

Musical Senses: Report September 2024

The Tri-borough Music Hub (TBMH) is committed to positive change and in supporting children and young people from all backgrounds to better access musical activity. Working in partnership with other organisations – Royal College of Music, ABRSM, Young Sounds, Audiovisability – we have developed a specific focus on making what we do accessible to young people who receive sensory support – young people who are blind/have a vision impairment (VI), or who are deaf/hard of hearing (HoH). This programme is called **Musical Senses**. This is only possible due to funding support from our sister charity, Musical Boroughs Trust (registered charity no. 1183585, working name *Tri-borough Music Trust - TBMT*), John Lyons Charity, Ingles Trust, and other private donors.

Building on the past 3 years, our **Musical Senses** programme aims to cover 3 main areas:

1. Training and professional development for teachers.
2. Working with and engaging positive role models into the roles of music leaders.
3. Supporting this cohort of pupils with specific sensory needs to physically come to engage with high-quality musical activity.

The programme for 2023-24:

- supported 6 students with bursaries throughout the academic year
- saw the delivery of a creative 3-day programme and concert at the Royal College of Music for 17 students and their families
- provided training materials for the workforce directly created by specialist workshop leads

MUSICAL SENSES



Creative 3-day Programme Summary

Musical Senses Creative Workshops took place over 3 consecutive Sundays: 30th June 7th and 14th July 2024 at the Royal College of Music, London. This programme at the RCM reflected the 3 points listed above, but the primary reason was to give young musicians an inspiring, engaging, and high-quality musical experience which included composition workshops, performance and musical experiences.

Our aim was that all participants could come to work collaboratively and creatively in interactive music workshops where the musicians – young people and professionals – are either Blind/VI or Deaf/HoH. Participants were encouraged to write a group composition piece and also learn a song to be performed by both groups. Young People and families were provided with audio/visual recordings, sheet music/lyrics and links to help support rehearsal and consolidation at home in the lead up to the next session.

All young people were accompanied by our trained staff and teachers throughout the day and parents/carers gave consent for their young person to take part. At the end of the final Sunday there was a sharing concert with parents, carers and guests attending. The young people performed 2 original compositions and a joint piece "It's alright", as well as some solo feature performances from several participants. The young people were then invited to enjoy a musical performance by partially sighted artist Bobby Goulder, DJ's from Deaf Rave, and also took part in an "immediate song writing session" with Hugh Nankivell from Young Sounds. The concert was filmed with thanks to ABRSM and was also recorded/produced by Jay Dasent; music producer/engineer who is also Blind.

Impacts and Outcomes

Young Musicians were represented from our local boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, and Westminster; as well as having a wider impact with students from Berkshire, Essex, Camden, Bucks, Rayleigh, Lewisham, Maidstone, Wandsworth, Greenwich and Lambeth.

Planned outcomes of the programme achieved included:

- Positively engaging pupils who are Deaf/HoH and Blind/VI
- Providing ambitious and engaging musical experiences for pupils with sensory impairments that build skills and confidence
- Providing space/time and sense of belonging for Young People with similar needs
- Strengthening partnerships and continuing professional dialogue
- Delivering inclusive weekly ensembles and choirs resulting in regular performances showcasing pupils' engagement and skills
- Making musical activity more accessible, inclusive and engaging so enabling meaningful participate for all
- Providing financial support for families of pupils with sensory impairment to access the activity
- Increasing the numbers of pupils participating in musical activity who have a sensory and/or other impairment
- Raising organisational knowledge of deafness, vision impairment and multi-sensory impairment and the changes that we need to make to become more inclusive organisations
- Providing employment opportunities for professional musicians who are deaf / hard of hearing or blind / have a vision impairment
- Increasing the knowledge and understanding of the needs of these groups within the workforce

In summary, the Musical Senses programme helped young people by providing pupil bursaries for weekly ensembles and choirs, mentoring, bespoke resources, specialist teacher resources, and access support over this academic year. The culmination of the project took place at the Royal College of Music workshops and performance on 14th July this year with 17 children and young people from 11 to 18 years old, some who have profound and complex needs.

Legacy

- We aim to continue providing 8 bursaries with support for pupils with sensory differences into the next school year (from September 2024).
- We are also planning for the next Musical Senses workshop/concert series for 2025.
- Our workshop leads also created resources to be used in the continuation of professional development and learning for our staff, tutors, and partners ([HERE](#)).
- We are keen to design and curate a national conference focused on VI/HoH learners

Barriers

- Recruitment: reaching young people in our local Boroughs, resulting in widening the call out to participants
- Securing an appropriate time/date/venue to cater to the needs of the Young People
- Differences in learning styles (e.g. Pupils in the Blind/VI group did not use Braille and were requiring large print/technology/memory to access the repertoire)
- Needs and considerations. The concert on the 14th of July aimed to cater to people who were Deaf/HoH and Blind/VI. The needs are differing and at times opposing (e.g. The Deaf/HoH group appreciated the volume of the Deaf Rave set as they could feel the bass and vibrations, but some participants from the Blind/VI group said it felt overwhelming to them at times)
- Funding. We require more funding to support our bursary scholars, develop more young people having access/using Braille, provide more extensive CPD for a wider workforce and finally, develop and grow our Musical Senses Workshop series.

Testimonials/quotes from participants, parents/carers, and workshop leaders

Just wanted to say a huge thank you for the last 3 weeks. My daughter had the time of her life. What a positive experience! **Parent of participant in Musical Senses**

It has been three weeks since the incredible performance given by the young people and all the wonderful musicians who helped on such a very special day. My daughter and I talk about it often and I wanted to extend my sincere thanks to you and to all those who made the three week sessions so inspiring and memorable. **Parent of Participant**



I wanted to thank everyone involved in the project and to apologise to those who I did not have a chance to say goodbye to on Sunday! I thoroughly enjoyed working with you all and appreciate all of the hard work that was done by those behind the scenes of the project to make the whole experience very enjoyable indeed. I loved seeing the development in the young people and thought they all did fantastically well at the concert, it really was a delight to witness. **HoH Workshop Leader**



These guys have been so amazing. They have helped me so much. I've absolutely loved the music and I've made so many brilliant friends here and I'm just thankful for everybody here.

Participant sharing feedback at the concert

Being able to see people that are like me. I don't really see people who are deaf or have difficulty hearing a lot because I'm the only one in my school

that's like that. I've really enjoyed seeing people opinions. When you bring people together you can make something amazing. I think it's really educational to people who have difficulty hearing or like vision and also bringing people who are similar together because not that many people have seen or heard or people that are similar to them so bringing would be really nice. **Participant**

I would like to say a massive thank to both of you for inviting Deaf Rave to perform and DJ. it was a wonderful experience and to witness the amazing musical talent from the VI and HOH, was incredible. **Deaf Rave**



Links to films and audio

- Main Performance Film [HERE](#)
- Short Film about Musical Senses 2024 [HERE](#)
- Audio [HERE](#) from VI group
- Audio [HERE](#) from HoH group

APPENDIX

MUSICAL SENSES PROJECT SPEND 2023-24

Training and development, strategic development	£1,400
Employing specialist musicians to deliver programmes	
• Workshop leads/Tutors/RCM mentors 30 th June, 7 th and 14 th July	£5,286.17
Supporting pupils/families to engage in activity and resources	
• bursary support for 2 pupils came from this budget (NB: another 4 students are funded from a different TBMH route)	£1,900
Other costs	
• supporting access (e.g. Audio recording, subtitles)	£950
• extra costs for running event at RCM including performers and refreshments	£855.16
TOTAL COSTS / EXPENDITURE	£10,391.33
Tri-borough Music Hub	£ 500
Musical Boroughs Trust	£ 3,000
ABRSM	£ 5,000
Ingles Trust	£ 2,000
TOTAL RESOURCES SECURED / INCOME	£10,500
Tri-borough Music Hub (staff time)	£3,000
Royal College of Music (room hire, student support, staff time)	£17,655.45
Young Sounds (staff time)	£2,050
IN-KIND SUPPORT	£22,705.45

Thank you to all the funders for their generous support –
our programme would not have been possible without your help!

If you would like to support us in the future, please contact
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