

# UPRISING!

## Research Report 2023

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**Birmingham City University**  
Birmingham Music Education Research Group

The Centre for the Study of Practice  
and Culture in Education (CSPACE)



Dr Victoria Kinsella  
Dr Anthony Anderson  
Dr Elizabeth MacGregor  
Dr Nikki Booth



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# 1. Executive Summary

This research report offers an overview of the UpRising! project; its multifaceted activities and impact. Through a robust methodology and insightful dialogues with project participants, it sheds light on the intersections between professional development, the enriched contributions of Music Hubs to schools, and the broader influence on teaching, learning, and professional growth within and beyond the MEHEM consortium.

A series of guiding recommendations emerge to further shape the trajectory of UpRising! These recommendations are summarised as follows:

- A need for sustained funding to advance and expand professional development training across the MEHEM consortium. Moreover, a critical imperative lies in allocating resources to explore the replication of the UpRising! model on a national scale, with the potential to positively impact practitioners engaged with students across diverse regions.
- The networks developed through UpRising! have had impact on practitioners' music education practices, thereby influencing students' educational experiences. The report suggests the need to continue nurturing and sustaining these networks, fostering ongoing collaboration and support among practitioners, particularly those working with vulnerable young people.
- The report explores the issues around data utilisation and acknowledges its challenges for hubs. It advocates for the exploration of ethically responsible approaches to sharing data among stakeholders and the impact this could have on teaching and learning. Such a data - centric approach holds the promise of informing decision-making, optimising resource allocation, and providing personalised support for students.
- The report further underlines the importance of research and evaluation and the pivotal role it plays in continuously refining project strategies and enhancing the depth of understanding of impact for practice and policy.

In conclusion, the report illuminates the profound significance that this project has brought to nurturing partnerships, emphasising professional development, fostering reflective practice, promoting peer support, the importance for ethically harnessing data, refining curricula, and consistently evaluating impact. These recommendations provide a trajectory towards a more inclusive, empowering, and impactful future for young people.

## 2. Introduction

UpRising! is a three-year Youth Music funded project across the Music Education Hubs East Midlands (MEHEM) consortium that seeks to improve the quality and consistency of music-making opportunities for young people with additional needs across the East Midlands.

This report will summarise the findings from the Year 1 and Year 2 evaluations, and document the final evaluation of Year 3. It will explore the impact that the project has had on the projected outcomes, as highlighted in the Theory of Change developed in Year 1.

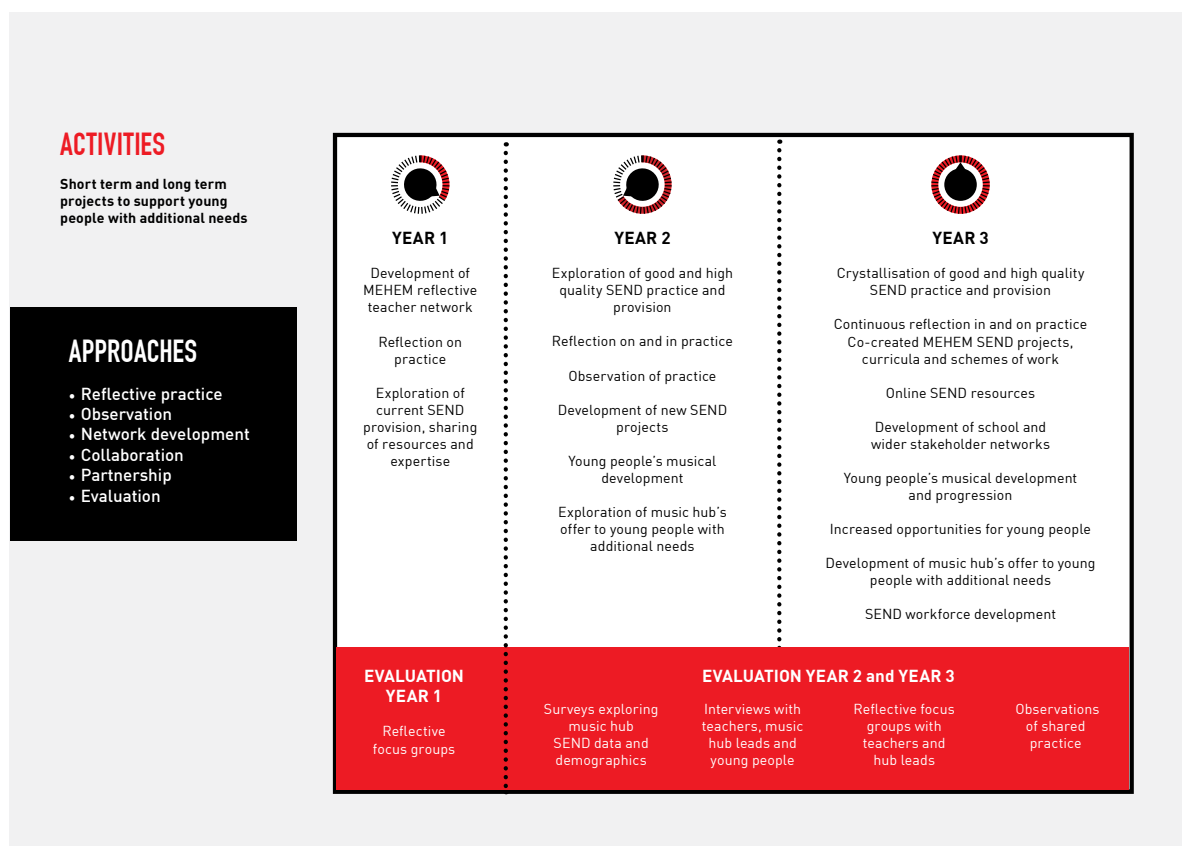


Figure 1: BCU Theory of Change developed for UpRising!

### 2.1 Project overview and development

Over three years, the UpRising! programme has developed in accordance with the activities proposed in the Theory of Change. In Year 1, a network of practitioners from Music Hubs and associated organisations across MEHEM was developed to facilitate peer-learning opportunities. These practitioners became known as Hub Reps. Reps met together (predominantly online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic) to reflect on current provision in the East Midlands for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). Hub Leads (those in senior management positions) were also involved in a survey about SEND provision.

Year 2 involved a range of activities including training sessions for Hub Reps from a range of professionals with expertise in behaviour and leading professional development; opportunities for Reps to observe each other's practice and provide feedback; and in-person Away Days for Reps to come together to share practice and receive further training. To conclude Year 2, the Reps separated

into three groups to create Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes or resources to be delivered to the MEHEM consortium. Evaluation of Year 2 took place through a reflective focus group with Hub Leads and individual, semi-structured interviews with Hub Reps.

Year 3—the final year of the initial funded project—saw the further development of activities from Year 2, including online Hivemind sessions where Reps and practitioners met to share successes and challenges. Reps then formed collaborative partnerships to deliver large-scale projects including an inclusive choir, inclusive ensemble, composing workshops, and multisensory concert experience. Reps also continued to receive and deliver training on topics such as Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD) and running inclusive ensembles.

## 3. Research Methodology

As this evaluation considers the importance of the voices of the participants and the impact for organisational policy and practice, a mixed-methods approach was considered the most effective research paradigm (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). The integration and merger of quantitative (close-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data offered a more rigorous and persuasive set of results by accounting for diverse and multiple ways of knowing.

### 3.1 Research methods

In Years 1 and 2, methods included: a Hub Leads survey exploring SEND data held by Hubs, Hub demographics, the impact the data has on decision-making, and what is currently missing from the data; interviews and focus groups with the Hub Reps to reflect on their learning and impact on practice; focus groups with Hub Leads exploring the impact of UpRising! on Hub activities and workforces; a semi-structured interview with the Project Lead to reflect on the impact of the project as well as its management; and observations of the Reps' peer-to-peer teaching and reflection sessions.

In Year 3, data were collected through the following methods:

1. An online survey for Hub Leads (repeated from Year 1);
2. Focus groups for Hub Reps;
3. An individual interview with the Project Lead;
4. Observations of some examples of collaborative projects.

Fieldnotes were also taken at UpRising! Away Days, the MEHEM Conference, and throughout the development of the curriculum working group.

### 3.2 Analysis

To analyse the data, thematic analysis was selected as an iterative approach (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Transcribing and analysing the data helped make sense of participants' views and their reasoning behind these perceptions. Following multiple cycles of coding and categorisation (Saldaña, 2009), emergent themes offered insights 'beneath the surface' of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2013:174). Identifying resonances between themes emerging from the different data collection methods used made it possible to build a detailed, multifaceted picture of participants' perceptions of the UpRising! project.

### 3.3 Ethics

This evaluation was approved by Birmingham City University Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences Ethics Committee. It was conducted in accordance with the British Educational Research Association (2018) guidelines on ethical practice in educational research. All participants provided their informed consent to take part in the research and were made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time. In this report, all participants and their professional affiliations have been anonymised in order to protect their identities.

## 4. Findings

UpRising! is a three-year Youth Music funded project across the Music Education Hubs East Midlands (MEHEM) consortium that seeks to improve the quality and consistency of music-making opportunities for young people with additional needs across the East Midlands.

### 4.1 Hub Leads Focus Group Findings: Year 2

In addition to the questionnaires sent to Hub Leads in Years 1 and 3, a focus group with four Hub Leads was conducted in Year 2. This explored five key elements of UpRising!:

- The impact of SEND training on the Hub Reps' practice;
- The development of training sessions held by the Hub Reps;
- Current data held by the Hubs on young people with additional needs;
- The aspiration for UpRising! in Year 3;
- What, if any, value UpRising! had for the MEHEM consortium of Hubs.

#### 4.1.1 The impact of SEND training

In Year 2, the Hub Reps took part in a series of CPD sessions held by a range of professionals across the field of additional needs practice. In the focus group, the Hub Leads shared their perceptions of the impact of these CPD sessions on Reps' confidence: 'I think it's really changed their mindset in the work that they're doing in special schools. And for one of them, it's given them a lot more confidence'. They also noted the long-term impact on wider Hub provision:

*I think the learning that our Reps have made will filter down into all sorts of different strands: our whole-class teaching and our singing strategy. And so, it's not just immediate impact on the Reps, it definitely will be that long-term impact for us.*

*I think it's been really, really great and useful to raise the profile of SEND work, not only within the county but across the region. It's created a network which we didn't have before and there's real knowledge—much more so than there was before, not just for the Reps but across the whole team.*

One Hub Lead noted the broader spectrum of knowledge offered via the CPD sessions and how that impacted the Reps' understanding, knowledge, and development: 'I think they have been able to see a broader spectrum of views and knowledge. And I think that's all to the good'.



#### 4.1.2 The development of CPD sessions

As part of the Reps' work for UpRising! they developed CPD sessions to be delivered to their peers in their Hubs. The Hub Leads noted that the 'Reps have gained a lot from planning those sessions and delivering them', and that the CPD would be important for the wider population of the MEHEM Hubs:

*I think the Reps were nervous as I would be too. But I know they felt a sense of achievement. By the time they get to do the session for our Hub in September, I think they'll have done several of them and they'll be really good, even better by that point.*

In preparation for the CPD, the Reps received training from a professional with expertise on leading training courses. One Hub Lead noted the importance of this:

*They have had a couple of sessions working with [the professional] to prepare for this training, which I think they found incredibly useful. I think it's going well, but I also think they will refine as they go along.*

Another key element for two of the Hub Leads was the impact of CPD training on colleagues when led by peers. The Reps' use of language, personal vignettes, and knowledge of schools in which colleagues would be working added to the training and gave it more meaning to attendees:

*I know for a fact that training that's usually the most well-received is that training that's delivered by their peers. When we bring an external speaker in, it never has the same impact. It's all about that peer sharing.*

*When we brought in external people before, they don't quite speak the same language as some of our members of staff. They are absolutely experts in their field, but don't quite know how to deal with a group of SEND children, either in a small-group lesson or as part of a whole class. So having that on-the-ground knowledge, and then pairing that with peer training is important.*

Providing in-house CPD also had financial benefits versus bringing in external providers:

*I'd usually buy in external support, I'm very much leaning on our own workforce now, which is something we've not really done before. I think that's a good thing'.*

#### 4.1.3 Additional needs data held by hubs

Data-sharing between schools, local councils, and Hubs was frequently described as a 'struggle'. Often, the lack of information-sharing between organisations meant that young people's additional needs were not addressed prior to a music teacher coming into school. This delayed progress for these young people, as prior data could influence pedagogic approaches and instruments used. As seen from the findings from the Hub Leads questionnaires, data is patchy, not easy to decipher, and possibly not shared with Hubs. As the focus group interview took place after the Year 1 questionnaire was analysed, we discussed the challenges of data-sharing, but also the potential impact that good data could have on SEND practices:

*The council never want to tell us anything at all, even though there is a data-sharing agreement. The other issue that we have is that we don't have access to the pupil data feed, so we have to send the names of the pupils that we teach to get the sensitive data, to get that sucked into our system. But in addition to that, what we're asking for here is the whole-school population and the sensitive data.*

*We haven't cracked it at all. It's not just for SEND, it's data in general that we really struggle with. And I know the next data return is beginning to loom and I'm already beginning to think about it; but being part of the local authority, I can request data, but that data comes back anonymized and therefore it's sometimes very difficult to interpret.*

*I think that the difficulty is that we've become used to that situation. So, for example, a teacher going in to teach whole-class will not have that SEND information before they start. And it's a real fight from whichever angle you come from; it's a real fight to get that information. People will hide behind different things rather than say all you need to know because that would be good for the child.*

The delays in data-sharing could have ramifications for young people's music making:

*Because we often find out about the problem way too late. We find out about the additional needs when it becomes a problem, and either that child has decided to give up or the family have put in a complaint because their child wasn't supported in the right way. We want to support the child and know this information as well, as it does nothing for our reputation in terms of how we're supporting children across the county.*

However, for some Hubs data-sharing was beginning to progress:

*During the course of UpRising!, the answers have got better from schools. They are starting to tell us more about special needs instead of thinking that we don't need to know. But they're still scared stiff of telling us which child is which.*

One reason for this could have been more SEND-specific information on Hub websites and better communication between Hubs and schools:

*I also think having things that are badged specifically for special schools on our website and marketing has really strengthened our connection with our special schools. We always did work in our special schools but having specific training that was just for them and having drop-in sessions, I think that that has helped. I think they're so used to not being included in the norm, that in actual fact they didn't expect anything. So, the fact that there was something that was bespoke for them, which has made them interact with us a little bit more, means that they now understand that there's a lot that we can offer them. Whereas before they didn't even try and ask, and there was almost, you know, that, "well, that's not for us". I think that has broken down a barrier and opened them up to sharing more about the young people.*

The sharing of data was a key area of development where more specific, individualised data needed to be sought:

*When the teacher goes in it will be apparent, sometimes, what the additional needs are. But at other times, it won't be at all. So, we are looking to get even more precise information from our schools before September. So, fingers crossed that will happen.*

One Hub Lead noted the wider issues when working with schools and the pressures they were under:

*We're struggling with it, and we've got to be fair to schools as well: they're also struggling with capacity and having to deal with everything that they've got to do. And it's an easy miss. It makes a big difference to us but it's an easy thing for them to forget.*

#### 4.1.4 Year 3 of UpRising!

During Year 2, Hub Leads hoped that the following year would bring further development in building wider networks, more in-person observations, and sharing the work within the field of music education via conferences and events:

*For me, it's about developing further those networks and those relationships that have developed so well. I think over the past 18 months, we have really been embedding those. I'd also like to really begin to learn more from visiting one another because we've not really been able to do a lot of actual visits.*

*I think this coming year is really about embedding much deeper into what we've been doing, and then identifying what the gaps still are, because there's plenty we haven't cracked yet. This is just like a stepping-stone towards what we want to do next after UpRising!. So, identifying with the Reps, with the schools, what the needs are for further development and then putting in more support to Year 4 and beyond.*

They also hoped that it would be possible to disseminate Reps' CPD to Hubs outside the consortium: 'as well as making what we've done so far more widely known, I think we need to be looking at what next because it can't just stop'; 'we really need to get what we've been doing, "out there"'.

#### 4.1.5 Value of UpRising! for MEHEM

UpRising! was an important fund supporting the development of SEND in the MEHEM consortium. In the focus group interview, the Hub Leads discussed how 'the expertise within the MEHEM group is absolutely invaluable', and its potential for Hub networking, building teams, and developing relations:

*I think there's a great deal of respect amongst us as Hub Leads, as well as Hubs, and for that to then trickle down into the teaching workforce is really strong. To have built that community of practice is important, but to build it further afield than your own Hub is really important, and also practising that across regional Hubs rather than just on your own turf.*

*Prior to this we may have looked outside of the region for expertise, not really appreciating that it's already here in MEHEM. It just looks different in different parts of the county. We've all got different strengths. And so that's really great because, actually, we can begin—and I know that was the whole point—but we can begin to share that knowledge between us.*

*Teams in their very nature in music tend to be relatively small, and so actually you create a much larger network by bringing us together. I mean, we had a handful with SEND experience although we've got a large workforce, but we probably had less than six staff. So, by networking it you have a really strong team there for people to be able to draw from. And, well, they have developed that trust, haven't they? And how powerful is that to have an army of people ready to support our SEND schools? It is quite exciting.*

*Being part of UpRising! and being in the in the group with each other and being able to share those stories and to be able to tap into [the Project Lead] has been really, really important for the Reps' self-esteem and confidence as well. I don't think they have all put their hands up and said, "I'm an expert in this, call on me", whereas now they've got that confidence and they've got that foundation of knowledge that they've built up over the last two years.*

#### 4.1.6 Conclusion

The Hub Leads identified key areas of success for Year 2 of UpRising! including the development of Reps' knowledge, confidence in their teaching and CPD offer for SEND, the importance of communities of practice developed by the Reps within the wider MEHEM consortium, the knowledge and CPD being shared across the region, and the future impact the work could have on other Hubs outside MEHEM. For Year 3 and beyond, areas for development suggested were: easier data-sharing protocols; a re-assessment of what is needed to better help music teachers teach young people with additional needs; an evaluation of what constitutes good data; more in-person observation and sharing between Hubs; as well as disseminating the work of UpRising! to key stakeholders beyond MEHEM.

## 4.2 Hub Leads Focus Group Findings: Year 2

In order to gain a deeper understanding of individuals' perspectives, during Year 2 semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven of the Hub Reps for UpRising!. Following transcription, data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The emergent themes that were identified, along with supporting data, are summarised below under four categories: pedagogical development; personal development; communication between Hubs and schools; and long-term development.

### 4.2.1 Pedagogical development

For several Reps, the UpRising! programme had been an eye-opening experience. It was fundamental as they began to identify exclusive practices in their own established approaches to teaching music. Training that they received through UpRising! helped them consider where more work needed to be done in providing young people with inclusive musical opportunities:

*[UpRising!] made me think a lot more about when I go into a whole-class setting, like what I need to know before I go in about any students with additional needs. [...] I'd ask [the school] if there were any students that needed more support and then, depending on what they came back with, I'd be like, "how can I support them further and what do they need from me?"*

*There are definitely things that I've learnt through [UpRising!] that I have brought into things. [...] Having [the training] reinforced through all the things that we're doing has meant that I've then pulled up colleagues when we've been using language in the wrong way.*

*When [they] came to present about inclusive ensembles, I became aware of so many opportunities for young people—whether that's with mainstream young people or just in terms of SEND settings—that those ensembles, generally speaking, do not exist in [our county]. [...] I think that, for me, it has been a big realization that there is a huge amount of work for us to do.*

However, for some Reps, listening to other colleagues present and taking part in discussions enabled them to validate inclusive practices in their own current teaching:

*[UpRising! is] helping me get connected and validating what I'm doing. [...] [Someone might say], "this is the way I do it", and I'm thinking, "yeah, I do similar as well", but they also do this, which is different. [It provides me with] extra ammunition in my toolkit so that when I'm in these [different] settings, there's something I can just try.*

*[It] validates and it reinforces what you're doing. It gives you a sense that you're not working alone and that there are other people either sharing your triumphs or sharing in your insecurities. [...] It's not just operating in isolation.*

Having distinguished between exclusive and inclusive practices, Reps were then able to share best practice with one another. First, they were able to receive professional development from colleagues who worked in different contexts, including SEND settings:

*CPD that's from a specialist who works in special schools, that's been really, really eye-opening because I don't have any experience of working in special schools. So, hearing their experiences and how we can then take that into mainstream schools.*

*[What was good about the CPD was] the participants thinking and talking about their own experiences and get[ting] them to feel like they can actually solve their problems and what they have been doing or may have been doing. [...] and then potentially offering, like, some solutions or things that they could try which might work and then signposting to, like, the other events and stuff [...] like Hiveminds.*

*Getting ideas from new people. [...] by working with other people from different Hubs and different places, it's kind of just opened my eyes to [...] lots of different ways of doing things that I may not have thought of beforehand. [For example,] someone mentioned to do some signing in lessons like using Makaton [...] [to] help that individual who also maybe can't hear as well or something.*

Second, they broadened their own pedagogical knowledge and were better prepared to continually 'question all of the things that [I teach]' to provide greater accessibility and meet pupils' learning needs:

*[Recently I've been] working with a pupil on a one-to-one basis, leaving the other teacher with the rest of the class. [...] I realised that [the pupil] was very, very able. [...] In a previous life I wouldn't have done that or have known what that pupil was capable of. [As a result of this pupil's success] his parents bought him an instrument [...] so that was pretty amazing stuff really.*

*So, the idea that you need to adapt the music to the musician, not the musician to the music, that's quite a shift for someone who spent their life in mainstream teaching. And I think when we're teaching Wider Opportunities, whole-class music, mainstream work, we have ranges of children within there. [...] Now I look at it very much like, "OK, right. We've got to find a way for you to access this music."*

*Some of my colleagues that I work with had a similar kind of revelation when they heard about the needs-based communication thing, and like, how, "oh, this kid isn't actually being disruptive because they're trying to make my life hell". It's like, it makes you take a step back and think "what am I missing here?", or "what can I try to do to try and fulfil that need that this kid is not getting or missing?"*

For those in leadership positions, this meant they could access a wide range of information and experiences to share with their wider networks of colleagues, and ensure that those not directly involved in the project were aware of more inclusive teaching practices: 'I'm in a position where we can actually use that information to try and help our entire team now, to get that shift of mindset'.

For two Reps, sharing best practice was then reinforced by occasions on which they were able to observe each other's practice. Engaging in observation and post-observation feedback activities was perceived as a valuable means of seeing a different perspective of the classroom, as well being able to share ideas for future pedagogical development:

*I went to visit [a colleague] when she was teaching and it was just interesting for me to like, sit back and see what goes on in the classroom. Because when you're at the front teaching, you don't always see everything. So, when you're watching what's going on, you see so many more things. And it was useful for when they came to see me for them to sort of point out things that possibly I didn't spot.*

*[The observation feedback] was much more about colleagues sharing ideas and saying what they felt worked, what they liked, what they might use themselves, all of that kind of thing, because I've used lots of things I learned from [a colleague]. [...] I think it's more about the relationship between the team that means that the observations don't feel threatening at all.*

#### 4.2.2 Personal development

Although the UpRising! project elicited important pedagogical developments, opportunities for participants to engage in personal development also became apparent. Several Reps felt like the programme 'pushed me out of my comfort zone', but as a result they became more confident practitioners:

*I've been at the Hub for four years, but I know there's people who've been there, like, 10 to 15 years. And as somebody who's newer into the profession, being confident enough to kind of deliver the knowledge that I've learned through this [project], to them was a bit nerve-wracking. [...] but [the CPD session] actually went really well.*

*Through conversing with each other, like practitioners, and specialized practitioners, you can have those moments where you're like, "oh my gosh, I'm so out of my depth...". [But then] the Rep meetings when somebody says something and they shared a scenario and this is what happened and you can say, "yeah, that's what I'd do", kind of thing. So, maybe a little bit of security in knowing that you're alright, I think you can do this as a career.*

By providing practitioners with much-needed and valued space to evaluate their own current practices, Reps were also encouraged to develop as more reflective practitioners: 'it's made me more aware of the importance of reflection and evaluation in my practice [...] we've actually tried to implement more given time for that during the working day'. They described the importance of becoming more reflexive in their everyday practice:

*The whole reflective practice thing we did right at the beginning I thought was really useful as well. Like, sort of coming out of a lesson and thinking, "what went well?", "what didn't, like, what probably didn't go to plan"?*

Reps' growing confidence and reflexivity was epitomised in the opportunities they had to deliver professional development. They commented on the positive outcomes of working in small groups to create and deliver CPD sessions for their Hubs:

*Planning and delivering the CPD sessions to our Hubs [was beneficial because] it was about how to do that effectively and how thinking through, like, all the different ways to lead a good session to some adults, you know, rather than to kids, because obviously most of us are just used to being a presenter to children. And obviously being a presenter to adults is a completely different ball game. [...] We were being a bit nervous about it and, like, we didn't have any experience in leading any CPD sessions. And then yeah, we were really good at it.*

*[There were a] vast range of skills and experience in that [CPD] group because I think there are people who are really quite new to SEND delivery and then there are people who've been doing it for years and years. And that's not a problem—this all helped creating our CPD session.*

*I like doing CPD. I like talking to people and standing up in front of people. [...] [But] the day we did it [...] the other members of the team would be really nervous [...] because they haven't had the chance to do that before. And so, it's like that was really, really good for them. So good for their confidence.*

#### 4.2.3 Communication between Hubs and schools

An important aspect of being part of the UpRising! network was the strengthening of cross-county relationships between Hubs. This was particularly aided by face-to-face Rep meetings, which became possible in Year 2. These spaces were considered 'very trustworthy [and] safe', where Reps could express themselves openly and honestly, and share successes and challenges:

*It's like part of community and also everyone's just so nice. [...] It doesn't often come along that you have a group of people that actually I can ask any question and I'm not going to feel stupid. [...] It's kind of become more powerful on the couple of occasions where we have been able to meet up [in person] [...] in those little moments in the break time where you kind of have a little chance to catch up with somebody and or to meet them for the first time.*

*I think working in small groups to start with worked because it meant we got to know each other really well. [...] Physically meeting people in person made a huge difference [...] I feel like the people I know best are those that I have spent more time in human-to-human contact with.*

*We got to really build up close relationships and learn from each other. [...] There's a network of people with so much experience. [...] So, if you are finding [something] tricky or you've got this query, you could come and see if these people might have a solution, rather than you trying to find out one on your own.*

Effective communication between Hubs and schools also emerged as an important asset, not only for establishing positive relationships between staff, but also to share information and plan for inclusivity:

*If I know what the school's processes of dealing with that particular student are and how they might react to me, then [...] I can be sort of pre-warned, of maybe what's going to happen and how I can deal with it and kind of knowing strategies that might already have been successful.*

One Rep summarised how helpful it could be,

*To know any sort of trigger points in advance, and anything that you can put into place to try and prevent things from happening to them, how to deal with it if it does happen and then what to do afterwards as well.*

However, although Reps highlighted the importance of schools sharing information with Hubs, instances where communication became a hindrance were also identified. As a result of information not being shared, some participants believed they were unable to teach effectively for inclusivity:

*Some teachers are quite reluctant to give information about their students. Even though, like, as visiting teachers, it's vital that we have that information, in order to teach their children most effectively.*

*It's so important at the moment, because we've got our Wider Opportunities bookings coming in and we're getting the information from schools. It's still all very sketchy. They never give us very much information on paper, but they are giving us more than they used to.*



#### 4.2.4 Long-term development

As part of the interview process, participants were asked whether there were any areas of the project that they felt could have been better. The primary long-term limitation they identified was the issue of time. Many felt that 'the UpRising! project is much bigger than I thought it was going to be [...] it's taken a lot more time than I initially thought', and they were unsure how it would continue to fit alongside their busy schedules:

*Extra work's been quite hard to fit in because my timetable's amazingly gone quite busy this year. [...] [I would love] just having the time to then take [UpRising!] to the next level, to do your own reading or learning and things like that.*

*Timing is important. You know, to really get my teeth into this. It's just taking quite a long time because I don't have the time to fit it in as a part-time member of staff. I've just sort of had to do things when I'm not supposed to be working.*

Nevertheless, being involved in the UpRising! project also caused some participants to consider their personal long-term ambitions and aspirations, and how they might continue the inclusive work with which they had been engaged. Some hoped simply to use their expertise to be 'the point of contact for people who can get more information about additional needs', while others hoped to continue to develop and share resources across a wider network of practitioners:

*I'm really hoping that we would stay in touch anyway, beyond Year 3. I think going into Year 3, it's just going to keep building, because as we do more work and more research and more sharing of resources, I think it has strengthened us as practitioners and it will give us more confidence to then be able to share that with others.*

#### 4.2.5 Conclusion

From the interview data gathered from Reps in Year 2, it was clear that being part of UpRising! elicited important benefits both in terms of developing more inclusive professional practice, as well as for personal development. Specifically, these benefits included validating, observing, and sharing examples of inclusive practices; creating space for confident and reflective practice; developing fruitful networks of communication between Hubs and schools; and establishing long-term ambitions for inclusive practices in the future. Many of these benefits demonstrated increasing scalability, where those directly involved in UpRising! had the opportunity to influence professionals who had not been involved in the project within their own settings.

Notwithstanding these positive outcomes, areas for development and further consideration were also identified. These included communicative challenges between some Hubs and schools, and the timing and scheduling of the project. In line with findings from the Hub Leads' questionnaires and focus group, better communication between Hubs and schools to share young people's learning needs was identified as essential to establish and uphold inclusive music learning practices.



### 4.3 Hub Reps Focus Group Findings: Year 3

Between May and June 2023, ten of the Hub Reps took part in online focus groups reflecting on their experiences of UpRising! up to, and including, Year 3. Each of the four focus groups involved between two and four Reps, and was recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Teams. Using a semi-structured format, the focus groups addressed the following questions:

1. UpRising! Year 3:
  - a. What has Year 3 of UpRising! looked like for you? (e.g., which sessions have you attended? what resources have you used? who have you networked with?)
  - b. How has Year 3 been similar to or different from Year 2?
2. Working with young people:
  - a. What has been the one most important change that UpRising! has made to your practice with young people?
  - b. What aspect of your practice with young people would you most like to develop over the coming year, and how could UpRising! support you?
3. Working with your Music Hub:
  - a. What has been the one most important change that UpRising! has made to your practice within your Music Hub? (e.g., with colleagues, training, networking.)
  - b. What change would you most like to see in your Music Hub over the coming year, and how could UpRising! support you?
4. Looking forward:
  - a. Overall, what have been the greatest benefits of your involvement with UpRising!?
  - b. What do you hope to gain from your ongoing involvement with UpRising!?

After multiple cycles of coding and categorising the focus group data (Saldaña, 2009), significant emergent themes were identified. In what follows, these themes will be discussed under five headings: Core values of UpRising!, Years 2 and 3, Training received by the Reps, Training delivered by the Reps, and Year 4.

#### 4.3.1 Core values of UpRising!

Implicit within the Reps focus group discussions were assumptions of the qualities valued by the UpRising! programme. Chief among these was the educational prioritisation of SEND. Participants discussed the ways in which meeting the needs of children with SEND had wide-reaching benefits, not just for individuals but also for mainstream programmes and pedagogical development:

*[SEND provision will have a] positive impact [...] on everyone's practice across the board... because every child is an individual actually! Like, so you know, anything that you do in a SEND setting is going to... the approach to that is going to make your mainstream work stronger as well. (Focus Group 4)*

They also strived to offer high-quality, meaningful musical experiences for those with SEND, 'making sure that the young people are getting the best out of you' (Focus Group 3), and believed that—with the right support—children could exceed expectations and pursue aspirational goals:

*It's just about showing them, "you want to make music?" "you can make music!" [...] By going in and doing something, we can [...] show them that you can have it sort of as a career as well. (Focus Group 3)*

Prioritising SEND meant that approaches had to be accessible, inclusive, and participatory. Reps described how they had worked hard to develop training and create resources that would be accessible for teachers working in different school and Hub contexts. They wanted the UpRising! resources to be made widely available, in part to make up for the notable lack of resources for SEND music provision:

*It just makes you aware that you think all these things [e.g., SEND training, SEND music curricula] are already out there, up and running things, and people have that knowledge and they have that interest—and actually they don't. It's not there. (Focus Group 2)*

Inclusivity was also an essential attribute. Participants explained how UpRising! encouraged teachers to move away from exclusive music delivery (in which children with SEND would typically leave the classroom to do a different activity) and towards inclusive music delivery (in which children with SEND were always able to engage in classroom music-making):

*What we've always tried to do is keep those children in the classroom, 'cause the schools are always the first people to kind of go, "OK, we'll... this person isn't going to sit through the lesson, so we're going to take them out and do some reading or whatever." [...] So that's the biggest [...] take away from me, making sure [I'm] sort of mindful of adapting everything to make it do-able. (Focus Group 3)*

Inclusive approaches would typically be 'completely participatory, and they'll [...] immerse themselves in whatever the pieces are' (Focus Group 2), and individualised to meet pupils' specific needs.

#### 4.3.2 Years 2 and 3

Reps reflected on the similarities and differences between Years 2 and 3 of the UpRising! project. In general, they emphasised the progression from receiving and developing training programmes in Year 2, towards delivering and disseminating training programmes in Year 3. During Year 2 the greatest time commitment was to regular Rep meetings, in which they received training from experts and refined their own ideas for training that they wanted to pass onto their own wider organisations. During Year 3 the emphasis shifted towards delivering training and establishing collaborative projects including an inclusive choir, a multisensory concert, and school residencies:

*Year 2... I felt like we were having non-stop meetings. [...] We had a lot of online meetings like, you know, like multiple times a week, sometimes with the different teams, and [...] that turned into a big piece of training that happened on my team, which we ended up doing all over the place at every Hub. [...] And then this year it's been very different because we've moved into this inclusive choir side of things. (Focus Group 2)*

The training delivered and received by the Reps in Year 3 had many and varied benefits. They described it as 'really good' and 'just invaluable' (Focus Group 1), and were pleased to see the impact of regular events such as the online Hiveminds, 'which have been really well attended and people have found those really useful' (Focus Group 1). Likewise, they praised the collaborative projects for building opportunities for partnership working that enabled them to work with different musicians and reach diverse audiences. For example, Nottingham City and Northamptonshire worked together to stage a multisensory concert for pupils from SEND schools in Nottingham:

*The event itself is going to be at a theatre in Nottingham, with Northampton's youth orchestra coming, and [the Northamptonshire Reps] coming along, and combined with our youth orchestra and then with Nottingham schools coming to participate. [...] [It's] this quite massive thing, which is not just the performance itself, it's a huge thought process: how things will work, and what's best for me, what's best for those young people who are going to be participating, but also then thinking about the orchestras getting involved [...] and making it a valuable experience for them as well. (Focus Group 2)*

Although many of the participants acknowledged that the collaborative projects during Year 3 had been well-managed, they did also highlight some limitations. As large-scale, multi-organisation endeavours, the projects often required a significant (and sometimes unwieldy) time commitment from Reps, and had complicated logistical requirements such as travelling between counties or facilitating online music-making. For example, one Rep expressed how:

*I have a full timetable and the space outside of that to be doing these things is really quite limited. And I feel disappointed because [...] there's a really grand project on the horizon with Nottingham [City], and I've not had the time to be able to really consider that in the ways that would have been ideal. (Focus Group 2)*

Another Rep involved in online sessions of the inclusive choir said,

*My fear is if I'm ever in control of the actual Zoom meeting. That's my real fear, that I've got to control the music and I've got to control that everybody gets the link and I've not had to do that. (Focus Group 2)*

Some projects lacked well-structured management, and Reps found the extra workload demanding and exhausting. Although they acknowledged the positive impact of the projects, they also highlighted how, in some instances, 'we've had low numbers and we struggle... so I think it feels very, very hard work for a small number of children' (Focus Group 2).

#### 4.3.3 Training received by the Reps

Four themes emerged relating to the training that the Reps had received over the three years of UpRising!: building on evidence, sharing expertise, validating experiences, and putting into practice. They recognised the importance of training that was building on evidence—such as that relating to PMLD provision—and described it as relevant, valuable, and powerful. One Rep highlighted the benefits of learning from experts who were able to share recent research findings and examples of best practice to support Reps' own developing knowledge and expertise:

*We've had some really good training sessions this year. With some real, like, evidence behind it, but also practical things that you can take straight back into your sessions. [...] Having that knowledge and concrete evidence that this is why we're [using specific approaches] has been quite powerful for me. (Focus Group 1)*

Sharing expertise, however, reached beyond learning from visiting experts. All of the Reps identified the Rep network as essential for sharing 'different lived experiences and different backgrounds, different ways of teaching' (Focus Group 3). It offered a crucial peer support network that enabled them to feel supported by friends and colleagues who had different—but relevant—skills and interests that they could learn from and incorporate within their own contexts. The leadership of the network by the Project Lead was described as encouraging, as he took time to identify Reps' skills and suggest how best they could share them within the network:

*[The Project Lead] in particular is very good at going, "oh, you have this skill". When you're going, "do I? What?" And it's like, yeah, just gives you a little push, and you think, "oh yeah..." But also having that network of Reps as well, and just sharing ideas and things has been so useful. Just building your confidence and giving you a big bank of skills to get out there. (Focus Group 4)*

The process of sharing ideas and challenges within the network was significant for validating experiences:

*A lot of it has been validating what I've been doing and what I believe to be right, but I haven't done the research to show the proof of why, yeah, sometimes. Sometimes you know it's right, and you can kind of articulate it as to why you're doing it. [...] [But] otherwise you're on your own and you don't know if you're doing what you think... (Focus Group 1)*

Within their respective organisations, Reps were often the only staff working in SEND provision or had few close colleagues. They sometimes felt alone in their practice and commented that 'we don't get [meaningful] feedback from staff or parents' (Focus Group 2). The Rep network was therefore valuable for sharing experiences, recognising aspects of their work that were difficult, and knowing that they were not alone. In many instances the network offered training or dialogue that reinforced the existing values and beliefs of Reps, while previously they may not have known whether or not they were following best practice.

Reps also gave concrete examples of how they were putting into practice what they had learnt during training. Specific practices that they had adopted included 'engineer[ing] the classroom layout [to be] slightly different' for pupils with sensory-processing difficulties (Focus Group 3), and incorporating chanting as 'a very versatile technique to use' in therapeutic sessions (Focus Group 2). Several Reps highlighted how UpRising! had reminded them of the significance of debriefing and self-evaluation:

*Actually, [in our collaborative project], we have 45 minutes before we start and then an hour at the end of every session. And would I have had the confidence to put that amount of planning and debriefing in [before UpRising!]? Maybe not, so I think it's crucial and essential to the success of the project. (Focus Group 4)*

Many said that they had become '[more] aware of children with additional needs' (Focus Group 3) and were more attuned to the varying issues that they could face:

*My awareness of the range of different things that they might be facing is just greater. So one of the training sessions we had was on dyslexia and using different coloured papers [...] [and] some of those things about dyspraxia [...] and how people are connecting with their bodies—I wouldn't necessarily have really considered that, at all, before [UpRising!]. (Focus Group 4)*

They were also more likely to approach schools to find out about pupils' specific needs before beginning to teach there. However, some pointed out that the mainstream classes they usually taught did not typically include children with SEND, and that therefore they had missed out on the chance to put into practice the valuable skills they had learnt during training.

#### 4.3.4 Training delivered by the Reps

For most of the Reps, putting into practice what they had learnt during UpRising! training meant disseminating and delivering training in their own emergent SEND specialism. Four recurring themes were discussed in relation to this aspect of the project: sharing expertise, promoting dialogue, upskilling staff, and changing mindsets.

Having been the recipients of expert training, Reps emphasised the importance of being able to pass on their knowledge and share expertise with wider networks beyond the immediate participants in UpRising!:

*This has sort of blasted me into the world of SEND, and I have people asking me questions on a regular basis like I'm some kind of expert! And I sort of feel like I'm not the expert, but then sometimes you think, well, maybe I am more of an expert. [...] It just feels like actually, maybe the experience we have had does give us the right to be the one that people ask the questions of, and maybe people do respect my opinion. (Focus Group 2)*

The Project Lead encouraged many Reps to learn how to facilitate professional training—something most of them had not previously considered:

*It's brought out a different side of me, you know, and I think about what I'm capable of, actually, 'cause I just thought of myself as a practitioner, [...] but now I'm happy to do some training. (Focus Group 2)*

Some ran training courses with their Music Hubs; some facilitated courses for generalist staff at special schools; and some shared their skills directly with children with SEND. They explained how, typically, similar training had been difficult to access, and that their new skills as facilitators were therefore highly valued by their organisations:

*The feedback I've had from some of my colleagues that I worked with, "oh, you've been trained up, you've got social model of disability training. This is great because now you can do it for us!" (Focus Group 3)*

Much of the training delivered by the Reps was focussed on promoting dialogue and conversation between practitioners and across wider networks. For example, they wanted to be able to point Music Hubs towards organisations such as the OHMI Trust and the Able Orchestra, so 'if they come to you with a with an issue, saying, "so-and-so might be able to help"' (Focus Group 1). They wanted their organisations to be able to share ideas and challenges, in the same way that they felt able to do so within the Rep network. They recognised that even mainstream music practitioners could feel isolated within their practice and did not always have opportunities to learn from their colleagues.

The Reps also aimed to make their training dialogic and conversational to ensure that it met practitioners' needs. For example, at Hivemind sessions,

*People can come to us and say, "I'm having this this sort of issue. What can I do about it?" and we can discuss it amongst ourselves and try and come up with some solutions for them. (Focus Group 1)*

They acknowledged that they all had valuable, practical experience which meant that they were suitably qualified to support their colleagues and work through problems together.

In several regions, Reps described how UpRising! had 'really, really accelerated the upskilling of our current staff' (Focus Group 1). Feedback they had received from colleagues suggested that training was upskilling staff by reinforcing other SEND work that was going on across organisations, normalising it as an essential part of high-quality music education provision:

*It's been really [...] refreshing to see how our Hub has really, like, put a lot of time into this, and I think it's probably being pushed on because of the UpRising! project. [...] It feels like that's been a big, key part of our in-service training days [...] for the last few years. (Focus Group 1)*

In some cases, upskilling seemed to be leading to wider changing mindsets:

*[There's] been a sort of slow drip-feed of a change of mindset, that's basically happened with our whole-class deliverers, [...] that actually, no, it's not acceptable that children get put out the classroom because they can't cope, you know. [...] We need to think of ways to include children, [but] not always force them to do the same instrument as everybody else. [...] So we've had a bit of a kind of epiphany. (Focus Group 2)*

Reps described how their colleagues were becoming more likely to prioritise the kinds of core values promoted by UpRising!, such as accessibility, inclusivity, and participation. Practitioners who had engaged in training on the social model of disability found that 'people are more open to have more honest conversations' (Focus Group 3) about the capabilities and aspirations of disabled musicians. For Music Hubs that previously lacked a diverse or well-developed SEND offer, 'it's forced [us] to make SEND work a focus [...] [and] our offer is now so much better than where we were at' (Focus Group 2). Nevertheless, there were occasional instances when training was less well-received by practitioners who were more reluctant to move away from their established teaching approaches:

*Some of our workers have gone out working in schools along with other people, they come back and it's been a bit of a, like, "I've always done this this way. I'm not changing the way I work. This is how I work." (Focus Group 2)*

#### 4.3.5 Year 4

When looking beyond Year 3 of the UpRising! project, two recurrent themes raised by Reps were the needs to maintain partnership networks and enhance professional development. 'Building those partnerships, not only between the MEHEM Hubs' (Focus Group 1) would facilitate opportunities for collaborative networking, enable signposting to relevant training, and offer access to specialist equipment such as adapted musical instruments. Ideally, they wanted 'to get more of the music Hub staff across the whole of the region feeling confident working with people with additional needs', and hoped for a time when 'all the staff are having SEND training and feeling confident and offering themselves up to be part of that SEND offer across our Hubs' (Focus Group 4).

Different Reps indicated different training routes that they hoped might be offered beyond Year 3. Specific suggestions included, for example, further training in 'approaches in delivery, and maybe types of delivery that people do in SEMH settings' (Focus Group 1), and ways 'to deal with the child in the middle of a meltdown, to [...] de-escalate that' (Focus Group 3). Others wanted to 'keep using and keep improving music technology, songwriting programmes, and production programmes to help young people realise their own visions of songs' (Focus Group 2), and to 'increase SEND ensembles in our schools' (Focus Group 4).

However, in order to realise these visions Reps identified the need to foster sustainable structures that would be viable in the longer term. This could require a major shift in the operational management of Hubs:

*You need training in a training room, yes, you need that. But then you need support in delivery [...] and then to feel that there is space and time to have the debrief and the reflection and all of that. And that requires, I might suggest, Hubs to take quite a bold move away from the way that they are currently operating. Because [at the moment] whenever we're working on a project, it's like, "well, I've got 45 minutes and then I'm on to the next school." (Focus Group 4)*

There was particular concern in relation to leadership of collaborative projects such as the inclusive choir and multisensory concert experience:

*I think going forward, it's going to take quite a bit of planning, and [...] something I've said very clearly right from the beginning of this is that we must have somebody in charge of it. (Focus Group 2)*

However, several participants pointed out that the incorporation of an Inclusion Lead or Inclusion Champion within Music Hubs would potentially solve this problem. The introduction of these roles—which were first proposed in the National Plan for Music Education (2022) — was considered 'a strong step in the right direction' (Focus Group 3) for ensuring that high-quality SEND provision could continue beyond the remit of UpRising!.

Nevertheless, there was some confusion over how Inclusion Leads and Champions were to be embedded into Hubs:

*There's so much confusion around the Inclusion Lead and the Inclusion Champion. [...] I'm not convinced the Hubs quite know yet where this is going. And you know, the Inclusion Lead sounds like they are a strategic person who's part of a management team, and the Inclusion Champions are the people like [the Reps], and we're somehow going to be chosen by the Hub [...] and they do the sort of sharing and groundwork and CPD. So how on earth is that going to work? Because if, you know, for instance, [a Rep] gets chosen as the Inclusion Champion, when [are they] going to put that into [their] job? So, I think there is a definite conversation around time commitment to this kind of thing. (Focus Group 2)*

Although the Reps agreed that taking on the role of Inclusion Lead or Champion would help them to continue to share expertise, promote dialogue, upskill staff, and change mindsets, they foresaw problems in integrating it with their present responsibilities:

*I don't know if that's supposed to be our role moving forward, to help maintain the legacy and make sure this knowledge that we've got, it doesn't just fizzle out. But absolutely, that would then need time dedicated to it, [because I already] have all these other leadership duties which see me working through my lunches, when I'm cooking the dinner at night... (Focus Group 2)*

For new Inclusion Leads and Champions to make a significant impact, they would need to be 'embed[ded] within the Hubs to keep this moving forward [...] [and] not just added on to somebody's extra workload, because that's when things get diluted' (Focus Group 1). In addition, Reps emphasised that 'the upskilling of the Inclusion Champions [will be] just as important as upskilling the staff, 'cause it's got to grow, hasn't it?' (Focus Group 1).



Lack of clarity around the roles of Inclusion Leads and Champions mirrored Reps' wider worries about the potential limitations of the UpRising! project after Year 3. In particular, Reps who were employed by organisations other than Music Hubs (such as Soundabout and Sinfonia Viva) were unsure of their future association with the project:

*I'm not employed the same as you guys with the funding and everything. So I'm not quite sure where it stands at the moment, so it'll be sad if people are carrying on and I'm not, 'cause I'd like to still be involved with more things. (Focus Group 2)*

There was also concern that networks could break down once funding finished, unless alternative structures were put in place:

*It shouldn't take a funded project for these things to be happening! [...] There should be an easier way to do this, surely, without having to look at where the next lot of funding's coming from and how do we get all these people in the same room? Like, surely there should have just been a WhatsApp group!? (Focus Group 3)*

One Rep described the risk of Hubs offering a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to SEND provision (Focus Group 4) if they failed to implement sustainable structures and networks allowing the Inclusion Leads or Champions to set aside sufficient time for their role.

Nonetheless, Reps did also highlight the myriad potential benefits of pursuing the value and ethos of UpRising! beyond Year 3. Primarily, they hoped to sustain dialogue and upskilling around SEND provision:

*I'd like these conversations to just carry on and grow, rather than [...] take a backseat. I'd still like it to keep being pushed, and keep upskilling everybody so that everybody feels like they could deliver a session with any student, whatever they present when they arrive. (Focus Group 1)*

They wanted to continue changing mindsets, raising more widespread awareness that 'there's a different journey you can have with music education, [...] so it's accessible for everybody' (Focus Group 1). They wanted to be able to share the resources and training they had developed, 'just getting the word out for people that we have these resources: let's share them with you and let's get people talking' (Focus Group 3). Ideally, this would be facilitated by Hub management:

*[I'd love] for Hubs and our leadership teams to [...] think, "right, you guys, let's try and make that time in your schedule and help you disseminate the information in practical ways to a bigger workforce". (Focus Group 2)*

Furthermore, proactive partnerships between Hubs and schools would ensure that Hub staff could 'have access, have the ability to go and teach those children with additional needs, to go and work in special schools' (Focus Group 3) and put their skills into practice. In doing so—and in networking with other practitioners—staff could develop 'responsive', 'reflective', and 'collaborative' teaching (Focus Group 4), offering high-quality, meaningful music education in both SEND and mainstream provision.



#### 4.3.6 Conclusion

The Reps focus groups highlighted the numerous benefits of the three-year UpRising! project, beginning with the opportunities to receive and develop training in Years 1 and 2, through to the instances of delivering training, disseminating resources, and sharing expertise evident throughout Year 3. The Reps appreciated the evidence-based, expert knowledge that they received through the programme, and the encouraging and dialogic fashion in which it was shared. These aspects were some of those that they most wished to pass on to colleagues in their wider organisations, in order to continue changing staff mindsets to be more inclusive, and to upskill teachers in their provision for pupils with SEND.

However, some of the limitations that were identified by Reps in their Year 2 interviews remained evident in Year 3. Several participants highlighted continuing time constraints and the difficulties of managing the workload of UpRising! in addition to a full-time teaching schedule. They were also concerned that these issues could forestall the legacy of the project. Although the reorganisation of Hubs to include Inclusion Leads and Champions was considered a 'step in the right direction', some Reps worried that these roles would not prove effective unless accompanied by a complete overhaul of Hub structures. Ideally, Reps hoped that the sustainable restructuring of Hubs would ensure that Inclusion Leads and Champions were not overburdened, had time in their schedules protected for working on inclusion objectives, and were offered space for team-teaching and reflective practice—especially when teaching in SEND settings or delivering professional development sessions.

Nonetheless, Reps' feedback during interviews and focus groups suggested that UpRising! has already begun to lay down secure foundations on which Hubs could build long-term, sustainable restructuring. Through sharing expertise and promoting dialogue, Reps have precipitated changes in colleagues' mindsets towards prioritising accessible, inclusive, and participatory practices. It is therefore possible that through maintaining fruitful partnerships between Hubs, schools, and associated music organisations—and with support from legacy funding through Year 4—the UpRising! network could continue to establish values and practices of inclusive training, teaching, and learning that last for many years to come.

## 4.4 UpRising! Project Lead Interview Findings: Year 2

Between May and June 2023, ten of the Hub Reps took part in online focus groups reflecting on their experiences of UpRising! up to, and including, Year 3. Each of the four focus groups involved between two and four Reps, and was recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Teams. Using a semi-structured format, the focus groups addressed the following questions:

### 4.4.1 CPD activities in Year 2

A focus of Year 2 was to provide the Reps with a range of CPD opportunities to expand their knowledge and understanding of additional needs. The Project Lead arranged a wide range of activities for them to engage with including:

1. Two sessions with curriculum and reflective practice specialists, Dr Anthony Anderson and Nichola Burke.
2. A number of sessions on challenging behaviour: 'we've had a lot of stuff around challenging behaviour because it is something that comes up time and again as a need and as being the result of additional learning needs. Especially for instrumental tutors that's what they wanted information on. We heard from Dr Phil Mullen, Alex Lupo, and Claire Cheetham. And then on the back of that, one of the Reps has created challenging behaviour training'.
3. Thirteen Twilight Sessions over the course of two years.
4. Train the Trainer session with Katherine Zeserson: 'the Reps learnt a lot and developed their confidence'.

### 4.4.2 Wider aims of UpRising!

As the project approached Year 3, we explored the wider aims of UpRising! and the future aspirations of the project. One of the key areas identified by the Project Lead was the need for a core team, which could be MEHEM-wide, that would support additional needs within Hubs. To explain this idea further the Project Lead drew on his knowledge of a similar team structure developed in Tower Hamlets, London:

*One of my wider aims in UpRising! is to have a core team—they have got one in Tower Hamlets, they call it the Inclusion Taskforce. So, for example, a few people that can drive things forward after UpRising!. And although the Reps have now got the knowledge, it became apparent they didn't necessarily have the confidence to train others. One thing I've learned is that some people just either don't want to or aren't ready to step into a role like that, which is fine—but actually some of the Reps really have. And it's allowed me to reflect on the skills that you need as well, you know. There definitely needs to be leadership in each of the Hubs, so where it's not going to be the Reps then we need to identify who that might be.*

This should be a recommendation for the future of the project and additional needs support sustainability within Hubs.

#### 4.4.3 Resource and training development

A key aspiration of Year 2 was the development of CPD to be delivered to MEHEM Hubs. Three training programmes were developed in the areas of Attachment and trauma, challenging behaviour, inclusive instrumental teaching:

*Three of the Hubs have had the instrumental training, and we have three more in September. Most of them will also have the challenging behaviour, trauma, Makaton, and music therapy training. We have developed a core of specialist practitioners and that will roll over to Year 3 now.*

To showcase this, the Project Lead was planning a session at the Music Mark conference. This would provide an opportunity to widely disseminate the training and potentially explore its requirement beyond MEHEM. Another key area was the development of resources to be uploaded onto the UpRising! website. These included: a beginner's guide to inclusion; basic training for additional needs; interviews with disabled musicians; and some activities for supporting additional needs.

#### 4.4.4 The curriculum development working group

A further aim of UpRising! Year 2 was to explore the potential of creating a curriculum document that would support additional needs within the classroom. To begin this process, a working group of professionals and specialists in additional needs and curriculum were brought together with teachers to consider what this document could and should look like. This document was then trialled with three schools in Year 3. The Project Lead described how:

*We have created this curriculum document and we have sent it out for review and we are having three schools are trying it out. What I think we need by the end is for each hub to have a curriculum specialist that can go in and develop plans for special ed schools—someone who is qualified and experienced to do that. It might be a Rep or a teacher. Again, we need to find the most relevant person.*

#### 4.4.5 Strengths of Year 2

Within the interview we explored the Project Lead's perspectives of the successes of Year 2. The Hivemind sessions, which were open sessions for people from across the United Kingdom to attend online, were a particular strength of Year 2:

*Our regular Hivemind sessions have been particularly popular because it's providing a space to talk. It's almost like group therapy or something, but within a kind of framework. We'll carry on those next year as they have been popular.*

Due to the impact of COVID-19, Year 1 of the project had focused on delivering CPD sessions and group meetings for the Reps. The move towards in-person meetings for Reps in Year 2 had beneficial repercussions for building trusting relationships within the Rep network. Working together in CPD sessions enabled the Reps to establish good relations. This had significant impact on the development of co-delivered CPD and peer-to-peer observations. Furthermore, the Project Lead noted the value of this network to the Reps' professional development and the importance of shared experiences and knowledge for teachers who often work in silo:

*One of Reps said to me [...] you can't make people bond. That was at the beginning of the project, and I was like, fair play. You know, it takes time. But I think from about halfway through the first day of one of our in-person sessions, suddenly it was, it was like a bubble that burst, you know, everyone had good feelings towards each other and developed trust. It really feels like there's a good camaraderie between the Reps.*

#### 4.4.6 Challenges of Year 2

There have been many successes in the project, but the Project Lead also reflected on areas that were more challenging in Year 2. These included that 'generally engaging with special needs school teachers is hard', and that 'I'm asking the Hubs and the Reps [for time] out of what they are normally doing, and that is a struggle'. Furthermore, it was difficult to extend the reach of the project to non-Hub organisation partners:

*In this project we have the Able Orchestra, Sinfonia Viva, and SoundLINCS, but all the Hubs have different partners that may or may not be working with people with additional needs. We need to connect with them too.*

#### 4.4.7 Year 3 and beyond

The Project Lead had a number of aspirations for Year 3, including for UpRising! to become an example of a world-class inclusive offer. He noted the uniqueness of UpRising! and its central role for developing a model of training and additional needs support for music teachers: 'I don't think anywhere else has brought together all of these people in a systematic way.'

He also hoped to initiate a MEHEM inclusive choir and offer more live music in schools through collaborative projects. In terms of training, he hoped to offer Reps the opportunity to hear more from people with lived experiences of disability and additional needs, develop training for teachers beyond MEHEM, and upload resources on the UpRising! website to equip music teachers.

Ideally, he hoped that every MEHEM Hub would be able to access a SEND network, and that UpRising! would also have an offer for PRUs and other alternative provision units. He specifically aimed to host a PMLD area on the website, launch the curriculum document, and create posters to be shared across MEHEM schools:

*I noticed when you go into a music classroom, they have huge posters of instruments in the orchestra. But I would like to create one about inclusive practice that can go up in classrooms and staff rooms. So, this will mean we need to distil all of what we've learned onto one piece of paper. I think it would be really nice to send out everywhere and then having the dates for next year's special needs sessions at the bottom.*

#### 4.4.8 Conclusion: Further support for additional needs

As we approached the final year of UpRising!, the Project Lead reflected on additional things that needed to be considered as areas of priority post-UpRising! funding. Firstly, relationships between Hubs and schools needed to be further developed:

*Relationships between Hubs and specialist provision needs development: Hubs figuring out what special ed schools want, even if the special schools don't know what they want yet, and being able to communicate that to them against the backdrop of funding cuts.*

He hoped there would be 'more curriculum support in [Hubs'] offers to schools', and that partnerships would be embedded and sustainable over the longer term:

*This needs systemic change. This could mean for whole class you have three weeks just with the people of the additional needs and then seven weeks with the whole class, or it could be having two teachers in to support these young people, or it could be training TAs [Teaching Assistants] properly, to be a second person who can support progression. Stuff like that. Because often it doesn't work well because figuring out needs has [not] happened prior to the sessions—more time is needed for this.*

Finally, the Project Lead noted the need for an increase in the disabled workforce and the importance of time given for this development:

*Having disabled musicians in the workforce is important. But it is also really hard. Able Orchestra have been brilliant at it, but they have told me that it takes time, it has taken six years of intensive support.*

## 4.5 UpRising! Project Lead Interview Findings: Year 3

During Year 3, training and resources for the Hub Reps built on the previous two years, meaning greater focus on fewer events as the aims of the project were more familiar to all participants. Despite this, online CPD events consistently reached beyond the boundaries of the project, being available and accessible to all.

### 4.5.1 CPD opportunities

CPD opportunities fell into four strands, many of which included multiple events:

1. Musicking for the Terrified (six 75-minute sessions, to which 60 practitioners signed up);
2. Curriculum design (six curriculum specialists working with generalist teachers in three schools);
3. Training for singing with Profound Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) pupils (attended by 30 practitioners);
4. Music in alternative provision (PRUs and similar settings).

These CPD areas were based on perceived need arising from Years 1 and 2. Attendance was nationwide and offered support and development that was otherwise patchy and problematic to access. As the Project Lead stated when describing the PMLD CPD session:

*There's only something like 10,000 pupils with PMLD in the whole UK. It's small, it's niche, but these pupils have got so much they can gain from music, maybe more than any other cohort. It's a totally different way of thinking about music, about progression. [So that CPD session] was quite a powerful experience actually.*

This CPD offer was enriched by bespoke training, which was offered in a focused manner, with its national reach making it realistic to run and the inclusive ethos of UpRising! aligning with its aims and objectives. For instance, Charanga's YuStudio was the focus for 12 practitioners to find the support they needed in music technology:

*What can we do to support people, even if they're only there for a short period of time? And the answer we came up with was Charanga's YuStudio. So that's basically the DAW that they can use at school, but then they can take home on their phones. So, we did some training on that, had about, I think, 12 people on that training or, you know, live or watching it. And we're going to have one more session to kind of round off and see where people got to with that.*

In Year 3 UpRising! continually reached beyond its six founding Music Education Hubs in making video resources available nationally:

*So, one big strand or one big outcome is to go is to have a national impact. Especially in training and resources, because teachers have got so little time. What we've done is we've just put really good quality stuff out there and told people about it and if they want to take it, they can.*

Video resources which built from this foundation included: top five tips for working with people with digital impairment; top five tips for working with people with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia and dyspraxia); working with non-verbal pupils; working with neurodivergent pupils aged 5–11; and working with PMLD pupils. These resources came from people either with lived experience of disability themselves, or from those with lived experience as carers, teachers, and musicians. The Project Lead considered the filtering function of UpRising! in drawing these resources together into manageable chunks as one of its important functions:

*People want short, quick to the point fixes, so we've tried to keep them short and snappy and really just distil it down. And I think lots of my job actually this year has been to distil down what's undoubtedly really useful knowledge into bitesize stuff that can be shared.*

These videos were therefore intended as a means of removing barriers for the music education workforce and making professional knowledge accessible. For instance, in the case of the PMLD video, “the idea is that anyone working in PMLD settings can watch these and basically get 20 years’ worth of knowledge in 10 minutes”.

#### 4.5.2 Collaborative projects

Collaborative projects were part of the original bid and took place in four out of the six East Midlands Hubs. These projects comprised:

1. The Soundabout Choir (accessible choirs with online and in-person modalities for PMLD pupils in Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire);
2. UpRising! on Tour (school visits to six schools to role-model disabled musicians as educators);
3. The Great Big Orchestra Experiment (Nottingham and Northamptonshire county youth orchestras combining to create a multisensory concert at the Albert Hall, Nottingham);
4. Symphonia Viva and Able Orchestra documentary (filming five inclusive ensembles in additional needs settings).

According to the Project Lead, these projects highlighted the funding implications of creating inclusive musical opportunities, but were also significant springboards into the continuation of the UpRising! vision beyond the three-year life of the current funding arrangements:

*It's very resource intensive per pupil, it's a lot compared to other, ensembles. We talk about equity of access, so if something costs more then it costs more. But obviously it's a limited budget, isn't it? So, it's an interesting thing and ultimately that's something the Hubs have got to decide, but definitely has been worth piloting it. What we'd like to do is have a MEHEM-wide choir starting from next year, so the other three Hubs coming on board.*

Sitting alongside these collaborative projects was additional supporting CPD, such as partner organisation training in Derbyshire where seven organisations from the Derby Cultural Partnership considered how to enable Hub offerings to be more inclusive in their scope.

#### 4.5.3 Hiveminds

The Hivemind sessions continued during Year 3 of UpRising! with the aim of bringing isolated practitioners together in a reflective environment. There were nine of these sessions, that enabled “instrumental tutors to come together, talk about their issues and find solutions together—and they’re powerful”.

The Project Lead considered the Hivemind sessions from Year 3 of the project as a place of encouragement, which facilitated the sharing of practices to develop musical learning for pupils with additional needs.

*Tutors are so isolated and imagine you're going every week and there's this one (or more) kids who you just cannot engage. It must be soul destroying, and you must feel rubbish. [...] And it's not like we're plumbers or something where we don't actually really care whether the water is on or off. We love music and it's close to our hearts, so to be a bad teacher is somehow connected to your self-worth as a person. A lot of what we do is reassure—you'll have seen lots of reassurance and lots of listening, and then some strategies [in the Hiveminds], but it's really interesting. We've had quite a few people that come back again and again and again, and I think it's just for the solidarity. So, we don't have a staff room, but we do have these—I think they're really powerful.*

In addition to the Project Lead's perceptions of the activities of UpRising! in its third year, two further themes emerged from the research interview: developing impactful practices and developing strategic voice.

#### 4.5.4 Developing impactful practices

According to the Project Lead, UpRising! has not only provided a reflective space for practitioner development, but has also impacted the practices of musicians, schools, and Hubs. He discussed specific instances when UpRising! had enabled musical impact and engagement: “we sent, about... I think about 40 ukuleles out across the East Midlands because we believe that live music is really important in schools”. The work of the project was also seen as key by the Project Lead in addressing shortfalls in provision: “less than 50% of schools have a music specialist teaching music, so most music is coming from these generalist teachers, so let's at least give them a bit of support there”.

In outlining the future shape of UpRising!, the Project Lead formulated provision for pupils with additional needs from his understanding within the project. This suggested specific structures and ways of realising equitable music provision, not based on his position and responsibilities within the project, but upon the potential impact that UpRising! might have:

*So the Champions, the leads, myself (or whoever's leading UpRising!), and special school representatives. So that will be a group. This is my recommendation: a group that meets every half term or every term, to basically push the agenda forward so that if UpRising! ends after Year 4, hopefully it's sustainable.*



#### 4.5.5 Developing strategic voice

Connected to this conceptualisation of impact, the Project Lead also positioned UpRising! as a means of developing a strategic voice within the sector. This outlook involved the concept of systematising special schools' music provision to map gaps and determine potential interventions:

*So what I'm seeing going forward is that each Hub [should have] like a spreadsheet of all their special ed schools: Have they done a music plan? What are the things that they said they're going to implement and how is the Hub supporting that? So, it sounds a bit controlled maybe, but I also say that one needs to be to be systematic and accountable.*

This way of thinking about Music Hub provision and how to manage it on a macro-scale has arisen as an outcome of UpRising!'s project work in all its differing domains. Such development requires time and thoughtful reflection, and this has only become possible as the funded project concludes:

*I feel like now we know what we need, where we need to get to. So now it's going to take at least a year to get to where we might want to actually get to.*

Years 1 to 3 of UpRising! will therefore directly shape the strategic thinking of what UpRising! should be in its hybrid form in Year 4:

*Inclusion Champions are there as a practitioner, they work in schools and they stay in a community of practice like the Reps were. They'll receive in-depth training that I'll programme, but they'll also support their peers by visiting—support visits like we did in Year 1, but also being visited so people can see their work. They'll lead ensembles like the inclusive choir. They'll share their learning in whatever ways appropriate... and they may oversee accessible resources like, you know, iPads or eye-gazes or whatever. So that's Inclusion Champion. Inclusion Lead has ultimate responsibility for equity of access, and they'll be a member of the [Hub's] senior leadership.*

Thinking, organising, and planning an UpRising! approach that looks beyond individual Hub activity to integrated and enriching cross-Hub possibilities is now firmly embedded in the Project Lead's strategic approach.

#### 4.5.6 Successes of Year 3

The successes described in Year 2 of the project were shared in the Year 3 outcomes. The Project Lead also added that he considered successes to occur when teachers do something in music that they might not have previously had the confidence to enact. Connecting and enabling conversation and providing a safety net for additional needs provision were further perspectives on his evaluation of the impact of the project:

*From the Musicking for the Terrified training—when you hear that people did something that they've never done before because there was a ukulele in the room—they reached out and played the ukulele and they never been interested at all in anything before [is how I understand success].*

*Some of the Hubs have come on leaps and bounds in terms of what their provision is. I think we've been able to provide the safety net, almost, for them to kind of step into their power.*

*Hearing about great conversations between parents, about should our children be going to a special school or a mainstream? How do you do this or that, and connecting is really powerful.*

#### 4.5.7 Challenges of Year 3

Nevertheless, challenges continued to be evident in the work of UpRising!, including difficulties with asking teachers to take on the commitment that UpRising! presents:

*I think the biggest challenge is just that teachers are so stressed and overwhelmed generally in life and you feel like asking them to do anything extra is... you don't want to be the straw that breaks the camel's back.*

Changing attitudes to inclusion in music-making and that this is possible to achieve were also outlined as a challenge:

*There's still some residual people that think that it's about talent rather than inclusion. And that's always going to be a challenge. You're always going to have them in the training, and I guess what the challenge is, is not that they think like that—the challenge is that they're maybe not open enough to talk about it.*

Funding for the work going forward was a further aspect of the Project Lead's thinking—which was perhaps understandable in a challenging funding landscape where inclusive education is expensive:

*I think we've been very lucky. Lucky that UpRising! is very well funded. I think that we wouldn't have been being able to pay teachers to do extra work for us to make these videos and that has been really good. And I think we haven't been foolish with the money. But you just need to invest in stuff like this. And I hope that that can continue.*

Communication within Hubs was also described as challenging: ensuring that those working as Reps were able to talk with Hub Leads about the project so that learning arising from UpRising! becomes central to future Hub planning remains a developing area.

#### 4.5.8 Personal development for the Project Lead

It is worth noting the extent to which working on the UpRising! project enabled the personal development of the Project Lead, according to his own reflections. Altruistic dimensions have been a strong focus for the Project Lead and a key motivation for him:

*...if a group of people are ignored and have been ignored for many generations, what better use of our time than to do music with them?*

The impact of UpRising! can therefore be considered multidimensional, impacting the lives of young people, musical practitioners, school teachers and therapists, Hub staff and the Project Lead.

## 4.6 Observation Findings: Year 2

As part of UpRising!, Hub Reps worked in pairs on reflective practice. During Year 2, this involved visiting and observing each other's teaching sessions, agreeing points of reflection prior to this process, and then making use of reflective models in collaborative reflection following the visits. These reflective conversations emerged from two main reflective models. One included question prompts such as What did you learn? What did you notice? What elements might you bring to your own practice? Another, in the shape of a starfish, included the elements: do more of, do less of, keep doing, start doing, and stop doing.

Observation visits included:

1. Whole Class Ensemble Tuition: strings (Year 4, two classes)
2. Whole Class Ensemble Tuition: woodwind and brass (Year 6)
3. Whole Class Ensemble Tuition: samba (Year 4)
4. Three music therapy sessions with individual children (Years 1, 2, and 6)

All participants found the observations to be a valuable experience, which enabled them to reflect on their own approaches and to consider the differing outlooks of others:

*You responded so calmly all the time [...] I really liked the way you gave the brass a task, whilst the others were putting their instruments together. 'Copy back' with the kids leading was really good too. I love the [clicks], 'Good morning everybody'—I'm going to use that in my own practice and I just thought that was great. (Teacher 1)*

*I thought it was great that you said, 'Are you going to come and join us?' rather than just ignoring the kid who wasn't participating [...] I really enjoyed it—I came away and I was just beaming the whole way home. (Teacher 1)*

*You were just really gentle with the kid in the corner—just keeping checking in with him and then you pulled out the ace in the hole which was the surdo! (Project Lead)*

*It was so magical. There was a fluid magical feel, despite the children being so different. Every time I'm working, I'm on my own, so just having the opportunity to see you was just brilliant, because I don't get those opportunities [...] new ideas, new ways of thinking, new things to try. That's what's so good about being part of UpRising!. (Teacher 2)*

*I would like to start doing some outcome evaluations. I've tried this before, but found it difficult to be researcher and therapist. It's a pressure we all feel that we've got to be doing something all the time. I would like to stop using the phrase 'not available' and I want to replace it with a non-verbal cue—a loud or abrupt musical intervention which is designed to draw the client straight back into music-making. (Music therapist)*

### 4.6.1 Vignettes from Whole Class Instrumental Tuition observations

#### Example 1:

*The impact of reflective whole class teaching, where the class included pupils with additional needs, was evident during sessions observed as part of research observations. Pupils with additional needs were fully integrated into the classes and it was often not possible to distinguish them from the other pupils in their musical responses. During one such session, for instance, a pupil whom the music teacher indicated had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) was fully engaged throughout. Their engagement or behaviour did not differ in any way from other pupils in the group.*

### Example 2:

*Another session included a pupil with a hearing impairment. During the music-making activities, she joined in with musical gestures modelled by the teacher, smiling and laughing and clearly enjoying the music-making. In the antiphonal musical episodes that made up the lesson, she responded synchronously with the class with increasing accuracy of rhythmic patterns and instrumental string selection.*

### Example 3:

*Where participation from children with additional needs was not immediate in whole class instrumental teaching sessions, music teacher encouragement often resulted in confident and enthusiastic pupil engagement by the end of the session. In one of the sessions, a pupil wearing ear defenders sat on a bench at the side of the room with a teaching assistant. After five minutes, the music teacher invited him to join the circle where the other children were playing. He declined, but removed his ear defenders. Later the music teacher invited him to play the surdo, "from there if you like" (i.e., sitting on the side bench), which he did. Gradually the pupil became involved with the music-making and by the end of the session was fully engaged and playing very enthusiastically. Significantly, it was the music teacher's repeated invitations, which included choices and facilitated child agency which enabled musical expression to occur for this young person. This invitation-style approach was observed in use by the teacher following an UpRising! Hivemind event which focused on needs-based communication. The structure of the UpRising! project and the space for practitioner reflection and discussion may, therefore, have influenced this subsequent interaction.*

#### 4.6.2 Music therapy sessions

These sessions in one setting were attended by a Hub Rep who works with children with a range of PMLD. Aside from the researcher and therapist, they were the only adult in the room. Observers were seated on chairs close to the child and therapist, which enabled an authentic understanding of the musical interactions, with no additional barriers between the observers and the therapy setting. The children's conditions were described by the music therapist as Angelman syndrome, cerebral palsy, and autism.



Figure 2: Instruments laid out for use prior to a music therapy session

### **Musical activity:**

A wide range of musical activities took place during the music therapy sessions. These included:

- 'Hello' and 'goodbye' songs;
- 'There's something in the box what can it be?' instrument selection song;
- Laminated cards with suggestions drawn from a bag (e.g., 'fast music', 'quiet music');
- Songs based on things that could be seen from the patio doors in the room where the therapy sessions took place (e.g., squirrel statue, ants on the patio);
- Songs about different parts of the body (e.g., hands and feet);
- Exploring the wind chimes and cabasa;
- Improvising together on piano, ukulele and guitar, and accordion and guitar;
- Playing together on drums and glockenspiel, tambourine, xylophone bass note bars;
- Counting songs.

### **Therapeutic outlook:**

The interactions from the therapist to the children was consistently of an extremely gentle and sensitive nature. These appeared to be highly respectful and consistently emphasised the agency of the child. Musical interactions were a subtle mix of direction and nuanced response to the musical leadership of the children: for example, "Shall we sing a goodbye song? Can you help me? Let's choose something for a goodbye song." At the end of each session, the therapist took time to reflect and note down key things to remember for the next session, looking reflectively out of the window as he did so. This was an interesting point of overlap with the UpRising! project, where reflection was strongly linked to practice and forms a key part of practitioner development.

### **Learning moments:**

For the Rep observing the music therapy session, there were moments of significant insight and the music therapist also appeared to enjoy sharing their perspectives as they talked and shared freely. The therapist explained their approaches as part of this dialogue: 'I try to match the energy that the child is bringing. [...] One of the things I'm working on is not always filling the space with music. It's quite interesting where my own comfort zone is' (Music therapist).

The impact of the session on the visiting Rep was evident in their reactions and responses, as they also verbalised how their practice would develop as a result of the observation:

*The insights I've had from this session are amazing and I can use them in my own practice. [...] I noticed how everything you do is so soft and gentle—there are no harsh, loud moments.*  
(Teacher 2)

The Rep made constant notes during their visit and was very focused on the musical activity that was occurring, appearing to relish the opportunity to reflect and think about music-making in this one-to-one setting with young people with additional needs. The comparisons made by the Rep and the music therapist were enabled by UpRising! and would have been unlikely to occur without the project. The visiting Rep and music therapist discussed the importance of the project for 'being able to share [...] just visiting each other and absorbing their methods is invaluable' (Music therapist).

*I had not had any training before UpRising!. I had experience with behavioural things, because of some youth work—that was where it all stemmed from—and I was interested. But since I've started UpRising! I've been constantly reflecting on my own practice, partly because of having to deliver training and partly because of sessions like this one.* (Teacher 2)



## 4.7 Observation Findings: Year 3

The emphasis during the final year of UpRising! was on CPD and Away Day discussions. Although some of the Reps did visit each other's project events, this was largely where collaborative visits had not been completed in Year 2 due to logistical challenges. Researcher visits involved sampling the collaborative events, where this was possible, although some of these events took place at the very end of the academic year, making attendance problematic. Despite these challenges, fieldwork took place at three events, two Away Days and the final MEHEM Conference for which UpRising! was a significant strand on the theme of inclusion.

### 4.7.1 Inclusive choir (Leicestershire, March 2023)

This choir session took place in a secondary school and was attended in-person by three young people with a range of additional needs and their carers. It was a mixed modality session and was also attended by three other young people online with their carers, making a choir of six in total. One of the young people joined from her hospital bed, where she was being treated for a chest infection. The opportunity for interaction with the inclusive choir, irrespective of location, was a significant feature of the UpRising! project.

During the session, musical activities ranged from musical warm-ups (a 'hello' song, movement matched to guitar playing, making a happy sound, make a sad sound) through to session songs (She'll be coming round the mountain, I would walk 500 miles, and How far I'll go), during which the participants played shakers and untuned percussion and joined the music practitioners in singing the first two songs. For the final song, the music practitioner taught the song to the young people a line at a time, whilst making observations, "It has some long notes in, doesn't it?" and gradually adding signs in the performance (signs for sky and sea, for instance). One of the young people was encouraged to share a song (O when the saints was chosen) which the group performed. The Soundabout version of the Happy Birthday song was also sung for one of the members, and the session closed with a 'goodbye' song.

The session featured lots of repetition of the same musical material, which enabled the young people to respond with increasing energy and enthusiasm. Over the course of the session, the participants repeated parts of the songs back episodically with developing vocalising becoming increasingly audible. The music-making changed the atmosphere in the room as soon as it began, with the choir members vocalising, clapping in time, and moving to the music. One of the music practitioners in particular relished the session and talked about the impact of UpRising!:

*It's such a shame this is going to finish. I mean, I know it will continue in some form, but seeing the other practitioners has been so brilliant. (Teacher 3)*

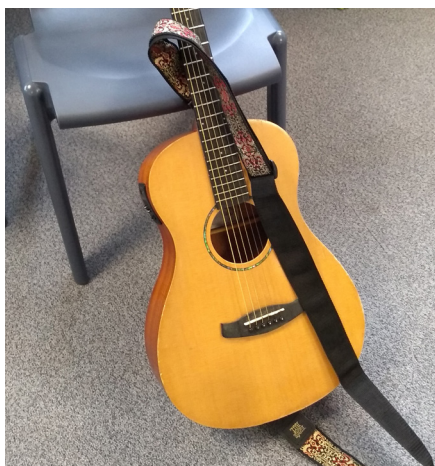


Figure 3: A guitar used by music leaders to accompany an inclusive choir



Figure 4: IT equipment used to connect in-person to virtual members of the inclusive choir

#### 4.7.2 Inclusive ensemble (Leicestershire, June 2023)

This music-making session took place during the school day at a special school in Leicestershire. The school music facilities were very well-equipped: the classroom had desktop computers with controllers for using Ableton, drum kits and guitars, and boxes of plectrums and headphone adaptors. The session was preceded by a meeting between the school music staff and musicians from Sinfonia Viva and the Leicestershire Music Hub, and followed by a debriefing session.

During the initial meeting of staff, some of the challenges of running the inclusive ensemble became apparent. Teachers commented on logistical issues such as poor attendance due to bank holidays, teachers' strikes, and conflicting extracurricular activities. There was feedback on pupils who had previously walked out of sessions, broken equipment, or who had to be supervised at all times to manage their behaviour. Nevertheless, plenty of time was also given over to consider how pupils' musical skills were developing and how they could be supported during the sessions. The school music lead pointed out, "the kids don't respond well to returning to a song, so you have to do a new song a week". However, the pupils preferred to play songs with a limited number of notes and chords, so "you couldn't say they are progressing, but they are consistently engaged with music-making". This was seen as a valuable achievement, since it kept the pupils engaged and enabled them to practise skills they enjoyed. One pupil was noted as having "a really good musical memory", and another participated simply by "play[ing] the [Ableton] Push with one finger on the keyboard".



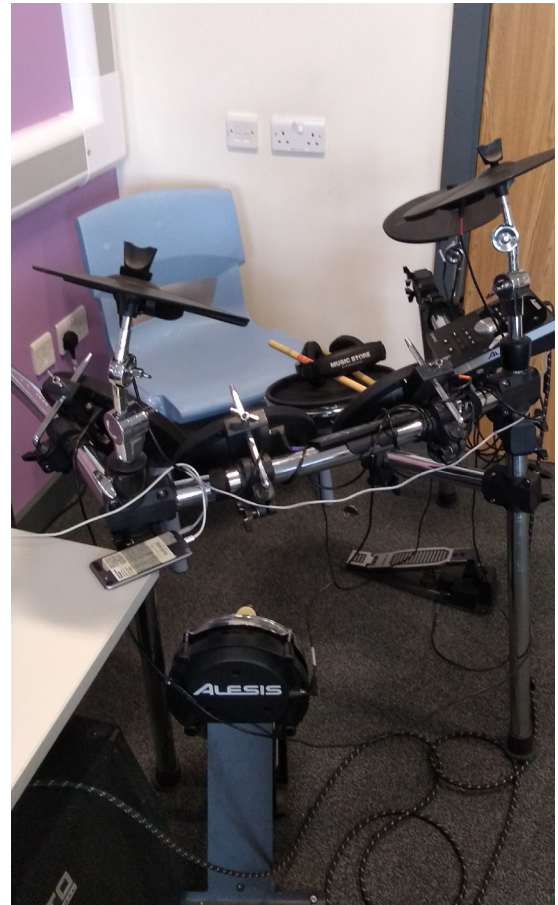
Figure 5: Ableton Push DAW set-up

As the pupils arrived for the first session of the inclusive ensemble, a musical atmosphere was established from the very start. The musicians and teachers were chatting and playing their instruments, and the pupils went to fetch their instruments or began to play quietly on the drums. Everyone was spread out across the room in a rough circle. In addition to the musicians and teachers, four pupils were present—two on electric guitar, one on piano, and one on clarinet.

The group warmed up using a simple improvisation on an A minor chord, before progressing to a chord progression around E minor. This set up the groove for the instrumentalists to improvise around: the clarinettists worked on long sustained notes; the musicians added drums and guitar solos. The secure musical environment enabled the pupils to develop their roles and explore new ideas. The music lead prompted one pupil to start and stop the group, which they did using gestures with their guitar. He also affirmed the pupils' music-making—"beautiful", "I like it"—and encouraged them to try new textures, timbres, and dynamics. Everybody was deeply involved, inhabiting both the collaborative classroom space and their own creative place with a sense of enjoyment and wonderment.



*Figure 6: Instruments used in an inclusive ensemble*



*Figure 7: Electric drum kit used in an inclusive ensemble*

During the second session of the ensemble, the musicians and teachers who had been playing independently seamlessly moved into the roles of facilitators for pupils who needed help playing the keyboard or finding the groove on the drumkit. They supported pupils' playing and answered pupils' questions with a genuine ethos of care: the music teacher added a tasteful trumpet melody to enhance the Jurassic Park theme being played by the group; and the music lead transposed the groove to a new key to enable a pupil to join in on the trombone.

The atmosphere in the room during this session was responsive and flexible: the facilitators were constantly making decisions to respond to pupils' music-making and ensure that the groove felt safe and supportive. There was an opportunity for pupils to perform pieces that they had been working on, and to practice their ensemble music for an upcoming concert. However, even when the learning focus shifted towards greater formality, teachers remained attentive to the pupils' ideas and explorations. For example, during one piece, the music



lead commented, “those chords sound so amazing, but they’re so wrong for this piece. But wait, let me record them!” He demonstrated that he valued and appreciated the pupil’s music-making, before skilfully reorienting the group to the piece they were originally working on. The debrief following this session focussed primarily on preparations for the upcoming concert, including how to ensure it would be stress-free for the pupils. Although there was no explicit discussion of how the session itself had gone, the ethos of care evident during the session clearly underpinned the plans for the concert. As expressed by the music lead during the session, the teachers and musicians cared deeply for being-with the pupils—whatever they brought to the sessions—but recognised that music-making together somehow surpassed anything else they could do together: “I love having you in the room, but I love it more when you play music with us”.

#### *4.7.3 Composition workshop (Nottinghamshire, June 2023)*

Composition workshops with two of the Hub Reps took place at six schools during Year 3 and received excellent feedback and requests for follow-up. The sessions aimed to introduce improvisation and composition activities to young people with additional needs using a combination of acoustic and digital instruments. In each school, the Reps offered pupils the chance to make music using trombones, iPads, and the Composer—a digital music-making device controlled using a joystick.



*Figure 8: P-Bones used in an inclusive ensemble*

During this session, the two Reps were joined by four other arts practitioners who helped set up the technology. Eight pupils took part in the session, alongside their class teacher and support workers. The session took place in the school hall, which was lit by coloured theatre lights. As soon as the pupils entered the space the Reps began to chat with them and talk about music. Pupils offered examples of their favourite instruments and favourite songs. Once they had sat down, they were invited to try out the trombones. Three pupils excitedly got up to try them out—they struck dramatic poses as they played. The Reps introduced a beat playing in the background and encouraged the trombonists to move and play to the beat. The pupils moved about the room, and some began to experiment with the Composer. By moving the joystick in time to the beat they were able to start composing and experimenting with new ideas.

The Reps then asked the pupils to make a choice between the trombone and the Composer. They helped them to develop their skills: on the trombone they were shown how to hold the instrument and how to make their best sound; with the Composer they learnt to play different chords by moving the joystick in different directions. The Reps asked closed questions to guide the pupils towards a compositional outcome: “we use a special number [four] as musicians—does anybody know what that is?” “we use an instrument [drums] to do that—does anybody know what that is?” Gradually some semblance of order grew out of the freestyling: the trombones played short, detached notes in time with the beat, and the composers added chords on beats one and two.

Throughout the session, there was space and freedom for young people to move and interact as they pleased. One pupil stayed at the back of the room using an iPad to make music. However, when lyrics were introduced to the music, he came to the front to participate. Initially he rapped along to a track on the iPad, but then joined in with the groove set up by the rest of the group. His rapping was rhythmic and in time, using wordless vocalisations and moving between lower and higher registers. His class teacher watched and smiled, and the Reps offered, “would you like to record it, so I can leave it with your teacher?” He was delighted, jumping up and down, “yes please!” As he recorded his rap, he experimented with different vocalisations and beatboxing, developing his ideas with creativity and originality. There was a clear sense of pride and achievement, which stood in contrast with his earlier detachment from the rest of the group.

Overall, the pupils seemed amazed at the immersive, improvisatory musical experience. Several pupils took turns to sing using the microphone, either using wordless vowel sounds or simple lyrics, “one, two, three”, “slap, yeah!” They made music enthusiastically and expressively, and were impressed with outcome: “what do you all think?” “Bangin’!”

## 4.8 UpRising! Curriculum Strand: Year 2

A curriculum working group emerged during Year 2, with the aim of supporting non-specialist teachers to enact curriculum music in inclusive settings. This was a perceived area of need within the sector, where little supporting resources and guidance appear to exist. The membership of the group consisted of school teachers from mainstream and special schools, Music Hub curriculum specialists and representatives, independent consultants, Music Hub teachers, the Project Lead, and an evaluation researcher.

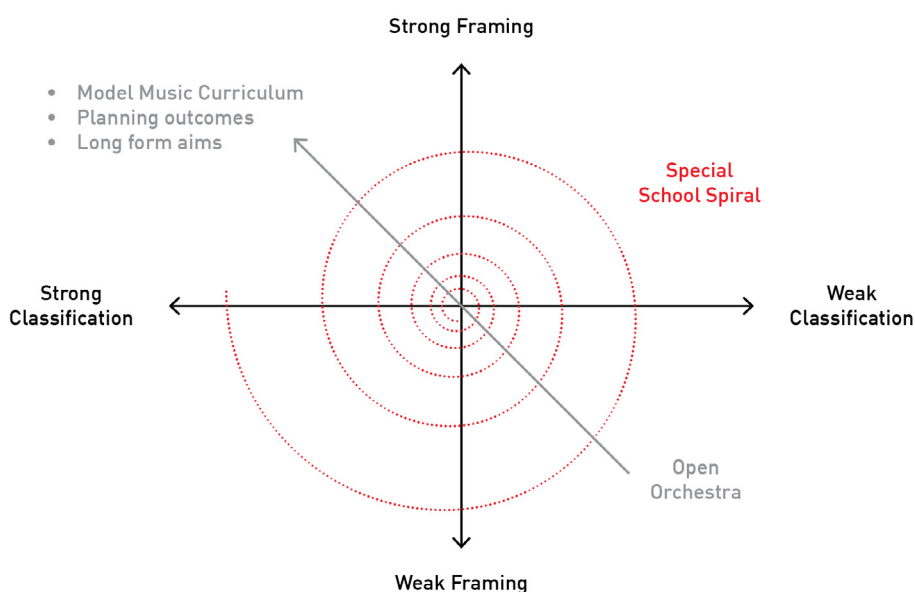


Figure 9: One of the Reps models of music curriculum

The group met seven times during Year 2, working towards producing a publication to support non-music teachers in locally developed music curricula: *Music Curriculum Design for Special Education Schools: A Beginner's Guide*. This guide included input from the curriculum working group, who each wrote a section of the handbook and worked collaboratively on its development. Sections of the publication addressed thinking about curriculum, a process for designing a curriculum, and links to teaching resources. This handbook was introduced at a special national online event in April 2022: *Curriculum Design for Special Education Settings*. This was attended by 32 delegates and was open to all those working in special needs education—not only those who were a part of the UpRising! project. The launch event featured presentations from the different contributors to the handbook, with a bespoke keynote from Dr Alison Daubney considering inclusive practices. Delegates were invited to give feedback in writing on the handbook, which was planned to be trialled with members of the curriculum group and teachers in three different special school settings.

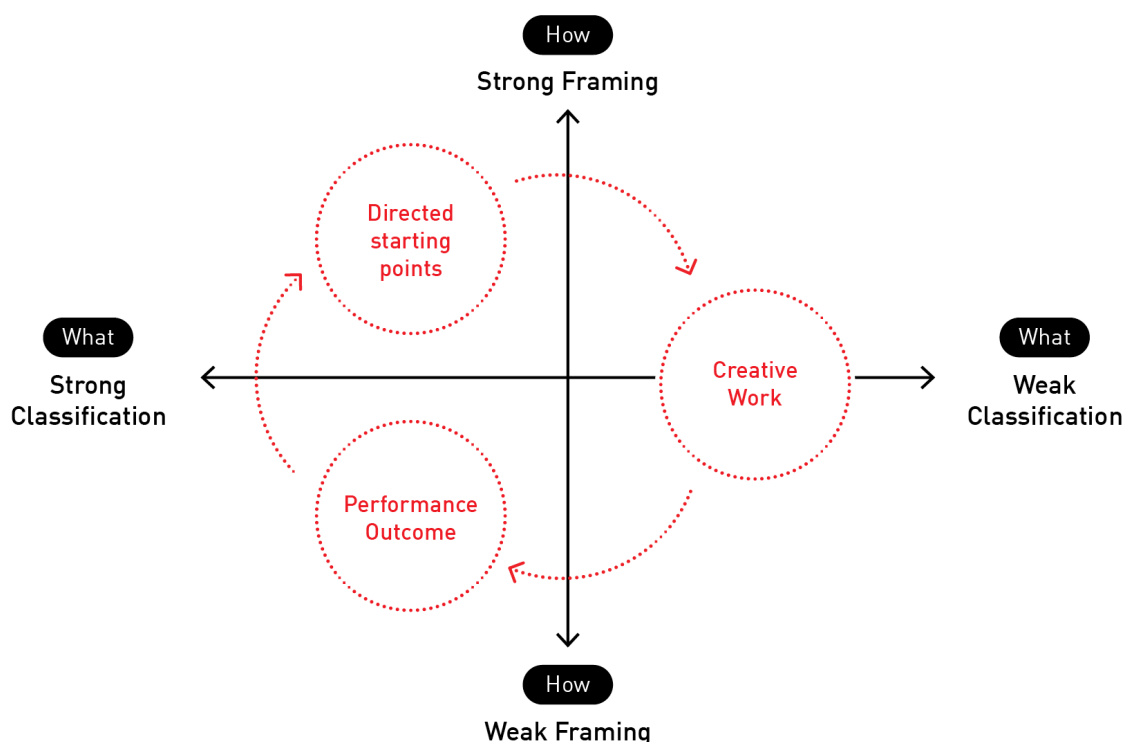


Figure 10: Another of the Reps models of music curriculum

In addition to the work of the curriculum group, curriculum also formed the basis of discussion and activity for part of one of the MEHEM Away Days. During the day, Reps shared their conceptualisations of curriculum and how this impacted their thinking about music education in special schools. Some of their visual representations are shown in this section of the report.

## 4.9 UpRising! Curriculum Strand: Year 3

Curriculum work continued during Year 3, in an attempt to further hone and develop the areas of activity from Year 2. As part of this, the curriculum expert group was divided into smaller sub-groups with the aim of 'road-testing' the curriculum handbook designed during Year 2, so that it could be further refined and developed. The sub-groups were commissioned to work with pilot schools to achieve this, which would involve initial meetings with a special school to develop a plan, followed by interactive work drawing on the handbook to create a bespoke music curriculum for the school meeting needs of pupils and teachers. The aim was to enable school teachers to develop in their music curriculum design work with the guide that had been developed, identify areas where the handbook supported and enabled this process, and highlight areas which required further development or which were unclear to teachers. Alongside this sub-group work, the main curriculum group continued to meet to discuss progress and establish how curriculum development work should be formulated for this UpRising! strand.

In addition to the curriculum group meetings, a series of four training sessions were also offered: Designing a Music Curriculum for your Special Education School. These twilight sessions presented opportunities to discuss and think about music curriculum in special schools, as well as a chance to continue to reflect and develop music curricula between the sessions. The sessions considered current school provision and use of music curricula, core curriculum values and the specific considerations of designing music curricula for pupils with complex needs. The training sessions that followed were then tailored to specific school needs allowing time for discussion, the sharing of existing curriculum practices in other settings, and the development of musical frameworks for future curriculum work. Sharing of school curricula and rationales formed part of these meetings and there was extended and detailed discussion as a result; it is unlikely that such developmental opportunities in developing curriculum for pupils with additional needs would have existed on this scale without the work of UpRising!, which acted as an incentive to such curriculum development.

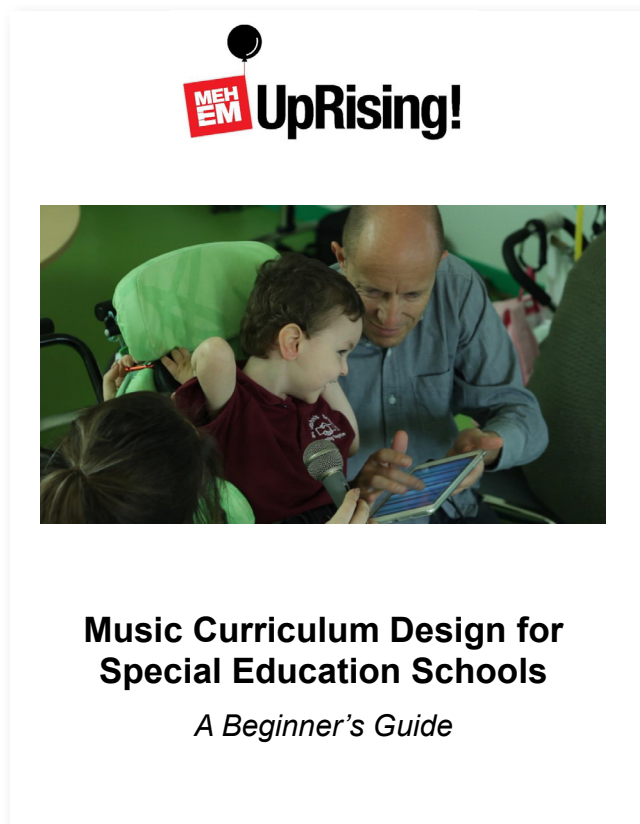


Figure 11: The cover of the curriculum handbook for special schools developed through UpRising!

The curriculum work in this strand encountered some challenges, which may have limited what was a rare opportunity for music co-ordinators to engage with discussion and thinking about music in a special education setting beyond their own schools. The ability of teachers to find time to engage and fitting this within other school commitments were the perennial and challenging issues here. There was no lack of will on the part of teachers to do this, but practical considerations of other school commitments made this difficult to realise at times, meaning the impact of this curriculum work was patchy – enriching and developmental in some instances and difficult to get off the ground in other cases. If such structural barriers can be overcome, there is considerable potential for this curriculum strand to grow and develop, especially as it is an under-resourced area where limited discourse exists. Apart from the individual teachers who were impacted by this strand of UpRising!, the significant legacy from the curriculum group's work will be the handbook that was co-produced. This is currently scheduled to be launched in Autumn 2023, as part of the legacy funding for Year 4 of UpRising!.

## 4.10 Hub Leads Survey Findings: Years 1 and 3

### 4.10.1 Introduction

To better understand the research foci, questionnaires were sent out to the MEHEM Hub Leads in Years 1 and 3. Data collected allowed for both quantitative and qualitative responses and was, therefore, of mixed-method design. Following data collection, data were then analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) so that broad themes could be identified. Based on the data gathered, the following themes emerged: demographics, SEND or EHCP support, partnerships, professional development, funding, and resources.

### 4.10.2 Establishing a clear dataset

Establishing a clear dataset for analysis proved problematic. The response rate to the questionnaire was low: three out of seven Hub Leads responded in Year 1; and two out of six Hub Leads responded in Year 3. Furthermore, Hub Leads did not specify the identity of their Hubs, so it remained unclear whether there was any overlap between respondents in Years 1 and 3. For this reason, Hub Leads will hereafter be referred to as Hub Leads 1 to 5 (4 and 5 representing respondents from Year 3).

It was particularly challenging to gather precise data on questions regarding the number of pupils with an EHCP, the number of pupils with SEND support, and the number of pupils who received Free School Meals (FSM). There were two key reasons why this was problematic. First, as indicated in Figures 12 and 13, different data sets from different academic years were being used when responding to questions. Second, further difficulties arose with follow-up questions which resulted in numerous 'unknown' or 'I don't know' responses. This was particularly the case for Year 3 data, where respondents were unable to provide pupils' specific SEND needs. It is possible that the low response rate to the questionnaire may have resulted from other Hub Leads lacking sufficient data to answer questions about pupils' specific needs or disabilities.

Although some Hub Leads were able to provide some specific statistics, the trustworthiness of the data given also needs to be questioned:

*High number likely due to schools double counting between PP [Pupil Premium] only and PP and SEND. [...] Ensemble data has been taken from parent forms who do not always complete [them] accurately, and statistics are partial. (Hub Lead 4)*

- 1 What is the number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan of SEND classification in your hub?

Showing all 3 responses	
I dont know	776692-776683-84429563
686 (taken from 2018-19 ACE data return. This figure does not include the numbers for pupils in their first year of WCET)	776692-776683-88975994
3,595	776692-776683-91019237

- 3 What is the number of pupils who received free school meals?

Showing all 3 responses	
I dont know	776692-776683-84429563
2021- 2022 music hub ensembles: 84 received FSM (109 answered no, at least 115 unknown)	776692-776683-88975994
14,652	776692-776683-91019237

Figure 12: An example of data taken from year 1 where different data sets have been used

- 1 What is the number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan of SEND classification in your hub?

Showing all 2 responses	
2231/7207 - 31% - annual data return 2021-2022 in school Data unknown for ensembles	1001395-1001377-107623292
High number likely due to schools double counting between SEND only and both PP& SEND	
Ensemble data has been taken from parent enrolment forms who do not always complete accurately, and statistics are partial data	
6020	1001395-1001377-110654297

- 2 What is the number of pupils with SEND support classification but no EHC plan?

Showing all 2 responses	
Unknown for in school 10/473 - 2% - ensemble data 2022/2023	1001395-1001377-107623292
18656	1001395-1001377-110654297

Figure 13: An example of data taken from year 3 where different data sets have been used

### 4.10.3 Demographics

In Year 1, Hub Lead 2 commented that the county they served was the eleventh most deprived and, according to 2018 data from the Office for National Statistics, was an area with a very low disposable household outcome. The participant stated that 59% of children live in families where no adults work, and household income is low enough for families to receive tax credits. The dominant ethnic group for this county was over 90% White.

Drawing on data from different sources, Hub Lead 2 was able to provide further details to better understand their demographic context. Figure 14 shows that, in this area, a large proportion of young people (1061 pupils) were eligible for PP funding (information taken from 2018–19 Arts Council England (ACE) data return). In addition to this, 686 pupils had an EHCP or SEND (taken from 2018–19 ACE data return); 84 pupils received FSM (based on 2021–22 Music Hub ensembles data); and 616 pupils received an individual subsidy to attend Hub activities (taken from 2017–18 ACE data return). However, these figures did not include the number of pupils in their first year of Whole Class Ensemble Teaching (WCET), and the respondent was not able to identify the number of pupils with SEND support but no EHCP plan, nor the number of pupils with SEND who are also eligible for FSM. As such, these were omitted from Figure 14.

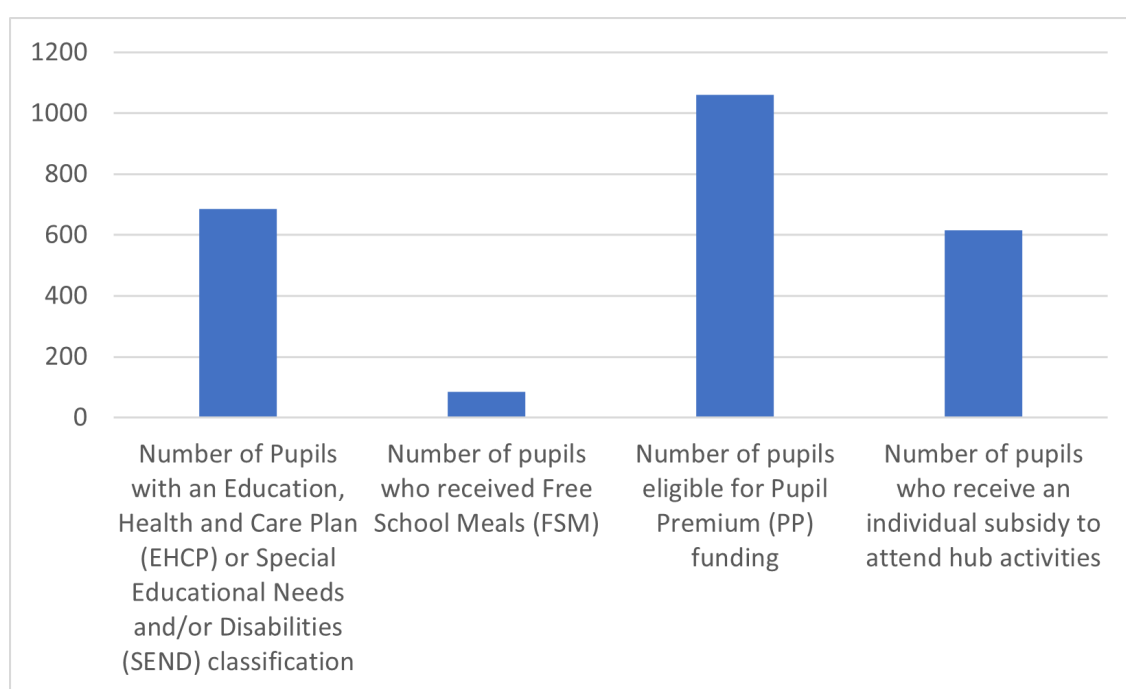


Figure 14: Additional contextual data for Hub 2

Hub Lead 3 reported that the area they served includes a mixture of urban and rural contexts covering significant social, cultural, and environmental diversity. In contrast to Hub 2, Hub 3 (according to 2015 data) consisted of 19.9% of families who are considered 'financially stretched' with other, higher, percentage rates being considered as 'comfortable communities' and 'affluent achievers'. Although the origin of the data was not stated, Hub Lead 3 was able to provide details to further illustrate their area's demographic context. These are shown in Figure 15. As with Hub 2, this shows that the largest proportion of students (22,157) were eligible for PP funding. In addition to this, 3,595 pupils had an EHCP or SEND; 13,360 pupils had SEND support but no EHCP; 14,652 pupils received FSM; 4,648 pupils with SEND were also eligible for FSMs; and 137 pupils (the only figure to be lower than Hub 2) received an individual subsidy to attend Hub activities.



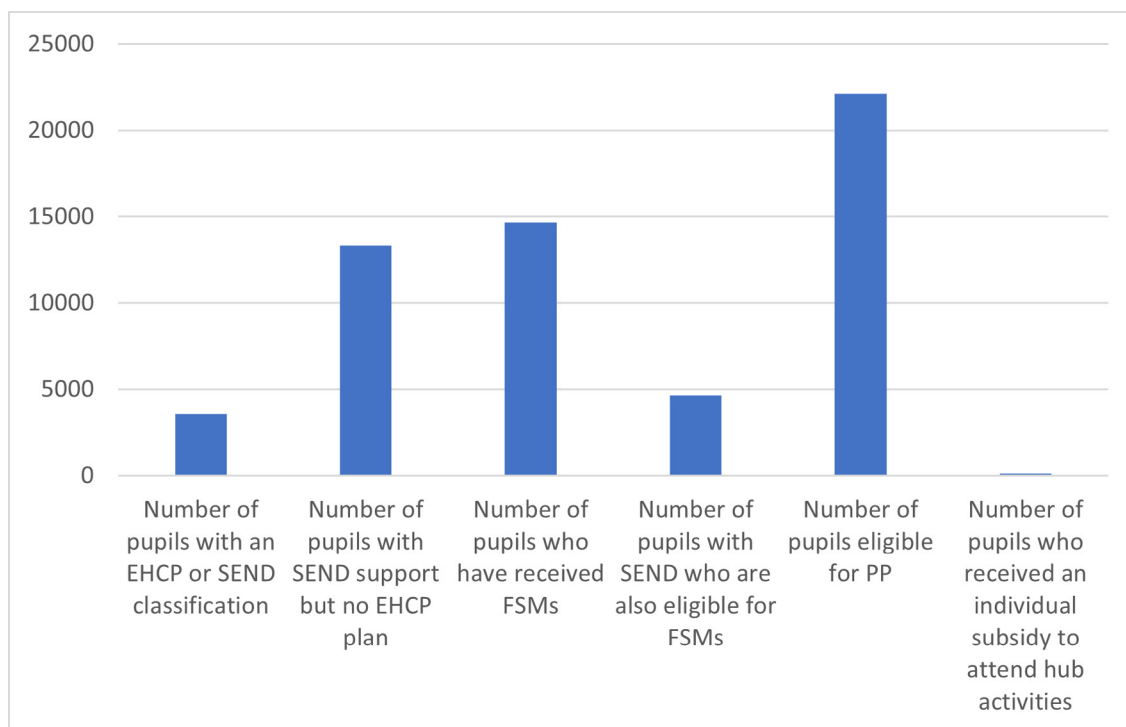


Figure 15: Additional contextual data for Hub 3

In Year 3, Hub Lead 4 identified their region as one of the most deprived areas in England, where city residents had the lowest disposable income in the United Kingdom. Hub 5 was also in a city area with a higher disadvantage rate than the county level. This city had been ranked highest in the United Kingdom for residents who cannot speak English well.

#### 4.10.4 SEND or EHCP support

Figures 16 and 17 show the percentage of the different SEND or EHCP support by type of need, as identified by Hubs 1 and 3.

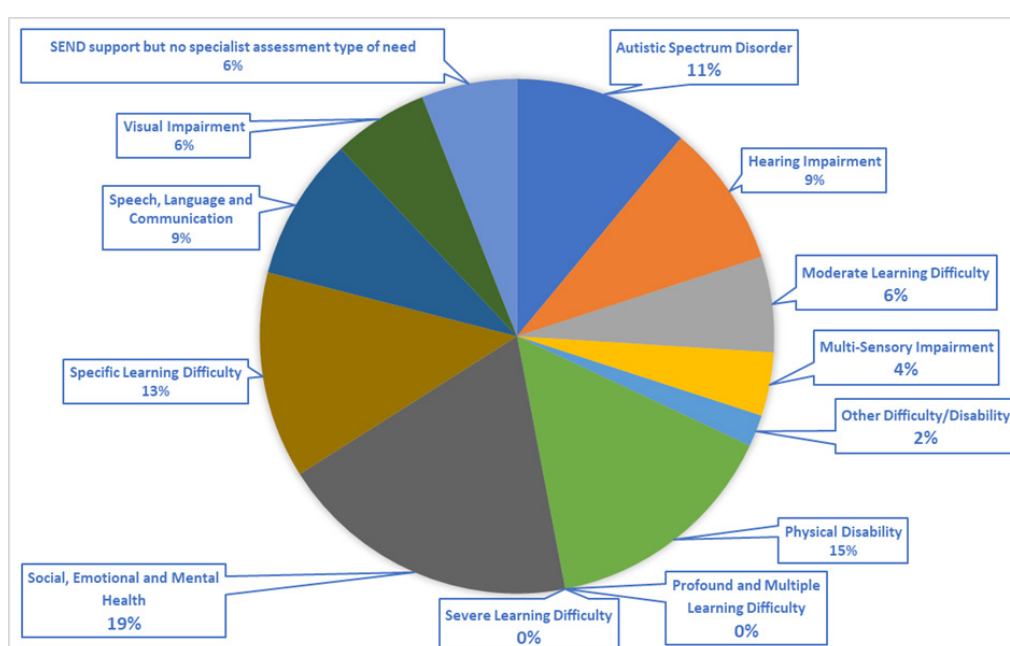


Figure 16: Percentages of types of SEND or EHCP support offered to pupils in Hub 1



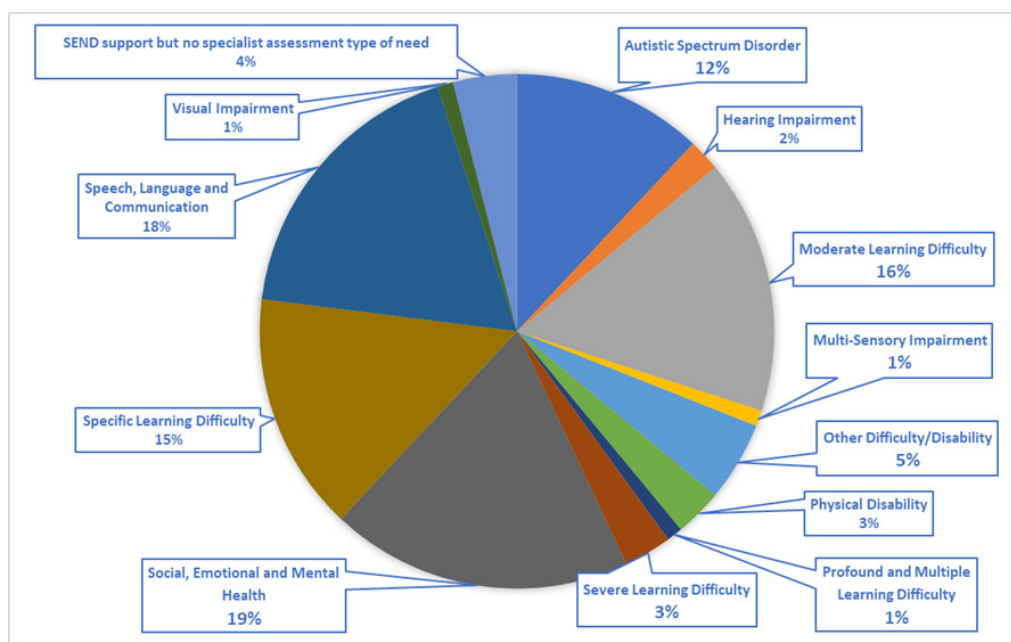


Figure 17: Percentages of types of SEND or EHCP support offered to pupils in Hub 3

In Hub 1, the most common type of learning support was identified as social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) (19% of overall figure) with physical disability closely following (15% of overall figure). In this area, no pupils were identified as having profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) or severe learning difficulties. What this information does not clarify is whether the total tally of 47 relates to 47 different pupils, or whether one pupil may have one or more means of support in place.

In common with Hub 1, Hub Lead 3 identified the most common type of learning support in Hub 3 as SEMH (19% of overall figure) closely followed by speech, language, and communication (18%) and moderate learning difficulty (16%). Again, this data did not clarify whether the total tally of 16,995 related to different pupils, or whether individual pupils may have had one or more means of support in place.

#### 4.10.5 Partnerships

Hub Lead 2 stated that, in addition to working in mainstream settings, their Hub also partnered with two special schools and one Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). The number of pupils the Hub worked with in each of these three settings is shown in Figure 18.

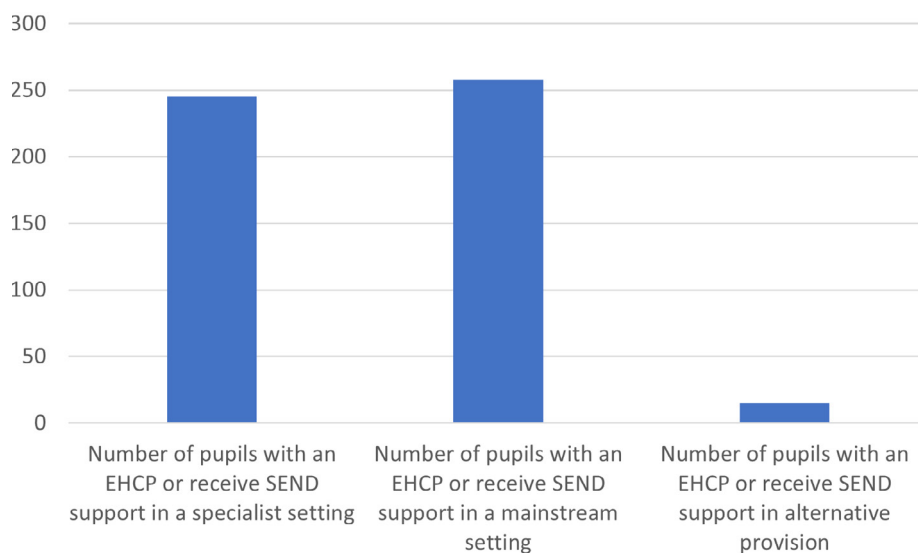


Figure 18: Hub 2 pupils in different educational settings

In providing further information, Hub Lead 2 stated that—according to the 2018–19 ACE data return—their Hub mostly worked with pupils who have an EHCP or receive SEND support in a mainstream setting (258 pupils). They also worked with 245 young people in specialist settings and 15 pupils in alternative provision. It should also be noted that the number of pupils who have an EHCP or SEND support in a mainstream setting does not include numbers of pupils in their first year of WCET.

Hub Lead 3 stated that their Hub worked in three SEND settings, one SEMH unit, and one PRU. The number of pupils the Hub worked with, where data could be gathered, is shown in Figure 19.

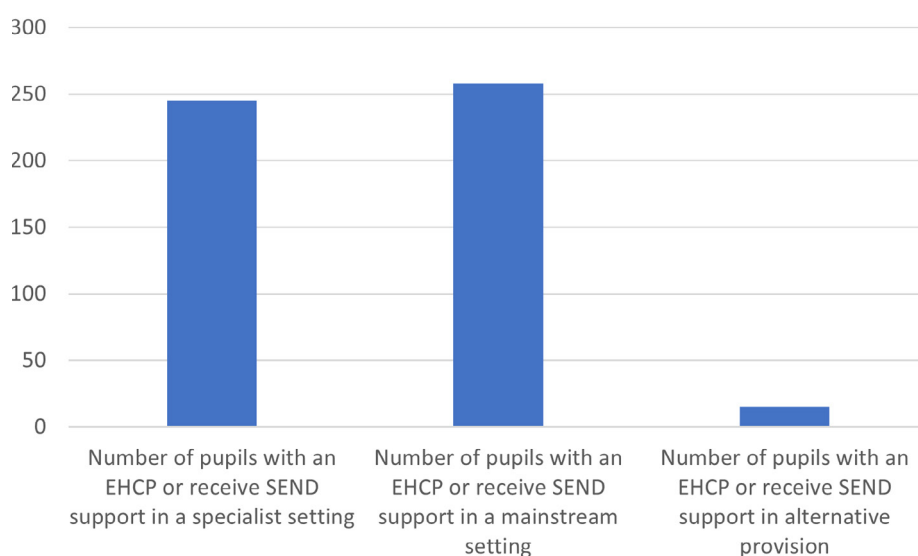
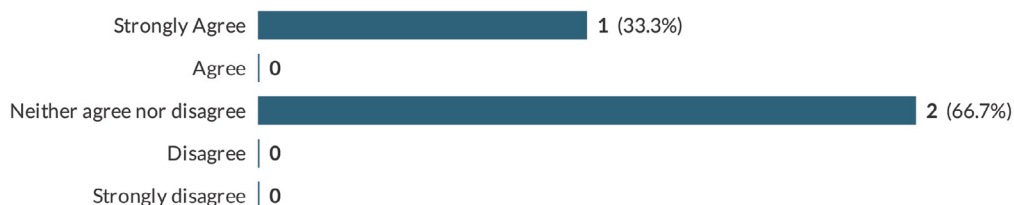


Figure 19: Hub 3 pupils in different educational settings

According to Hub Lead 3, the number of pupils Hub 3 worked with that had an EHCP or received SEND support in a specialist setting was significantly lower than that of Hub 2, with 106 pupils. That said, Hub Lead 3 also stated that, for some pupils, it was unknown whether they had an EHCP. Again, within the mainstream setting, the number of pupils whom the Hub reached that had an EHCP or SEND support was significantly lower than Hub 2, with 18 pupils. In providing additional information, this participant went on to say that other learning environments for young people with SEND were also offered by this Hub, including Y Not Saturday, Musical Stars, and a Youth Music Inclusion Programme.

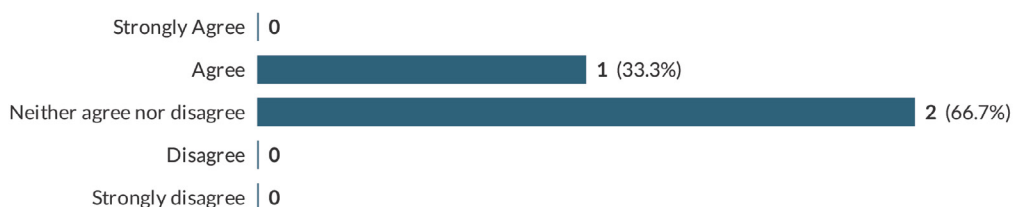
#### 4.10.6 Wider partnerships

All three of the Hub Leads in the Year 1 survey also commented on the levels of engagement between parents, special schools, and alternative provision units with their Hub offer. Two out of three (66%) agreed that parents or carers of young people with SEND did engage with their activities. Two out of three (66%) also agreed that mainstream settings did engage. However, Figures 9 and 10 illustrate that participants were less likely to believe that special schools or alternative settings engaged with their activities offer.



*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

Figure 21: Participant responses on whether special schools engaged in hub activities



*Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

Figure 22: Participant responses on whether alternative settings engaged in hub activities

Two out of three respondents (66%) stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with both special schools and alternative settings engaging in Hub activities. It is not clear, however, whether these were the same respondents on both occasions. Hub Lead 3 added further detail to their responses, stating that links with SENDCOs were extremely open in some partnerships, whereas in other settings there was no contact whatsoever.

Despite the low response rate, some comparisons can be made between the data on partnerships provided by respondents in Years 1 and 3. Responses in Year 3 suggested greater perceived engagement in Hub activities from a range of settings. Only 33% of respondents in Year 1 agreed that special schools and alternative provision settings were engaged in Hub offers—this rose to 100% in Year 3. Regarding mainstream settings, this figure rose from 66% to 100% between Years 1 and 3.

Although this may imply greater engagement between Hubs and school-based settings, there was, perhaps, still more work to do to engage parents or carers of young people with SEND. In Year 1, two out of three respondents agreed that parents and carers were engaged; in Year 3, only one out of two respondents agreed.

#### *4.10.7 Professional development*

Hub Lead 2 commented that they had the workforce to meet pupils' learning needs. All staff underwent Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) training. The participant was not aware of staff members having any specific SEND qualifications; however, they did comment that one member of staff was doing a TQUK Level 2 qualification in Behaviour that Challenges. This was being done in the staff member's own time.

Hub Lead 3 voiced that they had an emerging team to lead the direction of SEND professional development. So far, this group had received EDI training, training from the OHMI Trust, and had MEHEM UpRising! training planned for September 2022. It was acknowledged that the Hub increasingly provided CPD on working with young people with additional needs. Staff expertise was also available in this Hub, with one professional having a Sounds of Intent qualification, and two members of staff being qualified music therapists. Hub Lead 3 stated that there were also 21 staff members in the Hub who identified as having SEND themselves.

Through the MEHEM UpRising! programme, the number of Hub staff receiving SEND training appeared to have increased between Years 1 and 3. While respondents in Year 1 mentioned individual staff members who were trained in SEND, in Year 3, Hub Lead 4 commented that all Hub staff had received some SEND training via UpRising!, albeit not formally accredited.

#### *4.10.8 Funding*

In Year 1, Hub Lead 3 reported that bursaries and subsidies were available as financial support for young people with SEND, and that fully-funded work took place in schools and other settings. They identified a range of funders: Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation, Postcode Lottery, Masonic Charitable Foundation, Youth Music, Children in Need, and Constance Travis Charitable Foundation. This support was welcomed and was pivotal in providing programmes to support inclusion and music provision to young people who otherwise may not experience it. In one case, it provided an important stepping-stone to becoming a traded activity.

In Year 3, Hub Lead 4 commented that partnership with the OHMI Trust and MEHEM UpRising! programmes supported their funding. On the other hand, Hub Lead 5 raised the challenge of working in specialist compared to mainstream settings:

*[In specialist settings] there is a greater need for higher adult[-]child ratio than in mainstream. Specialists are more expensive to buy in. Group size needs to be smaller to support children. All this equates to higher costs. (Hub Lead 5)*

Despite the importance of funding, Hub Lead 3 added that long-term funding for projects was a continuing challenge.

#### 4.10.9 Resources

Participants were also asked whether their Hub held any specialist equipment or adapted instruments. Two respondents in Year 1 (Hub Leads 1 and 2) and two respondents in Year 3 (Hub Leads 4 and 5) commented that they had an established partnership with the OHMI Trust, and were able to loan adapted instruments for pupils who required them:

*[The] Hub has a partnership with OHMI Trust who helps provide adapted instruments. At the start of the year, a survey is sent to schools to collect information on the need and support any pupils need. Adapted instruments are then provided through the partnership. [...] Music service has recently signed a new partnership agreement with OHMI, pledging £3K towards instrument adaptations and £2.5K on staffing costs towards integrations and service delivery. (Hub Lead 1)*

*We aim to identify, through schools, all children who require specialist equipment or adapted instruments. This equipment is then sourced and provided through our partnership with OHMI and Creative United. (Hub Lead 2)*

Hub Lead 4 said they had loaned seven artiphons, a left-handed clarinet, instrument stands, ear defenders, and bow and guitar straps from OHMI. Hub 5 had loaned six soundbeams and six skoogs.

#### 4.10.10 Conclusion

Based on the questionnaire data gathered in Years 1 and 3, several conclusions can be drawn. First, it should be noted that, of those who completed the questionnaire, some respondents were not able to provide sources of numerical data. For example, Hub Lead 1 was not able to provide any contextual details surrounding the number of pupils with an EHCP or SEND, nor those who received FSM or PP. This was also the case for Hub 2, which was not able to provide details of the number of pupils with an EHCP or SEND support by type. Being able to access data such as these is important to better understand the types of learning needs some pupils have, and how best teaching can support effective musical learning.

Second, partnerships and communication with school-based contexts were a key component for supporting inclusivity. Despite the clear benefits such partnerships bring, it was noted that there were some settings where no communication took place. Further to this, although most respondents stated mainstream schools were engaged in Hub activities, respondents tended to state that they neither agreed nor disagreed that special schools, alternative settings, and parents or carers of young people with SEND engaged in Hub activities. This might suggest, therefore, that more needs to be done to develop Hubs' offers in these contexts.

Third, professional development was valued in Hubs, and staff were supported with inclusivity training to be able to meet pupils' diverse learning needs. Funding also played a central part in Hubs being able to offer a wide variety of inclusive programmes for young people with SEND. However, although the impact of funding was important, there were some concerns over the long-term funding required to sustain some of the projects.

Finally, partnerships with the OHMI Trust—who have provided Hubs with adapted instruments for young people with physical disabilities, and training to staff on using the adapted instruments—provided a crucial means of inclusivity for young people to access music education. Such partnerships should be scaled-up, and extended, so that more young people with physical disabilities can similarly share the experience and benefits that are enjoyed by pupils in these Hubs.

Based on the information presented in the questionnaire responses, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Hub Leads need to ensure that they have access to an accurate dataset of the demographics and needs of their pupils (e.g., pupils with EHCP, SEND, PP, FSM). This would improve the validity and trustworthiness of year-to-year comparisons and inform appropriate educational provision.
2. Hubs need to work more closely with parents or carers of young people with SEND in order to better engage them in Hub activities.

## 5. Evaluation Conclusion

The UpRising! project has been a significant undertaking, bringing together SEND practitioners, hub leads, and schools within the MEHEM consortium. Those involved in UpRising! hold the project in high regard due to its substantial contribution to their personal and pedagogical development. This is particularly pronounced among the Reps, who have embraced the chance for professional growth, experience exchange, specialised CPD opportunities, and a departure from the often-solitary nature of music teaching.

The establishment of partnerships among MEHEM hub practitioners engaged in supporting pupils with additional needs stands out as a notable aspect of UpRising! It is unlikely that this would have occurred without the project. The professional relationships that have flourished as a result have not only strengthened practitioners' skills, enriched their experiences, and broadened their perspectives, but have also had a profound positive influence on their interactions with pupils. As a result, UpRising! has exceeded its intended aims and expectations, extending its impact beyond the initially envisaged boundaries.

The national reach of UpRising! has also been significant. With well attended online sessions open to delegates from across the UK, the dissemination of valuable learning outcomes has extended beyond the immediate project participants. This CPD has been cost-effective and rewarding for both presenters and delegates.

### 5.1 The importance of reflection and additional needs training for professional development

Professional identity is the way teachers define themselves, their practice-based decision-making, and teaching choices. Over the past three years the Reps have developed an awareness of aspects that impact their additional needs practice. They have investigated personal and contextual factors that interact with and reshape their teaching practices such as the socio-cultural structures, personal and professional experiences. The UpRising! project has exposed them to wider information regarding additional needs through guest speakers and peer observations. Through reflective approaches they have also been encouraged to reflect on their professional dispositions. All of these activities have enabled the Reps to confront their perceptions, consider new ways of engaging learners with additional needs and think more intentionally about different aspects of teaching.

### 5.2 Peer to peer support and CPD

A crucial part of UpRising! is the peer-to-peer support offered through the Reps group. Peer review of teaching is a well-established process of CPD. However, for many music teachers, peer support is not often afforded due to them working across a range of schools and settings. They may, therefore, not have colleagues they work with consistently, if at all. The Reps group offers space to create such a peer group, all interested in developing additional needs knowledge and understanding. Gosling (2013) defines three categories for peer review and support: evaluative, developmental and collaborative. The evaluative model explicitly links review with performance management, developmental models focussing more on quality improvement, but both tend to involve hierarchical relationships of either seniority or expertise. Within UpRising! a collaborative model has been the preferred mode, which is an open and shared experience of enhancement and scholarship. Through reflective approaches they have also been encouraged to reflect on their professional dispositions. All of these activities have enabled the Reps to confront their perceptions, consider new ways of engaging learners with additional needs and think more intentionally about different aspects of teaching.



Since the beginning of the project, the Reps have been through a series of processes developing new outlooks on their own teaching and learning approaches. These include:

1. Time to recognise significant aspects of their professional role both within and beyond the classroom. Evolving their knowledge of curriculum development, assessment and feedback, pedagogy and practices for working with young people with additional needs as well as exploring new instruments.
2. They have been encouraged to think developmentally about potential innovations and problem solve issues surrounding additional needs teaching and learning. This has progressed into new CPD offerings for the Music Hubs.
3. They have been through a process of peer reflection and constructive critique which differs to performance management. For some, these reflections have moved beyond the success of an activity towards deeper reflection on the impact on approaches for progression.
4. They have been given opportunities to visit each other to observe the approaches of other practitioners in their field. Reflective sessions before and after these visits have enabled this process to have even greater impact. In an environment where the Reps are often working in isolation, this connectivity has offered additional opportunities for personal development.

### **5.3 Data: What is good SEND data? What do music teachers need to know?**

School held data provides a powerful vehicle through which to explore the impact of teaching and learning as well as offering insight into pupils and their specific learning needs and socio-economic status. However, the volume of sensitive information that can be linked and attributed to individuals can also lead to discrimination, loss of autonomy, infringements on privacy and misuse of data. It is therefore difficult to share data between organisations without clear protocols in place for data sharing. We have seen in this report the issues surrounding data sharing between schools, local authorities and Music Hubs. However, to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people, specifically with additional needs, some form of data sharing needs to happen so that provision is considered and resourced. The ethics behind data sharing is important, however there also needs to be a consideration as to the ethics of care. Pupils should receive the best possible educational outcomes no matter their circumstances. The question therefore of 'What is good data?' is important particularly when linked to additional needs teaching. This is something that warrants further explorations as to the best and most ethical way for data to be shared and support planning, teaching, and learning.

### **5.4 Curriculum gaps**

A lack of guidance and resources currently exist to enable special school teachers to develop locally-based music curricula which meet the needs of their pupils. The curriculum strand of UpRising! presents an opportunity for stakeholders with a widely differing set of experiences and expertise in music education in special schools to come together, to develop support for teachers, and to meet this challenge. Curriculum thinking should continue to develop during the fourth year of the project, where resources enable a response to perceived need.

## 6. Recommendations

This report has shown the diverse range of activities undertaken during UpRising! and the ranges of impact that these activities have had on the REPS professional development, Music Hub offer to schools, teaching and learning and wider professional development of colleagues nationally. Through this evaluation we have been able to unpick practice, teaching and learning. As the project moves to its transitional fourth year, we offer the following recommendations:

### 6.1 Recommendation 1: Funding

The recommendation for further funding from the year two interim report has been considered and transition funding pooled from the MEHEM hubs is in place for a year of continued focused activity. This will ensure the longevity and advancement of UpRising!

It is proposed that during this year a substantial portion of its efforts should go towards the pursuit of prestige funding. This endeavour not only aims to sustain the project's ongoing impact but also seeks to broaden the projects horizons and wider impact. This is of particular significance given the potential for the UpRising! model to be replicated and tested in other regions on a national scale.

Furthermore, the need for funding to support curriculum development has emerged as a significant consideration over the initial three years of UpRising! It has become apparent that approaches and resources for facilitating curriculum design and planning processes can present challenges for educators. Hence, it is strongly recommended that this aspect be of high priority in future funding streams.

### 6.2 Recommendation 2: Empowering teachers and practitioners

One of the more challenging areas as articulated by teachers and practitioners was the allocation of protected time for UpRising! project activity. Many Reps in particular, were seeking to balance already demanding roles with the investment of time that UpRising! required. Despite these difficulties, the Reps considered the UpRising! events, reflections and engagements of great importance and value, and sought to prioritise them in their schedules. Nevertheless, this caused workload issues.

In the future development of UpRising! it is important that this aspect be considered to allow practitioners engaging with the project the opportunity to develop their practice more fully and that UpRising! does not form an additional workload burden. It is therefore recommended that significant funding for teacher and practitioner release, including building the capacity of inclusion teams within hubs, forms a core part of future funding applications for UpRising!

### 6.3 Recommendation 3: Sustain and prioritise UpRising! networks

UpRising! networks for Reps has been an aspect of the project that participants have consistently identified as enriching and enabling in their music education practices for pupils with additional needs. Many of these practitioners work in isolation with a wide variety of schools and young people, travelling between them without the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their work. It was rare for these practitioners to have the opportunity to observe others at work in settings and to talk together about music provision and approaches.

For some of the Reps UpRising! was the first opportunity they had ever had to receive sustained, high quality CPD in SEND and the development of relationships across MEHEM was an inspiring and motivating experience. Sustaining networks where relationships have now become embedded and well-developed is an important consideration for year 4 of the project. As practitioners share personal experiences and reach out for support, this can cause vulnerabilities to emerge. Such supportive networks are difficult to establish, as it takes time to build trust and supportive environments. It is therefore recommended that funding be prioritised to sustain these groups and that additional considerations be given to facilitating practitioner well-being. Practitioners working with vulnerable young people in turn require significant opportunities to share together and need to know where to find support themselves, should these needs arise.

Recognising the value of CPD in enhancing practitioners' skills and approaches is central. These opportunities can include not only workshops and sessions but also building and developing online platforms for sharing innovative teaching strategies, ideas, and best practices. Ensuring the accessibility and relevance of CPD offerings remains paramount.

## **6.4 Recommendation 4: Effective utilisation of data**

As highlighted in the survey findings section of this report, establishing a data set from which to evaluate the work hubs are doing with pupils with additional needs and requirements was challenging. Response rates for this survey were low, both in year 1 and in year 3. The reasons for this are likely to be varied, although two primary reasons may be that:

- Hubs are unable to access data in such a way as to make it meaningful
- Differing data sets are used between hubs making it difficult to present specific figures

These issues are wider than the UpRising! project and representative of complexities in data returns for the DfE. However, they impact the development of a representative understanding of provision for young people with additional needs and requirements. This will be an aspect to continue to discuss in future UpRising! work and in hub development in general and it is recommended that UpRising! could be used as an example of the need for such clarity in national debate and discourse.

Addressing the ethical complexities associated with data sharing should be a key consideration in future funding. We suggest the project should actively explore ways in which more responsible ways to share relevant data among schools, local authorities, and Music Hubs should be considered. This data-driven approach can better inform decision-making, resource allocation, and personalised support for students with additional needs. We suggest discussions around the notion of "good data" based on the findings from the first three years of UpRising! should be the starting point of this work.

## **6.5 Recommendation 5: Research and Evaluation**

Research has formed a critical strand of the UpRising! project, with the research evaluation drawing together participant interactions in the wide variety of forums of which UpRising! is constituted. Interviews have enabled hidden themes to come to light and these have in turn influenced the project's development, as evidenced in the recommendations which have been implemented from the interim report. In addition, music education for young people with additional needs and requirements is an under-researched area, especially from the perspective of practitioner and teacher curriculum dynamics. It is important that the research strand of UpRising! is not only retained, but developed, as this in turn has significant potential to impact the music education that young people are able to access and how this is formulated by music education hubs. As the project progresses, a dedicated effort to gather data, conduct research, and assess the impact of UpRising! on pupils' learning experiences and outcomes should be maintained. This evidence-based approach ensures that the project's strategies remain effective and have implication for policy to practice.

## 6.6 Final thoughts

In conclusion, UpRising! should build upon its current successes by nurturing partnerships, emphasising professional development, fostering reflective practice, promoting peer support, ethically and responsibly utilising data, refining curricula, and continuously evaluating its impact. By doing so, the project can effectively address the ever evolving and fragile landscape of music education for students with additional needs, contributing to lasting positive change in practice and policy.

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## **UPRISING! RESEARCH REPORT 2023**

Centre for the Study of Practice  
and Culture in Education

Birmingham City University,  
Westbourne Road,  
Edgbaston, Birmingham  
B15 3TN