

Music and Me Evaluation Report
for East Lothian council

August 2012

MUSIC AND ME

AN EVALUATION REPORT

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Music and Me is a new resource developed specifically for Nursery staff that explores effective ways of using music to develop a wide range of emotional literacy and pre-reading skills.

A programme of CPD for staff supports the resource and follow-up visits to schools facilitate, monitor and evaluate its delivery.

Background

Music and Me was commissioned by East Lothian Support From the Start and East Lothian Council YMI, in response to evidence from a range of contemporary research highlighting the impact of Early Years intervention and indicating that music can be an effective tool to enhance learning in the areas of:

- Active Listening
- Concentration
- Sharing
- Turn-taking
- Carrying out instructions
- Leading and following
- Co-operation and collaboration
- Self-expression
- Emotional literacy

Support from the Start recognised that this approach could be of benefit to children in their “test site” schools where the remit is to improve early education opportunities. East Lothian Council YMI in turn saw the benefit of such a resource for all nurseries within the local authority. Since the remit of East Lothian Council Music Specialists does not currently extend to music provision in the nurseries, the development of an accessible resource deliverable by non-specialist nursery staff was a significant step.

Music and Me, therefore, takes an intuitive approach to music making and is designed for use by all staff, regardless of their perceived level of musical ability.

The two agencies collaborated closely in the funding and administration of the project, and musician/composer David Trouton was commissioned to devise and deliver the work.

An 8-week research and development phase began in April 2010 when David Trouton made a total of 32 visits to Wallyford and Whitecraig nurseries to work closely with staff and pupils to develop and test the games, exercises and activities that could deliver these learning outcomes.

The Music and Me resource book and cd were written and produced by January 2011 and piloted in 2 new nurseries, Campie and St.Martin's, during Spring term. Positive feedback from staff at these schools then encouraged the roll-out of the resource in August 2011 to a further 14 nurseries.

This first roll-out phase entailed 2 x 2 hour cpd sessions for staff on how best to use the resource, a follow-up visit to each school from David Trouton, before the end of first term for help and advice, and a further visit later in the school year from Sheila Payne, YMI Primary Music Instructor, to monitor and assess staff in the delivery of the programme.

In May 2012, YMI sent out evaluation questionnaires to all participating nurseries, inviting staff to comment on their experience of using the resource. 13 out of the 18 nurseries returned a questionnaire by the end of term deadline (72% response rate).

The data was analysed by Sheila Payne, and is presented below on a sample questionnaire, showing the combined responses from all returned evaluations:



MUSIC AND ME Nursery Resource: Staff Evaluation

We are currently evaluating the “Music and Me” nursery resource pack and would appreciate your feedback on the resource, and your experience of using it in class.

Please complete the following questionnaire and return to: Patrick Holden, YMI Coordinator, John Muir House (2.17), Haddington EH41 3HA or email pholden@eastlothian.gov.uk

Class Teacher/Auxiliary: _____ Nursery: _____

1) ABOUT YOUR CLASS

Number of children in your class/es:

Ante preschool	(various)
Preschool	(various)

Have you been using the Music and Me resource with:

Ante preschool	
Preschool	x 1
Both groups	x 11

How often have you been using the Music and Me resource material?

More than once a week	x 2
Once a week	x 3
On a few occasions	x 7
I haven't used the resource yet	x 1

2) ABOUT THE RESOURCE

(Please have a copy of the Music and Me to hand when answering these questions)

Which activities have you used with your class/es?

Warm-up games	x 12
Active Listening Games	x 12
Group Music-making	x 10
Singing	x 10
Music and Movement	x 9
Sound Stories	x 6
Music for Relaxation	x 6

Do you use the Music and Me CD with your class/es?

Often	x 2
Occasionally	x 9
I haven't used it yet	x 2

Do you reference the Curriculum for Excellence learning outcomes section in the Music and Me book?

Often	x 4
Occasionally	x 7
I haven't used it yet	x 2

The resource aims to offer a selection of music games and activities that are accessible for all nursery teachers, regardless of their musical expertise.

Please rate your level of confidence in delivering the following aspects of Music and Me by numbering on a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 is Not Confident and 5 is Very Confident (Please circle your answer):

	Not confident -----Very confident				
Warm-up games	1	2	3(x1)	4(x2)	5(x9)
Active Listening games	1	2	3(x1)	4(x6)	5(x5)
Group Music-making	1	2(x1)	3	4(x3)	5(x6)
Singing	1	2	3(x3)	4(x2)	5(x6)
Music and Movement	1	2	3	4(x4)	5(x6)
Sound Stories	1(x1)	2	3(x2)	4(x2)	5(x3)
Music for Relaxation	1	2	3	4(x3)	5(x4)

Please rate the level of effectiveness as a means of developing the following skills by numbering on a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 is Not effective and 5 is Very Effective (Please circle your answer):

	Not effective -----Very effective				
Active Listening	1	2	3	4(x5)	5(x7)
Concentration	1	2	3	4(x7)	5(x5)
Sharing	1	2	3	4(x7)	5(x5)
Turn-taking	1	2	3	4(x7)	5(x4)
Carrying out instructions	1	2	3	4(x5)	5(x7)
Leading and following	1	2	3(x1)	4(x4)	5(x6)
Co-operation and collaboration	1	2	3	4(x7)	5(x4)
Self-expression	1	2	3(x1)	4(x4)	5(x6)
Emotional Literacy	1	2	3	4(x4)	5(x6)

How many of the class appeared stimulated and engaged by the resource material? (Please circle your answer):

100% of class	x 3
More than 75% of class	x 6
More than 50% of class	x 3
Less than 50% of class	x 0

3) YOUR COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

We value your expertise as a Nursery specialist and would welcome your comments and opinions as part of our evaluation:

Do you see the music activities having an impact on the pupils? If so, in what way?

- Yes
- Yes - good practice. Emotional literacy vital and found children able express themselves and feel they have a forum to do so.
- The children have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the activities. Their listening skills are improved and they are able to describe how music makes them feel/what kind of music (angry, happy, sad, sleepy etc) with the music on the CD and also other pieces. The 'Today I'm Happy' song is a particular favourite and is great because it allows children to acknowledge that it is okay to be angry or sad.
- Yes, they find them motivating and never want to stop some of the games. They felt empowered when it was their turn to conduct, make a noise for others to copy etc. They think more carefully about what they hear and the noises they can make with the instruments. When they play along to a CD in the music corner they tend just to play as loudly as possible and forget to listen to the beat of the music.
- The activities that have been covered have been enjoyed greatly by the pupils. They have been engaged and great fun. I have often planned to carry out activities daily but this can sometimes be difficult when using child led planning and play. I have used the resource on occasions with small focus groups and this has also been of great value.
- Yes I do. In all areas. We divided the nursery into 3 groups and took them out of the nursery to the music room. All the children enjoyed the session, some more than others. I would have liked to have done more with the emotional side of the programme as I feel this would have been beneficial to certain children but there was only time to do so much. I would also like to develop story telling with music and do it with the whole nursery, as they seemed to enjoy this the most.
- We have used the resource periodically. We have enjoyed it alongside the ABC music resource and Singing Games and Rhymes. All of these resources work well together. We can see improvement in the children's ability to make music by themselves... experimenting with rhythm and pitch. This was evident when we set up a music area for free play. Our children particularly enjoy moving to music and the tracks on the CD are very useful for this. The pre-school children in particular benefit from working together as a whole group, learning from each other.
- Yes, I think it helps the ante preschooler with routines in nursery such as listening, sharing and turn taking.
- Yes, it helps the children to further develop their listening and concentration skills in particular but also turn taking and carrying out instructions.
- Increased ability to listen and follow instructions with greater independence. Develops stamina and concentration – engages active learners in fun and exciting way!
- Pre schoolers, ante preschoolers work together. Help improve listening. Encourages use of instruments / music by themselves (not adult led)
- Definitely. Focused listening – but fun.

Music and Me is designed to be a cross-curricular package. Can you describe any ways you have used the ideas in the resource to introduce or develop other aspects of the curriculum?

- Number – counting 3 or 4 to the bar; Maths – signs for greater than/less than/ equals, when discussing volume, tempo etc; Reading – use of words plus symbol for high/low note etc; Science – making different types of musical instruments; Health and Well Being – contrasting activity with the need for rest and stillness when meditating etc

- HWB – We have used the music for a starting point for discussions and work about feelings of different kinds. Children have been involved in making their own shakers (craft and design). Children use the instruments and shakers to make their own music and conduct each other without adult support, developing independence, turn taking and consideration for others. Aside from the obvious music element, the Health and Well Being outcomes are well integrated into the resource.

- Yes, used the games in our Health theme – emotions section. Used some action songs when learning about the body and being active / keeping fit / having fun / being happy. Use several of the games when we have hall time for PE. Listening also been a focus for the am class this year so lots of activities fit in well. Lots of connections can be made.

- I have found the resource to be a worthwhile aid to planning for HWB

- Literacy with story telling. Numeracy – counting the beats.

- During our school Eco Week the children were involved in making percussion instruments from recycled materials. The nursery children were able to use the experience of percussion to help with ideas for making their own instruments (i.e. they didn't just make shakers). We had instruments with beaters, strings, rough surfaces to scrape, bells, rain drums etc...

- Topical activities – seasons; Living things; Literacy projects; Numeracy activities; Growth and change; Transition activities; All about me etc..

- Sharing, turn taking, respect for others; Confidence, self esteem; Talking, discussing, new vocabulary; Use imagination; Make choices; Listening (to others); Improving movement.

- Maths – counting matching; Literacy – pre reading listening and talking; PE – physical – gross and fine motor skills.

Do you have any further comments or suggestions on how the Music and Me resource could be improved?

- More songs on CD and / or list of other suitable (popular / well-known) songs for emotional literacy. Titles of books with suitable stories. Breakdown of steps for Musical Stories i.e. lesson 1 listen to story, lesson 2 repeat and choose some suitable instruments, lesson 3, repeat and choose rest of instruments etc. Doing the whole story activity, even with a small group, was challenging. An important way forward I think is to educate the parents, perhaps through a one-off workshop(?) with their help and understanding, the children would gain so much more. I designed a parents' questionnaire, which I distributed at our Christmas concerts. Many of them were unaware of the different curricular areas, skills etc that could be learned / enhanced through music. I have been thinking too about doing groups for toddlers, to 'catch' them earlier.
- It was wonderful to have Dave come in and work with the children for a session. I would like a follow-up pack with more 'sound stories' and accompanying music tracks (though perhaps ones that need only a few, easily obtainable props). The pack is really easy to use to plan a lesson, or just dip in and out of. This has certainly been one of the most useful CPD courses I have undertaken and to have the book / CD as a constant resource is fantastic.
- I think it's a good resource and one that all the nursery staff can use, not just the people who did the actual training as the book is good to dip into and try different activities out as they fit with your theme / time available. Biggest problem is just remembering to use it and taking a little time to choose resources / plan session. But have been pleased with things I have tried and will continue to use. Hopefully even more next session. Thank you for developing it.
- No further suggestions at this time. I really enjoy using the resource, as do the pupils.
- I feel that the resource has given us enough information / ideas for us to extend these by ourselves.
- At the moment the resource hasn't been used as much because we have been lucky to have an ex music teacher coming into the nursery once a week to give the children a music session. But I have used the Music and Me book for a short time of ten-minute periods with the children, which I find very helpful.
- We haven't used Music and Me as much as we had hoped due to the fact that we are very lucky to have a retired music teacher who offers her services for an hour a week. I still use the ABC music pack, which I enjoy. Hopefully next year we will use it a bit more as I know it has some great ideas.
- This is a great resource for nursery staff to use with both groups. Unfortunately it has been difficult for me to implement this in our nursery due to times and other activities that were ongoing. I do intend to start using it after this summer break.
- Follow up CD with different tracks / story ideas? (Don't always have time in nursery to invent our own!) Really enjoyed the course and its ideas.

Thank you for completing this form.

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Commentary

All the participating Nurseries have received “Music and Me” enthusiastically.

Of the 13 responding nurseries, 12 have successfully integrated significant elements of the resource material into their nursery classes.

5 out of 12 Nurseries using the resource do so once a week or more, with the remainder using the ideas less frequently.

One nursery had yet to utilise the resource because of alternative music provision arrangements

(A regular music input from a parent volunteer).

10 out of 12 nursery staff are moderately to very confident in delivering all aspects of the resource.

One nursery teacher said she was not confident in delivering the “Sound Stories” element.

One nursery teacher said she was less than confident in delivering the “ Group Music-making”.

All staff rated the resource materials as effective – very effective at developing the key skill learning objectives, and observed that the majority of pupils were actively engaged by the tasks.

All 12 nurseries commented that the “Music and Me” programme was having a positive impact on their Nursery pupils and that the material lent itself well to many cross-curricular activities.

Those that used the resource less frequently than once per week cited timetable constrictions/ available time as a factor. Others highlighted the positive value of being able to “dip in” to the resource book for shorter 10-minute activities.

One nursery teacher commented that the accessibility of the resource made it valuable even to staff that had not attended the CPD sessions.

Next Stage

A second roll out phase for the remaining East Lothian Council run Nurseries begins in August 2012. Again this comprises 2 x CPD sessions for staff and follow up support visits to each participating nursery.

In response to the evaluations, CPD sessions have been evolving to address the needs of staff better, with more emphasis on the “Sound Stories” and “Group Music-making” activities that previous participants cited as more challenging.

Further developments and contact details

David Trouton, author of the resource, has developed a website with blog facility available to all nursery staff for commentary, discussion, advice and trouble-shooting:

www.engagewithmusic.wordpress.com

“Music and Me” has now been rolled out by West Lothian and Midlothian Councils, with interest from further local authorities for this academic year.

For further information about “Music and Me” contact:

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