review and Further Directions. *Frontiers in Psychology* 8.

^{iv} Guhn, M., Emerson, S. D., & Gouzouasis, P. (2020). A population-level analysis of associations between school music participation and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 112(2), 308-328.

^v Rabinowitch, T.-C., Cross, I., & Burnard, P., (2013). Long-term musical group interaction has a positive influence on empathy in children. *Psychology of Music* 41, 484-498.

^{vi} Kirschner, S., & Tomasello, M., (2010). Joint music making promotes prosocial behavior in 4-year-old children. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 31, 354-364.

^{vii} Mak, H., & Fancourt, D. (2019). Arts engagement and self-esteem in children: results from a propensity score matching analysis. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1449, 36-45.

^{viii} Blasco-Magraner J., Bernabe-Valero G., Marín-Liébana P., & Moret-Tatay C. (2021). Effects of the Educational Use of Music on 3- to 12-Year-Old Children's Emotional Development: A Systematic Review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18(7), 3668.

^{ix} Incorporated Society of Musicians. (2018). *Consultation on the future of music education*. London: Incorporated Society of Musicians, p.9.

^x Savage, J., & Barnard, D. (2019). *The state of play: A review of music education in England 2019*. Brighton, UK: University of Sussex.

^{xi} Department for Education. (2018). *The School Snapshot Survey: Summer 2018*. London: DfE.

^{xii} Rice King, J. (2003). *Teacher Quality: Understanding the Effectiveness of Teacher Attributes*. Washington, DC, USA: Economic Policy Institute.

^{xiii} Savage, J., & Barnard, D. (2019). *The state of play: A review of music education in England 2019*. Brighton, UK: University of Sussex.

^{xiv} Goopy, J. (2013). 'Extra-Musical Effects' and Benefits of Programs Founded on the Kodály Philosophy. *Australian Journal of Music Education*, 71-78.

^{xv} D'Amore, A., et al. (2020). *Evaluation of The Voices Foundation Singing Schools Programme*. London: Sound Connections and Birmingham City University.



Voices