

Summary of Activities and Outputs

A focus on workforce development and practice sharing was embedded from the start of the project. Alan, Claire & Matthew Hemson (Music Leader 1) quickly developed an easy working relationship based around the [Thrive](#) principles. For the first two months we agreed on the importance of fostering positive relationships with the children so that they felt safe and could trust the therapeutic environment we were creating. Music making was simple, fun, explorative, inclusive and accessible to all children no matter what their level of perceived musical ability. For example, some children had never heard their own voices amplified before through a microphone or reflected back to them through a recording. The intrigue this created was a good bedrock from which to build musical skill and for them to process their emotions, conditions and life situations. Alan and Claire quickly began to grow in confidence regarding their ability to facilitate music sessions and the team approach was always a natural part of the flow of each session.

After a few months Matthew was keen to start working with parents too, which was supported by the Harbour Team. The people who influence the education and wellbeing of children more than any other in the school community are parents/carers, therefore including them in the Harbour process was very important. All the parents/carers who were able to attend sessions with their children found it a very beneficial experience as they were able to relate to their child in a new way through music, praise their child, recognise their growing gifts and talents, laugh and play and also use their own musical gifts as parents/carers together with their child. This was a key part of practice sharing as often the parents would report back that they had been singing and using the musical activities with their child at home. This positive parental engagement led to family afternoons at the Harbour roughly once a term. They were very successful with parents/carers coming together to celebrate and engage in music, art, and Thrive activities. This would always end with a big group sing-song or drumming session and the connection everyone had as a group was palpable.

Musical activities were orientated in parallel with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Thrive progression levels. Once the children felt safe and secure, we then introduced activities that focussed on love and belonging, self-worth and self-actualisation. For example, writing and performing improvised songs about thoughts, feelings and hopes for the future. Or playing instruments with an increasing level of confidence and skill. We also began to invite additional children into sessions to enable each Harbour child to experience positive social situations using music as the medium through which to communicate, understand boundaries, process emotions and self-regulate. The most popular/enjoyable activities the children enjoyed were exploring different instruments, experimenting with different objects to discover vibration and playing games through music.



The outputs were numerous new songs and instrumentals created and recorded on video, Diaries and Thrive Booklets demonstrating SEMH progress, CPD sessions, Family Days, Reflective Logs (audio), Session Plans demonstrating musical, emotional and staff progress plus a “Harbour Way” document with new musical activities created by the team with the children and finally a legacy of trained staff and parents/carers leading musical sessions in schools today.

The final phase of our project saw us deliver group sessions, which involved some children that were having one to one sessions. These group sessions engaged children from Reception to Year 5, who have social communication difficulties, diagnosis of Autism, significant learning difficulties and Downs Syndrome. The outcomes from these sessions were so powerful, and included the following:

- Children felt more confident in expressing themselves through music and movement
- Children interpreted the music in their own unique way and individually ‘told their story’ through a variety of communicative strategies
- Children have learnt how to work successfully as a group, showing great pride in each other’s achievements
- Children have been supported in their engagement and growing ability to demonstrate the following indicators (all of which are the pre-requisites for more formal learning) persistence, exploration, anticipation, realisation, and initiation

Key Challenges and how we overcame them

Some of the challenges regarding delivery were simple things beyond our control such as parents not bringing their children to the session. Alan and Claire were always brilliant at finding out what the problem may have been and if anything could be done to help. The children’s behaviour was never really considered a challenge as this was the outward expression of their inner wellbeing and the reason they accessed the Harbour nurtured learning. We used our knowledge and a personal approach to behaviour to help children become more present to themselves and those around them as they progressed.

One challenge during this project was working with a child who is a selective mute. We had to build a relationship with this child but they couldn’t communicate with us verbally. So Claire had to think more about how we support activities, allowing the child to answer questions by using another form. So providing paper and pens at all times, so that the child could still communicate with us and we could ask more open ended questions to develop our relationship. The child was able to engage with the activities but we did have to think creatively about how the microphone work could form part of the sessions. So using objects to create sound and holding it near the microphone to see how it sounds. This would slowly progress to using our voices to ‘blow raspberries’ down the microphone to use our voice.

A key challenge that we faced was the outbreak of the Covid Pandemic, which beyond the common challenges that this presented in terms of school closures, bubbles and staff visiting settings, Matthew who delivered the majority of this programme couldn’t commit time beyond what we originally planned, so we were fortunate to engage Adrian, an experienced music practitioner for the final phase of the project.

Practice Sharing

A Musical resource was created by Matthew Hemson called “The Harbour Way”. This was shared through presentations at conferences, the latest being as a keynote speech for Pickwick Learning Alliance on 24th Feb 2020. Matthew delivered three CPD events focusing on Early Years & KS1 settings and how Teachers & TAs can create an enabling environment using music for the schools across CSL.

Matthew has also written a resource with over 65 new musical activities anyone can do. These games & activities were created by Matthew, Alan, Claire, and the children from different settings (including the Harbour Project) over the lifetime of the project. Feedback from the CPD and conferences has been very positive. Embedded, sustained change has come about through two parents of Harbour children who are now involved in leading sessions alongside Alan and Claire.

In addition to this, Alan and Claire share and model music-making with staff within other schools when they visit settings of Harbour children.

To develop the performance and composition skills of young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs

All the children who accessed music at the Harbour Programme developed their performance and composition skills at a personal and also age appropriate level. The outcome was fully achieved for each child in relation to their SEMH needs.

Activities

The most successful activities were ones that gave a framework within which children could compose and perform and were rooted in Music Therapy techniques. For example, framing a potential new song with 4 repeating chords and inviting a child to talk, rap or sing about whatever they are feeling elicited some beautiful songs. But this structure cannot be too strict either, therefore flexibility is key. For example, if a child begins to sing in a new direction then we must follow and not ask them to stick to the 4 chords or set rhythm. The child leads, we follow. This was a vital aspect of many successful sessions. And yet again flexibility is key as sticking to *this* rule is not always appropriate, especially if a child needs to grow in their awareness and understanding of boundaries. A successful session relies on tuning into the child's needs and responding with creativity, kindness, humour and teamwork. An unsuccessful session would be being too rigid, with an inflexible plan. This hinders spontaneity and creativity. We did not have a session like this. Even if a child was in a difficult place emotionally the session was still successful as we reflected back to them their own emotions so they knew they had been heard.

Musical games have also been very important for the Harbour children that Alan has worked with to help them to engage with music and enjoy creating music in different ways, with Matthew encouraging children to create their own musical games. This has been very successful and helped develop children's musical creativity, with the children demonstrating great imagination in creating new ways to play instruments and create music.

Evidence

Session plans and reflective audio logs demonstrate progression e.g. Nearly every child has progressed from a certain nervousness and reticence regarding singing towards confidence and excitement at singing and creating their own melodies and lyrics without embarrassment. This has been evidenced by video and photographic evidence, which is included in the children's progression booklets created by Alan & Claire. We found that children became more confident in the sessions and felt safer in the environment. This enabled us to introduce more directive activities to help children learn more musical concepts such as volume, rhythm and beat which all of the children were eventually able to copy and begin to improvise on their own.

Alan notes that he has seen the confidence of children develop through using their voice. *"A couple of the children that I have worked with were very shy and quiet when starting the sessions with Matthew but over time gradually became vocal and developed the use of their voice to sing. One child in particular was very shy and would often hide under tables or behind the sofa, but by the time he finished his sessions with Matthew, he was performing in front of us and his family, using puppets to sing 'Old town road' in different voices and trying to make us laugh with his performance"* - Alan, Harbour Practitioner

Parents have noticed progression that compliments that noted by staff. For example, parents/carers have told us that children have been making their own instruments at home or have created songs in their rooms to help them relax. In addition to this TA's that have accompanied children in the music sessions have noticed children's progression from timidity to confidence, in not only creating their own songs but also wanting to perform and share their creations with others.



Picture 1:

Parent bringing their own instrument to the sessions to develop their own musical skills, to support their child at home

Picture 2:

This child developed his imagination skills through his music sessions; he developed over time some amazing musical games of his own.

"He likes to express himself in the music sessions, he comes up with lots of ideas and that he is quite a clever boy when put in the right environment" - Parent

Picture 3:

R's Drumming Game - using the drum to control the adults by creating a rhythm before stopping and freezing in a pose which the adults had to copy. R then directed different adults to lead so that he and the other adult in the room could copy.

The Music Leader noted children making improved creative choices, particularly in group sessions whereby children would progressively lead, follow, share, take turns, and help each other. Their musical choices became more diverse as they became familiar with the wide range of instruments. They would also discover a style of composition and performance that most suited their personality ranging from standing on a makeshift stage and singing into the microphone with all their heart to rapping while sitting on the sofa to instrumental expressions of how they experience life.

Summary

Our indicators and associated sources of evidence all show movement in the same direction overall. There may have been a week or two whereby pupils engaged less due to their own personal circumstances and conditions, but music was used to help them process their emotions through composition and performance. By looking at the progression in the booklets and the video evidence a clear and consistent development can be seen.

To develop emotional resilience of young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs

We can say that the music interventions enabled the children (and sometimes their parents/carers) to process their emotions through music as the trusting therapeutic relationship developed. Most parents/carers stated that their children seemed more emotionally literate and at ease with themselves. 100% of our participants showed improvements of various levels in their emotional resilience. The parents/carers also mentioned that the sessions had the same effect on themselves (if they attended). The holistic nature of the games and activities we facilitated also contributed to the positive impact on Mental Health and Wellbeing. The sessions were not only about the

elements of music, but how music can inspire movement, dance, and all the range of emotions we wanted the children to engage with and regulate. To this extent the programme was very successful in supporting this outcome.

Activities

The most successful approaches involved parents/carers as the participants were able to relate to each other in a new way, using music as a form of communication. When parents/carers started experiencing and witnessing their children in a new way it generated a positive dynamic of celebration, praise and hope between them. They were sharing focussed time with their children and their children responded in kind. The least successful approaches were when there were broken weeks of attendance and where parents/carers were unable to bring their children to the Harbour.

Evidence

The children regularly engaged in feedback to assess how they were processing their emotions. We would sometimes create songs as a form of feedback too e.g. Using the characters from the Pixar film "Inside Out" as a way of measuring and regulating emotion.

Claire and Alan used Thrive scores which enabled us to assess where each pupil was at the beginning of the intervention and where they had progressed by the end. E.g., If a child in the BEING stage of Thrive progressed to the DOING or THINKING stage then this can be shown as evidence for impact of the music sessions. However, it must be noted that music sessions were part of an interwoven provision including art and Thrive activities. Therefore, any progression is part of a team effort and cannot exclusively be allocated to one aesthetic. However, we can say that some children prioritised music as their chosen form of self-expression and therefore naturally gravitated to learning how to process and regulate their emotions through music.

Claire notes that one family in particular stands out for her. The child was referred to the project as she was demonstrating the following:

- Often refuses to do what she has been asked, and this can escalate her behaviour
- She will often shout, growl, throw things and can be disruptive within the classroom and often says 'they annoy me', 'It's not fair'
- When she is in a heightened state she will be as disruptive as she can be, causing the classroom to be evacuated.

She was 52% 'Being' in her Thrive score. She has been attending the music sessions once a week with her Mum and younger brother, Mum reflected how it was at the beginning of her journey.

Being	May 2019	July 2019	Doing	Nov 2019
Profile score	52%	64%	Profile Score	63%
Safe	43%	59%	Exploring and Developing	72%
Special	72%	78%	Experiencing options	61%
Needs Met	41%	57%	Initiating, engaging and doing	57%

"When I first started with the Harbour programme I was at a complete loss with my daughter. She was disruptive at school and at home and we seemed to continually go around in circles of arguments and yelling. I was quite nervous going into the sessions initially as I hadn't realised how lonely and defeated I had been feeling. I was worried my daughter would kick off in the room and then I would have to deal with that situation and it made me quite anxious" - Parent

They have attended 20 sessions together, now her Thrive scores have significantly improved 63% Doing and the relationship between Mum and daughter has grown. Mum's perception on how her daughter has grown through her musical journey!

"She seems to really enjoy the atmosphere and the music really captures her imagination. She has done some amazing things with puppets and music. She has a natural affinity with creativity and could explore that in a way that I would never have considered. I am even more surprised by how much I have benefited from this programme. I went in thinking it was all about my daughter and felt I had to sit back and let her do her thing. I did need some convincing that it was as important to involve me as it was to support her and once that realisation clicked, everything changed. I was able to see how my actions affected her and how that could be changed to create a more nurturing environment" - Parent

School staff regularly commented upon the positive impact of music sessions on the emotional wellbeing and resilience of children. When providing music sessions offsite in neighbouring schools the staff asked if we could come more often as the impact was so clear. Staff feedback has been documented and is in the booklets/diaries created by Alan & Claire and in the audio recording reflections and Matthew's session plan notes which also include reflections on each session.

Summary

This was a primary outcome, and is important on numerous levels. The motive behind the Harbour project is to create an enabling environment within which children have an instinctive sense of safety, belonging, care, compassion, fun, intrigue, creativity and celebration. Everything is about the quality of a relationship. Pupils know they are cared for, listened to and encouraged on every level. They also know that they are challenged to develop and mature in kindness, teamwork, awareness, and self-regulation. Music is the medium through which these interactions occur. This highlights the importance and place of music as a form of unique communication whereby feelings can be expressed nonverbally as well as through lyrics and song. The overwhelming positive responses from participants, parents/carers, TAs, co-workers have demonstrated the beneficial impact of music on the social and emotional wellbeing of the children. This has been demonstrated and documented in the diaries, reflective logs and photos/videos taken over the last two years to mark the progression of not only pupils, but parents/carers as well.

To increase the confidence and skills of all staff (school staff, music leaders) and parents where appropriate, to deliver music interventions for young people

This has been significantly achieved as Alan, Claire and also parents/carers now lead music sessions. The CPD sessions have also led to music being used more regularly with SEND pupils in classrooms across the local cluster of, however a series of CPD sessions would be needed to embed this more deeply.

Activities

The consistent immersion into music sessions was successful as they became a natural, rather than alien, environment for staff. Handing instruments to Alan and Claire to play and improvise upon was also beneficial as being thrown in the deep end (with support and encouragement!) is often the best way to learn. Teaching Claire chords on the ukulele was good and encouraging Alan to really get back into playing guitar and clarinet was also a very positive experience for him. Helping all participants realise that their voices were the most important instruments was crucial too, as then they were able to express themselves musically anytime, any place, anywhere. Pointing out that music can be really great fun was also a good way of encouraging confidence. Music Games, for example, were always magnetic for both pupils and staff as they are based in a unique form of play. A combination of both child-led and adult-led approaches was most effective at the Harbour with flexibility being vital.

Evidence

Alan and Claire have both reported a progressive increase in their confidence and skill in providing music interventions for pupils. This is evidenced in that they now lead music sessions at the Harbour and even teach TA's and other school staff (through CPD sessions) how to run music sessions effectively.

"I really wasn't very musical at the beginning but now have gained a better insight into how therapeutic approaches can be applied to music activities and how this can also be applied to Thrive approaches and have seen the positive impact this has had on our families/children." - Claire, Harbour Practitioner

"When working with individual children and in groups, I often help support the children in their understanding on how their brain works. I am able to discuss with them the effects that listening to music can have on their brain, helping reduce anxiety, improving sleep and memory." - Claire, Harbour Practitioner

"Before the start of the project I had not really considered using music to support the SEMH needs of the children that I worked with and would have considered my musical ability as very low. However, during the course of the project and working alongside Matthew, he was able to show me that music could be used without the need to have a musical background. Working alongside him for over a year I have learnt how to use a number of different games, songs, and strategies to engage children with SEMH needs in a different way and how I can incorporate musical activities in my Thrive practice" - Alan, Harbour Practitioner



Picture 1: Claire learning chord sequences on Ukulele

Class TA's from Castle Mead Primary who regularly attended sessions learned to play instruments, sing, compose and improvise alongside the children. Hidden musical talents were unearthed and some TA's, when encouraged, brought instruments into School that they used to play as a child and successfully re-engaged with them e.g. trumpet, recorder, clarinet, guitar.

On the back of the normal sessions Castle Mead Primary and other schools from CSL requested CPD in Therapeutic Music Techniques to use with for SEND children in school. The training went very well and the feedback/evaluations forms demonstrate the increased confidence in staff to support SEND children using music.

Parents who have attended the sessions have all been very engaged, and have also commented that they have seen a different side to their child during the sessions:

"My son loves to come to the music sessions, he asks most school days if he's coming to see Mathew. He likes to express himself in the music sessions, he comes up with lots of ideas and that he is quite a clever boy when put in the right environment. I had fun too!" - Parent

"He was a little reserved when he started music but is slowly coming out of his shell and seems to really enjoy it! He often says that music calms him down" - Parent

"It is such a safe and relaxing atmosphere that even though she seemed like she was fighting it, she still wanted to get involved with whatever was going on. She seems to really enjoy the

atmosphere and the music really captures her imagination. She has done some amazing things with puppets and music. She has a natural affinity with creativity and could explore that in a way that I would never have considered” - Parent

“Great session yesterday, I really feel we were moving forwards with K expressing his anger through rap, it was quite a moving moment for me!” - Parent

“He’s definitely changed. He interacts with you now – he used to sit under a table and was shy. If it was something he didn’t want to do he wouldn’t do it. Whereas he tends to get involved with things now even if he doesn’t want to do it at first.” - Parent

“That hour a week at the Harbour helps L to express himself a little bit. There he can be himself without his brother kicking off.” - Parent

Through the review process within the Harbour they discuss future plans for the children, ‘what happens next’. This discussion involves the Harbour Team and the child’s home school. One particular child had progressed well through their SEMH journey and his Thrive scores had been increasing and through our review process we decided he was ready to transition out of the Harbour.

As he had been part of the therapeutic music sessions and Mum had been so engaged, Claire thought that she would support his TA and Mum to jointly run music sessions with his peers in school. Claire initially ran some sessions in school based on activities that she had learnt from Matthew, with Mum supporting Claire and the TA observing. After a couple of sessions Claire left Mum and the TA to work together to deliver the sessions. To see how they were getting on Claire popped back and joined in with a session. The TA and Mum had done an amazing job with Mum delivering activities that she had taken part in at the Harbour with Matthew; she had even taken in her own amp and microphones for the children to use.



Picture 1: Mum supporting music session

Picture 2: Family session

Summary

The indicators collectively demonstrate the impact of gradual and consistent encouragement to up-skill staff in a medium they may not have felt naturally drawn towards in the first place, only to discover that they actually have an innate gift for music. Because we all do. It’s a form of mentoring but in an informal way whereby the series of positive collective experiences gradually builds so that people realise they are leading sessions without feeling any sense of fear. Humour has always been vital in helping staff know it’s ok to get it wrong, to make mistakes and then to crack on anyway with the focus being on the children rather than on ourselves. Teamwork was always the key, teamwork, equality, mutual respect and humour.

Legacy

The programme has been a real asset to the Harbour programme, not only for the children involved but also for whole families. The music sessions have been a great way of bringing families

together, allowing children and their parents (and grandparents) to spend quality time together, having fun and bonding which they often do not get the chance to do at home. It has also allowed the practitioners at the Harbour to get to know families better and to build relationships with whole families and develop a trusting relationship which has been really important, and parents have commented on how much they value that time.

Music sessions have also been valuable during their Family days when they invite families of Harbour children to join us for different activities. This has helped to bring different families together and share experiences and build a network of friends. Even though the project has come to an end, the sessions will still continue and one of the parents is keen to run the music using the skills that she has learnt from Matthew.

It is also important for practitioners to have as many different activities in their 'tool belts' as well to support and engage children with SEMH needs, and through the project they have gained more knowledge and skills that can be used to support not only children, but also other adults who support children with SEMH needs. The other adults and parents who have attended have also gained these valuable skills and can take this away to support their own children at home or at school.

Claire notes that this programme has been extremely important to their development.

"The music sessions that have previously been with Matthew have enabled me to develop better relationships with the parents of the children I work closely with, it's so important to build those relationship/trust with the parents and have them on board to help develop ways to support the child in the future and for them to be part of that process. As we develop the project further the music activities will become part of our Thrive approach" - Claire, Harbour Practitioner

Alan notes that:

"As a result, I now confidently take musical activities with me during my outreach sessions to use with children who have not attended the Harbour youth music project and incorporate many of the games and activities that we used in the sessions" - Alan, Harbour Practitioner

"Staff members who have worked alongside our music leaders have built their knowledge to provide inclusive music making opportunities. They will share/model practices with other staff creating a 'ripple effect' to sustain principles and practice. They will continue to work with children and position music making within a child's inclusion plan. They will also work with parents and children together using music as a vehicle when appropriate." - Jayne, Collaborative Schools Manager

Case Studies

Anthony

All about Anthony:

- He is in the Nurtured Learning provision full time (not in a mainstream class)
- He has a diagnosis of ADHD and takes medication daily.
- In school A follows routines with support, but with little active engagement or emotion.
- In the Nurtured Learning provision, A sits very passively and if he is left on his own without being instructed or heavily supported, he would not participate in any activities. He needs constant reminders to complete everyday tasks
- A has regressed in all aspects of his learning and his Thrive assessments have shown a recent drop from 58% to 39% Being.
- A rarely talks about home life.

What we have noticed through Music Sessions

- A comes happily to the session; Adrian sings a welcome song as he arrives. This works well, he always has a smile on his face when he arrives.

- In his Music sessions, A is a little more active. He can be playful, but his play is very physical and often involves throwing and banging resources very loudly. He often barricades himself in a small space and hides under tables.
- To help support this we have been mirroring his emotion that he is showing. So if he is loud, we are loud alongside him, if he wants to sound louder we go louder! We have then been able to help him to regulate again by bringing the noise level down gradually. This has improved since he started the sessions. Adrian uses his singing voice and drums to support this and to engage him. We make reference to his emotions by saying “I wonder if you are feeling..... today..” “I’m noticing you are.....”
- We provide opportunities to draw to music. Adrian sings with his guitar and Claire often models drawing her house. A will join in and draw his house but once he’s finished, he will always scribble it out or rip it up. We are making slow progress. He will draw now without ripping the drawing up.
- A tries to push the boundaries during the sessions. So consistent boundaries are in place to help support him to feel safe and this has allowed him to have successful sessions.
- A enjoys playing the drum in the sessions; he likes to bang the drum as loud as he can, often saying ‘Louder, Louder’. Although he does put his hands over his ears, he wants sounds to be loud. He explores the Launch pad app on Adrian’s iPad, again all sounds played are loud, as loud as they will go. (This could replicate home, if home is a noisy place, quiet may feel uncomfortable).
- A enjoys exploring instruments and enjoys games such as musical chairs and musical statues. This is an activity that we do towards the end of the session. A likes the repetition and routine of this. Adrian finishes with a clam goodbye song before he leaves.



Frank

All about Frank:

- He is in the Nurtured Learning provision full time (not in a mainstream class)
- F has been accessing school full time since January (during Lockdown restrictions)
- F is finding it difficult to share his space with other children and share resources
- He prefers project based activities; he likes to know the ‘why’
- F had a phased return back to school in September.
- F is now on the Autism pathway and waiting to see a paediatrician
- His Thrive score is slowly increasing with recent assessments showing a jump from 24% to 40% Being

What we have noticed through Music Sessions

- F has attended one to one sessions with Adrian and myself. We had a few transition sessions, where I attended along with his TA from his class. Now he is accessing the sessions with 2 of his peers and his TA from his class.
- He enjoys arriving to a welcome song from Adrian and enjoys dancing around the room to this music.

- F still enjoys exploring new instruments and new tech! He is very inquisitive and has lots of questions 'why'
- His strength has always been his curiosity about how things work. His knowledge in areas of interest is still incredible. His vocabulary is amazing for a child of his age.
- If a new instrument is introduced F will want to share the experiences with his peers, and if it is an instrument he has come across before, he will share his knowledge.
- During his music sessions he has discovered lots of different ways to play instruments, this knowledge he now shares with his friends and they too are becoming more experimental.
- The sessions are very playful and in the sessions we often use different sensory lights and bubble machines. All the children love these, they love exploring them. The bubbles are especially popular! We dance to music, popping bubbles. This has helped one of the children in the group, as English is not his first language, the bubbles have allowed him to show his playful side.
- F enjoys conducting music. He will often initiate a piece of music. In these group sessions, we explore using our voices through a microphone, although F is still reluctant to have a go. The children have made a name for their band and they enjoy using the microphone to beat box and create their own songs/music.
- F is able to share the space with his peers, which he found difficult to start with, and share the instruments. He has been observed handing instruments out to children, wanting to share.
- The children have a favourite app that they like to explore on the iPad, it's called Launch pad. They can explore the sounds and adjust the volume to have some sounds quiet and some slightly louder. They enjoy making their own music with this app.
- F is starting to develop his peer relationships, through this music session. This is helping him back in his nurture group classroom. He is starting to play with children rather than alongside them.

Laura

All about Laura:

- English is an additional language (Polish)
- L is a Selective mute – outside home environment. This manifested after her permanent move to England from Poland.
- L will speak at home
- L has been a selective mute for 6 years – since nursery age
- L is transitioning to secondary school in September
- L presents as a very anxious child

L comes to the Harbour every Friday afternoon for a 30-minute session. She is brought by her Father who waits in a separate room for the duration. The session is jointly facilitated by Claire and Adrian.

Our aim is to offer L a place for safe, self-expressive exploration. To enable her to experience a full half-hour as free as possible from Anxiety - or circumstances that might lead her there. As a consequence, the hope is to help her grow in self-confidence and increase her self-esteem. We hope that this environment might motivate her to explore her voice, whether through vocal sounds or actual speech.

Our music activities with L have included: listening, and playing along to, favourite artists or bands; choosing a 'feeling' from the feelings poster and drawing our own interpretation of that feeling; playing, interacting with bubbles from a bubble machine; choosing a rhythm loop and joining with a selection of percussion instruments; playing paper based games built around turn taking; briefly exploring unusual effects on the sound of the voice amplified through a microphone and loudspeaker.

What we have noticed through the Music Sessions:

- When L arrived at their first session, they were extremely anxious. L walked in behind her father with her hood up.
- L came into the session and showed little emotion. When answering any questions, she would either nod, shake her head or put her thumb up.
- L engaged with the activities cautiously.
- As time has moved on, L is happy to come to the sessions. Smiling and walking in on her own through the door.
- L is showing joy and happiness in the sessions and often smiles and laughs.
- L enjoys activities that involve drawing. We often draw to music.
- Adrian starts the sessions with a welcome song, which she now smiles at when it is being sung. She will choose an instrument and play along to the song.
- We think about how we are feeling that day, we use a visual support, 'blob people' or a feelings board to point to how we are feeling. We also support this by drawing how we are feeling and listening to pieces of music we have chosen to also describe our feelings. L is very good at thinking about how they are feeling and happy to share.
- L enjoys being playful, so we use music games to engage her. She enjoys the bubble machine and would like to pop bubbles to music. They also like choosing popular pop music to play along with an instrument.
- Providing these activities has helped develop the relationship we have with L. This has allowed us to ask some more difficult questions about the reasons for not using their speaking voice.
- L is more confident and is starting to share more information about her past and we are able to start to piece together reasons for her anxieties.