

Management of Change

Sing Up 2007-2011
Programme Evaluation
Theme 5

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

Further information about CUREE can be found at: 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 (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

1.Original Sing Up
Tender Documentation

2.Ibid

In 2007 the Sing Up programme set out to implement its vision that 'every primary school-aged child should be experiencing high quality singing activity every day'¹. Sing Up recognised that the status of singing in primary school ranged from 'non-existent to sitting right at the heart of school culture'². A large number of mechanisms were made available by Sing Up to support schools at both of these extreme positions, and those in between. These support mechanisms included:

- Sing Up Awards, aimed at providing a framework for schools who want to improve their singing provision and recognising and celebrating their achievements
- The Song Bank, an online resource providing teachers with free songs, backing and echo tracks and teaching materials
- The website and magazine, aimed at offering resources and ideas to help lead singing;
- Training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

3. Singing – why does my school need it?

- Other funded programmes, including, for example, Beyond the Mainstream (BTM)³

The aim of this report is to explore organisational practices related to implementing the Sing Up vision within settings involved in the programme. It offers the analysis and synthesis of the evidence of how singing was introduced (and where relevant – embedded) into school experiences of and extended schools provision for primary aged children.

What Was the Range and Nature of Change?

4. 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.

The projects⁴ selected as offering relevant evidence for this themed report include a mix of school based projects and projects focused on supporting schools. Both types of project illustrate what is involved at various points of the journey towards becoming a singing school, or supporting schools to do so.

A 'singing school' is defined by Sing Up as one in which:

- 'all pupils sing for at least 5 minutes every day;
- the whole school sings together at least once a week;
- singing regularly takes place in and outside the classroom, and in and outside the school day;
- at least 2 people in every primary school are confident to lead singing throughout the school;
- pupils sing in performances periodically (internal and external audiences and recordings), and at least once a year;
- the school recognises the value of singing as teaching and learning tool across the curriculum; and
- the headteacher, governors and staff are supportive of singing⁵.'

5. Singing – Why does my school need it?

Some of the activities schools engaged in and were supported with happened within their own school. Others involved them working with other schools and organisations and participating in regional and national events.

Singing activities within a school included:

- choirs;
- extra-curricular opportunities, such as breakfast clubs;
- singing in music and other lessons of the curriculum;
- assemblies (whole school singing);

- inter-class competitions; and
- opportunities for young singing leaders (e.g. juniors working with infants).

Singing activities involving a number of schools/organisations included:

- choirs to support young people making transitions between schools;
- arrangements for young singing leaders/buddies (pairing children with special educational needs (SEN) with 'buddies' from mainstream secondary school⁶);
- Beyond the Mainstream (BTM)⁷ work;
- preparing a performance for a festival or event involving other schools; and
- Big Sing concerts⁸ (events offering children involved in Sing Up opportunities to join together in one area of the country to showcase their singing)

6. Please refer to Youth Leadership report for more detail.

7. Please see Glossary for more details.

8. See <http://www.singup.org/news-local-events/news-article/view/127-singing-in-birmingham-and-liverpool/>

Some of the participating schools only introduced one or two of these activities whilst being involved in the Sing Up programme. For example, they started a choir or introduced singing as a regular activity in the classroom (e.g. Starting Point, GMAZ). At the other extreme, Sing Up Platinum Awards schools engaged in most or even all of these activities. This does not necessarily mean, however, that those closest to embedding the 'singing school' vision in their setting travelled the furthest in implementing change. Starting points, i.e. the extent to which singing and musical activities were part of the school life prior to schools' involvement with Sing Up, varied as significantly as their journeys.

9. Singing – why does my school need it?

These diverse starting points were recognised by Sing Up early on⁹; a number of routes for engaging with the programme, and forms of support in introducing a variety of singing experiences in a range of settings were made available to schools to take account of this. Examples of this differentiation, highlighted by the projects selected for this theme, include the creation of the website with a range of material on it and the provision of a range of training opportunities, for school staff with diverse levels of expertise and experience in leading singing, designed at both national and local level.

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The Song Bank hosted on the Sing Up website, for instance, was developed by Sing Up to provide a lot of resources (such as plans of lessons for different curriculum areas that include singing, 'Quick sings'/Five minute features, glossary of musical terms, etc), that practitioners with little experience of teaching singing would find particularly useful. At the same time, the sheer number and complexity (e.g. four part version for This is our world) of some songs were intended to support more experienced practitioners through offering a choice of repertoire and enabling them to build on their pupils' existing skills.

Some of the Sing Up projects' focus was on facilitating change by building sustainable capacity. This involved supporting the development of school practitioners who would in turn provide singing opportunities to children and

increase the range and quality of such opportunities. The Voices Foundation, for example, has developed a tiered approach to supporting change through staff development. It ranged from in-school training and in-class support from music specialists over a long period of time (4 terms) for hub schools in clusters of primary schools, to training Local Advisory Teachers (LATs) who could continue leading singing programmes. It was envisaged that the LATs would offer support in their local authorities once the project was finished.

What Motivated Change, or Why Did Schools and Other Organisations Get Involved in Sing Up?

'Many school leaders recognised the inclusive nature of singing and its potential to develop a sense of worth and belonging in children, staff and the wider community (e.g. Sing Up Awards schools). In this context singing was seen as another dimension of whole school improvement'

What motivated different organisations to embark on the journey of change and introduce different programmes and activities, was often similar. It focused on promoting singing in order to benefit children and young people and other participants. Yet, alongside a common belief in the value of singing, it was possible to notice patterns, reflecting the priorities of different settings.



Professional music organisations and local music services and Area Leaders were often focused on engaging specific groups of children in singing. These included:

- children during transition between phases;
- gender groups (boys in particular);
- children with emotional and behavioural difficulties;
- children who are gifted and talented;
- children who have moderate and severe disabilities; and
- other groups of children who are not in mainstream education or require additional support (e.g. looked after).

These organisations (e.g. Ex Cathedra) often recognised that by helping to increase singing opportunities for groups of children listed above, they could also develop their own practice. They saw it as an opportunity for developing range and variety and for scaling up their existing practice (e.g. CBSO, Sing Up Kirklees).

For schools, singing was often seen as a strategy, and an enjoyable one, that could promote:

- engagement in learning, helping motivate disaffected pupils, i.e. 'create an environment conducive to learning'¹⁰;

10. Sing Up case studies: The power of singing schools.

- the development of pupils' skills in working together;
- pupil confidence and self-esteem; and
- rising standards across the school.

Many school leaders recognised the inclusive nature of singing and its potential to develop a sense of worth and belonging in children, staff and the wider community (e.g. Sing Up Awards schools). In this context singing was seen as another dimension of whole school improvement.

The staff development potential arising from embedding singing in a school was seen as another reason for schools to get on board. This was particularly appealing because of the nature and amount of support provided by Sing Up (please see the Workforce Development report for more information).

In some schools change was initiated by a school leader, in others – a singing enthusiast within a school or a music coordinator provided the trigger. When singing was initiated by the school leader, their interest and belief in singing and its importance for children and the school tended to come from either their personal background (head as a specialist musician or singer), or resulted from them responding to one of the Sing Up activities, such as media coverage, various events¹¹ etc. Sing Up case studies¹² offer an example of how a head teacher, having realised the value and potential of singing during a Sing Up workshop, strategically planned and implemented change to make it part of the culture and curriculum in his school.

11. Please see Campaign report

12. Sing Up case studies: The power of singing schools.

Finally, schools that applied for Sing Up Awards were motivated not only by the potential recognition of their work and achievements, but also by opportunities for reflection on what has been done and what could be further enhanced.

Approaches to Implementing Change

Despite the differences between the factors that motivated schools to get involved with Sing Up, their achievements in making singing embedded, their starting points, and hence the nature of the change they had to introduce, there were a number of common features characterising their approaches to making singing part of children's experience of learning and life at school.

Initiation of Change

Some projects started their work by identifying common values (such as Sing Up Greenwich's Accessibility, Creativity and Musicality), identifying what success might look like (Voices Foundation) or agreeing key principles for working together (Pie Factory Music). The latter was found particularly helpful within projects involving partnership working of practitioners from different areas of expertise, without any experience of working together before, such as BTM projects.

Getting more/all colleagues involved was recognised as key and a challenge both

in the projects that were initiated by school leaders and those that were more organic, 'bottom up' approaches. A whole school INSET day was a common strategy to kick off the work. Helping staff who were not yet involved to appreciate the benefits of singing and how it can be embedded in a school was often the focus for such sessions ('give the teacher a reason to sing again and again', GMMAZ). One of the school leaders involved in the Sing Up programme came up with an original strategy for convincing colleagues:

'I knew if we went back and told everyone to start singing we would get nowhere. So, following a secret meeting with those who attended the conference, [the head] ... and his team came up with a plan. ...they produced a pirate-themed INSET day for staff, weaving in songs to show how singing can inspire learning. Initially, they thought we were mad – with us dressed up as pirates – but by the end of the day they were convinced to give it a go'.¹³

13. Sing Up case studies: The power of singing schools.

Many schools involved in the programme had input from music specialists, such as Sing Up Area Leaders, in delivering this crucial first (and subsequent) INSET whole staff training. Staff choirs emerged as another common approach for convincing sceptics amongst staff, with multiple stories of practitioners who had been told they were 'tone-deaf' in their own days in school and petrified at the thought of singing, suddenly discovering they could join in. Resources provided by Sing Up, particularly the Song Bank materials, allowing teachers to use recordings of songs and not necessarily having to sing themselves, were cited as crucial for convincing practitioners who 'had never dreamt' of singing in front of others to introduce singing into their classroom practice.

Supporting and Sustaining Change

The importance of support from school leadership was recognised at different levels. Often, individual project reports cited the presence or lack of school leaders' engagement in and support of the work as one of the key reasons for its success or failure. At a whole programme level, the Sing Up Awards criteria, indicate what might be expected of a school as it moves closer towards the vision of a 'singing school'. They list 'headteacher singing with the school' as the first criteria for the Gold Award.

On the other hand, headteachers leading the projects aimed at increasing the amount and quality of singing in primary schools were relatively rare. In most projects reported here, this was the role of a music coordinator or other colleagues, commonly called 'enthusiasts' or 'champions' of singing in schools. Interestingly, these were often non-specialists who enjoy singing and who are infectious in their enthusiasm for it. Enthusiasm and passion for singing and commitment to making it part of school life were identified by colleagues at all levels as the qualities needed to lead change (e.g. Sing Up Awards schools, Voices Foundation, etc).

In schools where singing appeared to be most embedded, the majority of school staff were involved in some form of leading singing (e.g. musical specialist leading the school choir, members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) leading

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whole school assemblies, teachers leading singing in the classroom and teaching assistants leading in breakfast clubs) and so were pupils: 'The school ... has reached the point where when the Music Co-ordinator is away, there are plenty of people – staff and pupils – who have the confidence to lead singing activities'.¹⁴

14.Ibid

Children and young people's involvement in leading work was diverse (see Youth Leadership report for more detail) and ranged from them choosing the repertoire for the school choir to older pupils volunteering to 'help out with an infant choir that ran at lunchtime', as 'singing experts' or 'sound squads' of pupils from every class responsible for keeping their peers singing.¹⁵

15.Ibid

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In some cases, project leaders recognised that by developing relationships between different people involved (e.g. All Saints family of schools), they were working towards sustainability of the change, enabling participants to support each other in the future but also to be collaboratively responsible for the work, committed to change.

Sustainability was planned for from the beginning in some projects and considered at a later stage in others. Yet, attempts to make the change sustainable were often similar. In addition to the above mentioned strategies (involving most staff, securing support from SLT, ensuring rationale for change is shared, etc) the following approaches were commonly adopted by the projects:

- **Making the change embedded**

In a number of projects, practitioners tried to build on their existing work and structures:

'Singing had always played an important part in the school day, bringing smiles to the pupils' faces and helping their learning. When Sing up was introduced ...music leader wanted all teachers to get involved' (Sing up case studies).

'The project acted as an extension of the innovative play activities, learning and behaviour development already taking place at the school' (Spitalfields Music).

In some cases projects focused their efforts on introducing singing into existing partnership work (e.g. transition) between the schools or with their local authority, often bringing in other, additional sources of funding early on.

Others tried to routinise change, making it 'part of classroom life' (GMMAZ).

- **Involving parents and wider community**

Some projects, e.g. Sing Up Bedfordshire, targeted settings such as youth clubs and faith-based settings to establish new community projects and singing groups. For the majority of the Sing Up projects though, it was common to produce performances for parents and the wider community as a way of celebrating success. A sense of pride was frequently mentioned. Several reports noted that

their school was recognised as a singing school by parents and the community, which often changed the perception of the school.

Other schools went further still and not only publically committed to singing but also encouraged parents and other community members to get involved through organising parents' and village choirs, use of Song Bank, etc (Sing Up Awards schools, Sing Up Case Studies).

- **Staff continuing professional development (CPD)**

Most projects reported here enjoyed targeted, singing related CPD opportunities through their involvement with Sing Up. In many instances, there was specialist input from music professionals, including Area Leaders, in the form of delivering school-based (whole school) INSET days, external training workshops and courses. Skills and repertoire tended to be the main foci of CPD opportunities (e.g. Voices Foundation). In a number of instances, practitioners lacked confidence to sing in front of children (or anybody) and training was specifically targeted to tackle that.

The length of courses differed and ranged from short workshops to learning spanning long periods of time. In one instance, participants welcomed the spread of the five days of a course over the academic year as it gave them an opportunity to embed the content and their learning back at school.

A large proportion of the projects reported on-going support from specialists in their own settings. This took the form of, e.g. in-class visits and support (Voices Foundation), external music specialists working alongside staff (see Transition report) and music specialists initially leading classroom practice, then gradually involving classroom teachers to deliver singing sessions to children alongside them (GMMAZ). In most cases, specialist support arrangements lasted a term or longer.

In evaluations, practitioners particularly valued the direct contribution the CPD made for their practice. For example, many commented that they had developed the confidence and skills to sing in the classroom (e.g. GMMAZ, Sing Up Greenwich, the Voices Foundation).

Noticing and Overcoming Barriers/Challenges

'Dealing with emerging challenges and issues was an integral part of leading change in schools and beyond'

Dealing with emerging challenges and issues was an integral part of leading change in schools and beyond. Challenges differed from project to project, some being easier to tackle than others. One of the challenges that proved difficult to address was, for example, change of priorities in a school which resulted in it withdrawing from a project. The project leaders felt this was partly due to the school not being fully engaged in the first place.

Another issue that was problematic was the timing of a project which did not coincide or work with the school year. Colleagues noticed that this made long term planning complicated and had a negative impact on the engagement of some schools.

Time constraints were cited by some schools as the reason for not pursuing the next Sing Up Award. However, this was not linked with diminishing quality or volume of singing in those schools.

Other challenges were more operational in nature and often led to tailoring and enhancing the adopted approaches. For example, much of Beyond the Mainstream work needed personalising for the specific groups of children and young people colleagues were working with, be it repertoire for children with English as an additional language (GMMAZ) or timing of sessions for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and short attention span.

Monitoring Change

Evidence analysed for the current report suggests that music and other organisations, often commissioned specifically to lead or coordinate Sing Up projects, tended to be more systematic than schools in collecting evaluation data. Examples of some of the better quality evaluation sources included surveys of participating practitioners (Sing Up Greenwich), regular (weekly) notes based on observations of children and practice in music professionals' reflective journals (Pie Factory Music), etc.

Schools were often prompted to consider quantity, quality and impact of singing in their organisation and beyond by the Sing Up Awards programme, resulting in them trying to re-trace their steps and collect evidence for their application:

'...schools commented on how the need to collect the evidence of singing activity across the school has raised the awareness of the importance of charting and recording developments and achievements across the creative arts in school. While teachers always had to collect evidence for things like literacy and numeracy, the ... Sing Up Awards [have] reminded them how important it is to record and celebrate arts and cultural activities as well' (Website, Awards tool).

One way of doing such charting and recording of ongoing singing activities was developed at Spaldwick School.¹⁶ Having recognised the importance of monitoring singing across the school early on, practitioners started keeping a Sound Diary. This was then developed into a Sound Wall, so that children could write on it too.

16.Sing Up case studies: The power of singing schools.

What Was the Impact?

Amongst the perceived benefits of implementing change at a whole school level various stakeholders commonly highlighted:

- a sense of pride, achievement/worth and belonging/community amongst various stakeholders;
- singing becoming accessible to large numbers of (often disadvantaged) children and young people;
- curriculum development and enrichment;

'While teachers always had to collect evidence for things like literacy and numeracy, the ... Sing Up Awards [have] reminded them how important it is to record and celebrate arts and cultural activities as well' (Website, Awards tool).'

- improved pupil engagement in learning;
- development of pupils' social and communication skills;
- development of partnerships with other organisations such as high/feeder schools, music services, etc;
- increased staff confidence and development of knowledge and skills, enabling them to lead singing; and
- school becoming a happier place.

These outcomes are explored in more detail in the synthesis report and other 'themed' reports, including Impact on Schools, Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing and Workforce Development.

Management of Change: Connections With the Wider Evidence Base

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Examples of practice aimed at introducing and embedding singing in schools and other settings which feature in this report correlate well with the wider evidence base. For example, in their analysis of 'what constitutes effective transfer of learning from new initiatives and taking it to scale', Cordingley and Bell identified key dimensions of such approaches:

- Goal and purpose – how much change is involved, of what kind?
- Depth – transfer of practice, knowledge, beliefs and understanding of principles and values
- Spread – numbers or volume
- Extent of ownership
- Degree of sustainability

With regards to goal and purpose, for example, there was a relative consistency amongst the participants in the reports featured here about enhancing learning experiences of children and young people through the introduction or increase of singing opportunities. There was, however, sometimes a lack of clarity amongst schools in terms of whom (which young people exactly) their approaches were going to benefit and how. Music organisations and those working on Beyond the Mainstream projects appeared to have more fine-grained understanding of their goals and purpose in relation to particular groups of young people.

Sustainability was another dimension that was at the forefront of the Sing Up Project Leaders. In many cases they were required to consider sustainability of their work as a condition for the receipt of funding. Several organisations and their partnerships came up with creative solutions of how they might continue

benefitting from their work after the completion of their projects. Many schools felt that the resources and the training made available by Sing Up would enable them to continue singing in classrooms or as whole schools. Other projects recognised sustainability of their work as a challenge. This was particularly true of the projects which depended on resources: for example, some Beyond the Mainstream projects or sophisticated models of CPD felt they would not be able to continue delivering at the same level once the funding stopped.

Finally, it is important to clarify that although these dimensions were generally present across the programme as a whole, they did not necessarily characterise the approach to Management of Change adopted by each individual project.

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 Management of Change. A total of 15 projects had information relating to the theme. Types of the evidence collected by the projects that provided the basis for this report included:

- school staff perceptions/quotes;
- music specialist perceptions/quotes; and
- school staff survey.

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.