

# Workforce Development

Sing Up 2007-2011  
Programme Evaluation  
Theme 10

## Sing Up 2007-2011 Programme Evaluation

Sing Up 2007-2011 was the Music Manifesto National Singing Programme, led by Youth Music, with AMV-BBDO, Faber Music and The Sage Gateshead, supported by Government. It aimed to raise the status of singing and increase opportunities for school children throughout the country to enjoy singing as part of their everyday lives, and to support all primary schools to become 'singing schools'.

Sing Up commissioned the Centre for Use of Research & Evidence in Education (CUREE) to undertake an external evaluation of the whole programme. The evaluations are presented as follows:

- Synthesis Report including Executive Summary
- Probe & Case Study Report
  - Themed Reports:
    1. Communications
    2. Health & Wellbeing
    3. Impact on Schools
    4. Learning Across the Curriculum
    5. Management of Change
    6. Musical Development
    7. Partnership
    8. Speech, Language and Communication
    9. Transition
    10. Workforce Development
    11. Youth Leadership

The full set of reports can be found on the Sing Up website: [www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org)

Further information about CUREE can be found at: [www.curee-paccts.com](http://www.curee-paccts.com)

## Introduction

Sing Up 2007-11 was the Music Manifesto National Singing Programme, led by Youth Music, with AMV-BBDO, Faber Music and The Sage Gateshead, supported by Government. It aimed to raise the status of singing and increase opportunities for school children throughout the country to enjoy singing as part of their everyday lives, and to support all primary schools to become 'singing schools'.



Sing Up operated through four main strands of activity: a national PR and advertising **campaign** highlighting the benefits of singing; singing **resources**, through the twin vehicles of a website [www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org) (including a 'Song Bank') and a free termly magazine with CD; a **workforce development** programme to build the confidence and expertise of primary school teachers, musicians and others in leading and supporting children's singing activities, with a supporting network of 30 Sing Up Area Leaders; **funded programmes**, supporting the development of singing activity around the country.

By March 2011 Sing Up had engaged with over 95% of state primary schools and over 90% of all schools with primary school-aged children in them.

## Background and Scope

In its strategic plan for the four year Sing Up programme, the consortium defined its aim related to Workforce Development (WFD) as follows: 'Build and develop a committed and effective workforce to lead singing in and out of the classroom and the school, including Young Leaders.'

The following strategies were identified as likely to help achieve this aim:

- 'Create and promote a programme of training and professional development and resources for current and emerging Singing Leaders from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Develop a national network of Area Leaders who will:
  - provide support direct to schools;
  - link into, and link schools and singing leaders into, existing local networks, including music services, to ensure that singing provision is embedded across communities;

- establish new networks and partnerships to address local areas of need and to promote the partnership working agenda (N.B. many Area Leaders are themselves partnerships);
- and facilitate training and professional development activity to address local areas of need.

- Encourage partnership working across the community, through the Area Leaders programme, the wider reach of Sing Up and funding incentives.
- Develop the Sing Up Awards as a primary tool for engagement with training and continued professional development (CPD).
- Build on best practice in developing peer leadership and Young Leaders.
- Support the workforce to encourage and promote singing as part of instrumental and general music learning activities (including KS2 wider opportunities).
- Develop an accredited individual training pathway in singing/voice leadership in primary schools.<sup>1</sup>

1.Sing Up strategic plan, 2008

## Aims and Objectives

The Sing Up WFD programme aimed to provide professional development and training opportunities for primary school teachers and other singing leaders or potential singing leaders. Under this broad umbrella the individual aims of the different projects<sup>2</sup> varied; although they all involved some form of training and professional development.

Drake Music, for example, wanted to give staff and students an experience of singing using Assistive Music Technology at the same time as they piloted the resources they had created during their Beyond the Mainstream (BTM) work. They also wanted 'to empower staff to deliver accessible singing sessions with disabled students' at each of five schools.

Vocal Force Telford was a two-year programme aiming to create a sustainable network of local vocal practitioners in a deprived area. Sound Minds aimed to train and provide placements for singing leaders in working with children with mental health issues and Plymouth Music Zone (PMZ) explored approaches to working with the voice in special educational needs (SEN) contexts.

For Sing Up Leaders working within schools, the aims were similar. Greater Manchester Music Action Zone (GMMAZ) expressed them as follows:

'Development of singing skills for staff was a real focus of the project. We aimed to help staff develop confidence and expand their skills base so that they could lead singing sessions more effectively, with the aim that singing would be embedded in their teaching practice by the time the project had ended. We also worked with the staff as part of the workforce development strand of the project, creating an evolving training model, through staff only

2.For the purposes of this report, a project was defined as an aspect of activity carried out as part of the Sing Up programme. Projects therefore range in nature and include specific interventions; their types (e.g. Sing Up Awards); organisations and areas, leading a variety of strands of work; various communications activities and their analysis, etc.

'We aimed to give skills and tools that would enable teachers to use singing in everyday teaching, and encourage them to see singing as a valuable, enjoyable addition to their teaching practice'

sessions, classroom sessions, rigorous feedback, and the development of delivery methods within the group. We aimed to give skills and tools that would enable teachers to use singing in everyday teaching, and encourage them to see singing as a valuable, enjoyable addition to their teaching practice. For any who already did some singing, we aimed to enhance their skills, and develop new elements to the singing they did.'

For Sing Up Clusters, community cohesion and transition were important. For example the All Saints' Family of Schools, part of the Mansfield Cluster wished to:

'...bring our community together through the Sing Up programme. We also hope to encourage staff members currently running, or who wish to run a choir in their work, by providing training and support opportunities. We intend to launch Sing Up in January 2010. Leaders across all our schools will take part in an initial training session, and will be encouraged to use the Sing Up website and resources with their choirs. Throughout the year, leaders and choirs will be given support from the Arts Support Service, coordinated through All Saints', and there will be more opportunities for training.'

Other projects were highly specialised. For example Vocal Force Music and the Deaf wanted to pilot a project providing high level training for a small number of singers and signers to work together to develop their skills and confidence in encouraging deaf children to sign and/or vocalise and in developing signed song skills so that they:

- become confident 'trainers of trainers';
- become role models for Signed Song; and
- are able to contribute to signed resources and songs on the Sing Up Song Bank.

Whitewood and Fleming focused their training particularly on those working with looked after children.

## Processes and Strategies

No two projects adopted identical approaches, but it was possible from the data provided to highlight a number of key features of WFD across the strand. These included:

### Peer to Peer Learning

Some trainers made a point of pairing teachers or creating opportunities for them to learn with and from each other. For example Vocal Force Music and the Deaf created opportunities for pairs of colleagues to demonstrate their learning through task based-work during their residential training and also developed tasks for them to work on together in between their residential. These might include the following:

- choosing a song to sign, and bringing it back to the group;
- taking a song from the Song Bank and developing techniques for teaching it, and
- developing new repertoire.

### Networking

Developing and promoting supportive networks was a key element of the specialist input in several projects. For example Area Leader London supplemented training days with annual partnership events plus cross-cluster partnership/network conferences to promote working together. Sing East Sing West aimed to establish a mutual support network between participating teachers.



Vocal Force Music and the Deaf specifically targeted the development of a 'peer-support network for those involved in the training, and others seeking advice and support in developing signed song work'.

WFD also organised annual national regional gatherings for registered schools, trainers and other participants. Sing Up Cumbria and Sing Up Bedfordshire also commented on the opportunities built into the projects to 'network, discuss ideas and share skills with other practitioners'.

### Sustaining Learning Over Time

One-off, one-day training and/or networking events were a feature of much WFD work, including school twilight sessions. These were typically supplemented by in-school and/or on-call support. Where inexperienced or novice (in singing) teachers were concerned, there were some striking examples of carefully crafted, professional learning experiences, often spread over time. For example the Voices Foundation training provided teachers with the opportunity to develop an aural/vocal approach to music education, ensuring that children's learning progresses step by step through practical musical activities. The five days of the training are spread over an academic year, 'giving teachers the opportunity to apply what they have learnt at each training day with the children, enabling reflection and discussion at subsequent training days to take place'.

Others provided in-school support after initial training. These included Sing Up Burton where Singing Leaders visited each school on several occasions after the training session to support and supervise the first few lunchtime sessions during which 'uSing Play' was introduced and led. Whitewood and Fleming supported their practitioners after four days training all the way through 16 workshops with the children. Music and the Deaf spread its three residentials over a five month period, giving participant's time in-between to practice new knowledge and skills

and to reflect on their learning. Participants were then supported in their schools to put their learning and development into practice. During these direct delivery sessions in the eight schools participants worked in their pairs with support from the Music and the Deaf team.

### **Producing, Using and/or Developing Resources**

Resources were a key part of WFD. Sometimes the projects provided participants with highly specialised resources such as the Clicker technology provided by Drake Music. Sometimes they started off by providing teachers with starter packs of pre-prepared resources. In Sing East Sing West for example, the teachers received a pack of resources containing song lyrics and notation, advice on warm-up exercises and a contact list. A CD of all the songs, sung by the Singing Leaders, was sent through the post before their first singing session.

Leaders and participants often worked together to develop or adapt resources. Part of the training in Music and the Deaf involved taking a song from the Song Bank and developing a British Sign Language version, plus techniques for teaching it. The project made a point of collecting any new repertoire and signing resources to share and disseminate between participants and the wider Sing Up workforce. Songs were the key resource across all the projects, often taken from the Song Bank. Sing Up Burton delivered Just Sing by staying in one school for the day, spending time with each class to teach them two songs which they then taught to other classes after the Sing Up team left. All the songs used in this way were either traditional, taken from the Sing Up Song Bank or written by the Sing Up Burton team themselves. Vocal Force South Holland made their own resources. They collected the music knowledge of participants from migrant communities by sharing songs from the childhood memories of group participants from all the different nationalities and collated them into a songbook.

Vocal Force Let's Reflect highlighted the Song Bank as a core support for teachers' 'confidence, growth and ability to share their skills with other members of their school musical community'. At one staff singing session in a school the Music Teacher had compiled a handout of all the material on the Song Bank sorted into categories for the class teachers so they were able to navigate the choice of songs they might use for their classes much more efficiently. Other strategies used by projects included:

- mentoring;
- residential training;
- ascertaining participant's starting points (in terms of confidence and/or musical knowledge) and tailoring delivery appropriately; and
- being responsive to teachers' needs in terms of the timing and location of training sessions.

## Findings and Outcomes

'The 1000+ people who responded to the Institute of Education evaluation survey (see Footnote 1), identified two main benefits: an increase in their self confidence as Vocal Leaders and an appreciation of the provision of teaching materials to support the teaching of singing in schools. They were also positive about having access to a peer support network amongst fellow professionals'

### Adults as Participants

By far the largest group of direct beneficiaries of the programme were the participant teachers, SEN specialists and other adults. The 1000+ people who responded to the Institute of Education evaluation survey (see Footnote 1), identified two main benefits: an increase in their self confidence as Vocal Leaders and an appreciation of the provision of teaching materials to support the teaching of singing in schools. They were also positive about having access to a peer support network amongst fellow professionals. The evaluation also found that:

- teachers' professional development experiences confirmed a view that 'all children can be successful' in singing;
- singing was seen to help cultivate a heightened sense of community and to impact positively on children's social and emotional development;
- teachers reported that their Sing Up experience had provided detailed guidance about singing and also vocal health; and
- the vast majority of respondents stated that they had taken the opportunity back in the workplace to share their Sing Up development experiences with colleagues.

The data reviewed for this report is consistent with these findings and also helps to exemplify and illustrate them.

### Confidence

Increased confidence to deliver/lead singing activity was noted in many of the projects.

GMAZ asked participants about their confidence before and after the training activities:

'How confident do you feel to lead singing activity with the children with whom you work?'

Pre project: 11% said 'very confident', 0% 'quite confident'

Post project: 29% said 'very confident', 29% 'quite confident'.

The Voices Foundation described how one school headteacher had been so impressed by the skills and confidence effected by the training that she is 'paying for an additional programme which will focus on their teaching assistants and will take place this autumn...in order to give them confidence to use singing to engage, motivate and help children learn'. Music and the Deaf reported that their teachers had 'really gelled as a team and are developing immense confidence. They're also increasingly able to determine not only what makes a good song, but also what makes a good signed song, and are very forthright in their views!'. In Spitalfields Music – 'trainees grew in their practice and undertook a very steep learning curve'.



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Confidence in the use of new technology was an important outcome of the Drake Music training.

The Voices Foundation reported that its approach to professional development:

'...has enabled them all to teach music using the vocal approach, and has provided them with the skills and confidence to do so. The well thought out music educational programme has enabled some teaching staff with little musical experience, or bad childhood experience of music teaching in their childhood and resulting low confidence, to scaffold their teaching skills and to teach music in an enjoyable and rewarding way for both pupils and teaching staff alike.'

Voices Foundation reported that individual teachers who have been 'scared of singing' are now confident and able to engage and enjoy using their singing voice and teach and enjoy music. 'They are all confidently using their singing voice in their classrooms at different times of the day, in many different subject areas. It has been great fun linking singing across the curriculum - maths, geography, languages, history, science, and English'.



'All my life I have been told I can't sing, am flat and can't hold a tune. Yet today - aged 48 - I found my voice at your 'singing for the scared' training session, and experienced what a joy singing can be. I now feel brave enough to sing may be a little song with my class - something I never thought I would be able to do. So thank you for a wonderful - and for me - an absolutely unique day'

Participant feedback from Sing Up Training Programme Sue Nicholls training included one participant for whom the course had 'really inspired me and gave me the confidence to use music in the classroom. I am not a 'musical person' at all but the way you taught us with such enthusiasm and the activities you gave us were so user friendly that it has totally changed my way of thinking about it and I'm really grateful for that. I know many other students feel the same so I just wanted to let you know!' Similarly, participant feedback from Vocal Force Eden Valley included this from one participant:

'All my life I have been told I can't sing, am flat and can't hold a tune. Yet today - aged 48 - I found my voice at your 'singing for the scared' training session, and experienced what a joy singing can be. I now feel brave enough to sing may be a little song with my class - something I never thought I would be able to do. So thank you for a wonderful - and for me - an absolutely unique day.'

Spitalfields Music also reported the Deputy Head's perspective. He felt that 'overall the participants experienced a rise in vocal confidence and surprise that they enjoyed singing. For the school I think it has opened up some creative pathways musically and also increased the staff's confidence with regard to pupil behaviour.'

### Singing Knowledge and Skills

Participants also improved their own singing knowledge and skills (described in more detail in the Musical Learning and Development Report) and their ability to teach these to young people.

Core to the acquisition of new knowledge was learning new songs, song games and warm up exercises to help introduce singing in the classroom. But the range was more extensive: Sing Up Burton participants cited their newfound ability to compose songs and create resources; Sing Up East Berkshire and Sing Up Training Programme with Em Whitfield-Brookes highlighted their new skills in teaching songwriting – including breaking it down into segments.

Sing East Sing West and Sing Up Training Programme with Em Whitfield-Brookes participants highlighted how they had learnt to 'inspire and motivate children to sing.' The Voices Foundation reported that 'the project has left behind a large number of teachers who are now qualified to teach singing in their classrooms with supporting resource material'. Voices Foundation stressed the importance of teachers being able to practise and improve their own singing voices. 'Learning fundamental music skills and being given ways to teach them was crucial to making the course successful'.

In terms of overall impact they commented:

'The programme has had a powerful impact on the staff and has been very influential with improving the CPD (music) of the staff. Many of the teaching staff have enjoyed learning how to sing and now use their voices creatively. They have learnt a huge amount about the music curriculum and how to use singing as part of it and they have also really gained a great deal of knowledge on how to sing and share that enjoyment with the children they work with, in and out of the classroom.'

One project (The National Centre for Early Music [NCEM]) also talked of participants' sense of achievement in learning a new piece of music that was in a different style to what they were used to. Teachers participating in NCEM valued the opportunity to work with and observe 'such high quality and experienced Singing Leaders'. They found it inspiring to see them in action with their own choirs and gained lots of ideas and techniques for their future work.' This project has contributed to my CPD as a music practitioner in a primary school as it has exposed me to other people's ways of training, managing and conducting a choir'. 'The choral leader's training provided was really valuable -especially to be able to observe a professional working with your own choir allowing you to pick up good tips!'.

In GMMAZ 100% of teachers interviewed thought that the ideas from the project had been embedded throughout their school.

'They have been part of a learning programme which helps their professional development and teaches them ways to use singing, (or develop their existing singing skills) to enhance their classroom delivery.

They have been taught how to compose songs to fit in with their daily teachings and curriculum, they have been provided with resources such as CDs, props and songbooks to help them with any singing delivery.'

The Voices Foundation summed up the impact thus:

'Many of the staff had not realised the power of song and are really enjoying the positive impact that the programme has had on themselves, their pupils and the overall curriculum. The Voices programme has created access to music through song, and the vocal skills offered will have long-term beneficial effects on their professional development.'

### Adults as Trainers

It was clear from the reports and documentation provided to the evaluation team that the WFD had had a pronounced impact on Workshop Leaders, Project Trainers and others involved in delivering Sing Up, including their own skills and knowledge, enjoyment and even career progression.

Spitalfields Music feedback helps to illustrate what this looks like:

'I really enjoyed facilitating song-writing in response to Messy Play with the children at Cherry Trees School. I have worked on projects before where part of the role of the music activities was to reinforce a wider aim (core skills, social development etc) but particularly felt on this project that the workshops acted as an extension of the innovative play activities, learning, and behaviour development already taking place at the school. There were moments of children being engaged for significant periods of time and peer sharing. I would really like to experience this integrated approach again and to build on it.'

Vocal Force Eden Valley said the project had made:

'...a big difference...I have had to be clearer and better prepared, prepare resources more consistently. It has also shown me how much knowledge and skill I have accumulated...and that modelling my way of working isn't necessarily the best way of empowering generalists to lead singing in schools'.

Sing Up Burton, Sing Up Training Programme with Em Whitfield-Brookes and Voices Foundation trainers all reported that they had learnt new techniques in delivering workshops.

A trainer from Vocal Force South Holland reported:

'...immense personal satisfaction...the experience... of conducting the choirs and the London Mozart Players String Orchestra was an incredible thrill...this project really made me define my own best practice, and develop new ways of doing things and I feel that my own CPD has benefited enormously from this'.

'A number of trainers highlighted the beneficial impact of the local, regional and national networking opportunities which characterised the Sing Up approach'

Music and the Deaf's team of three core artists said they had 'been able to use our signing, singing and composition skills collaboratively and created an innovative approach to delivery of music sessions to deaf children'.

Southampton workshop leaders reported impacts including the following:

'My role in this Sing Up project definitely gave me new skills, and developed existing skills...this project gave me the experience to become confident leading workshops with very large groups. I learnt how to think on my feet... I also attended two regional Sing Up training days which were fantastic opportunities to learn more about the Sing Up vision as well as gaining access to great resources for my own teaching.'

And:

'From Bevois to Bollywood has helped me improve and develop my teaching skills and it has given me new aspirations for my career. Before the project I had never worked with this age group and running an after school club was a new experience for me. I know now how to lead singing and what to offer. The Sing Up Southampton project has supported me very much and given me some brilliant ideas and skills regarding vocal work.'

Sing Up Training Programme with Em Whitfield-Brookes described how 'I have learnt so much that has directly benefitted my own development and practice'. A trainer from Music and the Deaf reported that:

'...the impact this approach has had on my compositional technique has been substantial. I had previously never understood the visual and emotional impact music is able to have on people when it is signed. Ultimately, for the signing to have such an influence on its audience, it must be considered by the composer during the writing process.'

A number of trainers highlighted the beneficial impact of the local, regional and national networking opportunities which characterised the Sing Up approach. These enabled them to learn from others and to share their experiences and techniques. Sing Up Coventry reported that: '...the Sing Up National gatherings were fantastic...Ideas were shared and the common goal of 'singing for all' was celebrated. I picked up a fantastic array of repertoire and sought advice from some of the best practitioners around the country. Invaluable.'

Sound Minds found that:

'Attendance at the Beyond the Mainstream gathering provided much greater awareness of how our work fitted into a wider programme, and how that wider programme was targeted not only at delivery but learning from the experience of that delivery. This has been further supported by the provision of a consultant to talk through issues arising out of the programme.'

### Career Progression

Participation in Sing Up also benefited the career progression of some of the trainers. Examples include Sing Up Southampton:

'After the Sing Up project finished, my experiences definitely helped in securing other jobs. Shortly after I began leading whole class singing sessions for a school in Hampshire. In September I began work for Portsmouth Music Service, teaching singing and assisting with a number of choirs and music theatre groups. A knowledge and understanding of Sing Up was a high priority for both of these employers, so my previous workshop leading proved very valuable! I love the ethos behind the campaign, and have learnt so much from both leading the workshops and attending the training sessions.'

And a graduate of the Sing Up Training Programme with Sue Nicholls' training said

'...not only did I use some of the ideas in class during my spring placement but also used them for a year 1 class assembly which was a complete success. This lead onto a very good reference from the headteacher who recommended me to a school that asked me to go for a job interview. Using 'Me Tarzan you Jane' as the song for the interview lesson, I was offered the job which I happily accepted.'

### Children as Participants

The IoE evaluation analyses of survey responses found that the Sing Up professional development had led to very positive impacts on their children's singing, including their musical learning and development. Sing Up data helps to illustrate the form these took. (For a more detailed description of the impact of Sing Up on young people's musical learning and development see the Youth Leadership report).



Enjoyment, engagement and increases in confidence were widely reported. GMAZ leaders, for example, described the impact as follows:

'Through their engagement in singing activity with their peers, they have developed confidence, improved their language skills, and mixed with new schoolmates, both from the pupil referral unit (PRU) and from the mainstream school which many of them will attend. They have learned about weather, routines, social interaction, animals, verbs and nouns through regular, engaging, enjoyable singing activity.'

Pie Factory found similar enthusiasm amongst young participants:

'The feedback I received from everyone who participated [in the training]

'...not only did I use some of the ideas in class during my spring placement but also used them for a year 1 class assembly which was a complete success. This lead onto a very good reference from the headteacher who recommended me to a school that asked me to go for a job interview. Using 'Me Tarzan you Jane' as the song for the interview lesson, I was offered the job which I happily accepted'

is how much they enjoyed the sessions with the opportunity to express themselves musically with guitars, drums, singing and songwriting.’ Voices Foundation cited on autistic child who ‘has really enjoyed singing and is confident to sing solo and lead groups which is a fantastic achievement.’ Others, for example NCEM described the sense of ‘excitement and achievement’ when children performed for a large audience at the end of the project – ‘children felt ‘honoured’ to represent their school’.

### Leadership Learning

Sing Up Trainers and Project Leaders reported a number of areas of learning, especially with regard to:

- working with the rhythms and constraints of schools;
- working in SEN environments; and
- teaching and working with young people, which some of them had not experienced before.

Several of the projects documented the learning of leaders. GMMAZ in particular produced a legacy of its learning which is worth reporting in some detail for its care and comprehensiveness:

‘The key word is obviously ‘sustainable’, so it is important that whatever practices are used, successfully establish singing as part of classroom life, and within the teachers’ own teaching practice. It becomes about...a moment when a positive outcome as a result of singing gives the teacher a reason to use singing again and again. Such an outcome can be enjoyment – their own or the children’s, improved learning, improved engagement with them, or with one another, or a new found ability to put something across more easily, or to greater effect, or an improvement to a child’s pathway in their day to day schooling, progression to mainstream education and in their daily life. Facilitating these outcomes, through the teachers, with the support and guidance of the project staff was a major achievement of the project, and the structures and practices we used to achieve this, are what should be passed on.’

They recommend the production of a toolkit ‘to enable any organisation or animateur/practitioner to follow the processes we have used’ and describe in some detail what it should contain. The key elements for success, according to their toolkit, centre around responsiveness, communication, differentiation, excellent resources, teaching steps and strategies and sustainability. A toolkit should be created, and developed in a range of settings. The toolkit could be available online, or in physical print.

Other projects also listed aspects of their learning. Sound Minds found that working alongside mental health professionals was a key element of success. They also stressed the importance of ‘active listening’ ‘so that suitable activities are implemented at appropriate stages in the group’s development (rather than

following a predetermined plan).

Leaders from Music and the Deaf learned much as they went along:

'The nature of this project dictated that the composition itself would evolve as sessions with children and teachers progressed. This can be a challenging means of working as it is not possible to pre-determine what is going to come out of a session. Similarly, teachers can be rather fearful of this approach'.

'Vocal Force Eden Valley found that schools really appreciated the bespoke nature of the Vocal Force programme and the fact that we could deliver work that they wanted, rather than having to fit into a mould'

Their experience led them to advocate a central theme or idea and let the children direct the pace and content of the composition. Having worked in many cross-curricular projects, I believe this to be true of most art forms. After the first session, the artist team decided to use the theme of 'The Sword In the Stone'. 'Again, perhaps if we had met prior to the first session this could have been decided earlier and we could have gone into schools with a mini-package of songs already written'.



Vocal Force Eden Valley found that schools 'really appreciated the bespoke nature of the Vocal Force programme and the fact that we could deliver work that they wanted, rather than having to fit into a mould'. One piece of learning they also identified was the opportunity for teachers and community musicians to work together as equal partners/learners outside of the normal way interaction happens within a school project framework. 'This has really helped with subsequent projects and the way they have been delivered'.

Vocal Force Music and the Deaf highlighted learning points around the need for advocacy work to raise the profile of signed song and performances, and to convince staff and managers about the importance and potential of devising accessible projects. They also noted the isolation in which several participants worked, the importance of performance opportunities for deaf children and signing choirs and the work and time needed to further develop individual confidence in leading 'training the trainers' training as opposed to direct delivery with children and their teachers.

Among other things, they also noted the need for a good balance of singers and signers to share learning and support each other and the importance of the venue and quality of food to help create a good learning environment and group work.

Voices Foundation pointed out the need for effective timetabling:

'The normal plan is that they attend day 1, following this they shadow an experienced Voices Advisory Teacher (AT) and then attend day 2 at which they discuss what they have observed. Unfortunately day 1 was scheduled towards the end of the summer term and we didn't have enough ATs working in July to provide shadowing opportunities. Therefore quite a few of them attended day 2 before shadowing. We eventually arranged for all

nine of them to shadow an AT but in some cases they had to travel long distances.'

Vocal Force South Holland highlighted the need for effective time management, which they found to be the most challenging aspect of the project. Another project found that they could help with the time pressures on school staff by holding the sessions as part of a staff meeting to give staff the time to explore. 'It also means the head teacher is supportive as they have allowed time to be used for the purpose'.

## Methods

Ninety-nine project reports and related evidence, ranging between internal evaluations and external assessment, were selected by Sing Up as a basis for a number of synthesis evaluation reports. The documents were coded by a team of CUREE researchers as likely to yield evidence for each of the themed reports. The data were then extracted by the same team, using Nvivo software, for each of the themes identified by Sing Up. The data extraction framework, based on questions focused on both impact and processes for each of the themes, was agreed in advance with Sing Up. The resulting data was then analysed and synthesised so that the key messages for each theme could be reported.

The current report is based on the documents which were identified as containing data relevant to the theme of WFD. A total of 37 projects had information relating to the theme. Types of evidence commonly collected by the reports used to illustrate WFD included:

- school staff perceptions/quotes;
- Music Specialist perceptions/quotes;
- pupil perceptions/quotes;
- Area Leader/Sing Up Advisor quotes;
- school staff survey; and
- participant/school practitioner observation.

## Workforce Development: Connections With the Wider Evidence Base

The findings from the Sing Up projects featured in this report correlate with those from four systematic reviews<sup>3</sup> of existing research evidence about the impact of CPD on teachers and pupils. The reviews scanned and filtered over 20,000 research studies for the best evidence, key worded and mapped over 230 studies, and brought together data from the 70 studies offering the most relevant and high-quality data.



The reviews identified that CPD that resulted in learning gains for teachers and for their pupils usually involved:

- peer support (in pairs or small groups) to encourage, extend and structure professional learning, dialogue and experimentation – in combination with;
- specialist support, including modelling, workshops, observation, feedback, coaching, introducing a menu of research-based strategies for enhancing learning;
- planned meetings for structured discussion – including exploring evidence from the teachers’ classrooms about their experiments with new approaches and of their beliefs about teaching, the subjects being explored and their learners;
- processes for sustaining the CPD over time to enable teachers to embed the practices in their own classroom settings – including informal day-to-day discussions and observations between teachers;
- recognition and analysis of teachers’ individual starting points and building on what they know and can do already;
- developing teachers’ ownership of their learning, by offering them scope to identify or refine their own learning focus, and to take on a degree of leadership in their CPD; and
- a focus on pupil learning and pupil outcomes, often explicitly as a way to analyse starting points, structure development discussions and evaluate progress, both formatively and summatively.

There was considerable agreement between many of these characteristics of effective CPD as identified in the research literature and the characteristics of the WFD that was part of the Sing Up programme. Extensive use of peer and specialist support and sustaining development opportunities over time were particularly noticeable features of the programme.

Evidence in the theme report about communication highlights the different ways in which Sing Up focused on teachers’ starting points and ownership. Perhaps the aspect of support for professional learning that is less evident is a focus on structured discussion. Given the very practical nature of the support that most teachers experienced and wanted, it is interesting to reflect on what effects and tools for prompting structured dialogue about the links between singing, learning and progression might add to teachers and pupils’ experience of the programme.

## Glossary

### **Sing Up Awards**

The Awards have helped schools to embed singing throughout their school life, encouraging them to celebrate their singing. There are three different levels of Award: Silver, Gold and Platinum. The Awards are specially designed to work across different types of school, including SEN settings.

### **Beyond the Mainstream (BTM)**

Sing Up made a commitment to ensure that its work impacts upon all primary aged children, including children in SEN schools, Pupil Referral Units, looked after children, children with mental health issues and many others early in 2009, and the stream of work that underpins this commitment throughout the programme is called Beyond the Mainstream. BTM broadly focuses on children who can't access primary mainstream school (in SEN or PRU settings) as well as those who have difficulties accessing primary mainstream (including looked after children, children with EBD, children with mental health difficulties etc).

### **Sing Up Clusters**

Sing Up Clusters have helped secondary schools to lead innovative singing projects with their feeder primary schools. The programme aims to train and inspire singing leaders and enables schools to work positively with pupils' transition issues. Clusters work with 240 schools across the nation, introducing exciting singing opportunities to over 7,500 pupils.

### **Sing Up Flagships**

Sing Up Flagships are leading singing advocate organisations that work to share and develop best practice through projects, performances and resources. Nine organisations have worked as Flagships, with most programmes typically lasting 2 years. Thousands of children, practitioners and singing leaders have benefited nationwide from their work.

### **Sing Up Communities**

Sing Up Communities have been run by arts organisations and music services that work with primary-aged children. They aim to place singing at the heart of the community. Each project has run for two years and aims to reach over 2,000 primary-aged children. Work includes the development of young singing leaders and encouraging singing out of school hours.

### **Vocal Force**

Vocal Force was originally a project based on the innovative Vocal Union programme devised by The Sage Gateshead, before becoming part of Sing Up in 2008. Vocal Force aimed to foster a peer support network for sharing learning and exploring ways of sustaining networks. It has created over 60 bespoke projects to increase the skills, confidence and repertoire of more than 3,000 singing leaders.