

Musical Faces of Childhood: Exploring places and spaces



4th Conference of the Music Educators and
Researchers of Young Children Network UK

MERYC^{UK}

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Introduction

Dr Jessica Pitt

A very warm welcome to MERYC-UK's 4th conference, this follows our first conference at Roehampton University, London in 2012; the second at Cambridge University in 2014; and the third hosted by Berkshire Maestros in 2015.

Our conference title acknowledges that there are multiple perspectives ('faces') in early childhood music education and we welcome these diverse understandings about childhood, music, and music education at our meetings. The presentations today will enrich our understanding about places and spaces for music in young children's lives.

The discussion times at the end of each presentation are opportunities for reflecting together about music practice, early childhood, development and learning. Please participate in these with an open and reflective frame of mind. Peer-to-peer learning is very valuable and we hope that this day will be memorable for you. It is always hard to choose which presentations to attend, knowing that you are missing others. Be assured that if one presentation is full the other parallel sessions will be equally stimulating and may provoke unexpected new thoughts and reflections. This book of abstracts provides an outline of all the presentations and authors' contact information should you wish to contact any of the presenters about their work.

Sally Goddard-Blythe will challenge us in her keynote address: "Masters of music and mime: exploring non-verbal foundations for language in early childhood". She will explore the evolutionary origins of language and explain how movement and singing can improve auditory processing.

Also, we hope that you will have time to catch up with old friends and to network with new colleagues.

On your behalf I'd like to thank Karen Boardman for her hospitality and a special thank you to Zoe Greenhalgh and Ali Harmer, my fellow MERYC-UK organising group colleagues and editors of this book. Thank you.

We wish you a stimulating, challenging and fruitful conference!

Keynote Address

Sally Goddard-Blythe

“Masters of Music and Mime. Exploring non-verbal foundations for language in early childhood”

Sally Goddard Blythe MSc is the international Director of The Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology (INPP) in Chester. INPP was established as a private research, clinical and training organisation in 1975, dedicated to the development of assessment procedures to identify underlying physical factors in specific learning difficulties and adults suffering from anxiety and panic disorder and to the development of effective remediation programmes.

Sally is the author of seven books and other published papers on child development and neuro-developmental factors in specific learning difficulties including: Reflexes, Learning and Behavior, The Well Balanced Child, What Babies and Children REALLY Need, Attention, Balance and Coordination – the A,B,C of Learning Success - a reference source for all professionals involved in child development and education, The Genius of Natural Childhood, Assessing Neuromotor Readiness for Learning and a screening test for clinicians and health practitioners. She is also a contributor to Too Much Too Soon? Early Learning and the Erosion of Childhood and Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe 2012.

Her clinical work also includes the use of Johansen Individualised Auditory Stimulation (JIAST) a system which uses stimulation with frequency specific music to improve auditory processing. She has both a personal and professional interest in the role of music in developing language skills.

Sally has lectured on the role of infant reflexes in development and later learning problems to many different groups throughout Europe including to a working party on child well-being at the European Parliament in Brussels and in different parts of the United States. She is a member of the International Alliance for Childhood and the former “Open EYE” campaign – a pressure group dedicated to ensuring that children's developmental needs remain at the top of the agenda for government recommendations for early years education in England. She is also a patron of Toddler Kindy Gymbaroo, a programme

developed in Australia to optimise children's development in the early years, and a member of the educational panel for Dyspraxia awareness.

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Workshops & Practice Presentations

Music with 4 to 7 year olds. A creative approach

Linda Bance, Independent music leader and consultant

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Background: Encouraging those who lack confidence in the delivery of music is an area I find most rewarding. Enlightening those who are keen yet need knowledge to develop their practice of working musically with young children is key in maintaining music as an important subject of the curriculum thus preventing it from becoming a 'conspicuous casualty' (Burnard 2015) . When working with children in their early childhood I consider the playfulness, eagerness and curiosity that our children display for all things musical to develop a natural feel to music making; one that threads its way through daily life allowing it to embrace all areas of development and wellbeing (Bance 2012).

'Teaching music whether discretely or in combination with other subjects and fitting into the life of the school as a whole requires the confidence to develop a pedagogy of repertoire rather than a recipe and of principal rather than prescription'. (Burnard and Murphy 2013)

Aims: Each week for six weeks during term time a group of local children aged four to seven years meet for 45 minutes to make music, dance, play and act together.

The objective is to create a series of songs, dances and musical compositions around a theme chosen by the children. Through discussions and play the children are then encouraged to come up with ideas which are then extended by myself to promote the awareness of pitch, pulse/rhythm and timbre.

The theme we will discuss is The Circus.

I will aim to show how working in this way could be introduced into the classroom allowing teachers to be creative in musical endeavours with their children.

Interactive participation:

Participants will learn the songs and be involved in composition. Slides will show the process used to work creatively with the children.

Discussions will be encouraged.

Specific value and meaning: We will discuss the implication of teaching music creatively

References:

Pamela Burnard and Regina Murphy(2013) *Teaching Music Creatively*, London and New York, Routledge.

Linda Bance (2012) *Music for Early Learning*. London and New York, Routledge.

Pantomimus - an enabling environment

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Keywords: Enabling, inspirational environment, music, movement, powerful outcomes

In this presentation we will explore the impact of our current Early Years music and movement project to children from 3-7 years old in Infant School environments.

The initiative is based at the County Music Hub (Berkshire Maestros), from where we reach local children and their staff in various settings as a new exciting weekly music experience, lasting from 5 – 20 weeks.

The music activities are based on principles of Dalcroze and Kodály, using materials linked to classroom themes and aiming at positive, high focus and creative engagement of all children involved, often from very diverse backgrounds

Teachers and staff are always part of the sessions and attend additional training, where aims are discussed and issues explored.

The presentation will include photos, film clips and teachers' contributions to describe the sessions, which are held in a 'magic space', created by a pop up screen, which transforms classrooms and halls into an intimate space, associated with music and movement activities. With painted images which stimulate imagination, the screen sets natural boundaries, encouraging a sense of inclusion.

We are exploring the powerful outcomes so far and will be asking questions relating to the use of the screen and what is happening within:

- Can this simple, flexible, portable screen influence the learning outcomes?
- Does it help to create a flow between high focus and relaxed, playful interactions?
- Does it influence the quality of the listening, communicating and free expression?
- Is it the main factor in the extended attention span and quality of focus?
- Can the principle of using a screen with a unified image inform other enabling, educational and therapeutic spaces?

We hope that this presentation will open much discussion and debate about the importance of our musical environments, in which we claim to make a contribution towards the positive development of the human potential.

Tune into listening

Nicola Burke, Freelance Early Childhood Music Specialist

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Topic Area: Enabling Environments

Key words – Recorded music, listening, auditory environment

In 2013 I led initial research into the use of recorded music in early childhood settings. When surveying literature within this subject area it was clear that there is a paucity of research on the use of recorded music within early childhood education. The research in 2013 invited Early Years practitioners to complete a survey regarding the recorded music that they used within their day to day practice within settings. The findings revealed that auditory environments and the use of recorded music is an area which is often not considered. In 2015 I led a year-long action research project to further investigate this area in more depth.

The research question was '*How can we use recorded music effectively?*' When Enabling Environments are discussed in early childhood education the focus is on visual and tangible environments. The auditory environment is not generally considered and the EYFS offers little guidance on this subject. This workshop will demonstrate the importance of auditory environments and how recorded music can play a significant role in many aspects of children's learning, development and identity. This workshop will share the practical listening activities that were explored with children and will involve listening to music, observing film footage and discussions.

Auditory environment and children's listening abilities need to be given more thought and consideration in early childhood education and early childhood music education. Further research and debate is needed in this area to enable us to have a deeper understanding of the impact that recorded music is having and can have on young children.

Children listen to music in all manner of ways and can be highly competent listeners. The research found that some children preferred to listen whilst painting whilst others preferred to listen whilst moving and others preferred to simply just listen. This workshop will share evidence of children's highly competent listening abilities and will offer practical suggestions for participants to explore in their own practice.

DaCapo Early Years

Jane Cutler, The DaCapo Music Foundation, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, UK.

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DaCapo Early Years classes are based on 25 years of research, development, implementation and ongoing revision. The sessions are delivered by musicians who have a degree or performance portfolio and have been trained to deliver the DaCapo Programme.

The research undertaken prior to these sessions looked at Kodály and Dalcroze practice around the world and explored how best to apply this to children based in the UK. We looked at the work of Sheila Nelson (Tower Hamlets Strings Project) and at Colourstrings, Suzuki and Orff.

Time was spent looking for appropriate materials for children of the 20th (now 21st) century. Eventually we commissioned our own and now have extensive repertoire for children aged 18 months upwards, with appealing subjects such as burping woodlice!

Aims

We started the classes (in 1990) with the premise and aim that children would be more ready for instrumental learning if they first took part in a structured musicianship course which introduced a full range of musical concepts.

We spent eight years perfecting the activities and most importantly the structure for the class. The 45 minute session includes:

1. Tuning the voice - we cover songs with a small vocal range, using simple percussion for rhythmic use, action songs and visual resources
2. Rhythm flash cards
3. Movement
4. Picture songs - we sing songs that have illustrations to stimulate the imagination and give purpose to musical ideas.

Implications, value and meaning

We have found that the programme develops significant skills and understanding of complex musical concepts before the age of seven. This is demonstrated, not articulated. For example a young child working with unlabelled bass bars can identify them as do mi and so without prompting.

Another unplanned consequence of the work is an impressive change in social behaviour and the culture of sharing and caring. We put this down to the cooperation needed to work in a circle, with everyone joining in and taking part equally and with all voices respected.

The Workshop

The workshop will be fully interactive and participatory and will draw on all parts of the session (1- 4) outlined above within the allocated time for discussion. Participants should come in comfortable clothes, be ready to sit on the floor and also be prepared to do some movement!

The development of In Harmony Liverpool's early years programme

Alexandra Dunn, Deputy Artistic Director (In Harmony), Royal Liverpool Philharmonic .

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In Harmony Liverpool's vision is a healthier, higher achieving future for Everton, one of England's most disadvantaged communities. Using the power of orchestral music-making and the ethos and shared values of an orchestra, In Harmony Liverpool aims to improve the wellbeing, skills, academic achievement, musical ability, and future employability of children as well as inspiring children and families to celebrate their community through music, acting as a catalyst for them to gain the confidence to begin to change their own lives and to shape their future. In Harmony Liverpool now works intensively across three sites, Everton Nursery School and Family Centre, The Beacon Church of England Primary School and Faith Primary School reaching over 700 children aged 0-18.

From the very beginning of In Harmony, there has been an emphasis on the continuum of learning and music-making from birth onwards. In 2015, supported by the National Foundation for Youth Music, In Harmony Liverpool had the opportunity to expand into Everton Nursery School and Family Centre (ENSAFC), giving us an opportunity to thoroughly explore and develop the Early Years programme with support from outstanding early childhood educators at a National Teaching School. In Harmony's independent evaluation reports from 2009 onwards have shown progression in academic attainment, musical attainment, wellbeing outcomes and community engagement. Linking to these key areas, the programme at ENSAFC was developed to include a number of different strands: universal provision, targeted provision, community provision and professional and curriculum development. This presentation details these individual strands, how they link together and how they link into the wider In Harmony programme, as well as changes and developments that

have been made over the last year to the whole programme as a result of our learning. It is not only the set up, but crucially, the delivery and content of such immersive, intensive activity that has an impact. This presentation shows how that has been developed through the experience of Liverpool Philharmonic musicians and collaborative working with ENSAFC staff, as well as through evaluation and observation by our independent evaluator Dr Susanne Burns and child psychologist and early-years specialist Michael Galbraith.

Programme

Time	Where	
0930-0945	Foyer	Registration and Refreshments
0945-1000	Lecture Hall	Welcome by Karen Boardman
1000-1100	Lecture Hall	Keynote Address by Sally Goddard-Blythe Masters of Music and Mime: Exploring non-verbal foundations for language in early childhood
1100-1130	Foyer	Refreshments, Networking, Posters

1130-1215	<p>Room 1</p> <p>Practice Presentation</p> <p>Chair: Jess Pitt</p> <p>Margareta Burrell and Peter Hunt</p> <p>Pantomimus - an enabling environment</p>	<p>Room 2</p> <p>Practice/Workshop</p> <p>Chair: Jane Parker</p> <p>Lindsay Ibbotson</p> <p>What's in it for the grown-ups?</p>	<p>Room 3</p> <p>Workshop</p> <p>Chair: Nicola Burke</p> <p>Jane Cutler</p> <p>Da Capo early Years</p>
1215-1300	<p>Room 1</p> <p>Practice Presentation</p> <p>Chair: Jess Pitt</p> <p>Paula Phelan</p> <p>What would it look like if you could start from scratch? The process of creating a progressive learning space for musicians working in EC settings in Ireland</p>	<p>Room 2</p> <p>Practice Presentation</p> <p>Chair: Susan Young</p> <p>Jane Parker</p> <p>An exploration of the beliefs, assumptions and knowledge of Early Childhood Practitioners towards EC music</p>	<p>Room 3</p> <p>Workshop</p> <p>Chair: Linda Bance</p> <p>Nicola Burke</p> <p>Tune into listening</p>

Time	Where	
1300-1330	Foyer	Lunch
1330-1345	Foyer	Surprise!

1345-1430		<p>Room 2</p> <p>Practice Presentation</p> <p>Chair: Zoe Greenhalgh</p> <p>Alexandra Dunn</p> <p>The development of In Harmony Liverpool Early years Programme</p>	<p>Room 3</p> <p>Practice/Workshop</p> <p>Chair: Ali Harmer</p> <p>Paul Weston</p> <p>Early ears: Finding an innovative music technology with young children</p>
1430-1515	<p>Room 1</p> <p>Practice Presentation</p> <p>Chair: Nicola Burke</p> <p>Kate Thompson</p> <p>Soundplay: Early Years Development through Music</p>	<p>Room 2</p> <p>Practice Presentation</p> <p>Chair: Paula Phelan</p> <p>Karen Eaves</p> <p>Mamasing: Maternal wellbeing through singing</p>	<p>Room 3</p> <p>Workshop</p> <p>Chair: Margareta Burrell</p> <p>Linda Bance</p> <p>Music with 4 to 7 year olds: A creative approach</p>

Time	Where	
1515-1525	Foyer	Poster Session
1525-1630	Lecture Hall	Creative Conclusion

Mamasing: Maternal wellbeing through singing

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Keywords: maternal wellbeing, maternal singing, singing and health, musical parenting.

Every Monday afternoon a group of mothers gather for Mamasing in a small studio at the back of a baby shop in Essex. Their infants lay on cushions or are worn in slings, their toddlers shake eggs and tambourines as they roll and totter around the rugs. The mothers sing together. Gospel, soul, rock, pop, traditional, classical, the style doesn't matter. The mothers sing, and they experience something they describe as "soul-soaring", "magical" and "empowering".

In 2014 as part of my MA I undertook a qualitative study on Mamasing. I explored changes in subjective wellbeing that occurred through group singing, investigating the relationship between singing in Mamasing and musical parenting. I used the Warwick-Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) with a group of twelve of the mothers before and after a singing session. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four of the mothers exploring their perceptions of singing in the choir in relation to their well-being, their musicality, their singing with their infants and toddlers and their musical interactions with their infants and toddlers away from the choir.

The results showed that singing in a choir with their infants has had a significantly positive effect on maternal wellbeing. The mothers found a specific improvement in their relaxation and energy levels. This was measured in the wellbeing surveys and was further reinforced through the interviews in which all four interviewees reported a feeling of uplift, feeling better, an increase of energy and feeling good. The mothers also identified a strong sense of "mothers together" and felt connected to their community. Participating in Mamasing with their infants and toddlers gave the women ideas for ways to increase musicality and

musical communication in the home. They replicated some of the interactive warm ups when away from the choir, and developed new strategies such as calming and soothing with song.

This presentation shares the approaches of Mamasing alongside the perspectives of some of the mothers, the accompanying research showing a significant increase in wellbeing for mothers and reporting a resultant increase in frequency and type of everyday musical interactions between mother-infant dyads.

Kodaly said that “Music Education begins nine months before the birth of the Mother”. How do we enable parents to be actively involved in the process of ‘Communicative musicality’, or put frankly : What’s in it for the grown-up?

Lindsay Ibbotson, Freelancer working with NYMAZ, The Army Welfare Service at Catterick Garrison, Durham University Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring and Tees Valley Music Services

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Topic areas: Enabling Environments, Motivating parents beyond altruistic intentions for the child alone

Musicality : Empowering parents with a stronger sense of their own musical skills and experience, and exploring ways of sharing this

Families : Making music a natural and fulfilling part of the intimate family experience

Keywords: Sustainable, emotional, engagement

According to the ‘Conception to Age 2, First 1001 Days’ Report by the ‘Building Great Britons’ All Party Parliamentary Group, February 2015, the part played by parents in the healthy development of the young child is of crucial importance. That report calls upon the expertise of specialist Community Perinatal Mental Health Teams.

Music might generally be acknowledged as a ‘good thing’, but, as the ‘First 1001 Days’ report clearly demonstrates, it is not yet widely recognised as an essential tool for underpinning healthy development, either by its supporting the bond between parent and child, or by its giving emotional support to the parent themselves.

Making things bouncy and fun is part of the story. Singing, and having access to instruments are also part of the story.

But there is more.

Music is a universal language. As teachers, we need to focus on elements of its structure, and how these things can be systematically transmitted to young children. However, it is equally important to be aware of its interactive power, and the energising and positive effect that musical activity can have on individuals, their relationships, and, significantly, their overall development.

If this energising effect is to be sustained throughout the Early Years, with the accompanying long-term benefits, such as enhanced physical, social, and cognitive development, then musical activity should involve and attract both children, and the adults that are in a position to share their music with children – parents as well as Early Years specialist practitioners.

When parents begin to experience the 'two-way' nature of musical sharing and communication, it stops being a worthy chore, and becomes a 'win/win' delight. The same generally applies to the experience of Early Years staff who quickly rediscover that music is their 'mother tongue' too.

This workshop/practice presentation aims to explore how music has been used at an Army Welfare Service project in a Community Centre at Catterick Garrison to enhance a healthy, communicative relationship between very young children and the adults that care for them.

An Exploration of the beliefs, assumptions and knowledge of Early Childhood Practitioners towards Early Childhood Music

Jane Parker, Early Years, Take Art. South Petherton, Somerset, England.

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Keywords: Self confidence, self-efficacy, assumptions, beliefs, knowledge, effective practice

This presentation will aim to draw together my thoughts on what may hinder effective Early Years music education practice. Over the next two years, Youth Music, RIO, InspirED and The Paul Hamlyn Foundation are funding Take Art to set up an Early Years Music Network (SoundWaves Extra) for the South West of England, with various aims including up-skilling an Early Years workforce. Building on The Little Big Bang Report (Young, 2012), Take Art is mindful that all music leaders involved in SoundWaves Extra are not viewed as specialists that are parachuted in to lead sessions, but rather as mentors who collaboratively work with practitioners in a sustainable fashion, embedding music in to the culture of the Early Years setting.

Today's presentation will share an exploration of the complex beliefs and assumptions of early childhood practitioners regarding their own musical ability, as well as the musical ability of young children. It is drawn from a quantitative and qualitative investigation of early childhood practitioners' beliefs and assumptions towards early childhood music (Parker, 2013). Data was collected from a sample of 82 early childhood practitioners in a survey, four of whom also took part in more in depth interviews. The findings revealed 62% had no specific music training at all and a significant number of practitioners perceived themselves to not be musical, possibly due to a lack of confidence and low self-efficacy. The majority of practitioners also believed young children in their setting are fairly musical, yet the music activities they offered the children were either mainly adult-led or leaving the children

to explore instruments on their own. It was argued that perhaps the combination of a lack of knowledge, confidence, self-efficacy and a fixed set of beliefs and assumptions regarding the musicality of young children could possibly hinder effective music practice.

This presentation aims to stimulate a discussion on the barriers that may inhibit effective practice being adopted in a sustainable manner within an early years setting and focuses on the role of the trainer.

What would it look like if you could start from scratch? The process of creating a progressive learning space for musicians working in Early Childhood settings in Ireland

Paula Phelan, Programme Director Music Generation Carlow

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Alison Behan, Lead Musician Early Childhood Music Generation Carlow

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Keywords: Professionalism, Early Childhood Music, Professional Development, Management, Leadership, Effective Practice

Music Generation is Ireland's national performance music education programme and has existed since 2010. In this presentation we describe the process of leading a year- long development opportunity for musicians working on the Early Childhood team in one county: Carlow. Early Childhood music practice in Ireland is a relatively new concept and thus there is a unique opportunity to start from scratch and establish a standard of effective practice that may be considered as a model for the country. This opportunity is a unique one and this presentation will highlight the Early Childhood music landscape that exists in Ireland and how that landscape is changing due to the rapid growth of Music Generation.

This presentation will examine the challenges faced by management when trying to cater for the needs of a diverse musician team with varying experience in music and in Early Childhood music, and will examine the learning from developing a model deeply rooted in a research-practitioner approach. Consideration will be given to examining what effective practice looks like, how it can be facilitated and challenged, how it can be shared, and the reality of embedding the learning into practice.

This presentation will challenge the assumption that this could be seen as a form of continuous professional development by examining the meaning of the term and the discourse that may surround it. We will invite attendees to participate with us in some walking debate topics regarding professionalism, querying the idea that Early Childhood musicians can legitimately lay claim to belonging to a profession in Ireland. The presentation will in turn discuss the possibility for a process to begin to establish a professional body for Early Childhood musicians in Ireland.

Acknowledgements - U2, the Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Skills, Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board, Carlow County Council and the Early Childhood musician team at Music Generation Carlow.

Soundplay: Early Years Development Through Music

Kate Thompson

Topic Area: Using Music to Support the EYFS

Keywords: Child development, free-play, research

In April 2014, Music in the Round, in partnership with Sheffield Music Hub and ESCAL, was awarded a grant from Youth Music to deliver a year-long project with Early Years settings in Sheffield.

This included:

- Music workshops with 60 children aged 2-5 years at elevated risk of delay (due to low socio-economic backgrounds, English as a second language, low engagement from parents)
- A combination of leader-led activities and child-initiated freeplay
- Training for practitioners
- A conference
- Creation of bespoke resources for practitioners and parents
- Ongoing research throughout the project

The objective of the project was to deliver music-making activities and bespoke resources specifically designed to improve:

- standards of music delivery for children and embed music in young children's lives
- personal, social and emotional development of young children at higher risk of delay through participation in musical activity

- communication, language and literacy development of young children at higher risk of delay through participation in musical activity

Throughout the project specialists in Early Years Music designed bespoke activities. As part of this presentation, we will be involving delegates in experiencing some of these activities:

- songs developed specifically to support language development
- musical stories
- use of props
- E-sources created for practitioners and parents

A researcher was present throughout the project and collected data through: observations; questionnaires to practitioners and parents; video and audio recordings; and music and language trackers. This data indicated an increase in the children's musicality, and speech, language and communication development. Specifically, 81% of children reached (or sometimes surpassed) the expected level for speech, language and communication development (at the beginning of the project 62% were below the expected level). Marked improvements in their social development were also noted.

Practitioners reported an increase in their own confidence in delivering music. They also reported an increased understanding of the importance of music in the Early Years. However, they still felt they wanted to know more and be more connected to others in the field. The data collected throughout the project enabled us to present a strong case advocating the use of music in the Early Years to support learning. It also created a vast bank of resources and contacts that are now forming the basis of an Early Years Network in South Yorkshire.

Early Ears: Findings from an innovative music technology with young children project

Paul Weston, Laboratory Media

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Keywords: Music technology; methods of assessment

The Early Ears project was a two-year Youth Music funded partnership between Laboratory Media Education, Future Projects and The School of Applied Social Sciences, University Campus Suffolk (UCS) led by Dr Wendy Lecluyse.

By exploring cutting edge music-making technology and techniques, integrated with music therapy, we aimed to establish a new approach to improving the musical and wider development of children under the age of 5 years, in challenging circumstances by virtue of deprivation or social/economic disadvantage.

In this presentation film evidence will be used to demonstrate the technology used. The settings were in Great Yarmouth and Norwich and the children were aged 3-4yrs The methodology adopted for the assessment of the project was IMTAP (Individualized Music Therapy Assessment Profile)

In the presentation we will present findings from the project in relation to where we started from with use of technology, how it developed and how it affected our delivery. We will also explore the relationship between data collection and reflective practice.

We will outline findings related to the opportunities and barriers that technology brings, the use of technology to develop enabling environments and free play. We have new information to share in connection with how using music technology can benefit language development. The project has pioneered the use of non directive relationships and the effect this has on children's engagement. We will present the impact of working with a music therapist in the team.

Posters

A Music for Change Project: Using music to enhance speech and language support in a nursery

Kate Comberti (Music specialist) and **Lucy Chivers** (Speech and Language Therapist) Katharine Bruce Community Nursery , Queens Park.

Keywords: Reflection, confidence, speech and language, legacy, shared leadership, adult-led, child-led strategies.

A 10 week programme and collaboration between a music leader and a speech & language therapist forming part of Creative Futures' Music for Change project, which also offered simultaneous weekly music sessions, concerts and CPD provision at nurseries and children's centres across 3 of the most deprived wards in Westminster. This speech and language strand was devised in response to needs specified by the Westminster Early Years Advisory Team and used books as a starting point for exploring the discourses around specialist music provision and speech and language support for children aged 2-3 years and children aged 3-4 years.

An action research project, the music leader's priority was to engage and support the nursery's practitioners in jointly led, practical early years music sessions so that they could observe, gain confidence and finally deliver activities linked specifically to a book of choice. An important component of this project was time set aside for non-contact activities: one hour each week devoted to reflection, one hour for preparation and time either side of the workshops for the music leader to discuss issues and ideas with nursery staff and the speech therapist. This approach was instrumental to the positive outcome of this project.

The weekly reflective sessions allowed music leaders to tailor sessions to children's interests and to extend sessions to include musical experiences such as directing, improvisational free play, dancing and listening opportunities and ways of making music sessions more accessible to children. This process required the music leader to model effective leadership and it showed the importance of the role of the assistant in music sessions.

As a result, music sessions evolved from solely adult led, with the adult as a music specialist, to one of shared musical leadership across the nursery staff, plus child-led elements.

With thanks to Lucy Chivers, NHS Trust, Vanessa Stansell and Julian Knight at Creative Futures and all the staff at Katherine Bruce.

Notes

Notes

Date for your Diary

The main European Network MERYC holds its 4-day conference in the UK next year **20th - 24th June 2017** at Cambridge University. This will be an international meeting of early childhood music educators and researchers; the last time MERYC's main conference was held in UK was 2005.



www.meryc.eu



www.meryc.co.uk

MERYC UK drawing: Lorna Becker | www.fledgelingmusic.co.uk

Thank you

To Karen Boardman, Head of Early Years, Edge Hill University for supporting this conference.

To the review panel and the MERYC UK team.