



Fusion

Investigating the efficacy of a training initiative which sought a greater understanding of music

A collaborative action research project between SoundLincs and York St John University

Professor Lee Higgins



A report developed through a collaborative research project between SoundLincs and York St John University.

The research was developed as of part of the SoundLincs Fusion Project involving Looked After Children and Children's Services Practitioners in partnership with York St John University.

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Executive Summary

Commissioned by SoundLincs and funded by Youth Music, the purpose of this document is to articulate the findings of an investigation focused on the efficacy of a training initiative which sought a greater understanding of music, and its value as a resource and intervention for Children's Services Practitioners (CSPs) in Lincolnshire.

The research team took part in a number of training days and engaged the participants in interviews and focus groups exploring the interaction between the Community Music Facilitator and the Children's Services Practitioners, the music skills being passed on and their potential impact on the workforce.

Questions included: What are the distinctive approaches to music development CPD in the SoundLincs project? What are each stakeholder group's experiences of music development CPD? What is the perceived impact of music development CPD from the perspectives of each stakeholder group? What are the wider implications of the project?

Both responding and adding to the existing literature on Looked After Children and associated theoretical frameworks, workforce development, and projects that have previously engaged with music making the research findings suggested that (1) All participants on the training had a significant experience of music and were able to articulate its importance throughout their life journey; (2) A distinctive aspect of the SoundLincs training was to engage participants in a reflective dialogue of their music experience. Reflective practice was embedded in the training and resonated with the participants; (3) The training approach was effective and connected deeply with the Children's Services Practitioners, aligning the personal to the professional. This created a springboard through which the workforce could employ music in developing relationships with the client group in the future; (4) The workforce valued the training and saw it as something different to the usual CPD offer; (5) The workforce indicated that working with music, in the way they were shown had the potential for supporting issues around behaviour and communication. In order to achieve greater impact they would need further resources, particularly technology based ones and importantly senior management support.

One of the objectives of the funding that supported the project was to establish an evidence base that might be replicable beyond the geographic location. Because of the limited sample size and range of stakeholders engaged, this research can only point to the desirability to upscale the project. It is however clear that the primary research and literature point towards the potential benefits of rolling out CPD music training to the Looked After Children workforce.

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to articulate the findings of a project which sought a greater understanding of music, and its value as a resource and intervention for Children's Services Practitioners (CSPs) in Lincolnshire. This project, funded by Youth Music, represents an innovative collaboration between voluntary, statutory and Higher Education partners.

1a. Partners

The following partners participated in the project:

SoundLincs - SoundLincs is a not-for-profit community music organisation operating across the East Midlands. Established in 1998, SoundLincs works in partnership with local, regional and national organisations, providing high quality and innovative music-making opportunities and training for all ages and communities. SoundLincs has a national reputation for delivery and training work around Musical Inclusion, working closely with participants and staff across a wide range of sectors.

SoundLincs state that through their work they aim to:

- Offer training and professional development for both musicians and non-musicians;
- Run music workshops and residencies in an array of music and multi-arts genres; from samba to singing and pop to production and technology;
- Create toolkits, apps, and books designed to provide music-making opportunities to as many people as possible;
- Provide advocacy and information through e-bulletins and social media;
- Undertake research.

Developing partnerships with different organisations is a key element for SoundLincs when organising and delivering projects. There are several partners that SoundLincs work with including: Youth Music, Arts Council England, Lincolnshire County Council and The Mighty Creatives. Through their partnership with Youth Music Fund C, SoundLincs created five different strands of music projects:

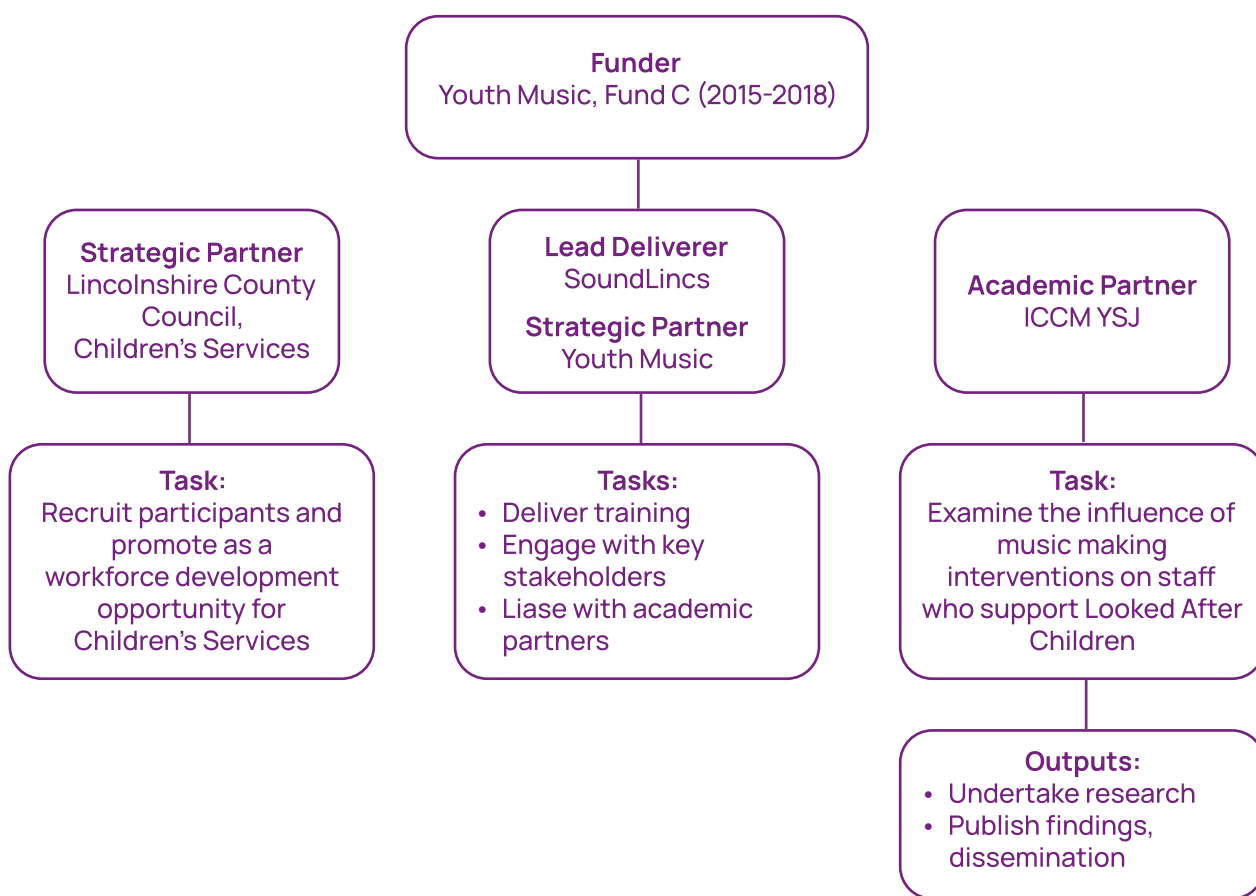
1. soundWELL: A project engaging children in paediatric wards of Lincoln County Hospital;
2. Project Y Nott: Music delivery engaging with Nottinghamshire Youth Justice system;
3. Fusion: An arts programme working with Looked After Children and support staff;
4. Good Vibration: Music making with children with hearing impairment;
5. Groove and Grow: Music making for young parents and children.

Within each strand, SoundLincs aimed to develop frameworks and associated documentation which could be used to help share practice between music practitioners. The documentation would also provide a detailed account of the impact that engaging in music can have for people in challenging circumstances, which could be used to underpin future funding bids and develop new partners. SoundLincs had several outcomes they expected to meet through the projects, ranging from musical outcomes such as increasing the number of music making opportunities for young people or developing their playing ability, through to the social outcomes of raising awareness of the positive benefits of engaging within music for specific individuals.

SoundLincs acted as the Lead Partner in the project, and as such held the funding agreement with Youth Music for the project, as well as the associated governance and project management responsibilities.

- Lincolnshire County Council - The Looked After Children Social Care Team from Lincolnshire County Council were the primary participant group for the project.
- York St John University - SoundLincs commissioned the International Centre for Community Music (ICCM), based at York St John University (YSJ), as the dedicated research leads for the project. This was led by Professor Lee Higgins, Director of the International Centre of Community Music, and supported by a small team of independent researchers¹. The research took place between 2016 - 2018.

Diagram 1: Provides an overview of the partners and their roles in relation to the project



¹ Research Team - Katie Simpson, Director of Learning & Development, BrightSparks CIC
 Research Assistant, Kerry Fletcher
 Student as Researcher, Sam Pheby-McGarvey
 MA Community Music Student - York St John University, Ryan Humprey

1b. Funding

SoundLincs' focus for this project was to engage and train Children's Services Practitioners through a music making training programme, providing them with the skills needed to confidently interact musically with the young people that they work with. The project began in 2016 and the training was located in Lincolnshire, the second largest county in the United Kingdom with a population of approximately 751,200.

The training programme was targeted at children's workforce practitioners working to support Looked After Children. The research was funded by Youth Music Fund C, aimed at developing a musically inclusive England, supporting children in challenging circumstances (CCC).

The research project ran parallel to the funding timescales and sought to understand the impact the training had on those who attended, specifically in relation to their roles supporting children and young people. Whilst poor outcomes for Looked After Children are well evidenced, there is limited research currently on Looked After Children and the influence of music making interventions.

1c. The Fusion Project

This report focuses on The Fusion Project, working with Looked After Children, which was developed in partnership with Lincolnshire Children's Services, who have seen an increase in the number of Looked After Children in Lincolnshire and the East Midlands. With numbers of Looked After Children increasing year on year, Lincolnshire County Council have developed more CPD training opportunities for their staff to help them improve their practice further and cater for this increasing number. Training opportunities offered are usually around helping staff to develop strategies for building relationships with children and young people. SoundLincs and Lincolnshire Children's Services believed that by providing musical training to the children's workforce staff, they would be able to find a new way of developing their relationships with young people by using music as a tool.

The Fusion Project was advertised through the Lincolnshire County Council CPD training system 'Lincs2Learn'. Through the training, it was expected that staff would develop their knowledge and practical skills of delivering music, which could then be taken back and expanded upon within their settings. The training days explored four key questions:

- How does music relate to social pedagogy and signs of safety?
- How can music improve my practice?
- What does music do and how do we know?
- Where can I go for more help and information?

Originally SoundLincs intended to deliver fifteen sessions over a year, with participants able to attend more than one session, allowing them to continue to develop their knowledge and skills. However, the uptake was not as initially expected and this led to schedule changes resulting in far fewer sessions being delivered across the time period. Sessions were initially intended for foster carers, but in the latter stages of the project, this was opened up to include any role in the children's workforce. This appeared to have more success as more participants signed up for the last two sessions being offered.

1d. Training

The focus of the training was on exploring strategies for using music with young people, which can then be utilised to engage young people in the Looked After Care system. The sessions were linked to the Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS)², around 'delivering excellent practice'. The KSS is the assessment and accreditation criteria for social workers supporting vulnerable families.

In total, five training sessions took place, attended by 37 children's workforce practitioners, in two locations across Lincolnshire. Attendees were employed by Lincolnshire County Council and private sector residential care providers.

The stated aims of the training were:

- To demonstrate how music can be an effective method of communication with children and young people
- To show how music can deliver better outcomes for children and young people
- To explore how engaging children and young people in music can be positively related to
- To increase participants' confidence in music making and model activities that directly engage children and young people
- To signpost to musical activities provided by SoundLincs, Lincolnshire Music Service and others
- To highlight the Inquiring Minds Process³ and engage participants in the research activities

Rather than an exploration of how to play different instruments, the training aimed to provide participants with ideas of small musical activities that could be developed further with the young person. The activities covered within the project varied from exploring technological applications which could be used on iPads, to activities which explored different songs and how they may evoke different emotions within individuals. All activities were developed with the intention of participants being able to use resources they already had access to, alongside making links to initiatives which staff may already be using such as signs of safety or social pedagogy.

The course focused on using music to improve communication with children and young people to achieve better outcomes. Supporting practitioners to enable them to use music confidently in their direct work was one of the key objectives. The training was designed to be interactive, participatory and creative. It sought to engage participants in a variety of activities that connect to the visceral power of music, including: practical music making using instruments and iPads, reflecting on own experiences of music, responding to videos, working in pairs, small groups and whole group discussions.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knowledge-and-skills-statements-for-child-and-family-social-work>

³ Details of the Inquiring Minds Process: <https://www.soundlincs.org>

Table 1: Illustrates the range of course participants and their roles:

Participant roles (Sept 16)	Participant roles (Nov 17)	Total number of delegates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Support Worker • Residential Care Officers • Early Help • Early Years Practitioners • Adoption Support • Young Inspectors • Researchers • Youth Offending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Support Worker • Residential Care Officers • Early Help • Early Years Practitioners • Adoption Support Young Inspectors • Researchers • Therapeutic Activity Practitioners from a residential care facility • Social Workers • Placement Support Workers 	37

All of the courses were facilitated by John Stafford, Programme Development Manager with SoundLincs and supported by Nikki-Kate Heyes, Chief Executive Officer, who worked together on designing the general structure and concepts of the training. Sam Clayton, Principal Child and Family Social Worker at Lincolnshire County Council, also contributed to the training to ensure strong links to current workforce development priorities.

About the Research

Essentially, the purpose of the research project was one of knowledge transfer. Through its Fund C investment programme, Youth Music encourages organisations to plan for change in particular areas. This project had a focus toward “workforce development” and had three project aims:

1. To facilitate a positive change with respect to music making for Children’s Services Practitioners in Lincolnshire
2. To improve the outcomes for Looked After Children in Lincolnshire through music making interventions
3. To evidence the change in Lincolnshire, and advocate for similar workforce development strategies in other Children’s Services nationally and internationally

2a. Looked After Children in Lincolnshire and the Children’s Workforce

There are currently⁴ 669 Looked After Children in Lincolnshire, the majority of whom are looked after in foster care. There are three children’s homes, three children with disability homes, and one secure unit. The Council has 339 qualified Social Workers and the same number in Early Help. Lincolnshire is largely rural, with 170,000 young people under 19, who are predominately white British. Currently the Council is rated as ‘good’ by Ofsted, with ‘Outstanding’ for adoption in the 2014 Single Inspection Framework. In 2016, a Joint Targeted Area Inspection was undertaken which focused on Domestic Abuse and, whilst this is not a graded inspection, there were no priority actions to be completed. The new Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) is due imminently. Lincolnshire County Council promoted the course to their staff and assisted in linking the training to existing frameworks, such as social pedagogy and signs of safety.

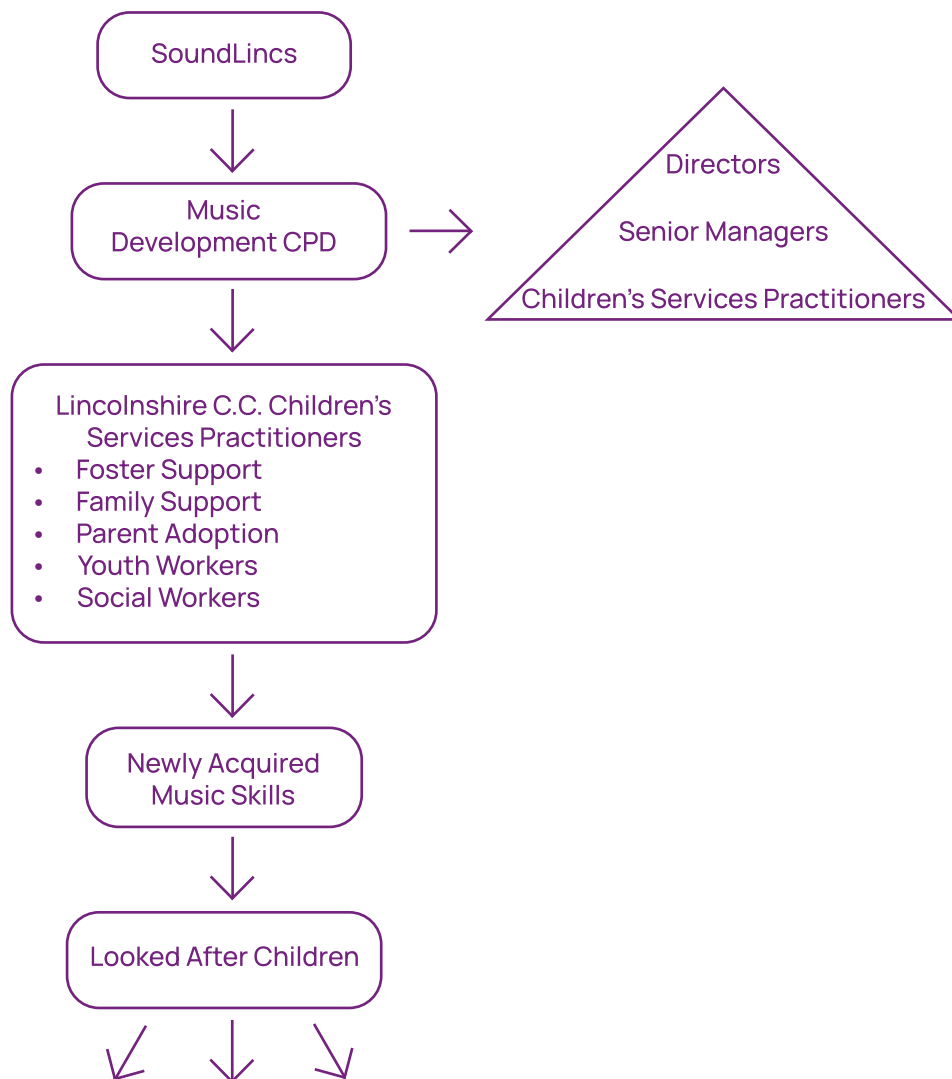
This helped to ensure that the workforce development objectives of the Council were embedded within the training. Lincolnshire County Council has a strong workforce development offer and actively recruited and promoted the course to staff in order to positively change⁵ the understanding of music, and its value as a resource and intervention, for Children’s Services Practitioners (CSPs).

The training had an objective of engaging a wide range of practitioners, with the intention that Directors, Senior Managers and practitioners alike would attend the training.

⁴Information from February 2018 - source - Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Research Observatory

⁵In this instance positive change means, being positive about music interventions and taking initiatives to provide them

Diagram 2: Illustrates the scope of the project and its intended outcomes



2b. Methodological Approach and Limitations

The research began in February 2016 and concluded in March 2018. A range of methods were selected as part of this longitudinal study. These included participant observation, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, telephone interviews and email surveys. A specially designed web portal was also developed and focus group discussions were embedded within the last two days of the training, to further enrich the data collection.

2c. Research Questions

The central inquiry revolved around the following:

- The interaction between the Community Music Facilitators and the Children's Services Practitioners - the music skills they pass on and how they are received;
- The impact the training has on the Children's Services Practitioners. How the skills were received and how useful they are deemed to be;
- The potential impact of these newly learned music skills with the Looked After Children.

Following this, the ICCM research team's guiding research questions focused on these key questions:

- What are the distinctive approaches to music development CPD in the SoundLincs project?
- What are each stakeholder group's experiences of music development CPD?
- What is the perceived impact of music development CPD from the perspectives of each stakeholder group?
- What are the wider implications of the project?

Categorised under four headings the research team explored:

Approaches to community music development

- What happens in the training?
- What is distinctive?
- How is it received?

Community Music Facilitators

- What is their background and experience?
- What are their reflections on the process?

Lincolnshire Children's Services employees (Directors, Senior Managers, CSPs)

- What is their background and experience?
- What are their reflections on the process?

Newly acquired music skills

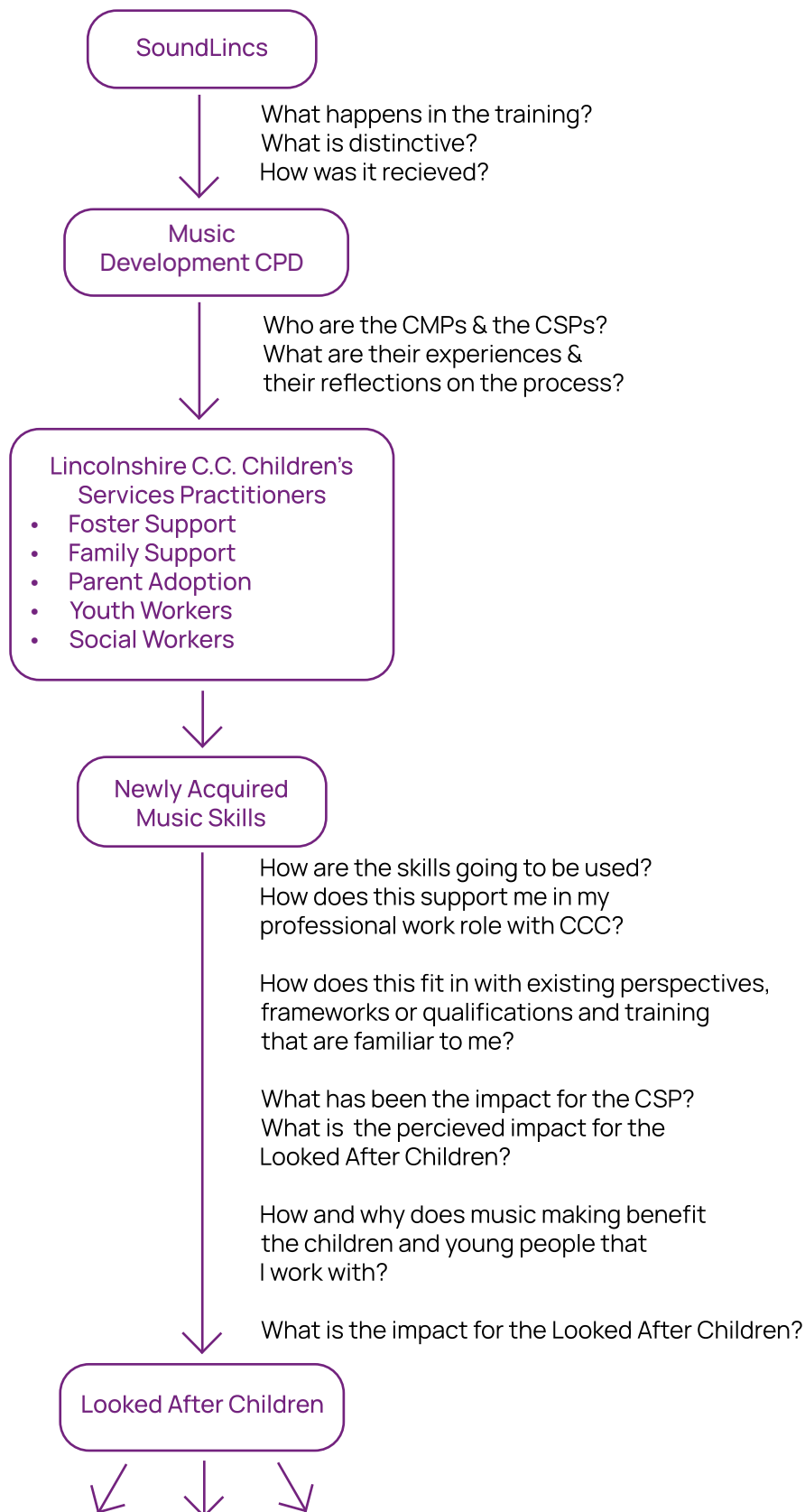
- How are the skills going to be used?
- How do the skills support practitioners' work role(s) with Looked After Children?
- How does this fit in with existing perspectives, frameworks or qualifications and training that are familiar to practitioners?
- What has been the impact for the CSPs?
- What is the perceived impact for the Looked After Children?
- How and why does music-making benefit Looked After Children and young people?

Diagram 3: Shows a model of the research process

CMP: Community Music Practitioner

CSP: Children's Services Practitioner

CCC: Children in Challenging Circumstances



Literature Review

3a. Headlines

Looked After Children have significant issues with attachment. Interacting with music appeared to help Looked After Children in their bonding with the adults in their lives;

Social pedagogy was the most used framework within residential homes. Social pedagogy was the most common approach used by those implementing music projects;

Educational attainment and development of language, behavioural and social skills were lower in Looked After Children than their peers. Music projects targeted language, behavioural and social skills;

Underdeveloped communication skills are typical with the Looked After Children population. Significantly, Looked After Children struggled to identify an individual adult that they feel they can trust. Music making was a useful tool in aiding communication;

Continuing professional development (CPD) training is good for skills development and motivation. The workload is high and complex, and this makes it hard to find the time to attend CPD training;

CPD training is too repetitive. The training on offer is often very similar. Workers wanted to attend training sessions that developed new ideas and approaches and the music sessions appeared to have fulfilled this role.

3b. Approach

In order to locate documents, searches were made through electronic databases that included: academic search complete, Taylor and Francis online, York St John Information Learning database and EBSCO. Key words such as, Looked After Children, music making, attachment, CPD, creativity, social pedagogy, music in everyday life, social work CPD, Community Music, social work, were used. Although it became clear that we would not be awash with material we found the following:

- Four reports evaluating the success of music projects in the UK working with Looked After Children
- Seven reports which explored current CPD training procedures for UK children's workforce staff and the potential pitfalls of the training being offered
- Five articles outlining the impact of identity and belonging that individuals felt when engaging within community music projects
- 22 documents focusing on the lives of Looked After Children, including; mental health trends, educational attainment and attachment development
- Nine articles and reports outlining attachment theory and the importance of young children developing secure attachments
- Two books focusing on the role of music in the everyday and the impact that this had upon individuals

The most common form of research design within the documents reviewed, generally followed Case Study research as a strategy. Several music projects were evaluated in relation to the developments of the participants whilst others were based on both comparison models, such as studies focusing in on the different impacts of attachment or resilience building, or studies focusing in on different pedagogical methods being used in children's homes. These studies often focused upon small cases and then compared the data between each source as a way of being able to distinguish the results.

Data collection methods were unsurprisingly qualitative in nature, such as focus groups and one-to-one interviews. These approaches were deployed to capture individual narratives and highlight personal stories. These accounts were predominantly used within reports that sought to evaluate the success of the music projects, although case studies focusing on Looked After Children and staff also often used interviews to gather individual's thoughts. A small number of studies used questionnaires to garner contextual information, such as individual's background (including demographic, economic, and cultural) and perspectives of the space and place through which the work happened. Reflective logs were a common method used within the studies we viewed that had a focus on music. These were employed to gather individual's opinions of the music projects they had been engaged in. Many of the evaluation reports also used reflection logs with Music Facilitators to gather their thoughts on the developments that individuals were making each week, and how they were musically supporting these developments.

We felt that the limitations of the studies were that the music evaluations had little by the way of focus on the impact that attending the project was having on the adults. Almost all evaluation reports were able to pinpoint specific developments within the child, but many did not focus on the potential impact this had on the adults attending. For example, new skill development or consideration of the use of music within a working environment. The music evaluations also appeared to lack a focus on the developments and impact that attending the project was having outside of the sessions. Many of these reports evaluated how the child was developing within the session, but did not appear to consider how they were developing away from the session in their everyday lives. This may not have been in the various research briefs, but we felt it is worth highlighting, pointing out that for a full understanding of the impact music can have one has to look beyond the sessions themselves. In the reports exploring CPD training there were limitations on the procedures and targets social workers have to meet. These are constantly changing and developing and therefore the targets outlined at the beginning of any said study may well have changed. Limitations were also identified within the studies exploring social pedagogy within children's homes, in which many of the studies focus on using a lot of the same 'everyday' activities with little information given into the benefits of using creative activities, such as music.

3c. Background

There are three key themes related to Looked After Children practice and theory, attachment theory, social pedagogy, and communication and learning. These conceptual fields are often explored within studies that focus on children facing challenging circumstances. Each of these areas will be given a brief overview before being explored in relation to specific musical implications.

3c.a. Attachment Theory

All children need to form secure attachments. Looked After Children need to form attachments with adults in order to help them overcome the challenges of being within new and strange environments. The adults in question can vary from child to child, but usually this will be with either a foster carer, adoptive parents or social workers, who go on to become a support network for helping the child in their developmental growth.

With a focus upon the importance that it plays within child development and within individual's lives, attachment theory has been put to the test across numerous studies and disciplines. John Bowlby (1935) one of the leading figures in the development of the theory, suggested that children are born with the need to form a secure attachment to an individual as a survival mechanism. Bowlby's studies into notions of attachment discovered that the early years of a child's life constitute the critical moments for establishing secure attachments to an adult. These usually manifest through the child's mother as she will communicate with the child both physically (cuddling, smiling) and verbally (talking, singing) and thus enable healthy bonding (Bretherton, 1992; Bowlby, 1988).

A key feature of Bowlby's work (1969) is the 'internal working model' (IWM), or how the child views the self and their expectations with regards to interactions with others. These expectations are related to the primary carer's responses to, and ability to meet, the needs of the child. For example, in a loving relationship where the carer is consistently responsive to the child, the child will feel secure, viewing themselves as lovable and worthy of the love of others. Consequently, a secure attachment will be formed. Where this is not the case, this can lead to the development of insecure attachments. These attachments are suggested by Bowlby as being a source for how a child may build future relationships with others and highlights how important the development of secure and healthy attachments are. Acknowledging the changing composition of the modern family, the term caregiver has replaced Bowlby's focus on the mother. It is also now widely accepted that multiple attachments can bring benefit.

Building on Bowlby's work, Ainsworth et al (1979) and Main et al (1985) identified four different types of attachments: (1) secure, (2) anxious-avoidant, (3) anxious ambivalent and (4) disorganised. Being in a secure attachment with a solid foundation results in the child being able to explore and learn about both the physical and emotional world that surrounds them (Schofield, 2007). For children in the care system, whose lives may be full of inconsistencies, lack of trust and insecure or disorganised attachments, their full engagement in exploratory learning is often affected negatively. Having a social worker providing a secure base can make a difference to the children's ability to explore and thus have a positive impact on their resilience (Gilligan, 2001).

Maslow's (1943) famous 'hierarchy of needs' is a model that breaks down the different components a person must have within their lives to be able to reach optimum fulfilment. Within this, the need to feel 'belonging and love' is particularly high and is linked to Bowlby's (1935) suggestion of children needing to form a secure attachment to a caregiver to survive. Maslow's hierarchy orientates around five components; (1) the psychological needs (food, water), (2) safety needs (security and safety), (3) belongings and love needs (attachment, love, relationships), (4) esteem needs (prestige and recognition) and (5) self-actualisation (achieving full potential, creativity). Although music making is not mentioned specifically within this model, it could be utilised within four of the areas; (1) the building of belonging, (2) the building of attachment, (3) their esteem needs and (4) providing a source of creativity within the individual's life.

3c.b. Attachment Theory in Relation to Looked After Children

In many of the reports that focus on working with Looked After Children, attachment theory is extensively drawn upon as a way for helping shape the way that the children's workforce engages with the children. Often these insights include focusing on the absence of attachments that Looked After Children can face due to not being able to secure attachments with individuals in the earliest stages of life, or not having a secure placement when in care (See Stein, 2005; Council, 2010; Smith, 2017). UK government statistics indicate that over 62% of the children are in care due to abuse or neglect, pointing towards unsecure attachment between the child and parent/carer.⁶

Similarly, in the report 'Our Children Deserve Better' (2012), Doug Simkiss states that 'Looked After Children desired love and affection, but this was often lacking in their lives' (p.5) resonating with McAuley and Davis (2009) who found that one of the biggest impacts on mental health and resilience for a Looked After Child is neglect from the birth parent.

Mike Stein's study (2005) explored how young people in care can develop 'resilience' and makes the correlation between this and attachment theory. Stein's study suggests that there are three groups of Looked After Children that leave care; (1) the Moving On group, (2) the Survivors group and (3) the Victim group' (p.27). The Moving On group are young people who have experienced stability and attachment, and therefore gained resilience whilst in the looked after care system. The Survivors group have struggled to maintain these attachments and stability that the moving on group achieved, resulting in a weaker resilience. The Victim group are the group most affected from being in the care system, where they have struggled to achieve stability and attachments, leading to little to no resilience and a struggle in life after leaving the care system.

As knowledge of the importance of developing attachment within Looked After Children's lives has developed, the UK government have offered training around attachment to the children's workforce staff. The 2014 Knowledge and Skills Statement (Department for Education) outlined the role of social workers, foster carers and adoptive parents as being a central role in helping children form attachments and make transitions within their life (DfE, 2014, p.3).

3c.c Social Pedagogy

Another key theoretical construction associated with children facing challenging circumstances is termed social pedagogy. Social pedagogy is described as being an approach 'where the care and educational needs of an individual meet' (Cameron & Moss, 2012). At the centre of this pedagogical approach lies the idea of the common third, a way to describe how a child and adult partake within a joint activity together and as such both develop stronger bonds. The types of activities do of course depend upon the situation which the child and adult find themselves in, however, a study by the Thomas Coram Research Unit suggests that when using social pedagogy, 'The pedagogue must also be creative being prepared to share in many of the children's everyday lives, such as preparing meals and snacks, or making music' (Cameron, 2007 p.4). Cameron and Moss's (2012) report places emphasis on how individuals must reflect on the activity, in order to develop the relationship further (p.48).

Through these reflections it is suggested that adults can help children to 'empower themselves - through listening to the child and involving them in the important decisions' (Cameron & Moss, 2012 p.47). An article by ThemPra⁷ suggests that equal reflection should be given to the pedagogue's involvement and how the activity made them feel. This will in turn help to develop a sense of how the child may have felt at that time and make the pedagogue look for specific moments where there may be developments being made.

⁶ (Anon n.d) Department of Education- National Statistics for looked after children. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664995/SFR50_2017-Children_looked_after_in_England.pdf

⁷ ThemPra is a company focused on social pedagogical practice. See <http://www.thempra.org.uk/social-pedagogy/>

Reports focusing on the use of social pedagogy within the UK discuss how it is commonly used within children's residential homes (Berridge et al. 2010; Cameron, 2007; Cameron & Petrie, 2011). The Fostering Network⁸ offers training for foster carers on social pedagogical practice and, following their training programme it was reported that carers were able to build: 'stronger relationships around the child, prepare the child better for panels, help develop the child's resilience and support the young child through placement movement' (p.4). Many of the outcomes, such as developing their confidence, attainment within school and behavioural skills link with Simkiss (2010) who has suggested that the support that Looked After Children currently need was in making secure connections with adults that will support them within these different areas.

3c.d. Communication and Learning

Documents relating to working with Looked After Children point towards the importance of providing a space of communication for the child with an adult (Simkiss, 2012; Berridge, 2010; Cameron et al, 2007). In the report 'Our Children Deserve Better' (2012), the authors outlined that work needed to be done to develop communication between Looked After Children and the adults within their lives, to help aid better communication (Simkiss, 2012 p.6). McAuley and Davis' (2009) study indicated within Looked After Children's lives the feeling of neglect was stated to have stemmed from having no opportunity for communication.

Many of the reports relating to working with Looked After Children describe how young people should be given the opportunity to communicate their voice in relation to the development of their care plans (Rahilly & Trevelyan, 2010; Cameron & Moss, 2012; Simkiss, 2012). Enshrined in legislation and frameworks followed by social workers is the requirement for them to ascertain the views of children and to take these into account when making decisions that affect them (Unicef, 1989; Children Act, 1989; DfE, 2014). Hence, communication is of particular importance when working with Looked After Children to ensure that decisions made serve the best interests of the individual children concerned. However, a study by Handley and Doyle (2012) found that child protection social workers deemed the communication training they had received during initial qualification training to be inadequate, despite their reporting using several different methods to engage and communicate with children in their practice. They relied on in-service training to boost these skills, which required a positive attitude and support from managers to ensure training opportunities were given.

A report by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)⁹ suggests that, in order to achieve emotional wellbeing for a Looked After Child, that they should 'be enabled to define what good emotional wellbeing looks like for themselves [...] be treated as experts of the care system' (Rahilly & Trevelyan, 2010 p.7).

However, a report by the Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists¹⁰ analysing communication between Looked After Children and their support network found that children in the looked after care system are often hindered by reduced communication skills. Similarly, Lefevre (2004) argues that children often don't have the language ability or cognitive development to convey their experiences through language alone, thus requiring additional symbolic means of communication, such as play and visual images. Furthermore, she advises that social workers working directly with children can use music as a communication tool, to aid relationship development between the social worker and child, and to act as a container within which they can explore their emotions and experiences.

⁸ The Fostering Network is a UK Charity. See <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/>

⁹ <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

¹⁰ www.rcslt.org

Many of these skills are developed through communication with a parent and through attending school. Reports examining the educational attainment of children in challenging circumstances found that they were often lower than their peers (Simkiss, 2012; McAuley & Davis, 2009; Booth, 2010). The study conducted by McAuley and Davis (2009), found that only 13% of Looked After Children received five or more GCSEs ranging from A-C, with 34% of Looked After Children leaving school with no GCSEs at all (p.148). Several reasons are explored through the study, which also resonate with Simkiss' report and Booth's report as they believe educational attainment is lower. Booth and Simkiss' reports suggest that the lower absence rate has a knock-on effect upon educational attainment, with a 'lack of encouragement and support' being a particular reason why some Looked After Children do not attend school (Simkiss, 2012 p.6). Other reasons ranged from the need for more practical support to more support for continuity in placement settings, to help develop better educational outcomes (p.6).

In 2014, the UK government developed a number of initiatives to support children facing challenging circumstances within school. The initiatives ranged from helping children secure places within school, to providing more support and training for those involved within care.¹¹ However, a study conducted by the University of Oxford and the University of Bristol found that even with the initiatives in place the educational attainment of Looked After Children was still inadequate compared to that of their peers (Sebeda et al, 2015 p.30). The report suggested that with older children in the looked after care system; that challenging behaviour, attending a mainstream school and having a large number of absences, prevented them from achieving targeted grades (p.30-32).

3d. Musical Implications

Several reports have outlined how music can be used as a tool to form attachments. The Youth Music evidence review (Dillon, 2010) and Loud and Clear evidence pack (Mooney & Young, 2012) both outline how joint participation between carer and the child helped form attachments to each other. Cre8tive Vocals was one of the projects identified within the Youth Music report (2010), where participants are encouraged to use lyrics as a way of expressing themselves (Dillion, 2010 p.20). This was of particular importance, as it is reported across numerous studies how Looked After Children can struggle to develop relationships due to a lack of trust to express themselves (Dillion, 2010; Hughes, 2000; Stein, 2005). Through having the carers join in with the sessions the music making became a 'leveller', where there was a space for communication between both parties, helping the children to develop their voice (Dillion, 2010 p.20).

The various music reports (Mooney & Young, 2012; Dillon, 2010) also focus on how engaging within music making helps the young person develop skills they did not know they had. Within one of the cases that Dillon focuses on, participants were able to develop their musical skills and received recognition from the Music Facilitators on their input into the creative process (p.23). This in turn led to them feeling more confident and an increase within their self-esteem, linking to Maslow's hierarchy (1943) and the need for individuals to feel a sense of self-esteem within their lives. A study by Eric Clarke, Nicola Dibbens and Stephanie Pitts (2009) stated that 'engaging in musical and other kinds of recreational activities (such as games and sports) is one means by which people achieve personal fulfilment' (p.2). Dillion's report continues to focus on self-esteem, suggesting that through developing a stronger sense of esteem in themselves, they were able to feel that they were much more part of the group.

¹¹ Grasping the Nettle: Early intervention for children, families and communities-report: <https://www.familyaction.org.uk/content/uploads/2014/07/Early-Intervention-Grasping-the-Nettle-Full-Report.pdf>

A study of conducting drumming sessions with children from a residential setting in South Africa (Fores et al, 2016) also highlighted the benefits to children, particularly the positive impact on their social and emotional functioning during and immediately after group sessions. However, the researchers noted that when the children went back to their residential setting, the benefits did not transfer and as a result, the staff did not notice the same changes. The researchers suggest that this could be counteracted by encouraging staff in residential settings and schools attended by the children to do follow-up activities with the children.

Salkeld's (2008) work into the impact that music therapy can have in helping Looked After Children develop relationships with their families focuses on children going through the adoption procedure, stating that 'adopted children who have had a number of attachment and loss experiences in their early lives may experience emotional problems which lead to difficulties in trusting their adoptive parents (Salkeld & Oldfield, 2008 p.141). Within Salkeld's exploration of her practice as a music therapist, there is recognition of the importance of providing a space for parent and child to explore music together. For example, she writes around how music is used in her sessions as a form of non-verbal communication between parent and child, where each one joins in, often with the child taking the lead with the adult following (p.142). Within Salkeld's past experience, this is outlined as being a place where the child can explore their past trauma, in a way where there is no pressure of having to put it into words.

There have been numerous reports that have examined social pedagogy within music practice. The Loud and Clear evidence review pack (2012), Youth Music review (2010) and Sing Up evidence review (2012), all have developed projects that enable joint interactions between carers and children to take place within the musical setting. The findings from the reports suggested that active joint cooperation helped develop the attachment that a child felt to an adult and also helped them develop their confidence, by providing an opportunity for their voice to be heard. This was suggested within the Loud and Clear project by one of the participants as being unique and unlike other everyday activities they could provide for the child (Mooney & Younger, 2012). Similarly, Daniel Levitin (2010) in exploring the impact of engaging within music suggests that music is unique, as it is one of the only art forms where there is the opportunity for synchronous (doing an activity at the same time) to occur, which when a parent and child do the activity together, helps form a bond (Levitin, 2010 p.5).

Similar findings were also found in a study undertaken by Williams and Barret (2015) that explored the use of music making within the home environment between adult and child, which found that 'parent and child home learning activities, that required joint attention, active cooperation, turn taking and immediate feedback between parent and child, support child's self-regulatory system and social development' (Williams, 2015 p.112).

Thus linking to features resembling Cameron and Moss's work exploring social pedagogy and the evidence from the different music organisations reports (Cameron & Moss, 2012; Dillon, 2010; Mooney & Younger, 2012).

For individuals who are working with children in a social pedagogical approach, it is suggested they should follow the 'Heads, Hearts and Hands' framework (Chambers & Petrie, 2009; Cameron & Moss, 2012). The framework broken down, states that adults should work with children with their:

Head - using the knowledge they have of the child to create sessions that work for them;
Heart - bring their own emotions to the work as well as taking into account that of the child's;
Hands - the actual doing of the activity.¹²

The framework has recently been adapted by Chambers and Petrie (2009) as a tool for artistic pedagogues who may be working with children facing challenging circumstances. In the adaptation, reflection became a central role alongside having quality indicators in place, which are both suggested as being undertaken within the Loud and Clear music project (Mooney & Younger, 2012) and across the various Youth Music projects (Dillon, 2010). For instance, within the Loud and Clear project, staff were expected to keep weekly reflection logs as indicators for any developments from the participants on a weekly basis (Mooney & Younger, 2012 p.15).

Studies and reports focusing on the effects of engaging within music making have developed insights into the various ways it can be used as a form of communication. Ansdell and Pavlicevic have explored musical communication in relation to a music theory approach, in which they suggested that playing music provided a 'way of being with others in the world' (Ansdell, 2010 p.204). The study focused on a music therapist working with a young child in which they created music together, but similar findings were also suggested by Malloch and Trevarthen's (2012) study on mother and child music making. Their findings suggested that when making music with a child, the parent will be communicating emotions to the child and a sense of belonging (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009 p.302).

Malloch and Trevarthen (2009) study also suggested that through music making, individuals can learn and develop their language, alongside developing their knowledge of the world around them. This has been examined by other academics, such as Levitin (2010), who suggests that songs such as 'the wheels on the bus, can communicate ideas about the social world around the child' (p.147). Within the Loud and Clear evaluation pack, it is reported that through alongside helping the child develop their attachment with a guardian, participants have also developed their language and knowledge of the outside world through having the space to communicate their ideas into the music making (Mooney & Younger, 2012). Similarly, projects with older children in challenging circumstances reported by Youth Music, found that through attending the projects participants developed their communication with their carers whilst developing their musical skill (Dillon, 2010).

Various studies have focused on music as a tool for communication within individuals everyday lives (DeNora, 2011, 2014; Clarke et al, 2009). Within studies undertaken by DeNora and Clarke it was suggested that individuals found that music was a cultural artefact that facilitated everyday emotions (De Nora, 2011 p.3; Clarke et al, 2009 p.4). De Nora's (2011) work found that individuals in some cases used music to help them communicate their emotions as a way of helping to 'make sense of situations, as something which people may become aware when they are trying to determine or tune into an ongoing situation' (p.13). Suggesting that individuals use music and the impact it has on their emotions, to help them better understand what is going on around them. Thus linking to Salkeld's (2008) study and how the individuals were able to make sense of the situation around them through using music.

¹²See <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/>

Clarke's study (2011) describes the emotional engagement with music as being potentially a 'safe' environment where participants can explore their emotions. Within Dillon's report (2010) it was stated that the young people involved within the project created lyrics of expressing their emotions (p.20). Providing a safe space to explore emotions links to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943) and the need for individuals to feel that they have a safe environment where they can express themselves. Camlin (2015) suggests that community music projects often provide a welcoming, safe environment, as often participants are welcomed into the group without having to go through an audition process. Similar findings are also apparent within Higgins' work exploring acts of hospitality within community music (2007; 2012). Higgins suggests that within these acts of hospitality the 'welcoming' to the group is important as a first step for building relationships, and often the musical ability is not the sole judgement criteria, but rather it is their engagement with the project and members of the group. These ideas resonate with the findings from the Youth Music review (2010) where Music Facilitators within the projects took participants at face value and this enabled participants to feel at ease when participating.

3e. Workforce Development

3e.a. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in Social Work

The social work context is constantly changing in response to policy and legislation changes and the changing needs of service users (Postle et al, 2002). To keep up with these changes, social workers need to engage in CPD (Turner, 2005, cited in Brady, 2013). The Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC, 2017a) defines CPD as a 'range of learning activities through which professionals maintain and develop throughout their career', ensuring they are 'able to practice safely, effectively, and legally'.¹³

In order to legally practice, social workers are required to register with the HCPC. To maintain their registration, they need to demonstrate that they meet proficiency standards set out by the HCPC, including those related specifically to CPD (HCPC, 2017b). Meeting these involves: maintaining an up-to-date record that demonstrates a variety of CPD activities have been undertaken, and participating in CPD activities that are relevant to their current or future practice and that may benefit the service users they are working with (HCPC, 2017c). Relevant CPD activities might include: attending internal and external training, reading, reflective practice, promotion, and discussions with colleagues (HCPC, 2012). However, social workers need to be able to provide evidence of their activities which could, for example, be in the form of certificates, training notes, or a reflective account, in the event that they are called upon by the HCPC to submit their CPD profile for audit. There are no rules as to the number of hours of CPD activities that must be undertaken per year, instead focus is on the outcomes of the learning activity and the impact that this may have on practice and the service user (Potter, 2013). Hence it is the responsibility of those working in the sector to ensure they have done enough CPD activities to satisfy the HCPC that they meet the CPD standards.

In addition to the HCPC standards, there are other standards for different purposes which social workers are expected to follow in their practice. For example, the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) sets out competency standards for social workers at different levels of their career across different domains (BASW, 2017). Within the domain entitled 'Professionalism', social workers need to be 'committed to professional development'. Hence, from a policy and legislative perspective, CPD is an integral part of social work practice.

¹³Health & Care Professions Council is a UK regulator for Health and Care Professionals. <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registrants/cpd/intro/>

3e.b. Tensions in CPD

Over recent years, there have been debates concerning the nature of CPD and whether there should be an outcomes and a competency-based approach, where learning is based on meeting a set of targets, or a more reflective, process based approach (Halton et al, 2013; Postle et al, 2002). Both approaches are problematic. The former has been criticised as reducing CPD to a rote learning, tick-box exercise, and the latter as failing to recognise the socio-political context of social work practice (Postle et al, 2002). Furthermore, Eraut (1994) argues that these approaches on their own are unable to accommodate a holistic approach to CPD that takes into consideration both personal and professional development.

3e.c. Barriers, Motivators and Facilitators to Engaging in CPD

Brady's (2013) research on child protection workers in Ireland found that they engaged in CPD to maintain enthusiasm for the job, to develop different perspectives with which to view their caseloads, and to progress in their careers. An earlier study of Irish social workers by Kirwan (2012) noted that knowledge gain was a motivating factor and that participants in the study wanted to either broaden their knowledge, or to focus more in-depth on specific aspects related to their practice.

Several factors in Kirwan's (2012) study were found to facilitate participation in CPD, including employer assistance with finances, time, and travel. Support from colleagues and supervisors was also a factor, with the former helping with workloads and the latter being a source of encouragement. This echoes the findings of other research which indicates that CPD can be difficult where managers do not value staff training (Boulet et al, 2007 cited in Halton et al, 2013). Organisational structures can also hinder participation. Kirwan (2012) identified that in some instances, structures meant social workers were marginalised from training provision, resulting in their paying for and carrying out CPD activities in their own time.

In Beddoe's (2013) study of social workers in New Zealand, participants identified the link between CPD and professionalism, and consequently saw it as a way of achieving greater professional status for the sector. In turn, they anticipated that this would enable them to compete against other higher status health professionals, as well as promote recognition of the achievements of social work as a profession. They viewed the recent introduction of a register for social workers positively, hoping it would lead to improved CPD provision and access to CPD resources.

Brady's (2013) research indicates that social workers need to perceive training as relevant to their caseloads to prevent it being considered a waste of time. In addition to relevance, the pitch and content of the training can also be important. Australian research by Boulet et al (2007 cited in Halton et al, 2013) found that some social workers at the end of their careers considered training to be too basic, while others found some CPD courses to be repetitive and lacking in new content. Relevant and useful training is of particular importance to those working in the sector, as work missed while attending training needs to be caught up on and as such, training can become an added burden on top of the demands already faced by social workers (Kirwan, 2012; Postle et al, 2002). However, Postle et al (2002) suggest that participants may not always see the immediate relevance of training. It is also possible that training deemed irrelevant at the time may be relevant to a social worker's future work roles and caseloads.

A further difficulty associated with staff taking time off work for training is the cost and difficulties in finding cover (Skinner, 2005). Work may become a balancing act between doing CPD activities and working with service users (SU), in which case, priority is with the SU (Boulet et al, 2007 cited in Halton et al, 2013). Brady's (2013) research documents how social workers sometimes had to cancel training due to unexpected issues arising with SU, highlighting the precarious nature of arranging CPD training. The difficulties in engaging with CPD are possibly being exacerbated by the current context of austerity, with cuts continuously being made to provision, leading to time, staff and money being increasingly stretched (Halton et al, 2013).

This review of existing research suggests that engaging in CPD is not easy for social workers and does not always result in the desired return for their time and energy given to it. Given the difficulties presented here, it is no surprise that social workers in Beddoe's (2013) research used the language of struggle to describe their experiences of CPD, acknowledging CPD as something they had to fight and battle for.

3f. Recent Developments

Last year saw the introduction of the Children and Social Work Act (2017). As a result, the existing regulatory body, HCPC, is to be replaced with a new regulatory body, Social Work England. This is to be set up and a new set of standards in place by 2020, signaling a period of further changes to the practice and CPD requirements of those working in the sector (BASW, 2017).

3g. Findings from the Literature

In this section we present our findings from the literature review through three levels:

1. Headlines from the literature;
2. Questions that these statements evoked;
3. Further responses taken directly from the literature reviewed.

Our process was to review the literature and summarise what we felt were the key points. We then reflected on these statements and asked critical questions of them. Armed with these questions, we then returned to the literature in order to see how the author might have responded to them. Each highlight raised a multitude of questions. For example, what questions did they have for you and how would you respond to them?

1. Looked After Children have significant issues with attachment. Interacting with music appeared to help Looked After Children in their bonding with the adults in their lives.
2. How do the music projects 'help' in their bonding? Where are the examples? What stories are there to be told?
3. Looked After Children have significant issues with attachment. Interacting with music helped Looked After Children in their bonding with the adults in their lives, often providing an opportunity to engage through a shared activity. Loud and Clear foster family learning (2012) at Sage Gateshead, incorporated shared musical activities into the session (playing instruments together, dancing to the beat). Carers noted this joint activity helped strengthen their bond as they were both actively engaged together. Similarly, Youth Music (Dillon, 2010) projects reported that the activities provided an opportunity for carers to engage in non-hierarchical activity, where they could learn more about the child.

1. Social pedagogy was the most used framework within residential homes. Social pedagogy was the most common approach used by those implementing music projects.
 2. How was this approach utilised by musicians? Where did they receive their training? How did this framework impact their work? Did the integration of social pedagogy change the way they approach their work as community musicians, if so how?
 3. Social pedagogues often follow the common third approach to provide a shared activity of interest. For example, the Loud and Clear (2012) project asks adult participants to join in the actions and singing of the songs, this provides a shared activity, where the expectation is both the adult and child are joining in. Youth Music projects were developed in partnership with care services, providing training around the needs of the child and approaches used (Dillon, 2010).
-
1. Educational attainment and development of language, behavioural and social skills were lower in Looked After Children than their peers. Music projects targeted language, behavioural and social skills.
 2. In what ways did the musicians target language, behavioural and social skills? What were the strategies used? Were they successful, if so how do we know?
 3. Educational attainment and development of language, behavioural and social skills were lower in Looked After Children than their peers. Music projects target language, behavioural and social skills. Loud and Clear foster family provides a break within the session, where children can interact with each other and develop their social skills. A Youth Music project targeting self-expression (Cre8tive Vocals) engaged participants in developing their language, through creating lyrics for songs about their life (Dillon, 2010 p.20). Additionally, through creating these lyrics, participants were able to develop their confidence and self-expression which aided them in developing their social skills. Success in developing the areas of behavioural and language development, could be seen in the Loud and Clear project: participants' interaction within the session, the development of language through various repertoire and the ability to share instruments with others. For example, George within the Loud and Clear project was seen to be playing with other participants more through attending the project. George was also noted by carers as developing his ability to share with others, additionally it was believed that the songs in the session were aiding in his language development (Mooney & Younger, 2013 p.27).
-
1. Underdeveloped communication skills are typical with the Looked After Children population. Significantly, Looked After Children struggled to identify an individual adult that they feel they can trust. Music making was a useful tool in aiding communication.
 2. Music making is useful in aiding communication, we know. How was it useful in the context of Looked After Children? What evidence is there that this work was transformational, or at least impactful?
 3. Looked After Children struggled to identify an individual adult that they feel they can trust. Music making was a useful tool in aiding communication. Youth Music reports that engaging in music provided carers with an opportunity to get to know the child better (Dillon, 2010 p.25). For example, within the Cr8tive Vocal project participants were able to express themselves in a way which they may have struggled to have done before. Music making was particularly useful within this context as it provided a non-hierarchical activity for both the adult and child to engage within (Dillon, 2010, p.25).
-
1. Continuing professional development (CPD) training is good for skills development and motivation. The workload is high and complex and this makes it hard to find the time to attend CPD training. CPD training is too repetitive. The training on offer is often very similar. Workers wanted to attend training sessions that developed new ideas and approaches and the music sessions appeared to have fulfilled this role.
 2. Did this training respond to the call for 'new ideas and approaches?' If so how, if not why not?
 3. Training provided by SoundLincs would meet the need for an activity they could use within their setting. It was also a new approach, as away from evaluating the success of music projects working with Looked After Children, there were no reports focusing on music training as a form of CPD.

Case Study

Participatory observations were undertaken across the three training sessions, where logs were kept outlining key moments and the engagement of the participants. In addition, eight sets of focus groups were conducted over the lunch time break within each training session, made up of four to five people in each group. A small research team of five people was used to gather the data, undertaking the participatory observations and conducting a focus group each. This proved useful in collecting a substantial amount of data within a short space of time, due to the reduced number of opportunities there were to collect the data from this project. Across the sessions that were delivered, participants ranged from staff working in residential homes in a supporting role, to participants working as therapeutic activity coordinators in private residential homes.

Using the key themes identified within the literature, a thematic approach was adopted. Several themes presented themselves as paramount, reflecting our participants understanding that music can be impactful when applied to their work with young people.

4a. Participant Expectations

The focus groups identified several key areas that they believed would be significant when utilising music within their work. As can be seen in Diagram 4, an increase in communication presented itself as a key attribute. This spoke to the importance of how music can aid topics of conversation and thus move towards more constructive and deeper relationships. Alongside this, there was a recognition that engaging in music might increase the participant's attention and thus open new pathways towards conversation. Participants identified how the older age group (16+) could struggle in relationship forming and that music as a distinctive activity could help the development of this skill. It was felt that, although the playing of musical instruments would engage younger children, using music technology might be more successful with the older children.

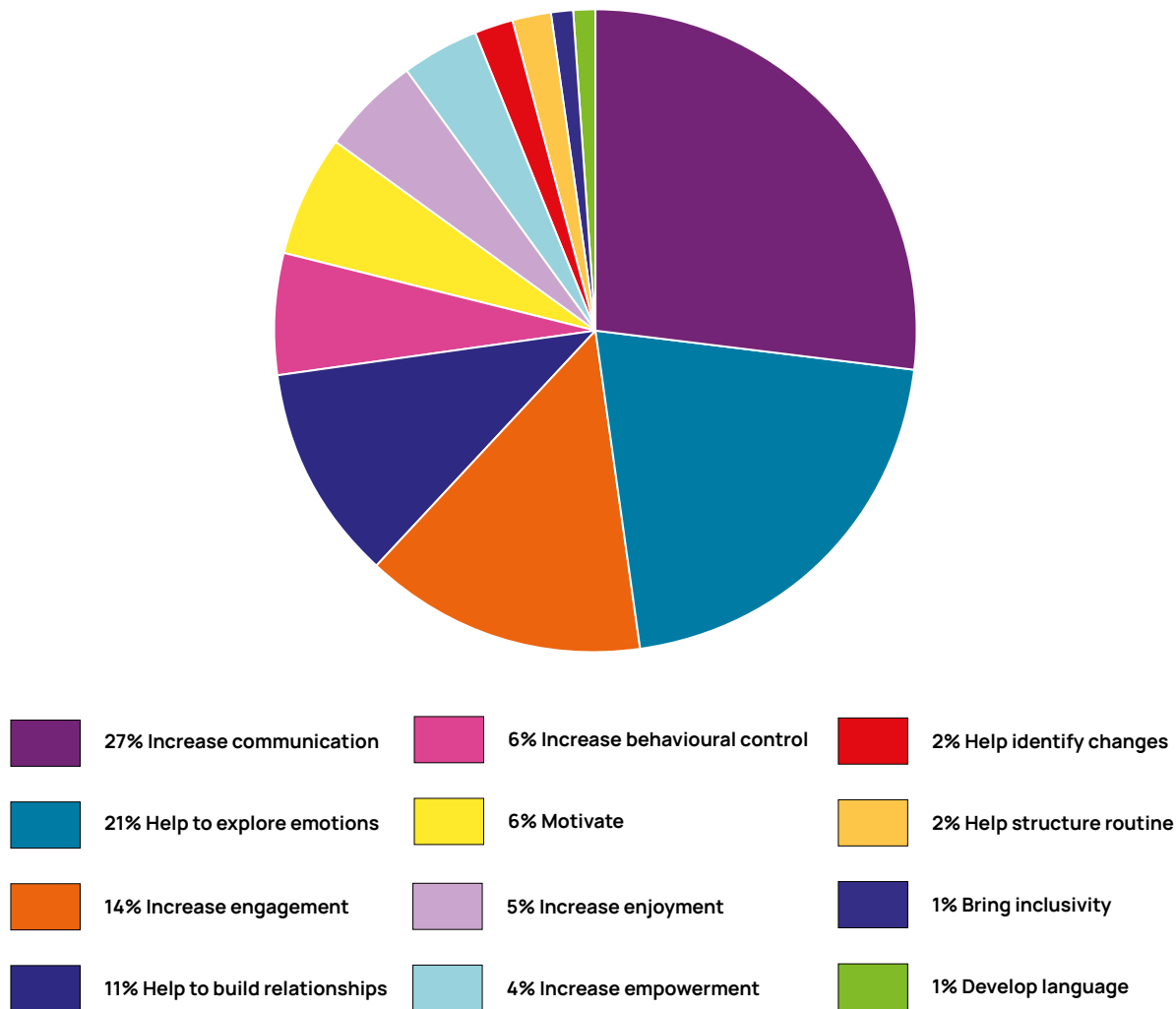
An increase of enjoyment for participants through music making was also identified. Several participants described Looked After Children as potentially missing out on opportunities of 'just being children' and consequently the joyous freedom often associated with being young.

One participant stated that:

"So many of our children have missed out on the opportunity of being children, from the circumstances they have come from. They haven't played, they haven't been allowed - they haven't bounced saucepans with wooden spoons, you know the things that we take for granted, I suppose that we have done with our children or when we were children - that a lot of our young people we work with, just haven't done that - haven't had the parents."

Diagram 4: Expected outcomes of using music

Expected outcomes from using music with young people

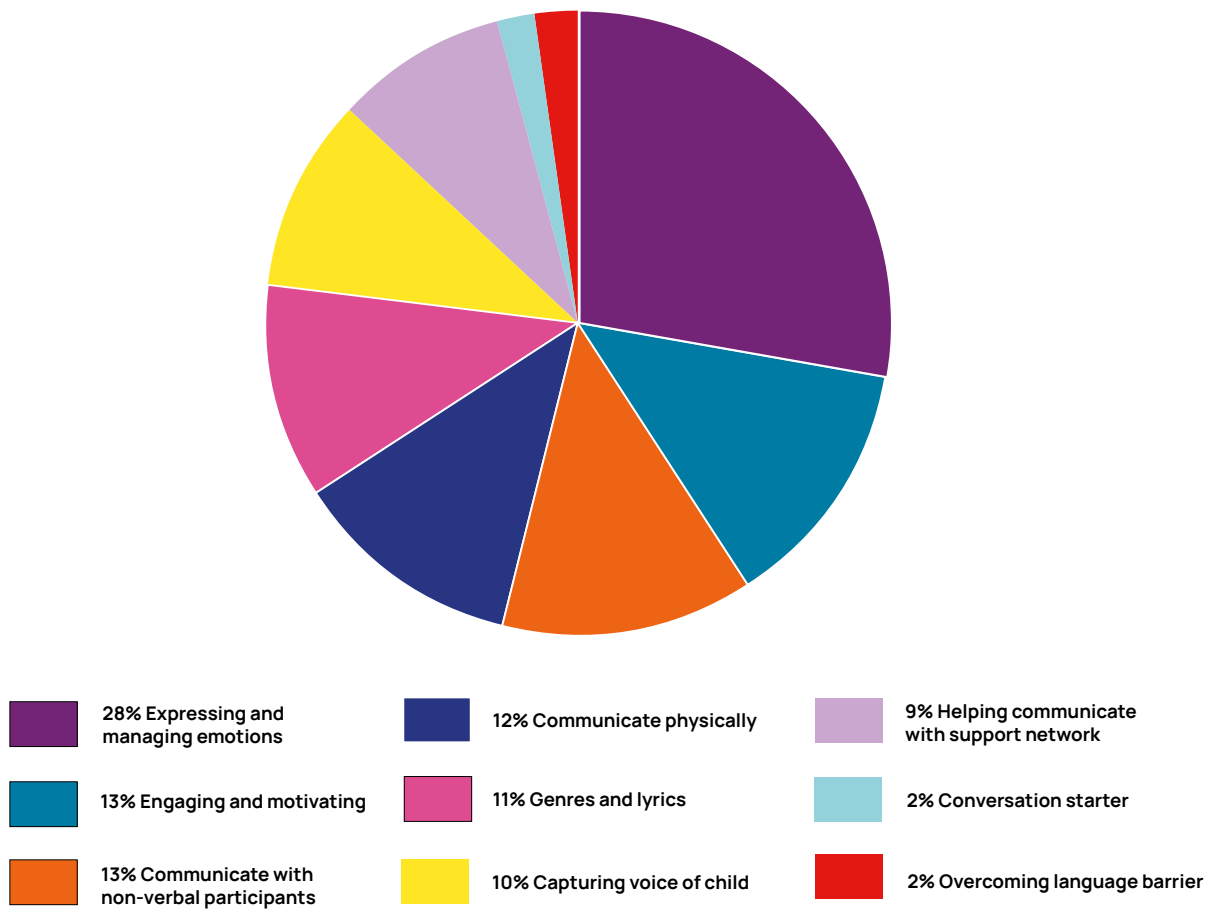


4b. Impacts of Communication

Exploring the impacts of communication through music, participants appeared to expect that music would help young people express their emotions more honestly to the adults in their lives. Participants identified that the young people they work with often struggled to both express and communicate their feelings. There was a suggestion that the music they listen to might provide an insight into how they are feeling at any given moment. It was hoped through focusing on music and lyrics that are important might provide significant scaffolding towards conversation and thus lead to meaningful emotional explorations (See Diagram 5).

Diagram 5: Impact of music on communication

Support participants need to develop music into their practice



It was also identified that music could help bridge a communication barrier when working with children who may be non-verbal or face potential language barriers. Several participants drew on past experiences of using musical instruments with non-verbal children. They highlighted that through this approach the young people would copy one another and this provided a sense of control not usually experienced. For example, one participant spoke around how the use of maracas within a session was used to communicate with others in the room:

"I know when I worked in a residential [home] the young people would come for respite. A lot of them were non-verbal, so we had to find something to interact with them, so we used maracas. So, all the attention was on them so one individual in a group would have an instrument and everyone else would move to the same speed and would move towards them."

*Would you say that music gives them a sense of control?
Definitely, you can see it in their eyes because they are non-verbal, when people were getting close to them you can see in their body language they would start to get all giddy and excited."*

Within the training, video examples were used to show different projects SoundLincs had ran with children in residential homes. Participants were always asked what they saw or felt when watching the videos. Participants on the course described how the images showed the young people expressing their emotions and how this could be a way of providing a platform for the child's voice to be both expressed, but importantly listened to.

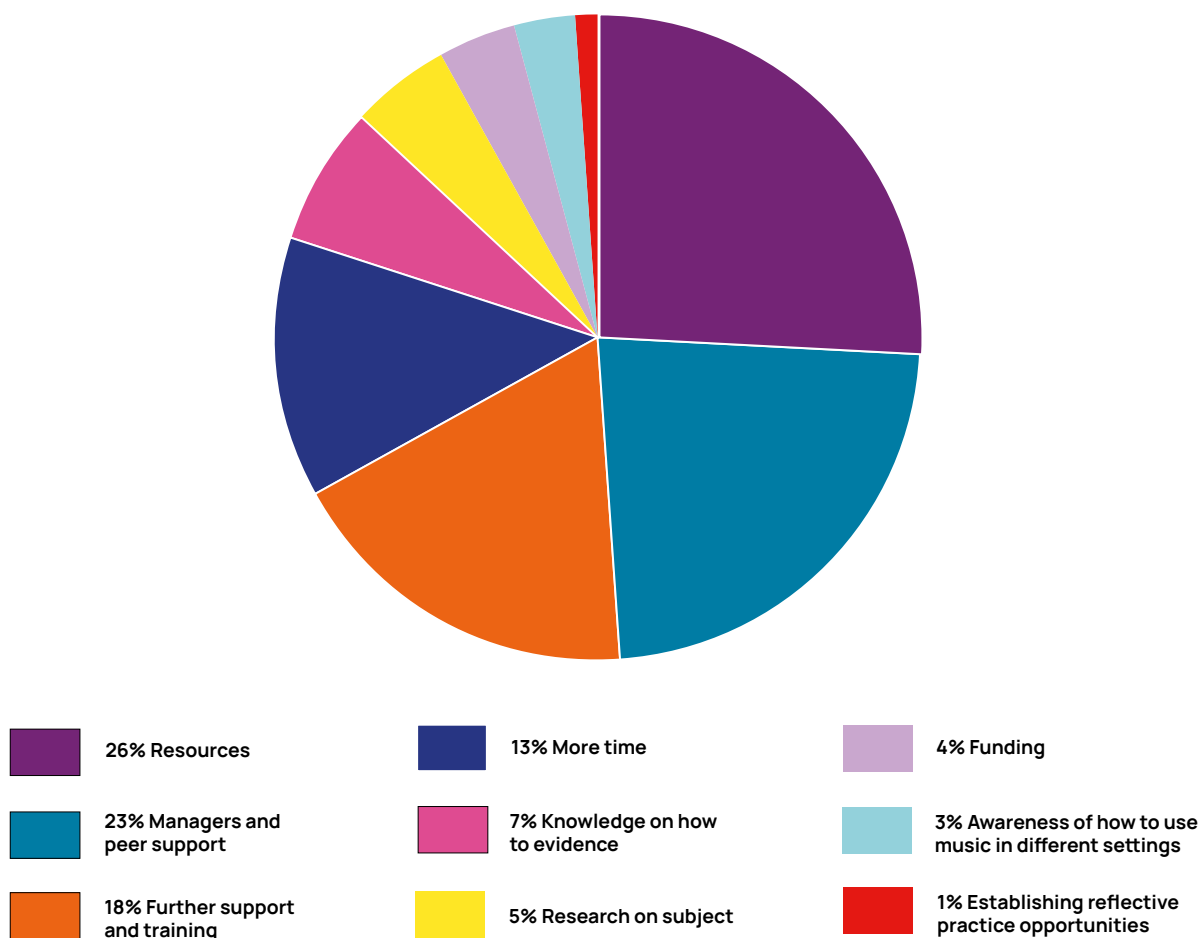
4c. Supporting the Workforce

In order to develop this work it was essential to understand the support needed (see Diagram 6). Resources were singled out as being the most important area for development. Although many participants recognised that they did not have any musical instruments at their place of work, the low availability of technology (iPads, tablets etc.) was viewed as being the most detrimental to implementing the training into their everyday routine. Additionally, participants also identified that they needed the support of their managers and the teams around them to successfully integrate music making into their work. Staff described how, without having research on the positive impacts of engaging in music with a young person, their managers and staff would not be in a position to support the activity both in terms of funding and practical application. One participant spoke about the issue of continuity within a child’s support network when it came to delivering art activities.

“I think sometimes as activities coordinator we could do an activity with a young person, but if the care staff are not engaging [in] it or encouraging or supporting it, then the young person doesn’t - they sort of feed off those negative vibes I suppose.”

Diagram 6: Support that participants needed to use music

Support participants need to develop music into their practice



The availability of funding was a common theme identified throughout the training day. Participants commented that, although the activities were enjoyable, they would struggle to implement many of them without having the funding to buy resources such as the technology being displayed, particularly iPads.

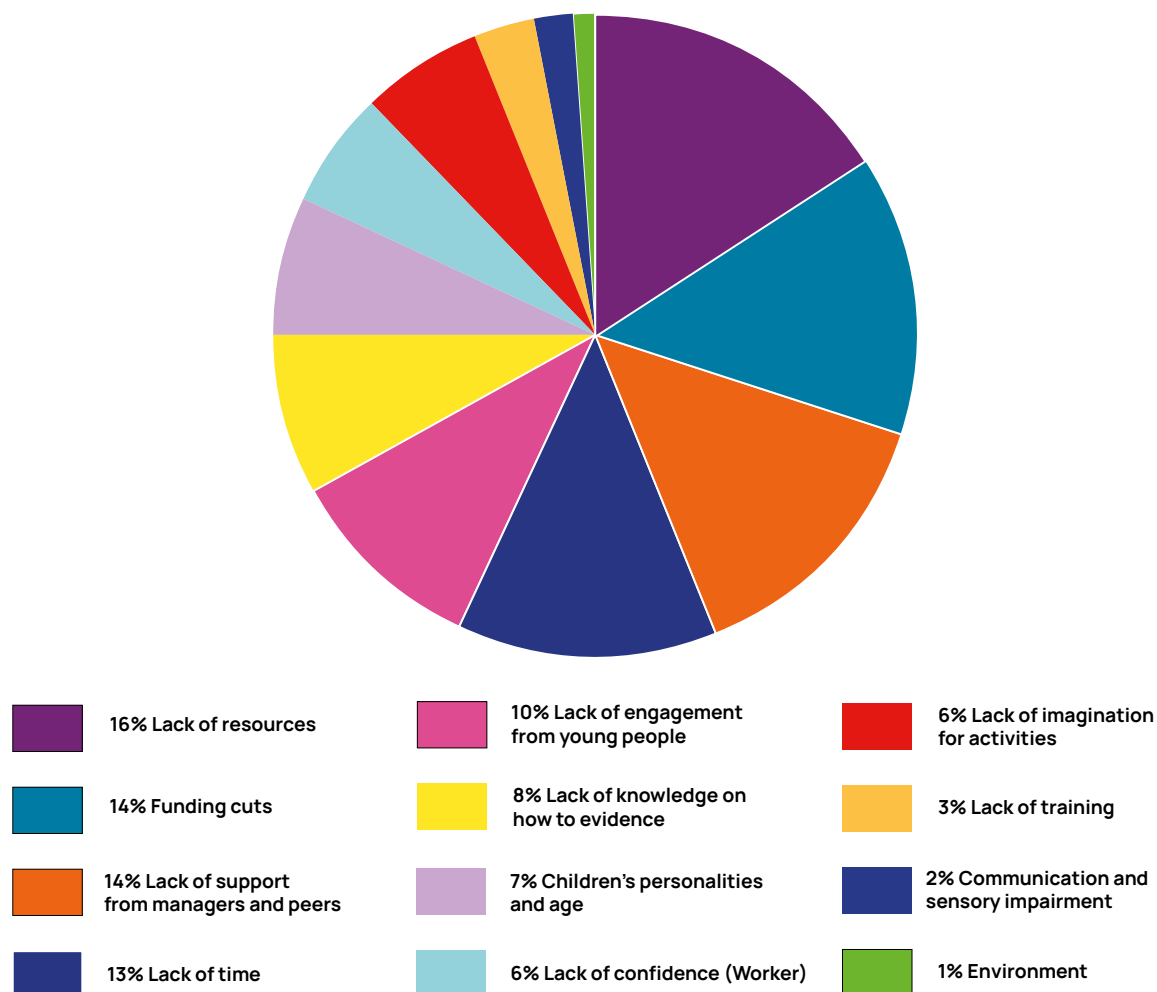
The iPad and music applications demonstrated on the day created a great deal of excitement and interest, however, many participants expressed their disappointment at not having any tablets to use at their place of work. There were also some concerns that there were often bans across workplace internet networks that prevented workers from accessing and downloading the applications.

4d. Potential Barriers

The focus group revealed that there were a number barriers that the children’s workforce staff believed may prevent them implementing music into their practice (See Diagram 7). Again, a lack of resources was identified as being one of the highest barriers that staff currently faced. Time pressures were also recognised, with participants describing their heavy and complex workloads, plus limited opportunities to plan and develop the activities. Some staff also felt unsure as to how to measure or record the softer outcomes associated with music making activities, such as increased confidence or participation, against current systems used for evaluating the young people.

Diagram 7: Barriers preventing staff from using music

Potential barriers that staff face in using music in their practice



Personal factors that participants believed would prevent them from using music were also identified. Low confidence in relation to implementing the activities was indicated, coupled with a trepidation about how to develop the activities beyond the basic start-up games.

4e. Experience of Attendance

Diagram 8 reflects the thoughts of the participants on the training SoundLincs provided. The training was generally found to have provided participants with some good tools to explore the ideas further, for example, the activities using apps and websites for music making. Participants stated this as being one of their main reasons for attending the training. Many participants described the training as being highly interactive, a feature which was identified as not replicated in many of the other CPD training courses on offer. These were described as rather static, relying on PowerPoint presentations rather than active engagement. Several participants suggested that the interactivity of the session would be beneficial for their learning, allowing them to remember the activities better and to experience it as the young people would:

"I remember better"

"Yeah and I can - then you've done it before you try to do it with a young person."

"Yeah, so you are getting to experience it beforehand"

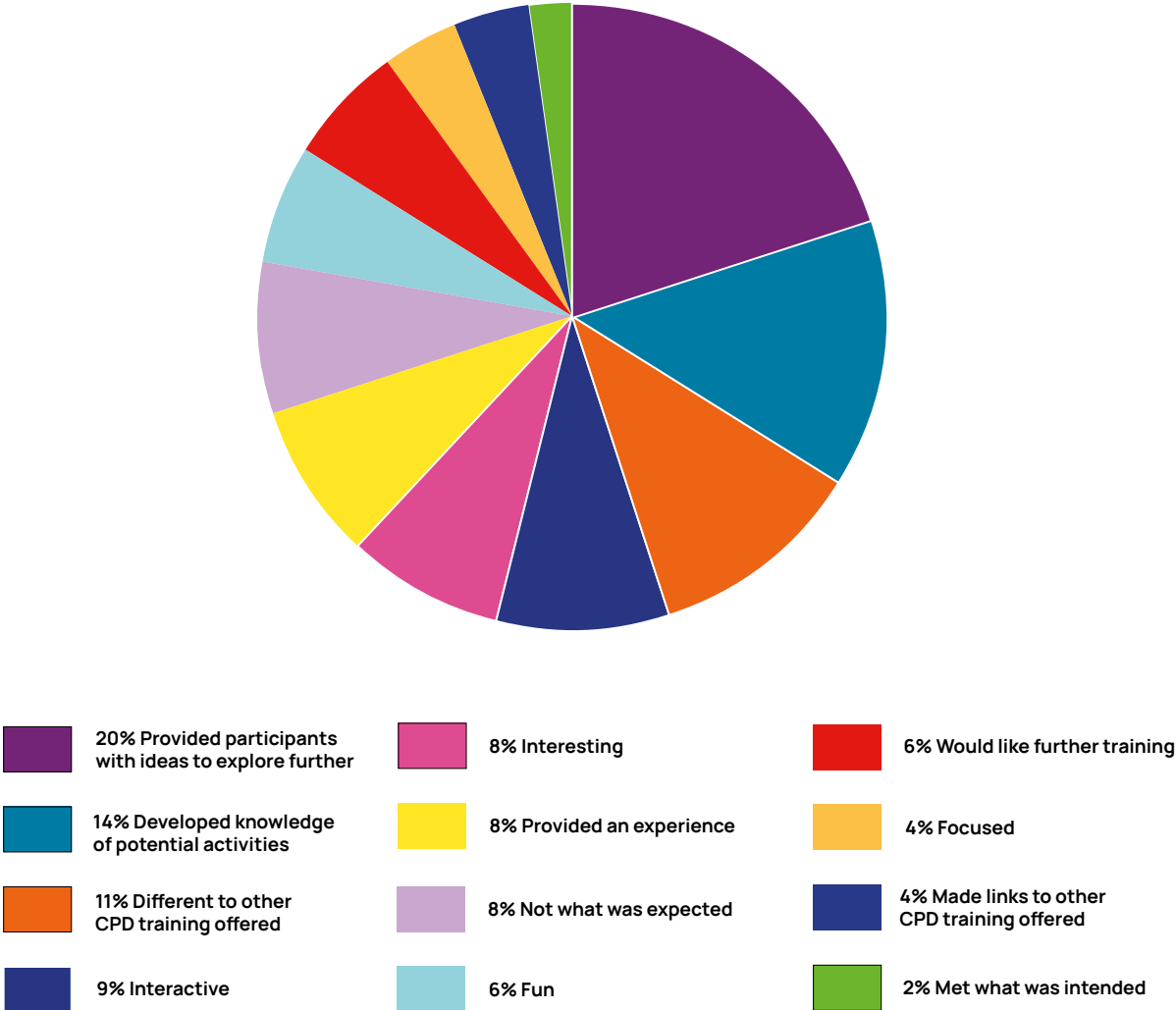
"You are experiencing those anxieties that kind of nervous energy - that oh my god what if I get it wrong - which is the same kind of feeling."

"Exact feeling that a young person is going to feel when you try and do that activity with them."

Many participants stated that the training was different or not what they had expected, but did, however, meet their needs by providing ideas of different activities they could use and then develop. Several participants believed the training would be more focused on the development of playing instruments, rather than focusing on what music meant to them to build their knowledge of the power of music.

Diagram 8: Experience of attending the training

Experience of attending the training



4f. Limitations

Although these results provide an insight into the impact that engaging within music making training can have for the Looked After Children’s support network, our opportunity for data collection was significantly reduced because of the participant uptake. Follow up interviews were initially set up to be undertaken one month following the training, however, this proved to be unsuccessful due to low response levels from participants. Therefore, it is unknown whether the intended outcomes of using music were achieved and if the potential barriers were overcome. Further research is required to develop insights into what the effect was once workers used the training.

4g. Reflections and Discussion

The data we collected revealed several key benefits music might have if engaged with regularly within a Looked After Child's support network.

A current and ongoing barrier that the participants of this research feel they need to overcome was reduced levels of communication, which they currently feel they face when working with young people. Various reports have outlined how often social workers, foster carers, and adoptive parents can struggle to develop a relationship with a young person due to poor communication (Simkiss, 2012; Handley & Doyle, 2012). Simkiss (2012), suggests that Looked After Children often feel they have no meaningful connection with adults and this manifests itself in limited conversation surrounding expressions of feeling. Many participants on the training identified music as a 'universal language' and as such everyone can have, or has, an emotional connection to it. Researchers have noted music has an ability to evoke emotions within individuals (Clake et al. 2009; MacDonald et al. 2013). Similarly, participants identified that music could be used to help young people communicate their emotions.

Looked After Children are noted as often struggling to verbalise their feelings with an adult, often leading to issues connected to health and wellbeing, which manifest later in their life (McAuley & Davis, 2009; Bazalgette, 2015; Simkiss, 2012). For example, Bazalgette et al (2015) examines emotional wellbeing for Looked After Children and found that many children are unable to verbalise their emotions, due to past experiences of neglect and maltreatment (p.13). There was a clear understanding that using music within their work would serve to enhance the relationships between the network of adults and the young children they work with. CPD training across the UK is currently focused on helping staff develop connections with young people and as such music could play a significant role. Staff at the SoundLincs training day identified music succeeds where other approaches have failed.

Participants on the SoundLincs project began to understand that if the young people chose the music they connect with, it could act as a useful and powerful trigger to recall particular emotions that, in turn could spark fruitful conversation. This was demonstrated during the training (see Diagram 5). One way participants believed they would be able to identify and support the young people in communicating their emotions, would be through focusing on the music the young person is listening to and talking to them about it. Noting here how there may be a link between emotions represented in the music and how a young person is feeling. This suggestion resonates with the work of Clarke, Dibbens and Pitt's (2009) on exploring how individuals place an emotional value on cultural objects, often asserting their feelings at that present moment to the song resonating with Clarke's suggestion that we often use songs to evoke our innermost emotions, as if they would be felt within everyday experiences (p.82).

Current CPD training offered to Lincolnshire County Council children's workforce revolves around developing emotional communication through 'Signs of Safety', a child protection practice framework (Turnell and Edwards, 2011). As a child protection model, Signs of Safety sets out core principles through which family members can engage with each other in partnerships to address child abuse and maltreatment. Within this structure children can self identify how they are feeling about the various circumstances they are operating in. Participants believed they could incorporate music into the model to engage harder to reach children, as they may have already placed an emotional connection to a piece of music that could be used to help begin a conversation about different emotions they may be feeling.

Some participants noted that by using music they would have a stronger chance to develop a relationship with the young people they work with.

Music was then understood as a particularly valuable tool when working with children who are hard to reach. Participants stated they could create an opportunity where a common interest is at the heart of the conversation for both parties. Camlin's (2015) study on community music projects found that through joint active cooperation involving playing together and engaging with each other, participants often felt a sense of belonging. As such, it could be suggested that by actively participating and talking about music with a young person, that the children's workforce staff would be able to help provide a sense of belonging. Similar results were found within the projects delivered through Youth Music (2012), whereby care staff noted more communication with a participant when talking about music resonating with Barr-Rawden and DeNora's study (2007), where participants shared music amongst each other and talked about what it means to them, therefore, helping to form a connection with the rest of the group.

Hughes (2000) notes that often building a relationship with a Looked After Child can be challenging, as it can often be challenging to find common ground or shared interests. Participants identified through the training how music was a feature within everyone's lives, and that through engaging in musical activities together could facilitate a bond. Similarly, Levitin's (2010) exploration of music making suggests that it is a unique art form that allows individuals to share a single experience simultaneously. Rawdens, Camlin and Levitin's findings could all be replicated with the young people and their support network, as workers identified that they could begin talking about the lyrics, genres or feelings towards a song through having an active sharing experience of listening together. This could be of particular benefit to the support network in helping them both understand the child better to provide the best support, whilst also helping to meet their targets.

There were also several benefits identified for the young people themselves, with the suggestion that music making would provide a unique opportunity. Through providing musical activity participants expected that the young people would enjoy themselves, develop new skills and increase their self-confidence. Studies have indicated how Looked After Children often face reduced confidence, as they believe their opinions and actions are not valued, which in the long term can affect their mental health (Stein, 2005; Simkiss, 2012) in terms of educational development. Similarly, educationally Looked After Children are noted for taking longer to develop in terms of language and numerical skills, compared to their peers (Sebba et al., 2015), often making them lack confidence within school settings. One participant identified how using music in their past role helped a child to feel more engaged and speak louder in the group and thus increased their self-confidence.

"We certainly did clapping rhythm, introducing yourself and that sort of gave the children the confidence to shout their name out. If you had just done it on the spot and said what is your name [...] they sort of wouldn't speak to you very much, by doing it clapping and everybody else doing it. It was sort of - sort of helped them, they might have done it very quietly but they did it, they joined in."

Results from the Youth Music evidence review (2010) have indicated how young people involved in music projects were seen to have increased their confidence through developing new skills. The report went on further to suggest that this was due to the encouragement that the young people felt from their support network and Music Facilitators, adding to their enjoyment and helping to develop their confidence. If the staff from the training day developed musical opportunities that are encouraging and provide a source of enjoyment where participants can develop skills, then there is the potential for the young people to develop their confidence, which will aid them in life after care.

Although there were many benefits from using music for both staff and children, the results also indicated that there could be several barriers preventing them from using music. Time pressures and support were identified as being two of the main obstacles, with help needed from managers in providing participants time to attend future training to develop the activities. Thus leading to the belief that although the activities may be useful at first, without extending them they may have limited usage.

One reason as to why it may be limited is due to activities often being outcome led, therefore once an activity stops meeting the outcomes then it is perceived to be unusable. Consequently, it is important that staff can attend training to develop the activities further. Studies exploring CPD training within social workers' practice outlined how there was often no time allocated to attend training (Skinner, 2005; Kirwan, 2012; Postle et al., 2002). Skinner's (2005) study suggested that even if social workers attended training, there was often little time to put it to use, clearly resonating with the experiences of the participants within the training session. It was believed that if more time were given to participants to attend more music training sessions, they would be able to develop the activities further and make them more engaging for the young people. This would also help embed music as a tool within the children's workforce practice, which would again bring about more usage.

Having the time to attend training was reliant on the support of the workers' managers, who are responsible for managing the funding and workloads of staff. The focus group believed that, due to their managers not attending the training, they would not understand the impact that engaging in music can have for a young person. This would result in the workers not being encouraged to use the activities or to them missing out on critical resources that would be needed for the activities; Gaining the manager's support would also affect worker's peers, who without the support would be unlikely to use the activities. Again, workers believed that a lack of understanding on the impact of music would be a reason why workers peers would be unlikely to continue an activity. However, it should be noted that across some settings music was not the only activity not being continued. One participant spoke around how within their workplace art activities between support staff are unlikely to continue once they have left. By having reports outlining the implications of using music with Looked After Children, workers would be able to gain the support of the managers and peers to develop the activities further. Although there are many reports examining the impact of Looked After Children engaging in music making projects, often the work is facilitated by musicians rather than the children's support network (See Dillion, 2010; Mooney & Young, 2012). Research outlining the implications of providing training for the children's workforce would help indicate to managers the importance of allowing time to attend for future training and support it with providing funding.

Resources were another boundary that would need to be overcome; surprisingly it was not low access to musical instruments which was seen as most detrimental. The lack of technology was identified as being a key resource that was missing, both for use with the young people and personally within their work. For instance; one participant spoke around how even with updated technology, without their manager's support, barriers would still be in place preventing them from downloading applications to use within their work;

"I mean we've just been given Microsoft phones, so we can now receive emails and things like that, but what they've done is, you can't download the apps on it cause they've put a stop on all that. So, you've got to have their permission to download an app and then get it all unlocked and all that, you know. It's just red tape."

It was identified that iPad's would be one of the leading pieces of technology that staff would like, as it would help them to engage the older children within the activities, plus they were often easier to use and could be continuously updated with new resources. Several settings already had a range of instruments in place, but felt unconfident about how to play them. For these settings, workers felt that bringing in companies such as SoundLincs to provide training would be more beneficial, particularly with the younger children. However, bringing in companies such as SoundLincs, could prove detrimental in relation to staff's requests to be given more time to attend more training, as having a company delivering music would indicate little need for workers to be involved in future training, limiting the development of skills.

4h. Summary

Engaging in musical training was thought to benefit both staff and Looked After Children. One of the most significant benefits was that the child's support network would be able to develop their relationship with a young person, helping the child to form a secure attachment. Much of the literature indicates that Looked After Children usually lack secure attachments, which can impact on their opportunities to have their voice heard and develop emotional resilience. These are both critical issues that the reports examining Looked After Children in the UK have stated needed to be overcome. Staff would be able to use music alongside their other initiatives, hence helping meet their targets set for the young people. However, several barriers are needed to be overcome for staff to be given a chance to use music within their work. The support of their managers and peers would be vital in continuing to use music and gaining the resources needed to implement music. The suggestion is that more research and training days to develop the knowledge would be a first step in achieving this support. Having more, higher level or top level engagement with managers attending the training would assist with 'buy in' and extend the influence and legacy of the training.

Conclusion

Community music as a field of practice and research has been gaining steady momentum over the last decade. During this time, we have seen a large increase in practices, courses, programmes and research, as well as publications in forms of books, chapters and journal articles. This growth in practice and scholarship has also been reflected in organisations for community music. For example, the International Society for Music Education's Community Music Activities Commission, as well as the development of new networks, such as, the Asia Pacific Community Music Network. Within this context, new debates about the intersections of practice, pedagogy, research and ethics have been emerging and new voices have begun broadening the agenda to consider settings where community music is engaging in social justice, political activism, peace-making, health and wellbeing, and online engagement, amongst other fields. The interest in this subject has meant an increase of scholarship and academic courses and consequently significantly expanded the amount of people engaging in community music. These new voices, agendas and contexts indicate that the field is continuing to grow, diversify and mature.

Set within a broad notion of music education, community musicians place emphasis on inclusive musical participation and as an expression of cultural democracy. As a conceptual idea and a mode of empowerment, and a sharing of values among the many cultural groups, musicians who work within the framework of cultural democracy are focused upon the practical concerns of making and creating music and musical opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. As an example of non-formal education, community music reflects a bottom-up or negotiated curriculum formation that involves a music leader, or facilitator, in continued dialogue with the people they work with.¹⁴

The purpose of this project was to explore the impact of providing the children's workforce with music training to implement within their practice. The central enquiry revolved around several training sessions being delivered by the music charity SoundLincs in Lincolnshire, for various different children's workforce roles. The following points summarise the findings, offer a conclusion in relation to the research and tentatively suggest recommendations for future music making CPD:

- Music is a fundamental aspect of the human experience. Consequently all participants on the training have had a significant experience of music and were able to articulate its importance throughout their life journey.
- A distinctive aspect of the SoundLincs training was to engage participants in a reflective dialogue of their music experience. Reflective practice was embedded in the training and resonated with the participants.
- The training approach was effective and connected deeply with the children's services practitioners, aligning the personal to the professional. This created a springboard through which the workforce could employ music in developing relationships with the client group.
- The workforce valued the training and saw it as something different to the usual CPD offer. The general feeling was that other CPD training can be formulaic in comparison, Powerpoint led and low on interactivity. The research supports that the SoundLincs training was engaging, interactive and provided ample opportunity for the individual voices to be expressed and heard. This was reflected in the overall conceptual framework in which the training took place. This could broadly be described as a facilitative approach. This negotiated content led to a sense of co-authorship and ownership.

¹⁴ See Higgins and Willingham (2017); Bartleet and Higgins (2018).

- Looked After Children struggle to form secure attachments. The research and the literature highlight the value of forming secure attachments, a shared interest/common third, further advocating Social Pedagogy.
- The workforce indicated that working with music in the way they were shown, had the potential for supporting issues around behaviour and communication. In order to achieve greater impact they would need further resources, particularly technology based ones and importantly, senior management support.
- One of the objectives of Fund C (musically inclusive England) was to establish an evidence base that might be replicable beyond the geographic location. Because of the limited sample size and range of stakeholders engaged, this research can only point to the desirability to upscale the project. It is however clear that the primary research and literature point towards the benefit of rolling out the training on a wider basis, in order to greater understand and assess the impact.

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