Attainment, Music and the Youth Music Initiative
A Short Research Report
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1. About this paper

This short paper explores how the Youth Music Initiative (YMI) can contribute to attainment for Scotland’s children. It particularly focuses on the link between music and literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as core aspects of attainment.

The report covers:

• an introduction to the national priority of tackling the attainment gap
• a review of how music can contribute to attainment
• exploration of how the YMI currently contributes to attainment
• a review of the success factors and challenges of using YMI to bring about improvements to attainment; and
• commentary on the strategic issues for consideration by the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland in linking the YMI to attainment.

This paper is intended to provide ideas and inspire people to consider the role of the Youth Music Initiative in helping the Scottish Government to meet its aim of closing the gap in attainment between children living in the most and least disadvantaged areas of Scotland.

This report is best read in full. However, each chapter can be read on its own and may be useful for distributing messages to key stakeholders – such as YMI staff teams, local decision makers or others.

At the end of the report is a short case study demonstrating the impact of YMI activity in North Ayrshire on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

The fieldwork for this research was undertaken in the 2016/17 academic year. It is worth noting that because work on closing the poverty related attainment gap is a high profile and fast moving area, connections between YMI and attainment will have developed further in the months between undertaking the fieldwork and finalising the report.
In Scotland, closing the attainment gap is a key national priority.

Children living in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland are around a year behind their peers at age five in problem solving and expressive vocabulary. This gap increases to around two years by the age of 15. Importantly, this variation exists within, rather than between, schools.

The focus on closing the attainment gap had developed since 2014, when the Raising Attainment for All programme was launched. This programme aimed to improve outcomes around literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing for all learners.

In 2015, the Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched with a particular focus on closing the attainment gap related to poverty and deprivation.

The Scottish Government has emphasised the importance of closing the attainment gap in its Programmes for Government in 2015/16 and 2016/17. In 2016/17, the Programme for Government stated that closing the attainment gap was the Scottish Government’s top priority.

In July 2017, the Scottish Government also announced its intention to place a duty on public bodies in Scotland to put tackling poverty and inequality at the heart of their decisions. This will be introduced by the end of 2017.

### Funding for closing the attainment gap

The Attainment Scotland Fund is a targeted £750 million investment over five years. It is focused on supporting pupils living in the areas with the highest concentrations of deprivation. It is made up of two main strands:

#### Pupil Equity Funding

The Scottish Government has made available £120 million for headteachers to use for additional staffing or resources that they consider will help raise attainment. From April 2017 almost all schools (95%) received this funding. Each school receives £1,200 for every pupil from P1 to S3 who is known to be eligible for free school meals (as an indicator of poverty and deprivation).

#### Attainment Scotland Funding

£50 million has been made available to provide targeted support for children and young people in local authorities and schools with the highest concentrations of deprivation. This funding began in 2015/16 and involves funding for attainment challenge authorities, and attainment challenge schools.

### The Attainment Gap

This graphic shows differences in the percentage of young people performing well between pupils living in the 30% most and 30% least deprived areas of Scotland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numeracy Gap</th>
<th>Writing Gap</th>
<th>Reading Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidence from the NIF for Scottish Education 2016 Evidence Report
Attainment challenge authorities

There are nine ‘challenge authorities’. These are the local authority areas in Scotland with the greatest concentration of primary age children living in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Each authority has agreed a plan with the Scottish Government about how to improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, particularly for pupils living in poverty. The plans for each area are very varied, depending on local needs and priorities. In June 2016, the funding of these nine areas was extended to cover secondary schools as well as primary schools. The nine challenge areas are:

- Clackmannanshire
- Dundee
- East Ayrshire
- Glasgow
- Inverclyde
- North Ayrshire
- North Lanarkshire
- Renfrewshire
- West Dunbartonshire

Attainment challenge schools

A number of schools outwith the nine challenge authorities have also received Attainment Scotland funding. Schools with a very high proportion of their pupils living in the most deprived areas of Scotland were asked to bid to receive funding – again focusing on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These bids were made by schools, rather than local authorities.

In mid 2017, the schools programme involved 74 schools – 46 primary schools and 28 secondary schools. The local authorities which have challenge schools within their area are:

- Aberdeen City
- Argyll and Bute
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Edinburgh
- Falkirk
- Fife
- Highland
- Scottish Borders
- South Ayrshire
- South Lanarkshire
- Stirling
- West Lothian

Find out more about closing the attainment gap

Scottish Government website – section on raising educational attainment
www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/Raisingeducationalattainment

Scottish Government note of frequently asked questions about Pupil Equity Funding
www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/Raisingeducationalattainment/pupilequityfund/caq

Education Scotland guidance on approaches which may help close the attainment gap – called ‘Interventions for Equity’
www.education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/Interventions-for-Equity.aspx

Scottish Government Programme for Government 2017/18
www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/09/8468

Video on Scottish Government funding for attainment challenge authorities and schools in 2017/18
www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtube_gdata&v=uxl5p-zYA8Y

Video on new public sector duty to reduce poverty and inequalities
www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtube_gdata&v=9MUkCmHINo8

Contacts – Youth Music Initiative Leads
Every local authority has a lead for the Youth Music Initiative:

Contacts – Attainment Advisors
Every local authority has an Attainment Advisor, employed by Education Scotland:

Your education team within your local authority will also be able to tell you more about your area’s involvement in the attainment challenge, and how different schools are involved.
3. How music can contribute to attainment

**About this chapter**

This chapter sets out the findings from academic research exploring the links between music and the development of literacy and numeracy skills, and enhanced health and wellbeing. It focuses on the findings from robust research studies which demonstrate a clear link. This chapter draws strongly, but not exclusively, on the work of Sue Hallam in researching the power of music and the impact music can have.

**Literacy**

There is good evidence of a connection between participation in music activities, and development of literacy skills. There are a wide range of research papers exploring links between literacy and music making.

The key areas of development include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading skills</th>
<th>Levels of understanding of text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonological awareness</td>
<td>The specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds in a spoken word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech processing</td>
<td>Understanding and processing speech and sound signals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory pathway efficiency</td>
<td>Development of the pathway between the ear and the brain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One discussion paper clearly summarises the rationale for connecting music with literacy skills by connecting how the skills developed through music link specifically with different components of literacy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Skill</th>
<th>Literacy Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhyme</td>
<td>Rhyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual focus</td>
<td>Visual focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch awareness</td>
<td>Phenome awareness (ability to hear, identify and manipulate the smallest units of sound and words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination of pitches</td>
<td>Discrimination of auditory elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory signals</td>
<td>Speech signals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Letters, words and sentences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Learning Literacy Through Music (discussion paper), Kelsey Tarbert

Research studies demonstrate clear outcomes around literacy skills:

- A 1975 study tracked a group of children who received Kodaly training 5 days a week for 40 minutes, for 7 months, and a group who did not. After training, the group who undertook Kodaly exhibited significantly higher reading scores. Music seems to help through improving the ability to link the visual parts of the words to their spoken sounds (sounding out words)\(^1\).

- Another 1993 study explored the relationship between music and reading in beginning readers, and found a relationship between musical sound discrimination and reading ability in young children\(^2\).

- More recently research showed that eight year old children with just eight weeks of musical training showed improvements in key language skills compared with a control group\(^3\). There were improvements in skills around perception of language and encoding language sounds.

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\(^3\) The power of music, Hallam, S, 2010
These skills feed into phonological awareness (the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words) and learning to read.

- Research has found that music instruction speeds up the development of the auditory pathway in the brain and increases its efficiency. The auditory pathway connects the ear to the brain, and development of the pathway could accelerate the development of language, reading, memory and communication skills.\(^4\)\(^5\)

- A large scale analysis of existing research into music and literacy found that there was a small but significant gain from music training relating to phonological awareness (the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words)\(^6\).

- An independent evaluation was conducted of a music and literacy programme, which worked with over 200 children aged 6 and 7. The children took part in a weekly programme of music and literacy activities, over six months. The children saw an average reading age improvement of 8.4 months, compared to a control group which saw an improvement of 1.8 months – a statistically significant difference\(^7\).

- Other research has also found a positive connection between music and reading skills, particularly in beginning readers\(^8\).

### Numeracy

There is very little research which demonstrates a connection between music making and numeracy skills. Research which has explored the relationships between numeracy, mathematics and active musical engagement has had mixed results.

- Some researchers have noted the potential association between music and mathematics. For example, 1991 research\(^9\) pointed out that there was a close relationship between the musical symbolism used in time signatures, and the mathematical symbolism used in fractional concepts.

- Research\(^10\) suggests that when children exercise their brains through music, they are potentially enhancing their mathematics capability, spatial reasoning skills and their ability to handle complex reasoning tasks.

- Some studies\(^11\) have reported that young people with formal training in music tend to have higher achievement in maths than those with no formal training.

- Some researchers\(^12\) have found that music students using a keyboard tend to have higher achievements in maths than students with other music training.

- Research in 1999\(^13\) and 2001\(^14\) found that students who had a high maths proficiency were more likely to be involved in instrumental music.

- Some researchers have found no significant relationship between music and numeracy skills, or very mixed results. For example, one research study\(^15\) found that students taking part in private music lessons for more than two years had higher mathematics scores than those with no private lessons. However, the researchers suggested that the reasons may be linked to affluence.

The mixed results may be because there are many different components of numeracy and mathematics, and it is difficult to extract and pin down the correlation\(^16\). A recent review of research\(^17\) concluded that while active

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5. The effects of musical training on verbal memory, Franklin, Moore, Yip, Jonides, Rattray, and Moher, 2008
7. Literacy through Music, Welch et al, 2012
8. The effect of music instruction on phonemic awareness in beginning readers, Gromko, 2005
16. The power of music, Hallam, S, 2010
17. The power of music, Hallam, S, 2015
engagement with music may be able to improve some elements of mathematical performance, there is a need for further investigation into:

- the nature of this relationship;
- the kinds of musical training required;
- the length of time required; and
- the specific types of mathematical skills which are affected.

**Health and wellbeing**

There is good research evidence that:

- music can help to develop physical skills, including through rhythmic movement, and can enhance fine motor co-ordination;\(^{18}\)
- singing and music more widely can bring about health benefits relating to breathing, posture, mood, stress reduction and the immune system;\(^{19,20}\)
- music can be used as a therapy to address stress and enable coping strategies for people with experience of psychological trauma;\(^{21}\) and
- music can enhance feelings of achievement, self-esteem, confidence, persistence in overcoming frustrations where learning is difficult, self-discipline, social skills, sense of belonging, team work, co-operation, bonding, trust, negotiation, responsibility, emotional sensitivity, concentration.\(^{22}\)

For example:

- one study\(^{23}\) found that engagement in music making projects can help to develop resilience among looked after children – including negotiation, cooperative working, self expression and positive relationships;

The power of music, Hallam, S, 2010
The power of music, Hallam, S, 2010
The neurochemistry of music, Trends in Cognitive Sciences, Chanda, M and Levitin, D, 2013
Music and trauma, Gorrido S et al, 2015
The power of music, Hallam, S, 2010
From The power of music, Hallam, S, 2015
From The power of music, Hallam, S, 2015

- one study\(^{24}\) found that musical activity encouraged cooperative and social behaviour in nursery school children;
- studies\(^{25}\) have found that using music to support physical education programmes can improve performance, including accuracy and endurance; and
- one study\(^{26}\) found that a 10 week music and movement programme resulted in improvements in leaping, jumping, skipping and galloping.

Much of the research around music and health and wellbeing has been undertaken with adults, particularly older people, or young people in hospital settings. There is also evidence that these positive outcomes only come about if the involvement in music activity is enjoyable and rewarding.

**Engagement with learning**

Some research studies demonstrate that an involvement with music is related to positive attitudes to school, and better attendance.\(^{27}\) There is some evidence that young people’s enjoyment of music reduces behavioural issues and supports anger management, team building and leadership skills.\(^{28}\) There is also evidence that this can encourage participants back into learning, by changing negative perceptions of and attitudes towards education. Music can act as a hook to engaging young people, and can support the development of a trusting relationship between young people and mentors.\(^{29}\)
4. How YMI activity contributes to attainment

**About this chapter**

We spoke to eight schools-based YMI practitioners, five out of school YMI practitioners and four teachers in Scotland to explore the contribution that YMI makes to attainment. We also reviewed a small number of local authority plans to tackle the poverty related attainment gap, to gather information on how the YMI is already being used in relation to the attainment challenge.

**Literacy**

Stakeholders pointed to the development of new vocabulary (particularly through singing); writing skills (through song writing); reading skills (through reading lyrics); memory skills (through memorising lyrics); and language skills (through singing in different languages and learning Italian music terms). Many felt that there was a particular impact on literacy in early years. Some also highlighted the importance of music in helping people with non-verbal communication, and different forms of communication.

> “The music input has allowed children in our school with SEBN (social and emotional behavioural needs) to express themselves through music which they are unable to do in words on a page or face to face conversation.”

Teacher

**Example:**

In Edinburgh, the YMI team realised that nurseries often used a limited repertoire of music, and that there was an opportunity to reinforce literacy skills in a fun way through song. The team developed a resource to support nurseries to use a range of songs to develop literacy skills and expand their vocabulary. Edinburgh has also included a music project in its bid for Pupil Equity Funding, working with the YMI team.

**Example:**

In Fife, the YMI team has been working with the modern languages team to encourage foreign learning language through song, for children in their early years. This is refreshing and reinvigorating YMI work while also contributing to wider learning.

**Example:**

SambaYaBamba has worked with young unaccompanied refugees. These young people have developed their language skills through music, as well as feeling more settled and developing a sense of belonging.

**Numeracy**

There was less evidence from those interviewed as part of this research project about how YMI activity contributed to numeracy. A small number of stakeholders highlighted skills around learning to count, moving in time to the music, staying in time and understanding time signatures and note values. In one area the YMI team indicated it was interested in exploring in more detail how learning Figurenotes can impact on wider learning.

**Example:**

One teacher felt that a YMI African Drumming project had been fantastic at helping children to develop their numeracy skills through having to count beats and understand sequences and patterns.

**Health and wellbeing**

Stakeholders generally felt that it was much easier to demonstrate a connection between YMI and health and wellbeing, than with literacy and numeracy. Stakeholders highlighted the development of skills around behaviour, self esteem, team work, sharing, confidence and memory. A small number also highlighted the health impacts of learning breathing exercises, thinking about posture, and developing co-ordination skills (particularly for children with additional support needs).
"It really has had a positive impact in the classroom... The whole class approach has been great, it gives a feeling of togetherness."
Teacher

**Example:**
Dundee Leisure Trust YMI activity has targeted young people requiring help in school, mainly around engagement in learning. The project saw clear outcomes for young people including settling better at school, improved emotional health, reductions in bullying, re-engaging with learning and building confidence and general wellbeing.

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**Engagement with learning**

Many talked about the impact of YMI on supporting engagement with learning more broadly. Stakeholders highlighted that YMI could help to improve the chances of young people going to school, staying in school and staying in class. Some YMI projects focus specifically on supporting pupils who are excluded from school or on the brink of exclusion. These projects have seen good evidence of pupils re-engaging with learning.

"Although difficult to pinpoint direct improvements in literacy and numeracy, teachers say that they have seen a difference in terms of the concentration and behaviour of some pupils in class."
YMI practitioner

"The children want to come to school if they know they are going to the drumming class."
Teacher

**Example:**
East Ayrshire is a challenge authority for the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Some of the Scottish Attainment Fund money has been used to extend YMI projects. These projects have demonstrated an impact in relation to confidence, behaviour and engagement in learning. For example, a DJ workshop project has been introduced to develop literacy and health and wellbeing, working with both parents and children.

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**Example:**
Feis Rois worked with pupils with behavioural issues who did not normally engage in class. Through involvement in YMI sessions pupils have begun to enjoy music learning and willingly participate in class, working with their peers.

**Example:**
Glasgow is an attainment challenge authority. It has integrated creative learning into its work on tackling the poverty related attainment gap. CREATE (Creativity and Expressive Arts Transforming Education) was set up to raise attainment and achievement across the curriculum through thinking differently. Part of this work has involved transforming music provision, with YMI tutors working with all primary schools and offering a programme of learning which has been attended by over 800 teachers. A new Music4All initiative is now in primary and secondary schools with an emphasis on improving musical experiences for children and young people.
5. Success factors and challenges

About this chapter
This chapter explores the key success factors that YMI practitioners feel have helped them to focus on developing links with improving attainment, and the challenges that YMI practitioners have faced. It is based on discussions with eight schools based YMI practitioners, five out of school YMI practitioners and four teachers.

Key success factors

- Connections with education and schools
  - YMI teams which had close relationships with (or were based within) education services found that generally they were more closely connected to attainment policy and practice. YMI projects which had built up good relationships with teachers also felt that they had a good understanding of what teachers were looking for from a YMI programme.

  “More and more teachers are seeing the wider benefits to attainment which music can bring.”
  YMI Practitioner

- Clear YMI programme focus nationally
  - A small number of YMI leads mentioned that the focus on intended outcomes helped to ensure that projects were working to the same set of goals, and now understood what was needed to evidence these. A few also mentioned that Creative Scotland research and advocacy to deliver messages at national level was also useful and essential.

- Having clear evidence
  - Many YMI projects were working to strengthen the evidence that they had about impact in relation to learning and attainment. Having evidence which made it possible to pinpoint the benefits of activities for young people was seen as very important. However, this area was also identified as a real challenge for many – explored further below.

- Additional support
  - A few YMI leads who had undertaken work to tackle the attainment gap indicated that they had worked with particularly disadvantaged or disengaged young people. These respondents had learned that it was important to allow plenty of time to build relationships and routines, and to work with other organisations to provide additional support when engaging with young people who face other challenges in their lives.

Example:

Feis Rois has identified Curriculum for Excellence outcomes which are regularly attained through participation in YMI projects. It has developed evaluation packs for schools that link to these outcomes in relation to health and wellbeing, literacy and expressive arts. This makes it possible to pinpoint the benefits of class activities – for example use of Gaelic or other languages in songs, or learning about different cultures.

Challenges

- Gathering evidence
  - YMI practitioners know that they need to be able to demonstrate that music making opportunities can improve educational attainment. But for many, these outcomes around attainment are naturally built into music and are not explicitly measured in any way. One respondent felt that evaluation activity could be a burden on creativity.

- Understanding the context
  - Some YMI leads are not sure what is happening through the Attainment Challenge locally or nationally. Varying approaches between and within local authorities make for a very complex picture, particularly when funding goes direct to schools.

- Defining attainment
  - There is some concern that there is no clear definition of ‘attainment’. A small number of YMI leads feel that without understanding all components of attainment, some contributions that YMI makes may be missed. For example, there are strong links with health and wellbeing but this isn’t always explicitly described as contributing to attainment.

  “We definitely think about health and wellbeing, but not in terms of attainment.”
  YMI Practitioner

- Connecting education and culture
  - At local level, a very small number of respondents felt detached from education services, and feel there is a lack of recognition of the role music could play in supporting educational outcomes.
“Currently it feels like we are two steps removed from any involvement in the wider vision for education and attainment.”

YMI Practitioner

- **Funding and time** – A few YMI teams have concerns about expanding their work through the Attainment Challenge. Others are concerned that attainment funding may replace YMI funding rather than adding to it. With pressures on workloads, a small number of school based respondents felt that working with particularly disengaged young people, in addition to undertaking existing activity, may be very time consuming and would require additional resources. One respondent also suggested that any new priorities needed to be built into YMI funding cycles at an early stage.

- **Communication** – While many YMI projects have good relationships with schools, there can be barriers in the flow of information through classroom teachers, Head Teachers and YMI teams. Most respondents also felt that they would like to better understand what others were doing across the country. A few teachers also indicated that it would be helpful if there was more information about what was available through YMI, and the benefits the activity can bring in terms of attainment.
6. Strategic issues

About this chapter
This chapter explores what the findings of this small research project mean for Scottish Government and Creative Scotland in developing the YMI programme nationally. It focuses on the important issues for consideration at strategic level, in order to develop the contribution of YMI activity to attainment.

Evidencing the role YMI already plays
There is clear evidence that music can contribute to attainment, particularly literacy and health and wellbeing. And it is clear that YMI already contributes significantly to attainment in terms of health and wellbeing and engagement with learning through existing activity. However, it is hard for some YMI practitioners to demonstrate that these outcomes are being achieved at local level.

There is potential to strengthen the evidence base and more clearly describe YMI activity as having a connection to attainment. This may involve small scale research studies to demonstrate the impact of particular projects; support to YMI practitioners to enable them to demonstrate impact; and awareness raising work with schools and local and national decision makers to demonstrate the impact of YMI activity.

Example:
In Stirling, the local authority is reviewing music and its contribution to learning. Head Teachers are being consulted to discuss how to evaluate the skills developed through music, and through the YMI programme specifically.

An enhanced focus on tackling the poverty related attainment gap
The Attainment Challenge involves working to reduce the poverty related attainment gap, with much of the work focused on the local authorities and schools with the highest proportions of pupils living in areas of deprivation (based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation). There is potential for YMI to adapt to ensure that there is a clear focus of activity on pupils living in areas of deprivation (and most likely to be experiencing a poverty related attainment gap). There is also scope for an increased, proactive and deliberate focus on building literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing skills through YMI.

This would involve working closely with the way attainment challenge work is developing at local level, supporting skills development within schools to enable delivery of these projects. YMI teams could have a key role to play in:
- demonstrating the possibilities of using music to develop literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing – to encourage schools and authorities to consider using similar projects;
- supporting schools to find tutors or partners to work with to use music to tackle the attainment gap; and
- supporting skills development within schools to enable delivery of these projects.

Example:
In Fife, the YMI team has worked to embed wider learning into its activity over time. For example, their Kodaly early years programme has been rebranded ‘ABC 123 Do rae me Look at me’ to emphasise the literacy and numeracy benefits.

Example:
In East Ayrshire, the YMI team hopes to use Scottish Attainment Fund to develop an out of school project involving young people and parents. The project will involve parents and children jointly developing new skills and engaging with music in a way they may not otherwise have done.
Supporting learning and joined up working

There is a real appetite for sharing the learning, knowledge and skills developed through YMI around attainment. There is potential to encourage and support more joined up working in this field both between local authorities, and within local authorities (between schools based and out of school work).

YMI practitioners may find it easier to demonstrate connections with attainment locally within the context of a strong national message about the links between YMI and attainment. This could involve building strong links between YMI and education – including education authorities, teacher training institutions and others who need to understand how music can bring about positive impacts.

Example:

Highland Council Education Services has asked a range of arts organisations for information on how they can help to improve attainment. This information will be added to a database being developed for schools. In South Lanarkshire, the local authority is taking a similar approach through producing a document highlighting the potential different approaches to tackling the attainment gap – including highlighting music and art as an option.
About this case study

This case study was developed through face to face discussion with six YMI practitioners, five teachers and two parents involved in YMI activity both in Garnock Community Campus and surrounding primary schools.

In these schools, YMI offers activity at every level of primary school. In primary five, each pupil gets to choose an instrument to learn, and they are able to take it home with them to practice. Teachers also receive continuing professional development activity to develop their skills and expertise.

Impact – health and wellbeing

Teachers, parents and the YMI team all felt that there was a clear impact of YMI activity on health and wellbeing and engagement with learning. They felt that YMI activity:

- offers leadership opportunities – with pupils leading their own music assembly or running Proms in the Playground
- helps to offer another option for pupils with different learning styles
- supports pupils to feel valued and recognise that they have something to offer
- fosters a sense of responsibility – through taking your instrument home or planning music events
- supports development of confidence and self esteem
- improves concentration and memory, multi tasking and performance of complex tasks; and
- can improve motor skills and coordination.

"The younger ones love to see what the older ones can do."

Parent

Teachers felt that because pupils valued the activity, they behaved better within the classroom. Some also felt that because teachers were often learning alongside the children, it helped pupils to see that it was fine to make mistakes. YMI practitioners also felt that behaviour improved through YMI activity, with music having a calming effect as well as promoting team work, responsibility and discipline.

Example:

One pupil was at risk of exclusion from school due to behavioural issues. Through YMI, the school found that music had a calming influence. The pupil’s behaviour was markedly better in the YMI activities. As the school saw this, they worked with the pupil to use music as a calming influence throughout the school day – providing space for the pupil to play an instrument as needed.

Parents also highlighted that children learn discipline through music, by bringing their instrument home and practicing regularly. Parents also felt that through both performances and music exams, pupils developed their confidence around sitting exams and found other examinations less daunting.

Impact – literacy

Teachers and YMI practitioners also felt that through YMI activity, pupils develop their skills in listening and talking. Teachers felt that lots of the impact was for early years children – around listening, sounds and phonics. YMI practitioners also highlighted the language benefits of singing in different languages (such as Spanish), learning Italian terms and learning phonetics, syllables and sentence structure.
**Impact – numeracy**

Some teachers felt that pupils developed their maths skills through keeping time to the music. YMI practitioners also highlighted the value of music in terms of numeracy including counting 4 beats in a bar, adding up note values, thinking about fractions and exploring rhythm.

**Wider attainment impacts**

Teachers felt that it was important to recognise that YMI was also raising attainment in music itself. Children are going on to learn music at secondary school as a result. Parents also emphasised that through YMI children were learning about music, culture and developing wider musical interests.

The YMI team has done some initial research which compares the attainment of children playing an instrument and those who are not. The children who play an instrument perform higher in almost all SIMD deciles (and certainly the most deprived ones). However, the team wishes to further develop this work and enhance the evidence base, and these initial findings must be treated with caution.

Finally, teachers emphasised that it was important to remember that music had a positive impact because it was fun, was different from other school activities and promoted a feel good factor.
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