

The Riff Project -Evaluation 2023

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Contents

- Introduction- Jointly authored
- Aims and Objectives- Jointly authored
- Literature Review- Steve
- Project Description and planning- Natasha

- **Methodology** Jointly authored
- **Key Outcomes and recommendations** Jointly authored
- Conclusion- Natasha
- Bibliography
- Appendix









Introduction- Jointly Authored

The Riff Project was launched as an inclusive music ensemble provision for pupils of secondary age to have space and time to explore improvisation and composition with others, no matter which instruments they might have been learning and whether they were formally or self-taught. The National Plan for Music[1] asks that all music hubs provide progressive opportunities for pupils learning instruments but it can be the case that these opportunities are either limited to particular instruments,

particular levels or are very re-creative in nature (ie. playing existing compositions). Pupils who are wanting to progress on their instruments do not always have access to opportunities to play with others and this can lead to quite an isolated identity as a musician. In addition, a large portion of instrumental lessons can be dedicated to the technical development of learning an instrument and re-creative learning of other music, or working on performing[2]. We wanted to give space for more creative learning which we hoped would contribute to the pupils' growing identity as musicians and give them confidence to then apply themselves musically in different musical settings.

As our demographic was students of Secondary age, identity and personal development were key considerations within this project.

There were ethical considerations to take into account when planning. We had to be careful not to promote a standardised approach to music education that assumes all students have identical musical needs. According to Regelski, typically lessons are tailored to ensemble programs rather than the specific skills and interests that would enable students to pursue lifelong amateur musical endeavours. This approach often neglects the development of independent musicianship and the necessary mindset to seek out and capitalise on opportunities to perform as adults.[3]

In this evaluation we hope to show the planning, implementation and evaluation of this project and highlight the successes and also the recommendations for future projects within this same hub or elsewhere.

[1]https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1086619/The_Power_of_Music_to_Change_Lives.pdf(accessed 10/11/23). On inclusion- 'It is essential that there are equitable, accessible and affordable options for children and young people of all ages to participate, sustain their engagement, and develop their skills and interests in music.' (p55)/ On progression for hubs 'to work as a partnership beyond school' to provide opportunities for students to progress. (p57) On building talent pathways- 'through the provision of facilities and expert support for composing.' (p62)

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Aims and Objectives-Jointly Authored



- To give space for pupils' musical identities to grow in confidence by playing and creating music with others
- To let pupils have the opportunity to compose pieces based on improvised riffs
- To facilitate the learning of some existing tunes and chord structures that can be arranged into their own versions of pieces
- To encourage the 'getting to know' other musicians of a similar age and have some fun.

Literature Review-Steve

Key Points:

- Learning through Osmosis
- Screen-Time

- Action Learning within a Musical Laboratory
- Dimensions of Amateur Musical Ensemble Participation: *Group affiliation, Opportunities for learning, Music and identity*
- Transferable skill sets

Learning through Osmosis

Lucy Green researched the concept that students of popular music learn significantly through Osmosis, the idea that the ability to play and interact with other musicians is picked up by listening and jamming without necessarily any 'conscious application' [1] and the process is more natural where skills are essentially passed down from other musicians as opposed to more disciplined study which is traditionally associated with learning a classical instrument.

While 'discipline' may have a negative connotation, in a conducted study by Green on 'Atitudes and values in learning to play popular music'[2] it was perceived that enjoyment played a vital part in the learning practices of all the musicians.

Enjoyment of music-making, be it alone or in a band, as well as learning about music theory was considered important. However, the enjoyment of and identification with the music being played were equally as important. Informal learning is heavily influenced by enculturation, and the music that is covered or created is typically chosen from styles that the musicians enjoy playing with their peers and can identify with. According to the study, musicianship is valued in two key areas. The first being performance and creativity where technical mastery is admired, but the ability to play with emotion and sensitivity is held in a higher regard. The second area places greater emphasis on personal qualities rather than musical mastery. Traits such as 'Cooperation, reliability, commitment, tolerance and shared tastes, along with a shared passion for music' [3] are highly valued. Pursuing a career in music is seen as a way to boost one's self-esteem.[4]

Enjoyment of music-making, be it alone or in a band, as well as learning about music theory was considered important.

It is our hope that Lucy Green's 'Osmosis' concept can be applied to not just popular music but to students of all ages and backgrounds, from classical to contemporary, traditional to experimental. By exposing students to a diverse range of musical styles and cultures through peer collaboration, we believe that they will develop a better and more detailed understanding of music and become more well-rounded musicians as a result.

We were aware that improvisation and composition can seem intimidating subjects, particularly if students have learned solely through the classical Grade system, whereby currently little is taught in the way of improvisation. We used the tagline 'Have you played an instrument for two years or more?' on the promotion poster so as to not place too much emphasis on actual graded levels. We also added 'No expectation of being able to read music or tab' again, to encourage students who may have learned their

instrument by ear. This adds to our 'Osmosis' praxis-to encourage students who have learned in different ways to collaborate.

Screen-Time

For the age group we are working with (Secondary age 11-17) a key element was to entice them away from their phones and laptop screens and to participate in group interaction. Through improvisation and group composition, we wanted to promote the idea of in-person collaboration and communication. All the students would have had to study through the covid period, and many would have had to participate in online learning which would have denied them the opportunity for face-to face collaboration and exploration within a musical context. Many studies have found that spending too much time on digital devices can have negative effects on our physical, psychological, and neurological health. Spending too much time on digital devices has been linked to depression and ADHD-related behaviour. Research suggests that it can affect our ability to regulate cognitive control.[5]

Studies have linked excessive screen time, lack of sleep, and decreased in-person interactions to poor mental health..[9]

A study conducted in 2007 as part of the national survey of children's health[6] showed that individual born between people born between 1996 and 2010 (Generation Z) are seeing their friends in person an hour less a day than Millennials did at similar ages.[7] The survey also found that 20.8% of 6 to 11-year-olds and 26.1% of 12 to 17-year-olds engaged in excessive screen time, with having a TV in their bedroom being strongly associated with excessive screen time and obesity for both groups.

The average 16-year-old student spends approximately 6 hours a day on screens, including texting, the internet, and social media. [8] Excessive screen time contributes to a sedentary lifestyle, leading to reduced physical activity, lower fitness levels, and an increased risk of being overweight. It can lead to difficulty in controlling emotion and cause irritability. It can also result in uncooperative attitudes, lower productivity and social awkwardness. Studies have linked excessive screen time, lack of sleep, and decreased in-person interactions to poor mental health..[9]

This research serves as a warning to limit screen time and prioritise brain-healthy activities[10] such as playing music within an ensemble.

Action Learning within a Musical Laboratory

Action Learning uses popular music to create community. In schools, scheduling rehearsals for large groups is difficult due to the extra-curricular nature, or clashes in timetables with other activities often leading to fewer playing opportunities. Schools tend to favor large ensembles, resulting in students only being exposed to the repertoire chosen by the leader, and can lead to a failure in gaining independent musicianship skills. Teachers struggle to provide personalised guidance, resulting in inadequate skill development.[11]

'Students may practice isolated parts without fully understanding how they fit into the overall musical composition' [12]

We hope to bridge the gap between the constraints of a large group ensemble tackling specific pieces and the informality of jam sessions, which whilst maybe an enjoyable pursuit, often lacks structure or the ability for positive interventions.

We aim to incorporate some key aspects of 'Action Learning' as set out by Regelski in 'A brief introduction to a philosophy of music and music education as social praxis' We are aiming to to incorporate 'Authentic models of musicking from the music industry into the classroom.'[13] This approach aims to enrich students' musical experiences outside school.[14]

Our workshop is not intended to be an introductory lesson on music as a subject. Our curriculum is designed as a practical experience, in the form of an apprenticeship in a musician's laboratory (such as a classroom or ensemble), that systematically cultivates musical skills through Action Learning.

Action Learning uses popular music to create community. Allsup describes a laboratory in this context as 'A space within the strictures and structures of formal music education that embraces the principles of the open text.' [15] and where 'Observation and reflection are joined and correlated by methods that have proved themselves to be illuminating and fruitful'[16]

He argues that Education can, and should be playful and creative and that the laboratory is a unique space that is both self-referential and connected to the outside world. It has norms and standards but is always pushing beyond them. He also argues that laboratories can be utilised alongside more structured forms of group music making such as a concert band rehearsal. The 'laboratory' aspect can be an offshoot group who are given the freedom to explore the material without the constraints of time and lack of resources which may prevail in an organised rehearsal environment.[17]

'A laboratory that is attached to a concert band might study the conventions of a form and test out alternatives with their director's help.'[18]

Dimensions of Amateur Musical Ensemble Participation: *Group affiliation, Opportunities for learning, Music and identity*

I felt that 3 of the '5 Dimensions of Amateur Musical Ensemble Participation'

researched, observed and quantified by Karen Burland[19] in a qualitative study conducted in 2017 of members of four adult amateur instrumental ensembles, would be relevant to our project, as, despite the demographic differences, the ethos of the positive outcomes of ensemble participation was relevant, as personal development was a key study point.[20]

'Individuals spoke about the ways in which ensemble participation complemented their professional (work-related) and personal identities'[21]

Ensemble participation for adults was shown to provide a valuable space for development, which benefited both personal and professional life. Motivations for participating in activities were shown to be related to our identities and sense of self, which influence our behaviours and sense of self in various roles we play in life.[22] Given the age range of our students, these observations were also relevant.

1. Group affiliation:

Ensemble participation can aid personal development. We offer a screen-free alternative, highlighting the rewards of group activities with like-minded students. Meeting new people and feeling part of a community provides a sense of responsibility to the ensemble.

'Individuals are motivated to make music with other like-minded people in a context that stretches and broadens their range of experience.' [23]

2. Opportunities for learning:

Participants are motivated by an 'atmosphere in which the camaraderie of the group supports learning, ignores mistakes, and allows individuals to feel encouraged and not overwhelmed.'[24]

Learning and developing new skills is essential in a supportive environment that provides the right amount of challenge. It's important that ensemble rehearsals offer more than just preparing for performances or improving standards. They should provide a space where learners can feel confident and motivated to achieve their goals. 'The process of getting together and "having a go" is an important feature of this kind of musical leisure.'[25]

We decided that we wouldn't title this project a 'Jazz' workshop specifically for the reason of alienating students who felt that their level of improvisation wasn't good enough. Our initial idea was that anyone could 'have a go' and experiment with improvisation. We deliberately chose simple forms and chord progressions of well-known standards to give us a basis and structure and not to include any intimidating study material to avoid discouraging creativity in any way.

3. Music and identity:

Music is an essential part of identity for young people, playing a crucial role in forming friendships and shaping identity through social media, clothing, style choice and social meeting places. In *The Oxford handbook of Music Psychology*, Hallam defines two types of musical identities: identities in music (IIM) and music in identities (MII). IIM refers to the characteristics of music professionals such as musicians, composers, improvisers and teachers and is reinforced by academic institutions such as music conservatoires. MII, is based on how music contributes to personal identity development. IIM depends on social, psychological, and musical factors, not just technical abilities. [26]

This ties in with Elliott and Silverman's advocation for the importance of the idea of "personhood." They believe that personhood consists of two main dimensions: the self and identity. They describe the self as having two sub-dimensions - 'Embodied' and 'Enactive.' The Embodied self is an individual's personal experience of themselves, while the Enactive self means the ways in which individuals express themselves through their actions and behavior. [27]

'Identity is thus seen as performative and dynamic, and as having narrative: it is something that we do rather than something that we have.'[28]

Erik Erikson suggested that adolescence is an important time in developing self-identity. He proposed three main processes: Identification, Individuation (becoming distinct and independent), and Integration.

James Marcia developed this theory further, proposing two main processes: exploration and commitment. Exploration involves discovering different attitudes and activities, while commitment involves taking on a particular set of beliefs or values.[29]

He describes an essential part of Identity within adolescents is cognitive structure. The more developed a child's cognitive structure, the greater their self-awareness and their ability to recognise both their uniqueness and similarities to others. [30]

'Of great concern for many adolescents is the issue of developing a vocational identity.' [31]

Transferable skill-sets

By nurturing confidence and collaboration, we hope that other skills may develop within the group, such as leadership or organisation. A participant may find that they enjoy the role of instructing other members how to play their composition more than playing themselves. By encouraging creativity in areas beyond music performance, other opportunities for involvement in various aspects of the music profession may become apparent to the individual, as well as in our thematic analysis.

'The music industry is vast and includes a huge variety of work opportunities for people with music skills and a passion to share music with others.' [32]

Creech et al discuss Non-formal teaching as an inclusive pedagogy that 'Meets students' musical needs, interests and aspirations, privileges the student voice and makes links with the music that young people engage with outside of school.' [33]

They say that to effectively teach in non-formal settings, a teacher should have a good understanding of their students' musical interests and abilities and use supportive interventions without feeling pressured to conform to any expectation. Authoritative interventions, where the teacher informs the students, should be used instead of prescriptive interventions, where the teacher dictates which tasks need to be completed. [34]

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Project Description and Planning- Natasha



The project was planned to take place over two days during a school half term holiday. This decision was made in order to find a time that did not clash with either school or other extra-curricular activities the students may already be committed to in term time. We wanted pupils to not feel as though they needed to commit to a long term project or equally for parents to feel pressured to pay a large fee as these can act as barriers to access.[1]

Project branding and partner organisation

We worked in partnership with *Create Music* in Sussex as this is my current employer. However, this was a new project that currently does not exist within the service, and contrasts with other provisions and opportunities currently available. It does have similarities in content to other projects, for example the O360 and Peer1 projects[2] which are open to pupils with SEN statements and also the HAF school holiday food programmes.[3] However, even though these projects are inclusive in nature, they are exclusive as to who can attend, and have clear participation requirements. We wanted our projects, other than the age of the pupils and the expectation that they can already play an instrument to a basic

level, to be open to all pupils currently learning an instrument. Within Create Music this number currently is 1225 pupils of secondary age within the Brighton and Hove area. Within our current Create Music ensembles within Brighton and Hove only 82 pupils (5% of learners) currently take part in addition to their instrumental lessons. However many others may participate in school ensembles or informal groups with their peers that are not necessarily tracked through the service.

Myself and Steve spent a considerable amount of time coming up with a name that encapsulated the aim of the project and hopefully made it appealing to the target demographic of secondary pupils. Even though the word 'riff' is largely associated with pop and jazz it can be a starting point for all styles and genres of composition. In the workshop we planned to talk about how riffs can be compared to a phrase, idea or theme for a piece of music. Steve drafted several ideas for posters[4] that contained varying amounts of text versus image as we wanted it to appeal visually to potential participants. In the end Create Music needed to use their own graphic, logo and design style as they were largely responsible for helping promote the event and were happy for this event to be posted on their website and social media. This was emailed to all parents of secondary pupils in lessons within Brighton and Hove and Lewes areas, then posted on social media. Fliers were also produced which I distributed to school Heads of Department in person. I also emailed the Heads of Department and instrumental teachers with the service for them to make personal recommendations as I know from experience that this often has the most influence on pupil's signing up for projects. In the end we had 14 pupils sign up to participate. As we had set a limit of 16 this was a positive number. In the end, 11 showed up with 3 cancelling due to illness or other commitments. The pupils had a range of instruments and time spent learning ranging from 1-4 years.

Facilitators

Both myself and Steve have a background in jazz and popular music and we wanted to utilise our skills and experience in designing a programme that included learning existing tunes or common chord progressions but also give space for pupils to compose and contribute to the musical experience as much as possible within a framework of activities. We also enlisted another Create Music teacher Matt Neesam to help facilitate during the two days. Matt's specialism in all rhythm section instruments made a good balance with my own role as a lead instrument player so we were able to support the pupils equally throughout the two days.

The structure of the two days

I wanted to start the workshops with ice breakers and musical games as I was aware that not many of the pupils knew each other as many came from different schools across the area. This helped with social cohesion and sense of belonging, finding out about each other (for example, each other's ages, instruments, favourite chocolate bars(!) etc.) The music games allowed for mistakes without anyone standing out and or being musically 'wrong'. I drew on ideas from the book *Search and Reflect* by John Stevens as well as games used in whole-class wider opportunities sessions that develop musical skills such as sense of pulse, rhythmic improvisations, listening and being part of an ensemble. So by the time the pupils transferred to their instruments after doing body percussion and hand-held percussion practice they felt comfortable about playing together and improvising. The instrumental activities began as a whole group then proceeded to split into two smaller groups, which then gave them the opportunity to develop their improvisation ideas into a concrete piece with a structure and roles within it. This gave many of the pupils their first opportunity to play with other musicians as part of a band, all taking a particular role and introducing form and structure to their pieces.

After the initial improvising and composing sessions in the morning, the afternoon contained the learning of an existing South African township tune *Ek Se* by Abdullah Ibrahim. The idea being that the pupils would then learn this piece and make it their own by added improvisations and deciding on a structure. I taught them the bass line, chord structure and tune by ear with them all singing the parts first then transferring this to instruments. They then all had the opportunity to solo over the top. In jazz education there is a large emphasis on learning by ear so I felt this was an important stage to go through.

In the second day we taught them the chord structure of a 12-bar blues, which is a very common chord progression used by pop and jazz musicians all over the world. They again learnt this initially by singing the bass part and getting an understanding of a 'swing' feel. They also had a chance collectively to try some *skat* singing before splitting into groups to practice. Once group worked more on the rhythm section chord and groove while the other learnt a repeated blues song 'blues backstage' by Frank Foster which is essentially a riff played three times. They also had a chance to practice improvising using a blues scale. We then put this all together.

Due to the group showing preference for composing and creative learning in the first day we decided as facilitators to then provide them with the chance to improvise their own blues melodies all together. Once they were happy with what they had written they took it in terms performing to each other with Matt playing a bass line to accompany. We voted as a group on our favorite. One student's piece got the most votes so he then taught everyone else his melody.

Time was also allocated for discussion and evaluation with the students which will be discussed in the methodology.

The final stage of the two days consisted on rehearsals and a performance to parents and carers.

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[4] See appendix 1

Bluesi IV (or) I BASS Blues scale for improvising

Blues scale for improvising

Solos-Isaac

Melody Anali

Torin

Navar

Navar

Koby

Cain

CASS

Jolos-Isaac

Melody Anali

Torin

Navar

Navar

Koby

Cain

Cay

Telody x2

Nelody x2

Nelody x2

EK SC Unint-ABC# EF# Abdullah Ibrahim nho CONNOT - CONGOS Dante - Bass Cain - Droms Koby - Girlar Chards Sam - Solo Keys. Head = main tume x 2 Conversation - Amali + Torin Naman + Isaqc with backing Mais the (head) X 2 (ABA)

Solony nores. Sass tine Build up 3 Thythru () 63 nots (3) 177773 Dramatic Bass DIDIJ KYOTE 50/05-4 bars each PEPPER Bach to main groove Everyone solo together fade out - with stabs EX GABOCD

The Riff Project final poster



Methodology - Jointly Authored

Music research has the ability to uncover unique human experiences. The performance of music has the potential to stir emotion, connect people beyond language and social barriers. 1

We will be using a combination of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (focusing on interpreting individuals' accounts of their lived experiences) and Thematic Analysis for our project. By using IPA as our methodology, we hope to uncover any underlying structures within the focus group discussions by identifying patterns and themes that emerge in the data.

We will be studying how students have developed over the two day workshop. Our questions will focus on subjective experience and we will track changes in individuals' experience. By analysing students personal accounts of their experiences, we can gain a detailed understanding of how developmental processes unfold over the two days.

We will be studying how students have developed over the two day workshop.

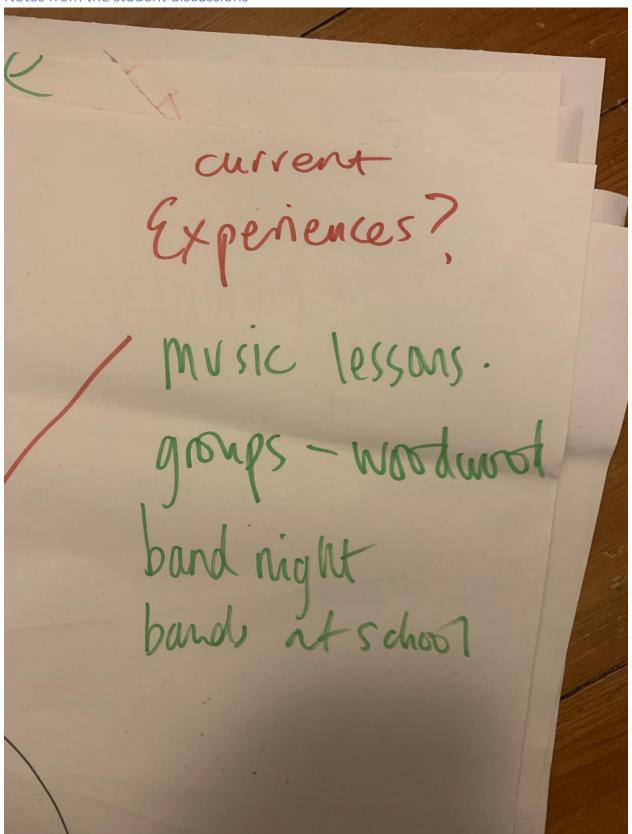
IPA's emphasis on each participant's individual experience can provide insights into how different factors may impact development. We will also study how different environmental factors affect how individuals experience and interpret events. We will use IPA to explore how individuals' experiences and interpretations change over time, providing a detailed understanding of the mechanisms that underlie developmental processes.2

The main disadvantage of using IPA solely is that, typically, such a study involves collecting data from a source that is already in situ and analysing data based on unique personal perspectives (such as the study conducted by Burland in 2017)4. As workshop leaders, it is possible we could have an influence on perspectives and, ultimately the data collected. For this reason, we chose to combine IPA with Thematic Analysis in the form of the tutors' individual journals and the holding of two focus group discussions during the lunch break and at the end of each day. By doing this, we should be able to triangulate data and track emerging themes.

We will also be recording the music making and looking at how their solos develop over the two days and their creative ideas. We will also be discussing our own observations amongst ourselves.

- How are the students building in confidence?
- How is their playing (particularly their improvisations) building in confidence?
- What processes of create music making particularly support their identity as improvisers?

Notes from the student discussions



you hope to gain? Parents Signed up saw ads. More experience unhather. Enjoyments. Playing music Knowledge of jan.

The no me improvised there my be no new music! Same, the can be repetitive with the same of with their and music.

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rew notes Enjoyed? people

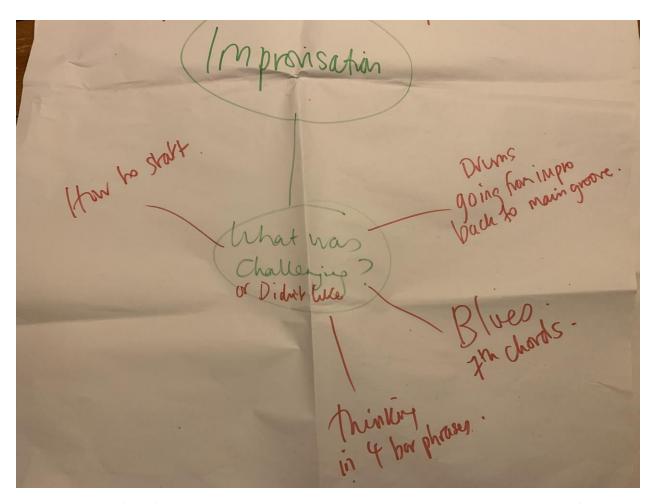
rew doords: Enjoyed? people

fest warding in her! Improvise more

ris flaying in her! Improvise more

not just theet music

componers.



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Video evidence showing student musical development



https://sway.office.com/Xi74RSflTo6E5Bq2#content=JKOx3QCjiPUqn9

1 - Workshop Day One



https://sway.office.com/Xi74RSflTo6E5Bq2#content=KiEISUoyWyNb0L

2 - Group Compositions



https://sway.office.com/Xi74RSflTo6E5Bq2#content=QiocZ9qfRiYqMC

3 - Workshop Day Two Final Performances

Key Outcomes and Recommendations



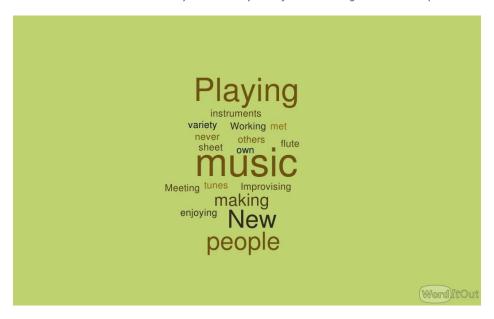
'He loved being able to come up with his own riffs and beats. He particularly enjoyed playing as part of a group as this was his first experience of doing this. He would absolutely love to do it again if you do run another course. Thank you so much, he loved it!'. Parent feedback

'James really enjoyed the course especially the second day. His favourite part was the improvisation, he feels it has really given him the confidence to perform in front of others more, in particular performing a solo. Many thanks again for organising the two days.' Parent feedback

'My student came back to his sax lesson following this workshop full of confidence in not only improvising but also enthusiasm for playing with others more, I really noticed a change and real drive to do more creative music making' Instrumental Teacher testimony



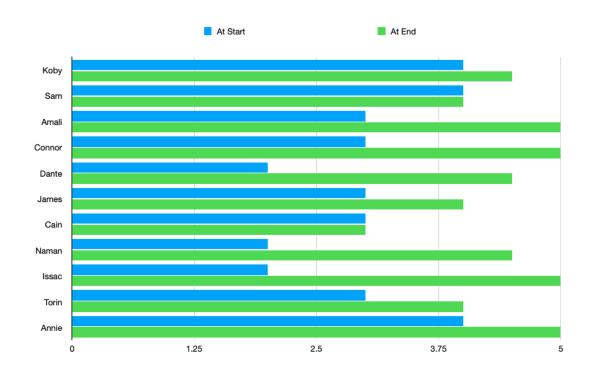
4 - Student View: What will you take away most from attending these workshops?



5 - Student View Day One: What have you enjoyed about the workshops so far?

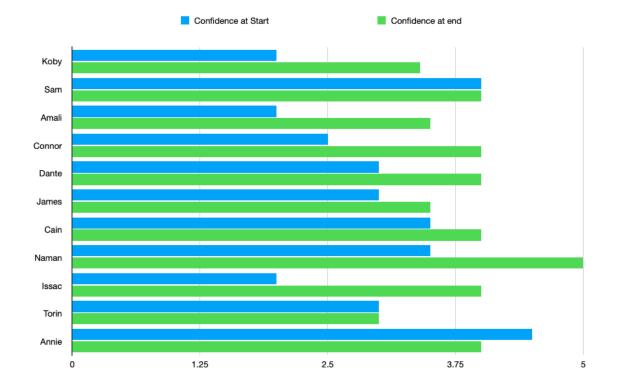
Student View

Results: Confidence in playing with others



Student View

Results: Confidence in Improvisation



Facilitator evaluations of student's musical progression

Evaluations after the first morning.
1-5 (5 being very confident and able musically within the context of an intermediate level pupil technically)

Name	Ensemble confidence- awareness of others	Improvising confidence within a piece	Contribution to the group composition	Confidence performing
	musically and how their part fits with others		process	
1) Koby	2	2	3	3
2) Sam	3	4	3	4
3) Amali	2	2	2	2
4) Connor	2	2	2	2
5) Dante	2	2	2	2
6) James	2	2	3	2
7) Cain	2	2	2	2
8) Naman	2	3	2	3
9) Isaac	2	2	3	3
10) Torin	3	3	4	4
11) Annie	2	2	2	2

Evaluations at the end of the project.
1-5 (5 being very confident and able musically within the context of an intermediate level pupil technically)

Name	Ensemble confidence- awareness of others musically and how their part fits with others	Improvising confidence within a piece	Contribution to the group composition process	Confidence performing
1) Koby	3	3	3	4
2) Sam	4	5	5	5
3) Amali	4	3	4	4
4) Connor	4	3	3	4
5) Dante	4	4	4	4
6) James	4	4	4	4
7) Cain	4	4	4	4
8) Naman	4	4	4	4
9) Isaac	4	4	4	4
10) Torin	5	5	4	5
11) Annie	3	3	3	3

Main triangulation of data points

- All students gained confidence in both improvising and playing with others. This could be
 observed by the tutors and noticed by the students themselves in their evaluations. This
 confidence grew the more time they spent together and the more range of activities they took
 part in.
- They needed to go through the process of exploration of sounds and collaborative improvisations and discussing what they liked and didn't like before deciding on their final pieces.
- They needed to go through the collaborative process of improvising collectively to get to know one another before being able to make any kind of finished product.
- The project was inclusive as there was a range of experience and ability taking part but this did not impact the process and was not made overly apparent to the students.
- The students clearly enjoyed making their own music and took pride in 'their own pieces' by deciding titles of pieces as well as the names of their bands.
- As their friendships and relationships grew so did their confidence in making music together.
- They enjoyed the continuation of making music in their free time which indicated a desire for more and how this music making was part of their developing personalities.
- The social aspects of making friends and having fun were equally important to the music making.
- The parents and carers loved the performance and were full of positive comments on how much their children enjoyed the workshops.

Recommendations for future projects

- To provide this opportunity for students on a termly basis, during half term holidays. These could include either the same or different students each workshop.
- To research arts council funding in order to pay two tutors to run this project.[1]
- To look into providing a parallel Riff Project for primary age pupils to also learn to improvise and compose together.
- To provide CPD for instrumental teachers on the importance of creative music opportunities within instrumental lessons.
- To connect with Heads of Music at Secondary schools about running workshops within school time for students who may not be available during school holidays. These could target students in Yr 8 and 9 who are possibly considering taking Music qualification and could run as single day projects.

[1] See appendix 8 for excel sheet of costings for the event.

Conclusion- Natasha

In conclusion we feel that this was a successful project and achieved the objectives of delivering an inclusive workshop that allowed space for improvisation and composition as well as an opportunity for young instrumental students to play and jam together in a safe space. The tools that they gained in this workshop are directly transferable to those used by professional musicians in a number of different settings and support their journeys into and through music in an important way, in contrast to more traditional music ensembles. These skills include the ability to learn by ear (by first singing and or clapping their parts); the ability to learn and hear other people's parts as well as their own within a piece; the ability to arrange music to suit their ensemble and preferences; the ability to listen to others' thoughts as expressed verbally and within the music, and be sensitive to these and the ability to improvise short solos within a context of a piece. We felt that we were lucky that there was a good range of instruments that allowed for two bands to be easily formed. The students themselves were also all open and willing to try new things regardless of their technical ability on their instruments. They all gained in confidence in improvising and playing in a group. However it would have been interesting to see a similar project with a more limited range of instruments, for example all woodwind or just guitars, and see the effects of this set-up. How would the music and experiences created be different? Would there be the same impact on their confidence? I hope that this evaluation demonstrates a desire for more ensembles of this nature to continue and be viable within music hub provision as part of a commitment to students' long-term career pathways and creativity.

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Appendix

- 1. Initial Poster ideas for the project
- 2. Session Plans
- 3. Pieces available to use in the sessions- Ek Se, Blues Backstage and Cold Duck Time
- 4. Permission slip that parents were asked to fill in
- 5. Data of demographic of students
- 6. Data from student questionaires
- 7. Reflections from the two facilitators
- 8. Possible costings for future projects

Appendix 1- Initial poster ideas



STUDENTS REQUIRED FOR IMPROVISATION WORKSHOPS



IF YOU HAVE ANY STUDENTS WHO YOU THINK WOULD BENEFIT FROM GAINING EXPERIENCE IN IMPROVISING WITH LIKE-MINDED STUDENTS,

PLEASE EMAIL:

NATASHA.G21@EDU.TRINITYLABAN.AC

TO REGISTER INTEREST.

ALL TUTORS ARE TEACHING PROFESSIONALS WITH FULL DBS CREDENTIALS

TO BE HELD ON

26TH AND 27TH OCTOBER 2PM - 4PM AT SOUND ROOMS 3 PELHAM TERRACE, BRIGHTON BN2 4AF







STUDENTS REQUIRED FOR IMPROVISATION WORKSHOPS



WE ARE LOOKING FOR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC STUDENTS
GRADE 2-5 LEVEL TO TAKE PART IN A FREE 2 DAY
IMPROVISATION WORKSHOP AS PART OF AN MA MUSIC
EDUCATION PROJECT

IF YOU HAVE ANY STUDENTS WHO YOU THINK WOULD BENEFIT FROM GAINING EXPERIENCE IN IMPROVISING WITH LIKE-MINDED STUDENTS, PLEASE EMAIL:

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TO BE HELD ON

26TH AND 27TH OCTOBER 2PM - 4PM AT SOUND ROOMS 3 PELHAM TERRACE, BRIGHTON BN2 4AF



Appendix 2- Session Plans

Structure for Improvisation Creative Project sessions

Thursday 26th October

Approx Time	Aim of session	Contents	Roles
10-10.15	Welcome and housekeeping Ice breaker game	Give info about the day. Times of breaks, introduce ourselves etc. Give info about musical aims of two days and the sharing at end. Ice breaker to get to know each other- 'Give me one' In break it down ask them to chat to different person in the group and find out: • What school they go • Who is the same age • What instrument they play. • Same pets Set up instruments	Natasha to lead.
10.15- 11.30	Session 1 Musical games and exercises that can lead to composition ideas.	1) Pulse 1-2 game as body percussion then instruments -Group in a circle and ask them to go round saying 1 or 2 round the group. Then repeat but ask them to keep saying their number as others join in. Try and stick to whatever pulse is set up at start. Add in a foot tap to help feel the one and two. Then freely change from being a one to a two. Try again but adding in an action for your number. (if ready) Add an extra hand clap in between 1 and 2. Try this in pairs.	
		Transfer to instruments. Low note for 1, middle for the hand clap and high for 2. Try this in pairs 2) Body percussion improvisations then transfer to percussion instruments then their own instruments (within a key).	
11.30- 11.45	Break		

Session 2	Continue to composition work	Matt
	Into two groups-	leads one
	Formulating riff ideas that work together as an ensemble in the same way that we did in the first	group (older
composition	session but formulating a structure for a piece that can be remembered.	students)
	Recording their ideas and adding improvisations as part of the piece if desired.	and I lead
		the other
		(younger
Louish		students).
Lunch		
Session 3 Discussion	Discussion about their musical selves in school and at home. How they may or may not be supported in this.	
THE STATE OF THE S	How confident they currently feel improvising, is this a normal part of their practice?	
	How do they feel now after the mornings session?	
	Have a list of discussion points for them to talk through.	
Session 4	Learning a Jazz piece- Ek Se by Abdullah Ibrahim	Natasha
Learning an	1) Listen to the piece and sing the main tune and root bass part.	
existing tune		
	Put the whole thing together	
	If time start additional piece- Cold Duck time	
Break		
Session 5	Recap on the group composition and Ek Se	
	Does learning an existing piece support their own compositions or distract from it?	
	Finish the day talking through what for worked and what they would like to do more of tomorrow.	
	Creating a group composition Lunch Session 3 Discussion Session 4 Learning an existing tune	Into two groups

Friday 27th October

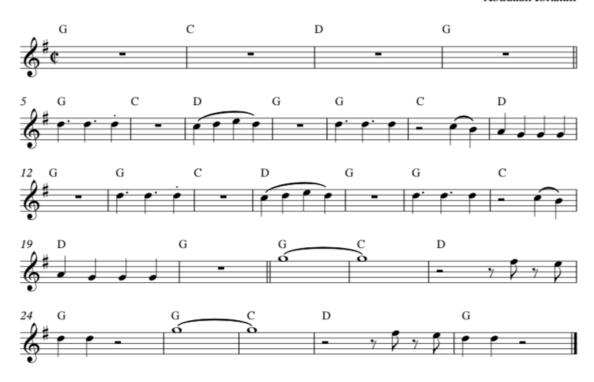
Approx times of sessions	Aim of Session	Contents	Roles
10-10.15	Settle into session and explain the timetable Warm up game	Explain that we will be first re-playing pieces from yesterday and learning a new piece.	Matt to lead warm up game
10.15- 11.30	Session 1 Blues composition	Discuss and write up the basic 12 bar blues structure. Sing through the chord parts and invent some actions to remember the changes 1, 4 and 5. Split into two groups of rhythm section and lead instruments. Rhythm section work on getting the chord changes and swing feel tight. Lead instruments learn a simple blues melody and a blues scale for improvising. Reform as a group and put this together.	Natasha when whole group then splitting into two.
11.30- 11.45	Break		
11.45- 12.45	Blues part two Composing a phrase that fits over 4 bars (12 beats)	Discuss how sometimes a Blues melody can be repeated 3 times to fit over the 12 bar blues chord structure. Ask them all at the same time to improve some ideas for a melody, over the bass line using notes of the blues scale. Go round the group listening to their ideas. Vote on one we like the best. Rehearse this ready for the performance.	Matt and Natasha
12.45- 1.30	Lunch		
1.30-2	Discussion	How do they feel about their playing now they are on the second day. Do they enjoy learning existing tunes or creating their own more?	Natasha
2-3	Session 3	Start by playing through 'Ek Se' with solos, deciding as a group a structure. Remember their own riff composition. Have a little bit of time in smaller groups thinking about if they want to change or add to these at all.	All

		3) Replaying the Blues from the morning and deciding on a structure.	
3-3.15	Break		
3.15-4	Session 4 Rehearsing,	Rehearse through the top and tail of each piece without an audience, tune up and then about 3.40pm invite people in to watch and or video.	All
	Performing and recording		

Appendix 3- Pieces available to use during the session

Ek Se

Abdullah Ibrahim



Blues Backstage

Swing

A⁷

D⁷

A⁷

A⁷

A⁷

A⁷

B⁷

E⁷

E⁷

B⁷

E⁷

E⁷

B⁷

E⁷

B⁷

E⁷

B⁷

B⁸

B⁹

Cold Duck Time

Eddie Harris



Appendix 4- Permission slip used for video and photos consent

TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE OF MUSIC & DANCE

The Teaching Musician Postgraduate Masters

Use of Workshop Video Recording and audio recordings during workshop sessions

Photos and video recording of parts of *The Riff project* workshop that your child is participating in will be used as a formal assessment of the teacher's skills as part of their postgraduate qualification and used as part of their evaluation of the projects success. It will be placed on Trinity Laban's password protected virtual learning environment and will only be viewable by the programme assessment team. It will not be downloadable and will be destroyed after the annual Programme Assessment Board.

As for any video permission is needed: from the pupil's parent, the pupil themselves if they are over 17yrs old, or from the school/institution where appropriate.

If you have given prior permission through Create Music for photos and videos to be used as part of their social media agreement these same photos may be seen online.

	ng Musician Student): Natasha Gawlinski
To be completed by the	ne pupil, parent/guardian or school authority:
I agree to the use of the	workshop video and audio as described above.
Pupil/class Name(s)	
Signature of pupil, pare	nt/guardian, school authority
Name:	
Position held:	***************************************
Date	***************************************
Thank you for your help	in this matter.
Any questions? Please or	ontact Tim Palmer, Programme Leader
t.palmer@trinitylaban.ac	.uk 020 8305 4383
	rvatoire of Music and Dance Charles Court, Old Royal Naval College, E10 95F

Appendix 5- Student data

Student name	Subcategory	Age	Home school	Length of Learning	Current Level	Teacher
Amali	Piano	13	Varndean School	2 years		Private
Annie	Flute	11	Dorothy Stringer School	2 years	PG2	Victoria Hancox
Cain	Drum Kit	11	Dorothy Stringer School	2 years	G3	Sam Glasson
Connor	Drum Kit	14	St Richard's Catholic College	2 years	G1S	Michael Pilley
Dante	Guitar (Bass)	12	Cardinal Newman School	2 years		Rock school
Isaac	Saxophone	11	Patcham High School	1 year	G1S	Natasha Gawlinski
James	Guitar (Electric)	13	Patcham High School	3 years	G5S	Andrew Aruldoss
Koby	Guitar (Electric)	13	Varndean School	1 year	G3S	Michael Shirley
Naman	Clarinet	11	Lewes Old Grammar	1 year	G1S	Claire Moisan
Samuel	Keyboard	11	Cardinal Newman School	4 years	G4S	Private
Torin	Guitar (Acoustic)	15	Dorothy Stringer School	3 years		James Lambeth

Appendix 6- Reflections and questionnaires by the students

 $Reflections from \ the \ students \ themselves \ from \ evaluations \ completed \ near \ the \ beginning \ and \ towards \ the \ end \ of \ the \ two \ days.$

Questions answered at the start then discussed

Name of student	What experiences do you have of improvisation before attending this course?	What did you hope to gain from attending this course?	Why is improvisation important for musicians?	Do you currently play in any ensembles? How confident are you playing with others? (scale 1- 5)	Confidence in improvising on scale of 1-5. (5 being really confident.)
1) Koby	None	Better skills at making up my own music	Unsure	Band at school 4	2
2) Sam	I have made up my own short pieces before. I applied as I like improvisation an to get better at it.		If you do not improvise there will be no new music in the world.	Yr7 band. Hangleton youth band. 4	4
3)Amali	Playing on the piano with my friends.	More experience working with others	To feel confident just playing music	Band at school 3	2
4) Connor	Good	For fun and skill	To change the music	Yes 3	2.5
5) Dante	Me and my bass teacher used to do it when we played guitar and improvised to the beat.	I applied because I could learn how to play with other people.	So that you can make things up on the spot	I used to 2	
6) James	Solo in songs, half written half improvised progress in bands and improvisation		So under pressure you can come up with something	In school bands and about to start my own band 3	3
7) Cain	It is fun	My parents signed me up	To learn	A band club 3	3
8) Naman	Fun lessons	Better improve skill	To learn improvisation	No 2	3.5
9) Isaac	I did some in lessons I thought it would help with my improvisation		It allows people to come up with their own music	No but I used to play in wind band on recorder 2	2
10) Torin	A good bit at home To have fun		To express yourself through the music with your present emotions	Yes 3	3
11) Annie	A moderate amount. I do improvise a bit in wind in my school holidays and to have fun.		So we can improvise?	Wind band, woodwind ensemble, concert band and 2 at school too. 4	4.5

Evaluation towards the end then discussed

Name of student	What have you enjoyed about these workshops so far?	What have you found challenging?	On a scale of 1-5 how confident are you feeling Improvising?	On a scale of 1-5 how confident are you feeling playing with others in a group?	What will you take away most from attending these workshops?
1) Koby	Playing with others and making my own music	Making up riffs and improvising	3/4	4.5	Making up my own music
2) Sam	The Blues	The blues	4	4	Blues
3)Amali	Playing with others and making new tunes	Starting to improvise with new people.	3.5	5	Improvisation and Blues skills.
4) Connor	Playing with new people.	Improvising after the beat going back to the groove.	4	5	Playing with new people to learn about them.
5) Dante	Working with people I've never met and enjoying making music with them	Playing for long periods of time.	4	4.5	Skills from playing more bass and getting to improvise more and knowing how to play with other people/
6) James	That we get to improvise rater than reading off sheet music	Finding specific notes	3/4	4	Notes and improvising
7) Cain	Stuff	Jazz swing feel	4	3	stuff
8) Naman	Meeting new people	Learning stuff by ear	5	4.5	Better at impro
9) Isaac	Being allowed to work with a variety of instruments	Scat singing	4	5	More confidence improvising
10) Torin	Playing Blues	Learning by ear	3	4	Better understanding of the 12 bar blues
11) Annie	Playing the flute	Playing by myself in front of others	4	5	Playing the flute

Appendix 7- Tutor reflections

Reflections on the students learning and progress during the riff project from the two music leaders Natasha and Matt

Name of student	Age of student	Main instrument	Ensemble work	Improvisation and composition skills
1) Koby	13	Guitar	This was one of his first opportunities to play with others. He became good at knowing the structure of a piece and how he fits into this. His technical ability just needs to catch up with his musical awareness.	Confident but his technical musical ability did not match his confidence. He liked to improvise and became more confident playing the blues scale in the $2^{\rm nd}$ day.
2) Sam	11	Piano	He started off playing over everyone as if he was just jamming at home on his own but through the sessions he started gaining better awareness of others. And giving others space. It was good for him to solo at the start of pieces to almost let his identity be shown so he could then sit back more and support others by comping. Lots of energy throughout the project.	Confident skills at the start but became better at listening and playing more catchy phrases when playing with others. He came up with the descending base line in his groups' piece. He learnt how to solo over a set number of bars and be able to improvise over a bass line continuing in his left hand.
3) Amali	13	Piano	Came on lots within the 2 days. Enjoyed both 'comping' and soloing on the piano and was able to contribute well to her groups ideas. She enjoyed coming up with a name for her group and the piece. Being one of only 2 girls I thought she was very confident knowing her parts and not worrying about this in the sessions.	Initially did not want to solo but her confidence in improvising has grown quite a lot. She came up with great rhythmic phrases that developed well.

7) Cain	11	Drums	He understands lots but doesn't have the musical vocal yet to explain things but definitely picked up on why we were doing things like singing the parts first. He questioned everything but definitely learnt from this. He picked up the new swing feel quickly and supported other musicians well with his drumming. He is raining in his playing well and taking instructions well. He became less showy throughout and more subtle with his playing	Cain improvised well within a 4 bar structure and was able to bring the groove back in after sharing a blues solo with Sam. He talked about finding this challenging but definitely managed and learnt from it. Picking up fills quite naturally.
8) Naman	11	Clarinet	Playing without music was a new challenge for Naman but he enjoyed learning by ear and did not seemed fazed by this.	His improvised phrasing improved through the sessions. He vibed off Isaac as if they were having a real conversation. Maybe this helped that they are already friends?
9) Isaac	11	Saxophone	The only challenge was on occation the transposition to Eb meant Isaac had to play in unfamiliar keys so at times hit the wrong notes. He however picked up on structures and how to fit in with the others really well.	Enjoyed the improvised conversation with Naman. They were vibeing off each other and leaving space for each other. Better throughout the 2 days and they became more confident with this when they knew the notes more.

10) Torin	15	Guitar	Was able to lead on sections within the	Able guitarist. It was good to have him improvise over
			whole group improvisations but	the blues in between the main tune as this brought
			developed more in the smaller group	him out as a great lead guitarists. It was good to see
			work contributing ideas and being a	his personality come out more throughout the two
			strong lead player.	days as initially he seemed quite reserved despite
			Torin did not quite get the melody of ek Se	being a strong lead within the pieces. He benefitted
			on every play though despite being	from playing through the blues composed tunes a few
			advanced musically, so there are bit	times to define his ideas. Is was great seeing him sit
			missing in his learning.	forward more as a playing during this time.
11) Annie	11	Flute	Confidence grown throughout the	He improvising was good when she understood the
			sessions and responded best when	notes but often asked for things to be written down as
			working in a small group with others of a	was not used to learning by ear at all. In the
			similar age. She always sat separately in	performances she did not take many solos but said
			the breaks as found the social aspects	that she learnt lots to play and improvise more at
			difficult but this did not come across when making the music. She enjoyed being	home. I would hope that with age she will continue to gain more confidence in improvising if given more
			given the responsibility to start and end	opportunities. She gave herself high marks in the first
			the piece with the chime bars.	questionnaire but this was not reflected in her playing
			100	initially as I suspect she was not used to improvising
				in front of others.

4) Connor	14	Drums	Had a good groove, fairly consistent with his playing. Very quickly worked well with Torin as similar in age but this was apparent in the music before they had even chatted much to each other. Connor learnt that it was really important to learn other people's parts (le the tunes and bass lines) even though he is a drummer. He realized that he would become a better drummer if he understood the music over all better.	In the 2 nd day he worked really hard at coming up with a repeated drum rhythm and I could see him learning from this experience as previously he maybe had always been told what to play so this game him a sense of ownership that the rhythm composed was his own. He responded well to this activity. He learnt well the new swing feel of a Blues and how best to do improvised fills for this as this is not an easy groove to play for the first time.
5) Dante	12	Bass guitar	He has come on loads. He did not know the names of the notes but picked things up really naturally by ear. He had loads of great ideas even at the end of the day for example 'let try the break down here' or 'let do a solo without drums for 4 bars and see how that sounds'. He really benefited from the small group work. Being the only bass player he was given lots of responsibility	He made a great blues phrase which used notes of the blues scale. Something he did for the first time ever. He also improvised within his small group using notes of the bass line but just changing the rhythm. The only challenge for him was not loosing the structure of where he was after taking a solo as this did happen within the performance.
6) James	13	Guitar	James benefitted lots in the small group where he was the only guitarist and learnt how to fit in more with other instruments. He followed the order of pieces well and understood how to come in after so many bars etc.	He composed a great Blues tune which was voted as the best to be performed to parents. He was thrilled about this and also took a longer extended solo over the 12 bars using a blues scale. His improvising really game on during these two days and he seemed far less shy by the end of the 2 nd day musically and personality wise.

Appendix 8- Projections of costings for future projects

Projected budget for 2024 if the project were to continue in different scenarios

Scenario 1- Continuing in collaboration with Create Music and being available in Brighton and Hove area – 3 times per year

EXPECTED		
Item	Cost	
Artistic fees & expenses		
6x full days (Daily rate of approx. £200 per day)	£ 2,400	
x2 musicians/facilitators		
Project Planning		
Session planning: 1-2 hrs prior to workshops	In kind	
Equipment & Materials	Through Create	
Marketing (flyers)	Through Create	
Evaluation	Through Create	
Travel	Through Create	
Contingency (6%)	Through Create	
	£2,400	

If cost were to be offset to parents this would be approximate $\pounds 33$ per day per child based on an average of 12 pupils attending each course. But ideally the philosophy of the Riff project does not include a parent contribution and would look for alternative funding possibilities.

Scenario 2- Offered in 3 areas of Create Music hub 3 times in the year (Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighton and Hove)

EXPECTED		
Item	Cost	
Artistic fees & expenses		
18x full days (Daily rate of approx. £200 per day)	£ 7,200	
x2 musicians/facilitators		
Project Planning		
Session planning: 1-2 hrs prior to workshops	In kind	
Equipment & Materials	Through Create	
Marketing (flyers)	Through Create	
Evaluation	Through Create	
Travel	Through Create	
Contingency (6%)	Through Create	
	£7,200	

Scenario 3- An offer delivering the project to 6 different hubs as a one-off workshop independent of Create Music. This would be applicable if applying for arts council funding.

EXPECTED	
Item	Cost
Artistic fees & expenses	
12x full days (Daily rate of approx. £200 per day)£ 4,800	
X 2 musicians/facilitators- includes planning time	
Project Planning for co-ordinator	
10 hours x £40 per hour	£400
Equipment & Materials	Provided by each collaborating hub
Website design	£100
Marketing- hard copies (flyers)	£50
Evaluation	£100
Travel	£600
Contingency (6%)	£120
	£ 6,170