



Schools, music services and community music organisations must start 'singing from the same sheet' if the National Plan for Music Education is to succeed

"It's essential that schools, music services, and community music organisations understand each other's perspectives and ways of working if the National Plan for Music Education is to be truly inclusive." Dr Douglas Lonie of Youth Music, when he presented a paper on the place of non-formal pedagogy in English music education at the first international 'Community Music and Music Pedagogy' conference at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich last week.

Youth Music is the leading national charity using music to help transform the lives of children and young people, especially those with least opportunity. Since 1999, the charity has helped over 2.5m children access unique music learning experiences. In the last year alone, Youth Music has supported more than 380 music projects reaching over 110,000 children and young people, its highest number ever.

In his address, Dr Lonie drew on the "Communities of Music Education" research study commissioned by Youth Music and conducted by Dr Jo Saunders and Prof Graham Welch of the Institute of Education. The study examined the issues faced by schools and non-formal music organisations working together as well as differences in teaching and learning approaches in those settings. The research also explored how the approaches and effects of non-formal music education are understood by practitioners and young people.

Dr Lonie said: "Community music settings have a lot to offer young people across a range of styles, genres, instruments and methods not currently supported in the curriculum. This presents a number of opportunities to schools in working with others."

Dr Lonie outlined some of the distinctive features of non-formal music teaching and learning approaches as identified in the research. One aspect highlighted was **limited 'teacher talk'** and where this was included in sessions, it took the form of feedback regarding technique or performance, introductions to a wider number of musical genres or introductions to the concept of being a musician.

Another principal feature of non-formal music sessions was greater **scaffolding and modelling** and alternative approaches to instruction. This included modelling the techniques of playing, modelling the ways of being a musician (communicating musically), establishing '**horizontal learning**' (i.e. peer-led learning and less hierarchical relationships) with more able learners and establishing more of a **mentoring** relationship with less musically confident learners.

A particularly interesting aspect of the study compared Ofsted guidance indicating the '*outstanding* characteristics' of a school music lesson with the characteristics of observed sessions in the non-formal sector. The findings indicate that there are commonalities in high quality musical learning across these different contexts.

Whilst the research highlighted the lack of mutual understanding between potential partners in formal and non-formal musical settings about their ways of working and different terminologies, the study also suggested there were strengths in the different methods of delivery and ways of working employed by the formal and non-formal sectors and providers had a 'huge amount to learn from each other'.

"We are all interested in providing the highest quality music education to as many young people as possible. This research should help providers talk about what quality looks and sounds like across different learning contexts. These conversations will be crucial to the success of Music Education Hubs and a National Plan that is relevant to all young people" says Dr Lonie.

The Communities of Music Education report has been published by Youth Music and the Institute of Education (International Music Education Research Centre) and is available at <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/research/communities-music-education>

In addition to supporting music projects around the country, Youth Music undertakes research across a range of music education topics as part of its aim to provide thought leadership to the music education sector. Over 3,200 music education professionals subscribe to the online Youth Music Network to share ideas, innovation and best practice www.youthmusic.org.uk/network .

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Notes to Editors

1. **Youth Music** is supported by Arts Council England with lottery funding. In addition, the organisation raises funds through donations and gifts. More information on how to donate can be found at <http://www.youthmusic.org.uk/Donate.html>

2. **Youth Music** is a leading national charity using music to transform the lives of children and young people with least opportunity. We support and develop exemplary music provision across at every stage of a young person's development, whether it's the first time a mother and baby make music together, a young person not in employment or training attending a music production skills course or a talented teen's debut at the Royal Albert Hall.

3. **Youth Music** has transformed the landscape of musical opportunity in the UK. Since 1999, we've reached over 2.5 million children and young people across all musical genres; both in and out of school. Music has the power to build confidence, broaden horizons and raise aspirations. Our music programmes allow vulnerable young people to find their way, take charge of their lives and unlock their hidden potential.

4. **In the last year, 111,361 children and young people benefited** from attending music projects funded by Youth Music. Over £11m was spent by Youth Music supporting over 380 music projects, the highest number ever.

5. **Youth Music** aims to provide thought leadership to the music education sector through its published research and by engaging in national debates on music education issues.