

Wren Music ELER (young people at elevated risk) project summary 2015-16



Wren Music was delighted to secure funding from Youth Music in 2015 to continue our work with young people at risk of exclusion in various settings across Devon. This project summary is created in part from the final report to Youth Music: *(due to photo permissions in these settings, this summary does not contain any photographs or video)*

The idea was to work with young people at risk of exclusion and those with Social, Emotional and Behavioural issues, to develop their confidence and self-efficacy through music, as well as their resilience to challenges at the same time as having fun.

The activities planned included learning about acoustic instruments, practising pieces as a group, songwriting and other group skills including leadership through e.g. conducting or suggesting arrangement ideas.

Wren worked with various partners across Devon:
Marland and Springfield schools (SENTient Trust) in Peters Marland and Barnstaple
North Devon Academy (Schoolscompany) in Bideford
Central Devon Academy (Schoolscompany) in Exeter
Barley Lane School (SENTient Trust)

148 music and learning sessions were delivered over 2 years and they were structured into blocks of 5-week courses

28 courses were delivered, with 2 stretched over 10 weeks, rather than the 30 originally planned, due to changes in school timetables.

Each course consisted of set themes and ideas as well as participant-led work. A typical course took this form:

Session 1 Instruments, finding out about acoustic instruments and how they make their sounds.

Session 2 Finding your voice, and learning about singing

Session 3 Song writing

Session 4 Arranging and rehearsing

Session 5 Practising for, and delivering, a performance - then reflecting on the work

Each week we added these ideas, so e.g. week 2 saw a return to the previous week's work, as well as learning new things.

Our reporting was divided into several areas to show different outcomes of the work:

Musical development; familiarity and challenge

We looked at the level and complexity of the work undertaken, and the progress of both young people and setting staff in achieving these musical goals. Some quotes from pupils and staff:

Students

"Yeah it's been great – got a lot better at music since I started."

"I just love the music"

"these are really good music teachers"

"Best lesson of the week!"

"Now I can play the guitar!"

"I've been and bought a ukulele"

Staff

"Great sessions - all students have said they enjoyed the music sessions and have contributed positively!"

"I didn't take part today, but felt I could have at any time"

“So it now has been mooted that a few of the staff do know how to play guitar or know how to play the piano and this kind of stuff.”

“I’ve got a guitar at home that I never use. Would you like to borrow it J?”

School development; musical, and educational -

One of the outcomes was that schools would look at the way they provide music, as well as how it could relate to the curriculum, and other school-based outcomes

“So (after the music sessions) we’ve input some pianos in one of our hubs – one of our rooms that the kids can go and access...So now there’s a couple of kids who straight off in the morning will say now “Can I go in and sit at the piano, play on the piano” and that’s great” - staff member

“I didn’t think this sort of music-making was possible in my school. When you first started coming, that’s what I would have expected it to continue like. And it’s great now. The things they’re coming out with it’s a different world. There are some in there that have been doing the music for a while and it’s all kind of pulling together a bit better. At the start, I wouldn’t have expected that.”- Head of setting

“Well what I’ve done is I’ve gone away and used our assessment system I’ve looked at what we’ve done and I’ve looked at the music assessment system here and said well we’ve done that and that and that.” - staff member

Personal development; leadership and resilience -

We wanted to see what effect music could have on Young Peoples’ response to challenges in life, and how they could develop other social outcomes from their work.

“The best bit was seeing our boys become teachers” - SEBD staff member

“Wasn’t really teaching. It was helping. Guiding. Quite liked it actually. That I got to help other people learn.” - pupil peer teacher

“I feel the music sessions have improved the boys’ confidence and self-esteem.” - staff member

...he (pupil) gets victimised quite a lot and what you done today empowered him. You know we can spend weeks and weeks on empowering him and that happened within an hour session which is fantastic. And he’s walked out of that session with the person who is more often than not the bully. He walked out and they walked out together, discussing something else they want to do together later like play on a computer game which is amazing to see.” Senior staff member

“The “what did others do well” section at the end is particularly good. It includes everybody and gives all a confidence boost/praise from others. That continues into the evening with peers and friendship.” - setting staff member

Wren Music has learnt a great deal from its work in these settings, and we have had a great time working with these Young People. We have achieved some fantastic outcomes as well as having lots of fun, and we hope to do much more work in these settings in future.

If you are interested in this project, or in any way we can help you to achieve positive musical and social outcomes for your setting, please get in touch:

01837 53754 or email info@wrenmusic.co.uk