



Banded About, Birmingham – Evaluation

'I think it's helped me as someone who's not very musical, having someone in school who has shown me some different ideas about how to create music from the children's ideas and using them as the main resource for being creative rather than the teacher, it's been quite helpful.' (Primary School Teacher)

'They've worked with some wonderful people and they've learnt a lot and they've grown as individuals so I'm very happy.' (Secondary School Teacher)

'I'm very sporty and I wouldn't have done music normally but I'm doing GCSE music [next year] now.' (Secondary School Student)

'I'm more confident ... with the people in my class, like I didn't used to talk to them that much ... I just found out more about them.' (Primary School Student)

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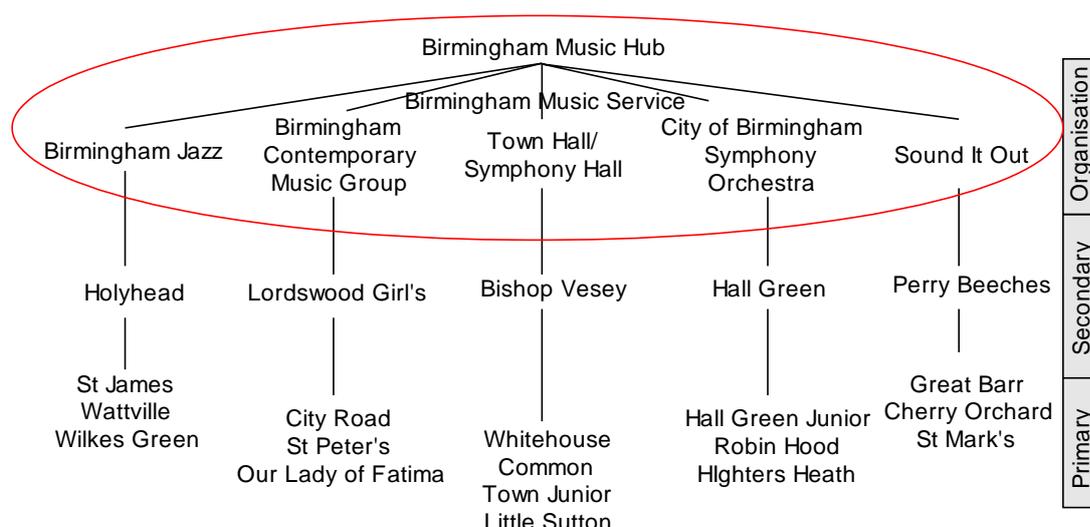
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Executive Summary

Introduction:

This has been a large and complicated project involving a range of different schools, teachers, musicians, pupils and providers of a range of musical experiences. The project was born out of a network of music organisations who had begun working cooperatively to provide musical enhancement for young people in Birmingham as the Birmingham Music Hub and to share experiences of managing project work involving young people and music. The organisations involved in the project varied between very small ones, Ex Cathedra and Birmingham Jazz, and larger ones, like the Birmingham Music Service. Particularly significant in the intentions of the project was a commitment to working together and to providing shared understandings of creative music making ensembles. Each organisation involved, including the schools, had different attitudes toward creative music making and ensembles, but the intention was to share some of these in order to be better able to work collaboratively and cooperatively with a range of teachers, musicians and young people. Equally important was to ensure that small organisations, with particular identities, were not swamped by the larger organisations in the partnership.

The project contained a number of strands which were operated and managed in different ways in each 'cluster'. Five clusters were established; each contained a secondary school with three feeder primary schools, a music organisation and support from a teacher working with the Birmingham Music Service.



The research focused on how effective partnership working was for developing support mechanisms and improved professional development for those offering musical experiences to young people in Birmingham Schools and how these links impacted upon the young people in the clusters. The individual members and organisations of the hub conducted a range of evaluation exercises during the year of the project and these have been made available to the evaluation team. The evaluation team has focused on the ways in which the organisations together formed a hub and how partnership working revealed areas for development and allowed for and promoted the sharing of innovative practice.

Because the focus was on creative music making ensembles, the evaluation team has organised the outcomes under the following headings: Impact of Creative Ensembles; Cross Phase Working; Sharing Days; Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This allows us to comment specifically on particular outcomes in relation to these items which were evident across all clusters in Banded About.

Conclusions:

There are many positive outcomes from the project:

Impact of Creative Ensembles – these were interpreted differently in different clusters and developed their own momentum in individual ways. They were initially seen as being the cornerstone of the approach to partnership working in this project and although they took some setting up and coordination to get started, they have had a major impact in some of the schools and particularly amongst the young people and their teachers. They also provided valuable CPD for a number of participants whether from a music organisation, school or the music service.

Sharing Days – were worthwhile for young people, teachers and musicians to recognise and consider new and different approaches to creative ensembles and to work across different phases and sectors of music education.

CPD – this was probably the most difficult area to organise, but where musicians, teachers and other staff participated, it showed how effective simply making music with others can be in terms of professional development. The undertaking of this venture showed also that it is very necessary, although hard to achieve. However, It is clear that the intention of the project is to allow teachers of all kinds to develop their creativity and ability to use formal and informal approaches to musical learning. As Wright and Kanellopoulos (2010:72) suggest ‘improvisation might offer a route for creating an intimate, powerful, evolving dialogue between students’ identities as learners, their attitudes towards children and their creative potential.....Such

experiences for pupils and teachers alike might further extend the social and personal effectiveness of informal learning.’

Cross Phase Working – was very helpful. There are numerous comments particularly from teachers in both the primary and secondary phases suggesting that they found this worthwhile and that it provided some CPD and confidence. Teachers of music in secondary schools are frequently unaware of how much goes on in feeder primary schools and equally their primary colleagues can lack confidence in articulating what musical activities occur. From the young people’s perspective, making music with others is almost entirely beneficial and proved very enjoyable.

Birmingham Music Hub Partnership – the project has strengthened the links between the organisations within Birmingham Music Hub. Not only has it raised awareness between organisations of the diverse work being done in the City, it has created a positive move forward strategically for the organisations involved. The partnership has also facilitated a core network of links between project participants. Clear links have been forged between the partner organisations and schools, and links between primary and secondary schools have also been created.

Lessons learnt from the project:

Relationship between partner organisations and schools – whilst some organisations already had a relationship with schools in their cluster, for others this was a new strand to their work and relationships took longer to establish. For some clusters difficulties with establishing and maintaining a relationship created a great amount of pressure, particularly within the short time-scale of the project. However, feedback from the students indicates that their experience of the project was in line with other clusters. This suggests that although there were challenges in managing the project, this had not impacted on student experience. Partner organisations have reported that they have a clearer idea of the challenges of working with schools, the constraints under which schools work and a better understanding of how to approach work with schools in the future.

Creative working – for some clusters creative ensemble working has mirrored their work but for others, this was a new way of working. Clusters where the partner organisation musicians came from a traditional performance background found that the different skills employed by the musicians produced different results. However, the diversity that this created within the project is something to be celebrated. Feedback from practitioners and students indicate that, through the sharing days, they have been exposed to a much wider range of music than the work that they had done locally. The value of this has been much greater than was anticipated at the start of the project.

Recommendations:

For this work to be sustained in future-

Some funding would be needed to ensure the continuing involvement of all the hub organisations, particularly freelance musicians for whom, time is money.

The working relationships set up between the music service, musicians, music organisations would need to be refined and developed.

The ideal of creative ensembles should be pursued, using practical examples which have worked this year.

Clear outlines of roles for all participants will be needed in future and school teachers need to be involved in some of the decision making about the project and what will work effectively.

References:

Wright, R and Kanellopoulos, P (2010) Informal music learning, improvisation and teacher education in *British Journal of Music Education* Vol 27 No1 pp71-87

Methodology

Data collection

The data collection process had three layers: Observation, interview and questionnaire.

Observation data was collected by video evidence and field notes. Video evidence was collected not for public viewing, but to aid the researcher in the analysis of the observation data.

Interviews were either recorded and transcribed or where telephone interviews were conducted, interview notes were taken.

Two online questionnaires were designed, one for students and one for practitioners. Online questionnaires were used so as to disseminate the questionnaires as widely as possible and to minimise the data collation time, so that more researcher time could be spent on data collection. Where some schools had no internet access, paper questionnaires were distributed.

Within the time allocated to the evaluation, the data collection process was as follows:

Observation

- Visits to 50% of participating schools (one secondary and one primary in each cluster).
- Visits to project sharing days.
- Visit to one CPD day and one Practitioners' Ensemble.

Interview

- Interviews with students participating in December sharing event.
- Short interviews with students at each of the visited schools (50% of participating schools).
- Interviews with secondary teachers from each cluster.
- Interviews with a sample of primary teachers.
- Interviews with BMS teachers working in each cluster.
- Interviews with cluster leaders.
- Dialogue with practitioners during observation.

Questionnaire

- Practitioners' questionnaire.

- Student questionnaire.

Sample

The sample of schools visited was based on the dates and times of sessions and the availability of the researcher to access them. Sessions at all secondary schools and five primary schools were observed.

Questionnaires were disseminated to all participants, however only 61 responses to the student questionnaire were received and 13 responses to the practitioners' questionnaire were received.

All cluster leaders were interviewed. However, one interview could not be conducted due to illness, so the interview schedule was emailed and a written response was received.

Four out of five secondary school teachers were interviewed. Difficulties with illness and timings prevented the fifth secondary school teacher interview from taking place. However, data was collected from this teacher via dialogue.

Two music service teachers were interviewed in depth and data from two further music service teachers was collected via dialogue.

Four primary teachers were interviewed in depth and data from a fifth primary teacher was collected via dialogue.

One musician was interviewed in depth and data from six further musicians was collected via dialogue.

Students from all secondary schools were interviewed.

Students from six primary schools were interviewed.

Ethical considerations

The Banded About evaluation has been carried out within the Birmingham City University ethical guidelines for research. Permission for students to be interviewed and videoed has been sought via the cluster coordinators and where no permission has been granted, no interviews or videos have been undertaken. Participants have the right to withdraw from the evaluation and where a participant did not wish to be interviewed, researchers did not persist.

Findings

Impact of Creative Ensembles

Confidence

Across the clusters, the impact of participating in creative ensembles on building student confidence was evident to both teachers and students.

'I think all of them have grown in confidence.' (Secondary School Teacher)

'Confidence, definitely built confidence.' (Secondary School Teacher)

'I know a lot of them have been sort of willing more and have been open about what they can do and so in terms of confidence they've grown a lot in what they can do.' (Primary School Teacher)

'They are really eager and keen to get involved are some of the quiet ones as well. So I think it's given them a bit more confidence.' (Primary School Teacher)

'They've [brought] themselves out more and they have confidence in what they do now.' (Secondary School Student)

'It's made you more confident, well it's made me more confident to play my instrument because I feel like erm, I can, if I can make pieces of music with Jacky and Pete then I feel more confident to play in class' (Secondary School Student)

'It's given me confidence but not only doing music but also sort of in school and everything.' (Secondary School Student)

'We did a talent show and we just got up and improvised and hadn't rehearsed. It gave me confidence to do this.' (Secondary School Student)

'It's opened me up to completely different types of music. It's given me confidence to have a go at anything more than I would have done before.' (Primary School Student)

Ownership

The reasons for this confidence are attributed to the ownership that the students have had of their creative ensembles and because all students have had input.

Teachers commented that the students are more engaged than they are in other school ensembles, as this conversation between two primary school teachers shows.

'We've done music things before, we've got an orchestra at school at the moment actually, and the children seem far more engaged in this in a way. Everyone is far more interested. I think they like the fact that everyone's got a part that's no more important than anyone else.

They are all equal .

They are completely, effective, so it's really nice for them to feel that they are of equal standing with people with guitars.'

'They are a very bonded sort of group anyway. They work together with children from different classes anyway. I think maybe some of the other children, we've noticed that some children are musically talented that aren't necessarily academically talented and I think it's given them a bit more confidence in a different situation to actually speak up.'

Normally it's the same children that dominate discussions in class that tend to be the more academic ones.

Different children definitely dominated more often in this.

Yeah, definitely.

I think it's being child led.

Yes, that's the main thing.

The main idea of it has been, definitely.

They've got ownership of it haven't they, which is why I think all of them are so engaged.'

Another primary teacher in a different cluster also saw that the creative element of the project enabled the children to engage and develop ownership of their work.

'They've not been told that they've got to play it like this, they've been actually given that chance to play or do whatever they want to do and make it sound right and I think that's you know, that's been a really good part of it.'

This was echoed by the students. When asked what students enjoyed about their Banded About project, *'being able to make up our own music'* came out strongly. One secondary school student said

'One of the best parts is that we get to compose the music together and if you don't like what someone's done you can say something so it's our own composition which is great.'

Engagement

The following conversation between secondary school students also shows how important the creative element of the project has been in their engagement.

'Yes that's what I was going to say. The thing that I like is that you, it isn't like a set piece where you have to do everything perfect, the dynamics are set and everything, you don't really get an opportunity to do it in music lessons.'

'Very different from music lessons.'

'We get to add bits into the music'

'If we don't like things we can change them'

'Everybody has an input.'

Again, this was echoed by primary school students. Their comments included

'I like that we don't just play written music, we create music.'

'I like that you can say what you think.'

'I really enjoy it because normally I don't find music fun but now I do. The fact that we all get to take part.'

The following conversation between primary students shows the importance of everyone feeling that they are part of the project.

'It's proper music. In like class we just like hit some drums, just one person, and this is like proper music'

'Yeah we get to do stuff together and it's not like one person doing everything, we've all got something to do'

'and we like the other people who do it as well'

'we get to take pride, it's a good opportunity, instead of just doing a literacy lesson'

'we get to try new instruments out because at home we just like, have the one instrument and we get to try out all the new things'

'You get to see people's talents as well.'

'Yeah and it's really fun because you find out new things about people and the musicians are just nice and if you get something wrong they just help you and stuff'

'we've all got on and I think everyone has enjoyed it'

'I'm not so excited doing music in class because one person has got a drum and everyone else sings'

'and in this when you're in groups you do things together and then when we're altogether it sounds really good'

'like when we were doing that there we had ideas and we shared them and you only get like one drum between a pair or something or a table in class'

'We're learning different types of music as well'

'Yeah because you sing things like Michael Jackson and stuff in class where it's good to come here where we make up our own songs, it's not just being told like you're doing this song, you get to make it up'

'We're really clever when we make stuff up and it's really nice of them to let us do it'

This also shows that the students have got pride in what they have achieved in their creative ensemble. Because they have created a piece of music that sounds good, and that they have all participated in the creation and playing of the piece, they have engaged with music in way that they haven't before. This has given them a view of music in a different light, as one primary school student said when asked what they had learnt from the project, *'that music isn't boring, that it's really good'*.

Musical Skills

Alongside this growth in confidence, the impact on musical skills was also evident. Not only did it allow students to see music from a different perspective and engage with active music making, it also allowed students to develop their musical skills and bring this back into the classroom. One secondary school teacher commented

'[They've] learnt a lot about improvisation as well. Their ensemble skills are much better and I think they have learnt about commitment to the band. Unfortunately there are a couple of people for various unavoidable reasons that can't be here tonight. And the group feels it ... a lot of people

don't understand that they are part of an ensemble, that you are sort of crucial to what the group do. So yeah, they have built these skills, musical skills.'

Another secondary school teacher commented on the impact that participation in the project will have on class music lessons in year 7 and how those that have participated in the project will be able to help those who haven't.

They've done group work before with gamelan, minimalism, stuff like that, but now they are doing actual compositions. So those that have been involved with [Banded About] have already had the experience of creative music making will obviously help with those that have not done it before as well.'

These secondary students tell of how they have been able to use the skills that they have developed in their creative ensemble in their class music lessons.

'We have learnt something new about actually composing our own pieces. I don't know about everyone else but I haven't had as much confidence about putting in my own sort of, because I think 'oh that's rubbish' if I've composed something on my own, but to other people it may not sound, it might sound good. But working with everyone else, we've got more confidence.'

'We've been doing, we've just done in music Theme and Variations and because me and [another student] have been here we've been able to develop it and incorporate what we've done, yeah, and develop it a lot more and go for something that sounds different but not completely the same.'

'We've been trying to create melodies today, so we had to create a melody and mine was really different to how I normally do it because I would do a straight forward thing but today it was a bit different.'

'We've really listened to each other and learnt how to listen to music.'

'We know how to listen to each other when doing solos and respond to each other.'

'You think like more about the different sounds, say before we came you just listen to words or set sounds but now you can listen to, like you can see the different instruments and they are playing the different rhythms.'

'I think some things that we've played, you think oh that's a bit strange but when you think about it it actually sounds really good and I think it makes you want to, cause when I'm at home I know it makes you want to try and improvise more on your own and try and write music as well, which we've done.'

One primary student commented

'We get to play music and then sometimes it sticks in your head sometimes and you start thinking of ways to improve it and that.'

One secondary student commented on the impact that involvement in the project has had on her relationship with music outside of school.

'I was watching Avatar and in the end you sort of end up listening more to the music, which is slightly annoying because you want to pay attention to the film, but somewhere in the back of your mind you are like "oh yeah, that sounds really good" because of such and such.'

These skills are all related to the creative element of the project. Through composing and improvising the students have actively engaged in musical skills such as listening, developing ideas and responding musically to others in the group, as well as developing commitment and understanding of what it is to be in an ensemble.

Curriculum Music

To one primary school teacher, developing these skills has been an important aspect of the project and has a wider impact on the students in general.

'The other thing I think is that it's had an impact on discipline. You know, it's very disciplined and not an issue in our year group as such, but they know that they've got to be focussed and listen and watch and follow instructions and you know, I think they've realised that in music you have to do that as well. It's not just in a Maths lesson or in a science lesson. They've realised how important it is as if you don't, it all goes wrong. So it's really good. We've had a few children that do struggle with things like listening and they've been involved in the project and I think that's had a good impact on them. Realising the importance of it. Because I think with music, you can see it and hear it more when things go wrong and that's just down to not listening properly.'

One secondary school teacher commented on how one student actively brought the work that he had done within his creative ensemble into the classroom and the impact that this had on him.

'There's one boy who I think has particularly taken to it and he actually did the presentation, he did the little talk before they played. And he was really confident with that. He's actually got EAL and you wouldn't know at all. Very confident to get up and talk like that. He did things like take things that they were doing with [the musicians] and brought it into the lesson so he conducted a little section and led and group rehearsal which I was then able to make a little note of to put into his file to say that he's actually taken part in a leadership role as well, helped tick a box in the bronze award thing as well. He stands out as someone who that really took to it.'

In the students' questionnaire, 77% of respondents stated that participation in the project had altered their view of school music. Comments about how it has changed included

'It has made me realise what goes into making a piece of music and how fun it is.'

'that you don't have to just play pieces on paper, you can make them up yourself.'

'It has made playing instruments more fun and has taught me different ways to play.'

'That music's not like banging a drum and that there's lots of people in the class do stuff that you don't know they do'

'Because I feel more confident in what I do and have learned that people struggle, not just me.'

Social Context

One secondary student commented that the best thing about the project was

'I think probably watching as everyone else has progressed in so many ways. It's been a true triumph watching everyone else getting better in more than one aspect. Not just playing but, I'll leave it to your imagination to describe how everyone's got better. Not just musically.'

The impact of the project on the social context of school life was also evident. Students commented on how they had got to know their classmates better and how they now know other students in the school.

'It's, cause some people we did know but not properly but now we know there are a lot of people who are talented on what they play, we know a bit more about them.'

'Making new friends in school that we haven't really got to know before'

'I'm more confident like with the people in my class, like I didn't used to talk to them that much so like and people from other classes that I don't play with, I just found out more about them.'

'You never know, there might be a person who, this has really inspired them and they might grow up to be a great musician, you don't know.'

The project has also helped to raise the profile of music in some schools.

'I think the newspaper article that was in the Post this week, that really made the Head sit up and notice. He's always been behind it 110% but I said to them the other day I think you need to come to the concert to understand that we've been a small part in a very big puzzle and to see how this has impacted the City you need to come in and experience the concert. So I think from reading about it and hearing about it, and especially us going to the primaries this week, I think my Head Teacher went to a primary school for a meeting and he got really good feedback about what we did in the afternoon and so I think he really understood. It's changed. They're behind music, but it's definitely raised it and made everyone really more.'

On the whole, the project has given students the opportunity to engage with active music making, has contributed to a growth in their confidence both in contributing to class and also in their musical ability and has helped to develop their musical skills that can be taken back into the classroom.

'Some of them will be introducing the pieces and if you'd asked them to that a few months ago they would just, you know, so they are going to introduce the pieces and it's built their confidence. But I mean the kids themselves that have been involved in this have just appreciated music much more and what they can actually do, I think it's really uncovered some hidden talents amongst the children and has developed their confidence. Because some of the children we've got, although they are really eager and keen to get

involved are some of the quiet ones as well. So I think it's given them a bit more confidence.'

Impact of Cross-Phase Working

Clusters have approached cross-phase working very differently. One cluster has held a weekly ensemble with students ranging from year 4 to year 9. One cluster has held a fortnightly ensemble, again ranging from year 4 to year 9, interspersed with individual school ensembles. One cluster has held a primary school ensemble with a small number of primary students from each school at the secondary school leading up to the final performance, and then joined them with the secondary students in a rehearsal prior to the concert. One cluster has joined primary and secondary school students together in a big band, but has not performed together. One cluster has joined students together purely to perform to each other, but the students did not work together.

However, cross-phase working in its different forms has contributed to the growth in confidence of both primary and secondary students. Where primary and secondary students have been working regularly together, the impact on attitudes to music making and to confidence has been evident.

Aspiration and Inspiration

Practitioners have commented that the secondary students have taken responsibility for primary students and primary teachers have commented that being able to see what can be achieved has helped students grow in confidence. One primary school teacher explains

'They've loved going to [the secondary school] and working with the older children every fortnight sort of thing ... in terms of what they've actually got out of it, they've absolutely loved it. And they loved the concert last week, they thought that was brilliant. As far as I know, [the reaction from the secondary students was] quite good but again I've not been with them. But, I know, they've reacted quite well. The feedback that we've got is that they've all worked quite well together and that they've enjoyed seeing, especially the performance last week when they saw the GCSE music, that was quite good for them to see where they can progress to.'

Primary students supported this with comments on how they have been inspired by the secondary students.

'The big band was best. Working with other children.'

'The big band sessions because it's really nice playing in a big sound and sharing music'

'The [secondary students] were really good.'

'I won't still be doing violin [in secondary school]. I'd like to be doing what the [secondary] kids are doing.'

These students' teacher also talked of her students' reaction to the secondary school students.

'It's our main school, we're a feeder. 70% of our kids go there so it's nice that their kids came down. You know we had kids from [the secondary school] with drum kits yesterday and saxophones and they were eager our kids were to get up there. I said in 18 months time you'll be there. You can do it. And I think, they are saying I want to do it and before they wouldn't have said that because they hadn't had this experience.'

Secondary students from the cluster that have worked on a long-term, weekly basis throughout with primary students have gained confidence in their leadership skills.'

'It was great to work with the primary school kids as at first they were given easy stuff and then let us go at it. They played easy stuff and we played harder stuff.'

'It would be really good to carry on as a group at school, after school, maybe get the primary kids up. Yeah, I'm going to ask if we can do that. I feel confident enough to lead that. Yes, definitely.'

However, both teachers and musicians within this cluster commented that the most difficult part of the ensemble was working with such a wide range of ages and abilities and they have had to adapt their approach by using small group work sessions in order to cope with this.

Secondary students in the cluster where there was a primary school cluster that joined them for the final performance explained how they felt about working with the primary students.

'But we've also got the junior primary school with us so they're playing the piece that they've been working on.'

They've been given the same as us so it's a huge contrast like, and you'll see the little kids will be better than us.

Which will be a kick for me!

When they came they were a bit out of timing and out of tune weren't they?

Don't put them down.

No, they were good for like primary school children and they like, listened to us and then they sort of, what's the word?

Adapted it.

Adapted it yeah so they joined in with our pieces so they added a more of a beat to ours and then they did their own little piece.

It's not just, I mean it's us, sometimes we go fast, sometimes we forget where we're going but at least we've had that chance to do a rehearsal with them so, we've had about 2 hours with them.

Yeah, erm I think it's been quite good because they've like, there's actually quite a good contrast between the instruments. They've got some of the totally different instruments to us. There's 3 clarinet players, we only have one, but there's no, there's a completely different contrast to the theme that we're doing again, we're playing it grander and they're also like doing things in between it, so they've made it more interesting to listen to.'

However, teachers at one of the primary schools involved in this cluster were not convinced of the value that this had on the students.

'There's been 10 children from the year group that have gone up to the secondary school.

I think that has been the most difficult thing about it, I think it's difficult, the music in secondary and music in primary is vastly different isn't it in terms of the way it's delivered and it's been a bit more difficult to mesh together than other parts of the project. I'd say if there was a part that was less valuable to children...

Yes, I'd have said that.

... that took up a lot of time that that would be it.

That's taken a lot of commitment from staff and from the children to get them there and get them back and parents.

And parents.

Things like that, I mean obviously we're not going to see the end product of it and when I've been involved in the rehearsals I've not always felt that the children know exactly what they're doing and why they're doing it.

That's our experience anyway. It might be very different from what other schools have had.

What might have been more successful is if you've got a group of secondary school children maybe that had ...

Had come to us

... had come to the primary school instead. Have the children there, perhaps do music at the school, play their ideas in front of our children then let them discover possible ways that they could join in with it. It's more trouble to go to secondary school to sit with them and it was a little bit, I don't think they got the best out of them in a way, their teachers, I think they, if they'd done it at our school it would have been different.

Definitely. They have built a very very strong relationship with the musicians that they have been involved with in this part of today, very very strong and I think they would have got more out of the kids.

They haven't had the time to build up the relationship as the others have.'

School Links

In one cluster, the cross-cluster ensemble was conducted at the primary school and the students and teachers there had a different experience. One secondary school teacher explained how the secondary students felt about going to the primary school.

They loved it. We went to [a primary school]. They loved it. They were quite happy to work with the other kids and I think it's nice when those kids come up they will recognise the students. Kids have got a lot better memories than us lot. I think it's nice for them to meet the teachers and both myself and [another teacher] were there so they have a sense of familiarity those younger kids now when they come up'.

Another secondary school teacher commented that

I think that [transition] and the idea of making links with primary schools in the future are the key things.

However, in her cluster, the primary school links were not formed until near the end of the project. She felt that the links needed to be established at the beginning of the project.

'[This is] the first contact where we have actually spoke to them, yeah. Because when we had our first meeting session at the CBSO centre we weren't put in our cluster. I know that the people that organised that know that now and in hindsight it could have been handled better. Because I think I came out of that day feeling fairly unclear as to how things were going to pan out and I went there hoping that I was going to put faces to names, who is representing music in these different junior schools. And I came out not knowing anything more about that.

And we had another, that day that I talked about the feedback, there were people there but I didn't have time to talk to them because we had this meeting right up until eat, then it was eat and then go to the concert.

So when they came last Tuesday, that was the first time I actually spoke to them. But I think different junior schools have brought different people with them this week. [One teacher] has come along with her assistant or teacher, but the other two, they are different faces.

But what has shown is that the potential is there to make strong links. Certainly [one teacher] is really enthusiastic, she seems really keen. So I feel now that's a contact that I've made that I know I can pick up the phone and get a smilely response. And some enthusiasm to talk about how do you fancy, I mean even it was just how would you like to bring some of your pupils to play at our school concert, something that's fairly easy to organise but would make it more of a transition.

[The links are there] now, but I think it's a bit of a shame it's at the end of the year that that's actually happened. I think you need more opportunity to actually sit and talk about what we could do. Maybe there would have been opportunity to do something throughout the year. But that's fine because it has happened now and we can do something along those lines next year.'

Even though these links were not made at the beginning of the project, they have been made as a result of the project and the teacher above is clearly happy to utilise these links. Similarly with another secondary teacher, links have been made through the project that can be built upon.

'We have strong links with the primary schools but just not in terms of music necessarily. I think we now have a good link with [one school]. I wouldn't say this with the other primary schools, but certainly [one school] because that's where the workshop was and they've been very proactive in the whole project. The teacher is really enthusiastic anyway. I think they would be very happy to, well I suppose they would like to, and that's opened it for us to work with them in the future. Definitely.'

Although the cross-cluster ensemble didn't happen until the end of the project, the fact that it was held in a primary school had a good impact on the links between that school and the secondary school.

One cluster did not work cross-phase and the music service teacher involved with the cluster commented that

'I would have liked to have had the opportunity to work with the primary schools. If it had to appraise this, the one area where I think we didn't do so well was that. I could have been a little more involved, not just being involved with [the secondary school] and made a few more links.'

Transition

Secondary students talk of how participating in the project has helped them to settle into their new school.

'Yes [it has helped me move into secondary school], it's like, you're not moving into a really big school. Because everyone says that secondary school is really big but it's smaller than you'd expect it to be. '

Students in key stage 3 also talk of how participating in this project has made them feel about opting for music at key stage 4.

'I'm absolutely buzzing about it because music actually means quite a lot to me and I'm actually buzzing to do this. I know it's a bit early to think about this now but next year I'll be choosing my GCSEs so cause music means, it's really sort, it means a lot to me, so I'll do it at GCSE. I've been here before, I've performed here before, but this is a great opportunity for me to do it again.'

'The best thing about it has been fun and I'm very sporty and I wouldn't have done music normally but I'm doing GCSE music now.'

'I didn't really know where I was going with guitar but now I've been able to learn lots of new stuff and to see where I want to go.'

'[Through working in a cross-phase ensemble], I've been able to see where we've come from and where we're going to. All the different levels, from year 3 up to [the professional musicians]. I definitely want to do GCSE and A-level music. I want to go all the way. '

Although not all students have been inspired to opt for GCSE Music as a result of the project, one student talked of how he would continue to play after the project finished.

'The whole experience has been brilliant and I've enjoyed the whole thing but I won't do GCSE music. My step dad plays and I'll play with him.'

One secondary school teacher recognised the importance of being chosen to participate in the project to her year 7 students.

'I think the most impact was with the first two groups, particularly the year 7s because they are new to this school, they are new to having [secondary] music lessons in the first place and the fact that they were chosen to do this made them feel really tall and proud of themselves in the first place, and I think they did a fantastic performance playing at the CBSO centre.'

So, although not all students have worked cross-phase throughout the project, it has had a positive impact on both perceptions of music making, developing confidence in both musical ability and leadership skills and also transition through key stages 2, 3 and 4.

Sharing Days

One significant factor in cross-phase working has been the sharing days. One student said

'It's really nice to know that Banded About is going around different schools as well as our school'

Wider Context

The sharing days have helped to put the wider context of the project into perspective for the students, both in terms of within a cluster and also within the project as a whole. Talking of an inter-cluster sharing event, one primary teacher commented

'It's been a great experience, I mean it really has. I'm so glad we said that we can do it and I think it's going to have a real impact on the school in the future. I mean you know, performing to the school yesterday with the secondary school and another primary school people were saying that was brilliant. I said that was two rehearsals.'

One primary teacher talked of coming to watch the first cross-cluster sharing day before their project started.

'[The students] loved it. They really did. This was before we started the project. We went to the December one and they asked 'are we going to be doing something like this' and I said exactly, that's why we've come and they couldn't wait.'

The cross-cluster sharing days have also helped to forge an understanding of being part of a larger project. One secondary teacher commented

'Being exposed to all of the work that's going on in the City, all of the different children, all of the different musical starting points ... have been the best thing I think.'

For the students, seeing other children enthused by making music has been an important part of the sharing days. Secondary school students commented

'Seeing the other schools. You can see that certain pieces are different from other people's and you can see where their inspiration has come from and that the teachers have made such a difference to the music.'

'I think it's the enthusiasm as well, seeing some of the kids, kids our age and they get so excited and it's really good to see them like that.'

From one primary schools' point of view, performing at the Town Hall was a real achievement for her students, not only musically, but introducing them to parts of the city that they have had no contact with before.

'Our parents find things like this difficult to come and stuff because obviously where we are and stuff it's, but I mean the experience for them just being here is major. They didn't even know where the Town Hall was you know. They'd probably walked past it 100s of times without realising it.'

Secondary students also recognised the importance of performing at large venues.

'Getting the chance to perform here (Town Hall), like the responsibility of taking you know, be taken here and play your own piece is like really amazing. I think that's the best part'

'I think we were quite nervous, I really enjoyed it though, it was quite chilled out and it wasn't really scary in front of the primary schools'

Primary students also commented on what it had meant to them to perform at the cross-cluster sharing days.

'I liked performing at the CBSO because it was a big hall and there were lots of other people from different schools and so they can see how good we were on different instruments.'

'It was really exciting for me because it was the first time that I experienced performing'

'It was really good because it just felt, everyone had the experience of playing on stage with an instrument because if they get older and they want to play an instrument then it will give them more, I don't know, more experience of doing it on stage or down in the orchestra'

'We got to perform in front of other people and that was quite good because they can listen to what we can do and we listen to what they could do'

'when we performed I got to play an instrument that I'd never heard of before and never seen before called the marimba'

Many teachers and musicians commented that the experience of playing in venues like the CBSO centre and the Town Hall was significant to the students. When asked what the best part of the project had been, one musician commented

'Probably today. I think. It's all the culmination of seeing all their hard work and seeing their faces walking into the Town Hall and performing on the

stage it's such a great experience and very different from being at school. A very different setting, a very different feel. I mean it's been fantastic, a very lovely lovely school to work with. The school staff have been incredibly supportive. So, but I'm really looking forward to our performance today so we can just show off what we have done and what they have achieved really and what they have written, composed.'

Sharing and Performing

However, there did appear to be a tension between sharing and performing. During the performances, it was evident that some creative ensembles were more directed than others and the pressure of putting a performance together on musicians and teachers was also evident. One musician said

'Really for young people it's great to perform. The sharing sessions have been really nice.'

However, for the final performance at the Town Hall, she was only given three sessions in which to produce something performable. She talked of how she had had five sessions the previous term and that the students *'became more natural as the sessions went on'* but with only three sessions, this put a lot of pressure on and the group were not perhaps as natural as previously.

Another musician commented that they too had just a short amount of time to produce something for the final performance. The students also picked up on this. Secondary students talked of the differences between their creative ensemble in the Autumn term and their experience in the Summer term.

'Last year we had more time where as this time we've been doing a very short amount of time in which to, I'm sure these guys want to perform well, and to create separate pieces.'

Overall the sharing days have been successful in introducing students not only to the wider context of the project, but to musical activities and venues within the City. The students were able to put their work in context and were both inspired by and proud to perform to other students. Internal sharing days were successful in raising the profile of both the project and music in general amongst schools. They also helped to introduce students to a wider range of musical genres by seeing the work done by the other partner organisations.

Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development has come from three areas of the project. Formally through CPD days and a practitioners' ensemble, both organised centrally, and informally through partnership working.

CPD Days

Those attending the CPD days gave mainly positive comments about the content of the days and the impact that it had on their role within the project.

'Group tasks as part of CPD training provided inspiration for group workshops exercises and methods.' (Musician)

'More ideas for creative work with children and starting blocks for developing these skills.' (Musician)

'With such a large project, it has been useful to see and meet others involved. Without the CPD days, this would not have happened and I would have little or no sense of the magnitude or aims of the whole project.' (Musician)

'It has been useful particularly in exploring ways to deal with mixed ability groups.' (Musician)

'Staff are more confident to deliver and participate in project.' (Primary Head Teacher)

'Range of resources and ideas discussed has helped to produce the work we have as a group and develop to suit the ensemble.' (Music Service Teacher)

One secondary school teacher outlined what she had gained from the CPD days and how she had used it in her professional work.

'We've already started [creative ensembles] at [our school] actually. [Another teacher] and I have done a few sessions ourselves with the kids at lunch time. We've just said bring whatever instrument you play, giving them some stability, some ideas from the sharing days we had the sharing days in the morning and then the session in the afternoons, the CPD, so we've taken some of the ideas from there and used them already with the kids. We've been using them in lessons as well. It's been fantastic and opened up composition. They've reacted really positively. Actually what's really interesting is one group, my year 10 group, I gave them the stimulus

ideas, just have a go, it was just a single lesson so we picked it up in the double lesson and when I heard what they did I wanted to tweak it a bit and actually they didn't like me interfering with it. No, they just wanted to get on with it on their own. They just wanted to get on with it. So in terms of their composing it's impacted them a lot, definitely.

From the perspective of the music service teachers, the CPD days were also extremely useful. One music service teacher commented that

'After the first CPD day I went back to [my line manager] and said that's the best CPD I've ever had since I've been with the music service. Actually, I've done things before that I haven't normally done. It was just a new, fresh approach. I think it appealed to everybody, you could see everybody engaged.[It] not only develops their instrumental skills but also their leadership, and co-operative and sharing skills really. So it doesn't just come down to the more confident or the more able, it seemed to me he was getting everyone to contribute.'

One musician commented on how they could use what they gained from the CPD days.

'Although ... I have had a fair amount of experience before with smaller ... projects, particularly the CPD days have been of use. Liz Johnson's half-day was particularly useful, it involved some acting out of activities like those done with children, and then some adult reflection afterward, which I could make notes on afterward and potentially use in future non-Banded About projects.'

This shows the effect of the CPD days not just on the Banded About project, but also on other professional work of practitioners.

However, there were a small number of comments indicating that the sessions had not been useful.

'I have been delivering workshops for 6 years and without being arrogant, already use all the techniques demonstrated in the CPD training.'

(Musician)

'The first CPD day was so basic I couldn't believe it.' (Teacher)

The CPD days were open to all practitioners, however attendance was not compulsory. The reasons for non-attendance included

'The lead teacher was changed and then I was ill, as stated above, for the CPD sessions.' (Teacher)

'No I haven't, they've always fallen when something else, I know, it's hard. It's a shame really. Myself, I'd like to do more professional development.' (Teacher)

As well as there being no funding for attendance or not being released from school to attend.

A number of musicians felt that they would have liked to have got more out of the CPD days in terms of working with other people from different organisations. These comments came from musicians.

'On a more personal basis I would have liked to have done more work with the jazz, Birmingham Jazz or Town Hall Symphony Hall or something that's a little bit more out of my comfort zone because I'm very much an orchestral percussionist as it were. A very classical, my training was very classically based and I've worked for the CBSO for years. So from my point of view I would have like to have done more of something else and speaking to other colleagues some of them felt the same. So someone from Birmingham Jazz would have loved to have worked with the CBSO cluster. So I think from that sense, if we were to do it again, I think cross cluster workshops would be more interesting.'

'Training in different fields would be beneficial eg I would love to shadow someone from Birmingham Jazz as this is an area I don't know much about.'

Practitioners' Ensemble

For those that attended the practitioners' ensemble, this did give them the opportunity to work with and create links with other organisations.

'I think it's been good [in the practitioners' ensemble] to be with other people working in different areas of the hub to know erm, who they are and what they do and stuff, even though [one of the musicians] didn't play in the final practitioners sessions, I've managed to make a better link with her. Because I've never worked with BCMG so that would be really good to, I didn't know what they do, so it will be good to work with her in the future. I think that it's renewed my enthusiasm for performing as well

because that's why you come into it in the first place isn't it. Performing music, so it's very positive.' (Teacher)

'The practitioner's ensemble was great as well because that was out of my comfort zone, just sitting and jamming along. But I absolutely loved that and I would love to do more of that now. So it's been quite a journey in that sense. And sort of learning to just go with it, I'm quite laid back but without doing too much planning or you know, it's been nice.' (Musician)

'I think it has been useful within Banded About because it has brought many participants from all areas of the project together in a fun, musical way and helped us all perhaps see each other as equals with different skills, in a way that I have not perhaps seen in previous projects.' (Musician)

'It has been interesting working with a diverse range of practitioners and teachers, and it has helped me to refine some of the devices I have for working with large groups.' (Musician)

Not only this, participants felt that the work done in the practitioners' ensemble was helpful to their contribution within their own creative ensembles.

'Valuable experience - working with a diverse ensemble, investigating a variety of approaches to improvisation, handling notation and stimulus... This will impact future composition, performance and workshop work.' (Musician)

'Extremely helpful. Each session has been done with a very different outlook.' (Musician)

'The practitioners' ensemble has been very instructive.' (Music Service Teacher)

'Absolutely, it has given me ideas to implement within a classroom setting as well as at the area band I work with.' (Music Service Teacher)

However, there were some practitioners' who didn't get as much out of it as they might have liked.

'It has been an interesting experience so far but feel we could be moving it on now. All 3 sessions have been very similar.' (Musician)

'This work is not entirely new to me, I have participated in many similar ensembles with BCMG which have also aided my professional development and increased my confidence in this area, previously.' (Musician)

'Very useful to meet people associated with project, especially local school staff. Pretty basic music teacher-training / collaboration exercises. No impact on professional work.' (Teacher)

Attendance at the practitioners' ensemble was not compulsory and it was felt by some cluster leaders that it was not as well attended as it could have been, particularly by teachers. Reasons for non-attendance included

'Delegated to a member of staff.' (Primary Head Teacher)

'Time implications.' (Teacher)

'Limited budget. I believe only the lead artist for our cluster was able to go.' (Musician)

'I would have liked to have this opportunity but there wasn't sufficient funding.' (Musician)

'I was ill and unable to attend the session I was intending to go to.' (Teacher)

'I don't like jazz, I'm not interested in doing jazz. I wouldn't have got anything out of it.' (Musician)

Partnership Working

Cluster leaders felt that in some cases, partnership working had not been successful in continuing professional development as the teachers either were not present or seemed reluctant to become involved. However, the impact of partnership working on informal continuing professional development of teachers appears to have had far reaching effects. One musician talked of how she worked in partnership with teachers.

'Three different class teachers. But everytime, sometimes the class teachers were actually swapping round. They've all been very much involved and joining in and also sort of, we'd written the words down and printed them out so part of their homework, staff were also continuing our work, it's not just Friday morning to Friday morning, they do and they'll have rehearsals themselves because we've recorded them onto CD. The staff will do that.'

So although when observed, these teachers did not appear to be fully involved, they were using their professional skills to continue the work during the week. The musician continued

'I think well, some of them were confident because they were musicians already and some of them it has given them confidence that it's not difficult, there's no barrier. Music is scary for those who haven't studied it. I mean, I'm scared of Art because I can't do it, but I think it's been good for them to come out of their comfort zone and see what the children can achieve and do it relatively simply. It doesn't have to be about reading all the notes, I mean you can do things aurally and they've learnt all of this from memory, and they've been fantastic but part of their homework was to learn the words. Which is what the staff have done and it's been brilliant, really, really supportive. I do think the staff who haven't been as confident would be more confident now to work on it.'

This ties in with what the primary teachers who worked with this musician said about the impact of participation in the project on their professional development.

'I think it's helped me as I'm someone who's not very musical, having someone in school who has shown me some different ideas about how to create music from what the children, from the children's ideas and using them as the main resource for being creative rather than the teacher, which is, it's been quite helpful.'

'Yeah, I think it's helped me in that way as well because it's too tempting to follow your lesson plans and do those things whereas the children can follow our lead and build their own ideas and be more creative.'

'I think so, yeah, it's hard at our school because we tend to work in teams that we get to be in for the next year and a couple of us have been involved but not all of us. I think some elements we will take with us.'

'I think personally I will have more confidence in teaching music. How much impact it will have on the curriculum is difficult to assess where we are, but in terms of my personal confidence in teaching it and that sort of thing, it's made a big impact.'

By working alongside the musicians, but not necessarily actively leading sessions, the teachers have gained confidence in the delivery of music lessons and can use what they have learnt alongside their own professional skills to tailor their music lessons to suit their teaching style.

This confidence which primary teachers gained from working alongside musicians was seen in other clusters.

'In terms of the actual coordinating of the music, because myself I'm not very musical, so for me I've learnt loads in terms of what I can put into the music curriculum in the school, so in terms of telling other staff how to, if they've all got instruments, because that's what [the musician] does in the big band, how to control them. So I've got a lot of, coordinating what I could do, so that's been quite useful.'

In another cluster, both musicians and the cluster leader were concerned that the primary school teachers were not benefiting from the project as they hoped they would. The cluster leader said that it had been disappointing that although the secondary teacher had been very involved in the CPD and the project as a whole, the involvement of primary teachers had been less. They had *'struggled to get primary teachers on board'* and felt that the teachers had not always been present at sessions. The musician working with one of this cluster's primary schools commented that one of the aims of the project was to pass skills onto teachers and it was *'a shame that they haven't'*. However, the music coordinator of this particular primary school told a different story.

'So I've noticed now, I've got a couple more teachers, because music is part of my faculty because I'm faculty leader for the arts in our school. I've been trying to work with the Head about how we can build children's, well staff confidence really and but I've had a lot more teachers come to me in the last couple of weeks saying is there any opportunities for us you know. Is there anything we can do? One of my friends who's a year 6, she said to me I still- you know, next year I said you'll be having my kids so they will bring that to their music lessons as well- I just can't teach you know, I just haven't got, I just don't know what to do, and I said well the kids hopefully that have been working with this will be able to perhaps even lead some of it, so she's going to look into that maybe next year.'

Obviously now me being part of it, my new class in September, hopefully now it will all roll down so. I've already said to [the partner organisation] is there anything that we can do next year and they're going to come and meet with me next week to see if we can build on opportunities.'

Not only does she feel that having the project in school has inspired other teachers to want to be involved in music, she also feels that her skills and the skills that the students have developed will have a roll out effect in the school. Moreover, as a

result of participating in the project she now feels confident to write her own music curriculum.

'I mean the thing I think that holds a lot of our teachers back is the scheme that we've got in school is far too difficult, it's way above the children's head. It's far too hard. I mean even the year 5 stuff, I looked at it and the language and everything. I just couldn't get to grips with it at all. Our kids need the basics you know. So my intention is that we scrap this scheme and have it there as a backup if necessary and just dip in where we feel we need to and try and generate our own really. I know the curriculum is changing anyway in September so obviously, the whole point of it changing is to sort of start with the kids are from where they're at and that's what we need to do.'

Roll-out of Skills

This roll-out of skills has also been seen in other clusters. In one cluster the music service teacher is going to keep the creative ensemble running next academic year.

'I normally have a string group here on a Friday lunchtime and we're thinking of, instead of having it as purely strings, trying to involve this group of kids and me leading it a little bit and seeing if I can take it forward a little bit next year.'

'I feel that I've gathered some skills, yeah, I mean it's a shame really because the suggestion was that I might lead some of these sessions after half term, but my job, it's not been possible. But I do feel that I can go into next year with some skills.'

'It's been successful and it's something to build on, something not to let just disappear. Like I say, so I'm going to try and keep this little group together.'

The benefit to one musician has been the length of time working in the school.

'Just the fact that it's been lovely working in the same school for a whole year. I've done education projects for about 9 or 10 years now for the [partner organisation] so in that sense I've got a lot of experience, but it's always been shorter projects. From my point of view [this project has] always been excellent. This morning is exciting because it's the final culmination but it's also very sad at the same time because it's been a year and you get very close to the children, there's a real rapport and respect between us and them and there's very much a team effort so I am

going to be quite sad to be leaving the school to be honest with you, it would be nice to go in more regularly. So that point of view I've really enjoyed that. Or maybe to go into the secondary school now because they are all year 6. So they're all leaving anyway. Or maybe do something in a few weeks as a follow on, yeah that would be nice.'

To one secondary school teacher, being able to participate in the creative ensemble has not been possible.

'Yeah, I mean if I had a different role in the school then yes, [I would like to have contributed musically], but it's just teaching and I didn't want to get behind with my classes and ask for, I would have had to have had loads of cover. I would have had to have had 5, well more than 5 because [the musicians] are coming in for hour and half sessions whereas the other guys were coming in for hour sessions. So that would have been more cover and more classes getting behind. It's just not as simple logistically to do in secondary school.'

Overall Value to CPD

Apart from a few negative comments relating to the project as a whole

'Again, without being arrogant, I haven't really learnt any new techniques.'
(Musician)

'I have learned nothing, and gained no experience or knowledge as a result.' (Teacher)

And also on individual aspects of the project

'I always learn something from every project I do. I have learned a lot from the children in my school group and thoroughly enjoyed working with them and helping them fulfil their aims whilst finding new ways of being creative. But the big band has left me feeling very flat. I don't feel that in general the skills of the adult musicians present have been utilised very well.'

This project has not lived up to my expectations having listened to CD recordings of previous material created. I thought we were aiming to make a similar recording of music composed by the small groups and also the big group. The big band hasn't composed anything at all and I think this would have been both possible and exciting. It has been good to share as part of a cluster. It is also good to know that most of the material we do

present has come from the children themselves. Management of the project has been excellent.' (Musician)

Overall, 83% of questionnaire respondents said that participation in the project had contributed to their continuing professional development.

'Banded About has provided many opportunities so far: -observing other professionals and learning from their expertise -a chance to take time out from 'doing' and consider other approaches/methods... - networking/meeting/sharing with other musicians and teachers - experience from working with different groups of children -provided inspiration for education, performance and composition work -...etc...' (Musician)

'We created a very strong piece involving 60 children lasting for over 10 minutes. This was obviously a great endeavour in time and will be very suitable for use in future projects. Association with Symphony Hall is also valuable and we hope to work with this organisation again in the future.' (Musician)

'To the professional development of the school for music coordinator and teachers who are leading both classes who are participating.' (Primary Head Teacher)

'Having the opportunity to work with a variety of professionals and sectors to support learning and development which in turn has opened my thoughts to a variety of resources and contacts for the future.' (Music Service Teacher)

'New fresh ideas brought into school.' (Teacher)

'This is the longest project I have done in a junior school and it has been very interesting to see how to develop ideas with the children over an extended period of time.' (Musician)

'It has provided me with ideas about how to put together musical compositions with the children which we have already used as part of our Enterprise week, enabling us to create a CD with the children.' (Teacher)

The impact of both the formal and informal continuing professional development strands is clear. CPD days have provided inspiration and ideas, given advice and provided an opportunity for practitioners to network and support each other. The practitioners' ensemble has given practitioners an opportunity to share skills, see the

work of other musicians in different areas of the City and again given an opportunity for networking. Partnership working has enabled musicians to provide strong models for teachers of how to engage students through relatively simple ideas and teachers have been able to take these models and shape them so as to apply them to their own teaching.