

Mytime Active

# Evaluation of ArtsTrain

Final report

June 2019

—  
**BOP**  
Consulting



# Executive Summary

Between January 2018 and April 2019 ArtsTrain regularly worked with a total of **371 young people**, who took part in **24 projects**.

The outputs included:

- **294 workshops**
- Resulting in **45 performances**
- And **110 pieces of new work being created**

**ArtsTrain worked with a large proportion of young people experiencing deprivation (45% in receipt of free school meals) and additional learning and support needs (44%)**

Strong outcomes were reported, where pre and post participation questionnaires indicated improvements in the following dimensions:

**Creativity:** 92% reported that they like to be involved in lots of creative activities (up 27% points from the beginning of the programme) and 88% feel better able to express themselves through music (up 26% points)

**Self efficacy:** 86% of participants report that they like to finish something once they've started it (up 29% points from the beginning of the programme)

**Motivation:** 86% reported that they can push themselves to do the best they can (up 30% points) and 90% reported that they are interested to get involved in more things (also up 30% points from beginning the project)

**Musical communication and transferable skills:** 90% said they can communicate with others using music (up 34% points), 84% reported they could work well in a team (up 29% points) and 84% said they could relate well to other people (up 28% points)

**Progression:** 48% of participants felt ArtsTrain had a large influence on their plans to continue their learning, with 43% feeling it had some influence; 90% of participants planned to continue learning music over the next six months; and following their engagement with ArtsTrain 83% of participants knew where to go to continue learning music

These findings indicate a broad range of successful outcomes being achieved with the participants taking part in ArtsTrain. These are especially welcomed based on the demographic profile of participants focusing on those who experience additional barriers to participation in mainstream settings.

# Contents

Executive Summary	
1. Introduction and context	1
2. Evaluation methodology	2
3. Delivery	3
4. Profile of participants	4
5. Providing young musicians with valuable creative skills	5
6. Developing self-efficacy and agency in young musicians	7
7. Developing young musicians' motivation for taking on new activities	9
8. Providing young musicians with valuable technical skills and transferable skills	11
9. Learning in action – Project videos	13
10. Building networks and providing opportunities for career progression	14
11. Added value for partners	15
12. Reasons for poorer participation	16
13. Conclusions and next steps	17
Appendix	18

# 1. Introduction and context

## The ArtsTrain programme

ArtsTrain is a creative music programme run by leading social enterprise, [Mytime Active](#) since 2008.

The programme supports children and young people across the London Boroughs of Bromley, Bexley and Lewisham, targeting those who are not engaged in formal music-making and face challenging circumstances, such as development disabilities like autism.

All sessions are facilitated by experienced music leaders and facilitators from a wide range of musical backgrounds, across musical genres and focused on the creation of original work.

Their delivery partners range from educational establishments and health/wellbeing charities, to arts organisations, working across both formal and informal settings.

## This evaluation

Between January 2018 and April 2019 - our reporting period - ArtsTrain worked in partnership with a total of **371 young people**, who took part in **24 projects**\*.

Across these 24 projects a total of **89 young people** took part in this evaluation through participant surveys, supported by observations and survey responses by the workshops' Music Leaders and partners. This is a **participating sample of 24%**, which is strong considering the additional challenges faced by many of the participants, particularly in literacy and communication.

The purpose of this evaluation is two-fold. First, to measure the impact of the programme on the participants in developing both technical and personal skills, such as technical music making skills and self-efficacy. Second, the added value the programme provides to its partners, such as enhancing their existing delivery model to work in new ways.

\*Breakdown in Appendix

## 2. Evaluation methodology

There were six key sources of data for this evaluation:

**1. Participant surveys** - To gain feedback directly from the children and young people who took part in the programme, they were asked to fill out participant surveys. Here they scored statements on a 1-5 likert scale, where 1 was 'Very Poorly' and 5 was 'Very Strongly', at the start (as a baseline) and, where possible, on completion (as demarcation of development) against certain key impact areas of the programme. The completion survey also asked questions on progression plans, as well as reflections on the programme, such as key lessons and challenges. Three of the nine projects had a shorter engagement time of 2-4 days, so in these projects participants were given a shortened version of the full participant survey as it was felt that the full length version wouldn't be as applicable to these participants. These are reported separately, where significant.

**2. Partner surveys** - Partner organisations were asked what impact the programme had on their organisation, including lessons learnt, feedback and organisational fit.

**3. Music Leader observations** - Against the key impact areas (e.g. self-efficacy, technical skills), the Music Leaders were asked to provide their own scoring to compare with that of the participants, as well as provide further qualitative commentary on where they excelled and where they found challenges within each key impact area.

**4. Non-music professional observations** - As with Music Leader observations, non-music professionals involved in the projects' delivery were asked to score against the key impact areas to compare that of the participants. These were often support staff who had a longer engagement with the participants, therefore providing additional commentary on the extent of journey travelled.

**5. Project videos** – Links to videos documenting the working process of the projects are included below.

**6. ArtsTrain NPO annual survey** - Provided key background data about the participants (e.g. demographics), as well as the key outputs in delivery (e.g. no. workshops, no. of new pieces of work produced).

*The data collection approach was therefore largely self-evaluation, using questionnaires and feedback forms, which BOP were provided with for analysing and reporting. Resources wouldn't allow for additional primary data collection.*

## 3. Delivery

ArtsTrain's delivery model varies in the length and duration of project activity – ranging from a couple of days to a year long programme of support. They adapt their activities to meet the needs of the participants. However, their 'artistic' and 'participatory' approaches remain largely uniform across all delivery settings.

### Artistic approach

ArtsTrain's innovative model of music making and compositional training draws from practice across musical genres and focuses entirely on the creation of high-quality original work by young people. This is facilitated by experienced composers and facilitators from a wide range of musical backgrounds.

The curiosity to experiment artistically and 'push musical comfort zones', both for the young people they work with and the artist practitioners, is central to ArtsTrain's artistic ethos.

### Participatory Approach

ArtsTrain actively involves children and young people at all stages of their musical development, participating in every aspect of the creative process. An inclusive experience facilitates collaboration between young people from different social backgrounds and tailors activity to ensure young people are able to fulfil their potential.

### Outputs and scale of ArtsTrain

Between January 2018 and April 2019...

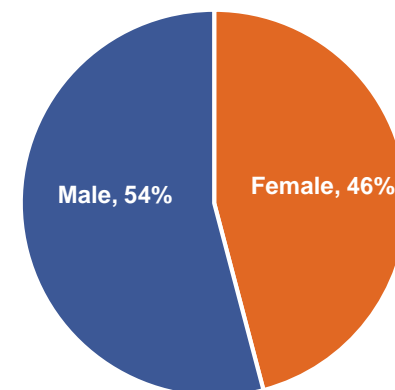
- **294 workshops** were run across the partners
- Resulting in **45 performances**
- And **110 pieces of new work** being created

## 4. Profile of participants

Across the partnership, the programme worked with participants from **a wide range of backgrounds**:

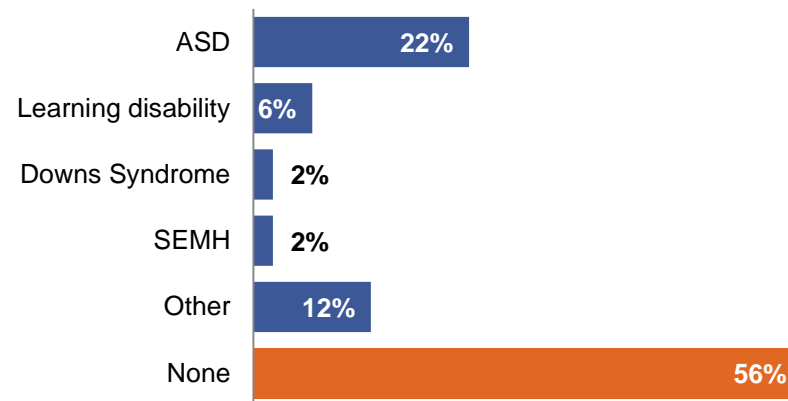
- 54% were Male
- Ages ranged from 5 to 23 years, with an average age of 15 years
- 45% were recipients of Free School Meals (FSM)
- They were characterised by four dominant ethnic groups:
  - 63% were White British
  - 11% were Black African
  - 7% were Black Caribbean
  - 5% were Mixed White and Black Caribbean
  - The remaining 14% were classed as Other
- 44% had a disability, with the highest proportions having:
  - Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) - 22%
  - A learning disability - 6%
  - Downs Syndrome – 2%
  - Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) issues - 3%

Gender split amongst participants



n=329

Disabilities amongst participants



n=331

# 5. Providing young musicians with valuable creative skills

## Fostering and facilitating creativity among participants

Through their workshops, ArtsTrain provide opportunities for participants to develop their creative skills, encouraging them to express themselves and solve personal problems. This is particularly valuable for those who have ASD or SEMH .

On commencing ArtsTrain, participants largely **had a pre-existing sense of creativity**; 66% liked doing things that are very practical and 82% stated they felt proud when they made something themselves (compared to 91% of short survey respondents). Participants scored themselves lowest on being able to use their imagination to solve problems (62%) and being able to express their own ideas through music (62%)

The greatest impact of the programme was in the proportion who **liked to be involved in lots of different creative activities** (a 27% increase), which could be explained by this programme being participants' first experience in new types of creative productions, and those being **able to express their own ideas through music** (a 26% increase).

Music Leaders mirrored this view, with six out of seven agreeing or strongly agreeing that participants had gained creative skills, particularly in musical communication.

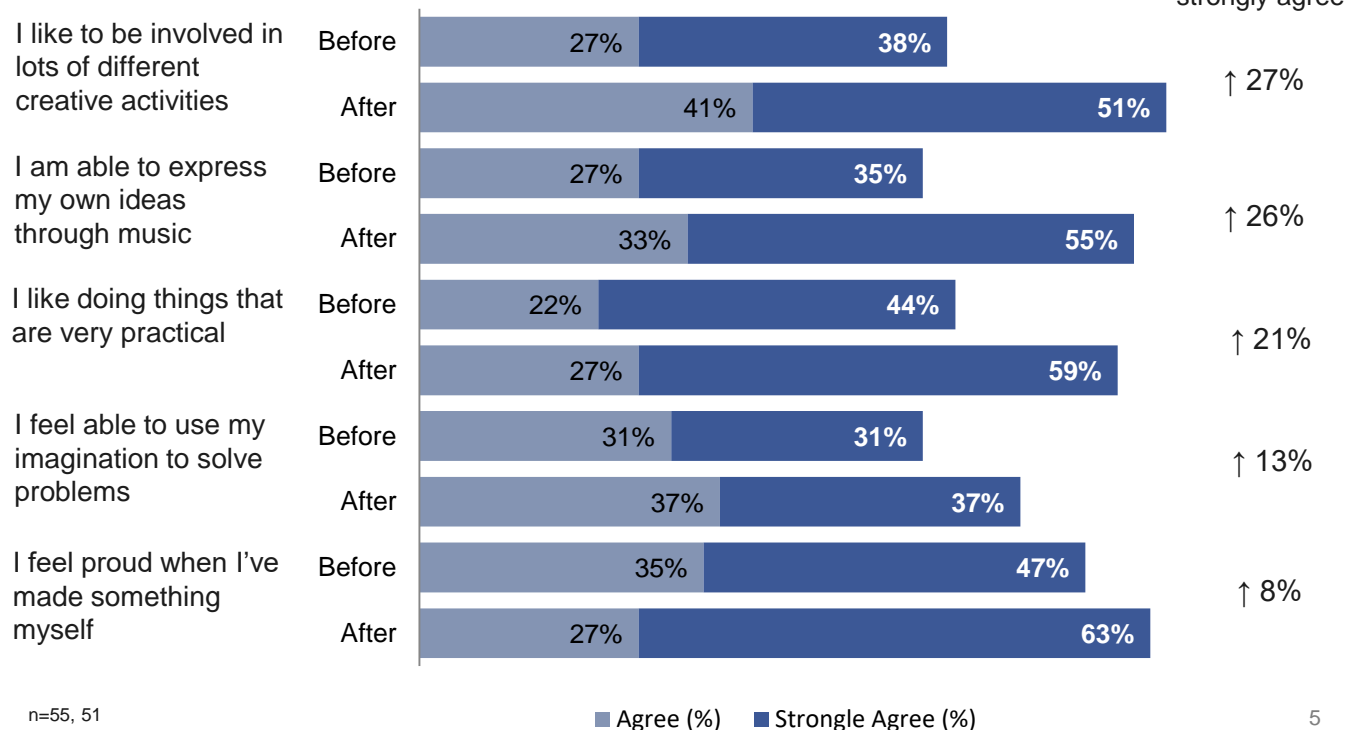
“ The project helped the students find new ways of ensemble working and the ability to create songs from various angles that they had not previously considered. **There has been an increase in creativity since the project started.**

- Partner school

“ Sometimes it's difficult to get about because mum's not got enough money to pay for petrol. I mean we're not well off, **we can't afford private music lessons.** ArtsTrain has given me the opportunity to **get out of my bedroom, learn new skills and make music with other young people**

- Participant, 16 – Youth Centre

**Pre and post participation measures for creativity dimensions**





# Participant spotlight

**Name:** Abigail, 16

**Project:** ArtsTrain London Jazz Festival Collective

**Involvement:** Songwriting | composition | improvisation | performance

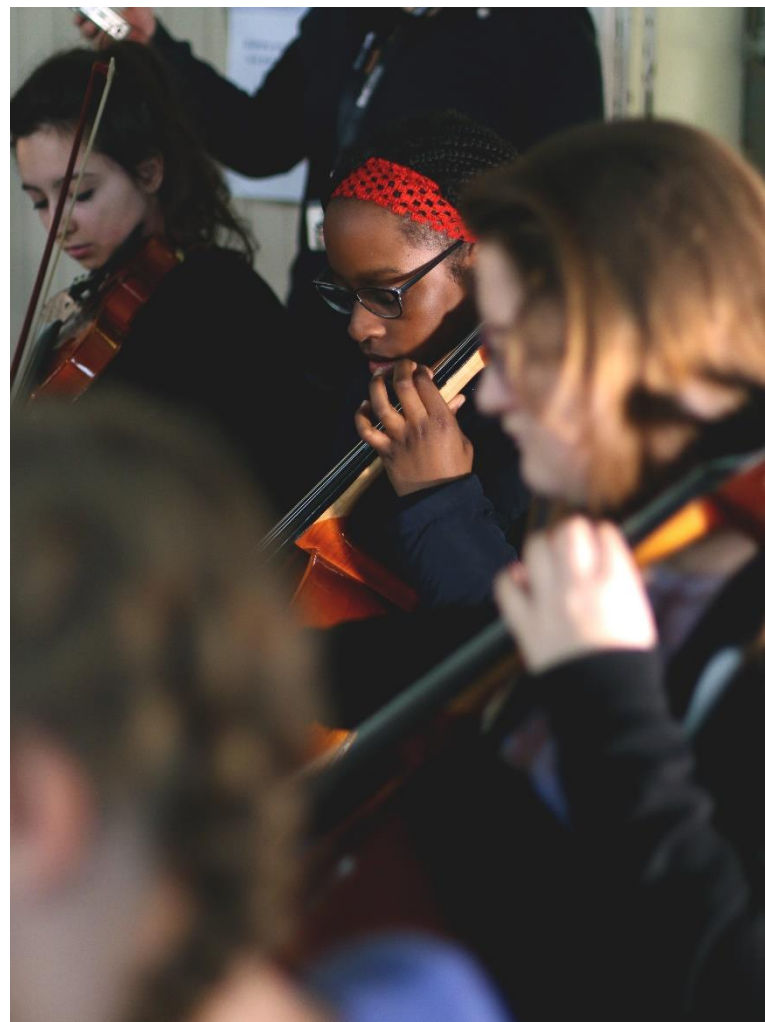
**Impact:** Developing communication and creative skills

“

I've learnt not to be scared to share ideas, how to communicate with others and share opinions. All useful skills to have not just for music but in general.

“

I feel freer without the music in front of me, and the fact that we've created this music is really cool.



# 6. Developing self-efficacy and agency in young musicians

## Self-efficacy and agency coming from within participants

Self belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task, and the agency to do so are key personal skills for young people from all backgrounds to develop.

On commencing ArtsTrain, participants were largely already independent thinkers; 81% felt they were able to think for themselves, with 71% happy to be involved in creative activities, even if their friends aren't interested. ArtsTrain had the least impact in these areas.

The greatest impact was in building perseverance and conviction in the participants' own decisions, with a 29% increase in the proportion of those who now wish to finish something once they have started, and a 15% increase in those who feel they can make decisions that are good for them. Moreover, 90% of short survey respondents felt they could decide if they wanted to keep making music or not (up 30%).

Music Leaders mirrored this view, with five out of seven agreeing or strongly agreeing that participants had developed self-efficacy over the course of the project.

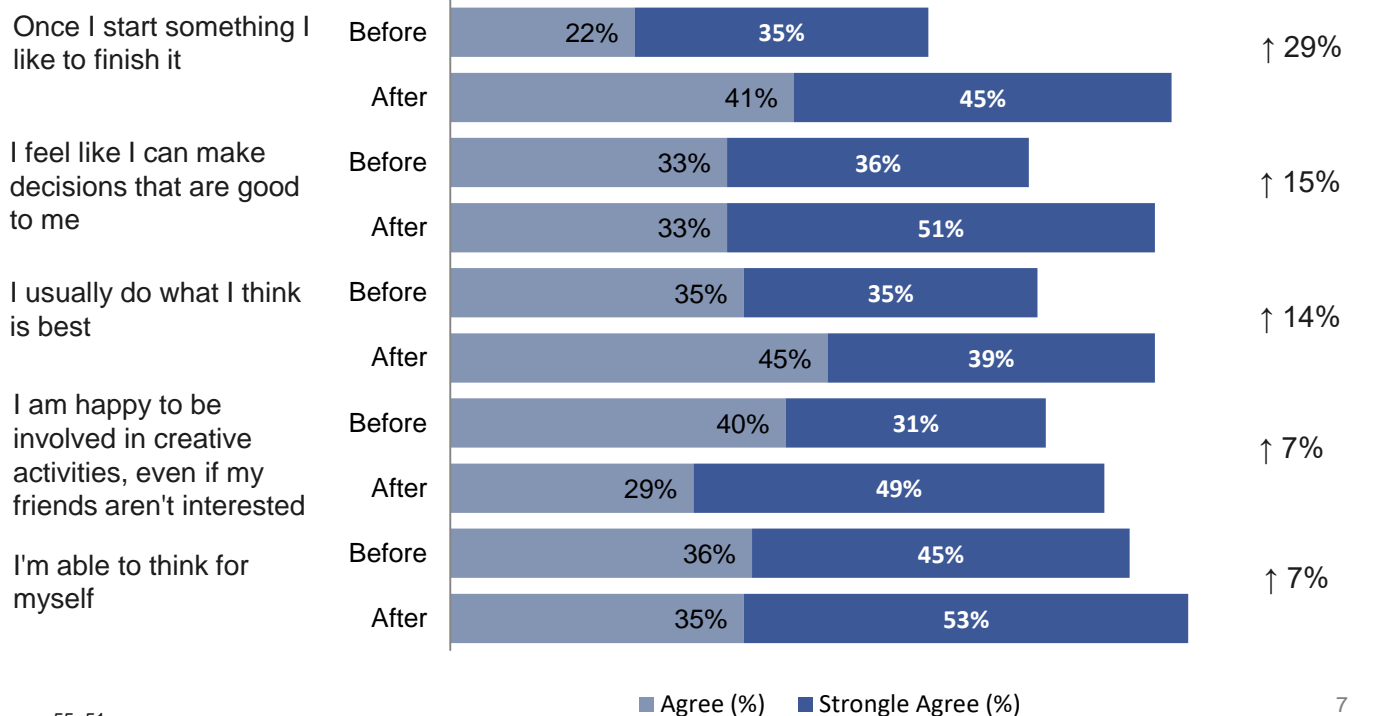
“ Over the weeks we noticed a **change in attitude towards ourselves and the project...**by the final weeks they had more respect towards each other and understood the need to remain quiet during recording.

- Music Leader

“ The young people did develop a certain amount of self-efficacy but due to age and needs still **needed support and a lot of modelling of activities.**

- Music Leader

### Pre and post participation measures for self-efficacy dimensions



n=55, 51

# Participant spotlight

**Name:** Troy, 18

**Project:** ArtsTrain Academy

**Involvement:** Songwriting | production | performance | recording

**Impact:** Building confidence and self-reflection

“

This project laid the foundation gave me more confidence in my abilities, whilst having a supportive space to develop my crafts inspired me to pursue my passions in music, poetry and entertainment... Artstrain gives you the opportunity to be a part of something greater than yourself and unlock that potential.



# 7. Developing young musicians' motivation for taking on new activities

## Building individual motivation

Often motivation to take part in a new activity is interrelated to an individual's self-efficacy and agency; a sense they 'could if they would'. ArtsTrain aims to 'light a creative spark' in young people, linked to the need for participants to feel motivated to engage and progress.

On commencing ArtsTrain, participants were **largely already enthusiastic about creating something new**; (77%). ArtsTrain had the least impact in this area, but still an impressive increase of 19 percentage points.

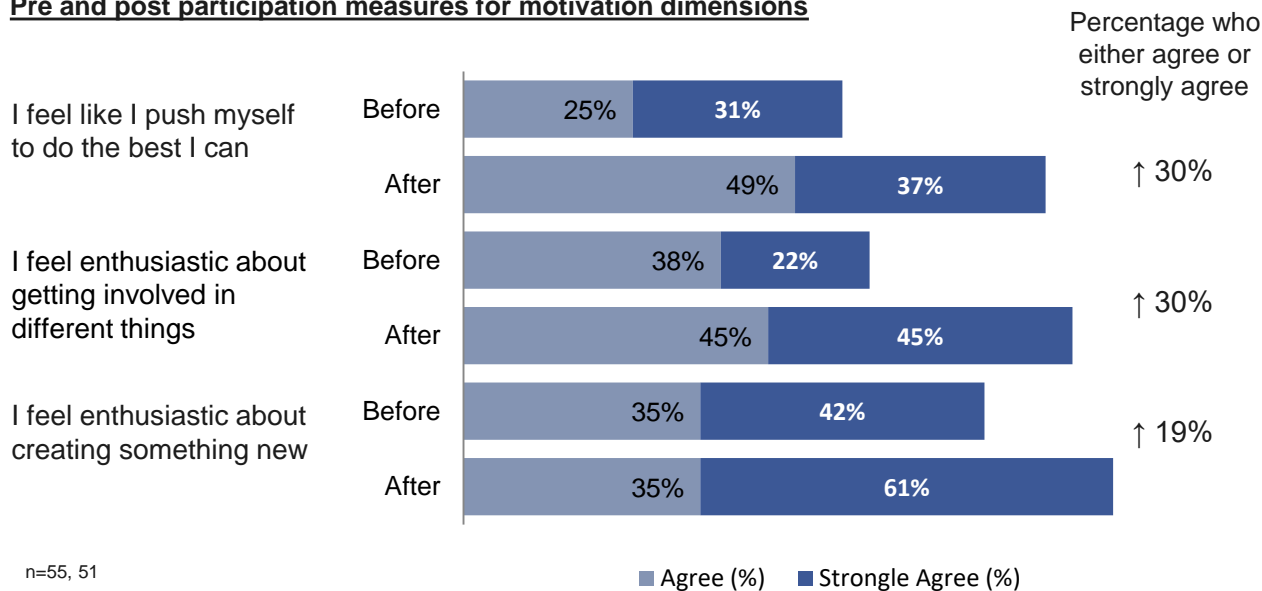
The greatest impact was in **participants feeling like they can push themselves to do the best they can, and feeling enthusiastic about getting involved in different things**, with a 30% point increase in both cases. Furthermore, 71% of short survey respondents wanted to keep making music after the programme (up 14%)

This was equally reflected by the Music Leaders, with **four out of seven** reporting an **increase in motivation**. As demonstrated in the first quote, this was a complex process, requiring opportunities and consistencies in experimenting to gain this outcome.

“ At the beginning of this project I wasn't really sure about it, like will we be asked to do things I'm not necessarily comfortable with? But as the **weeks progressed I've learnt new stuff and how to overcome certain things I'm not comfortable with.**  
- Participant, 15

“ All verbal young people were happy to use their voices in different ways and **push themselves to try new things** such as recording and music production.  
- Music Leader

Pre and post participation measures for motivation dimensions



# Participant spotlight

**Name:** Chris, 15

**Project:** Songwriting project with autism charity

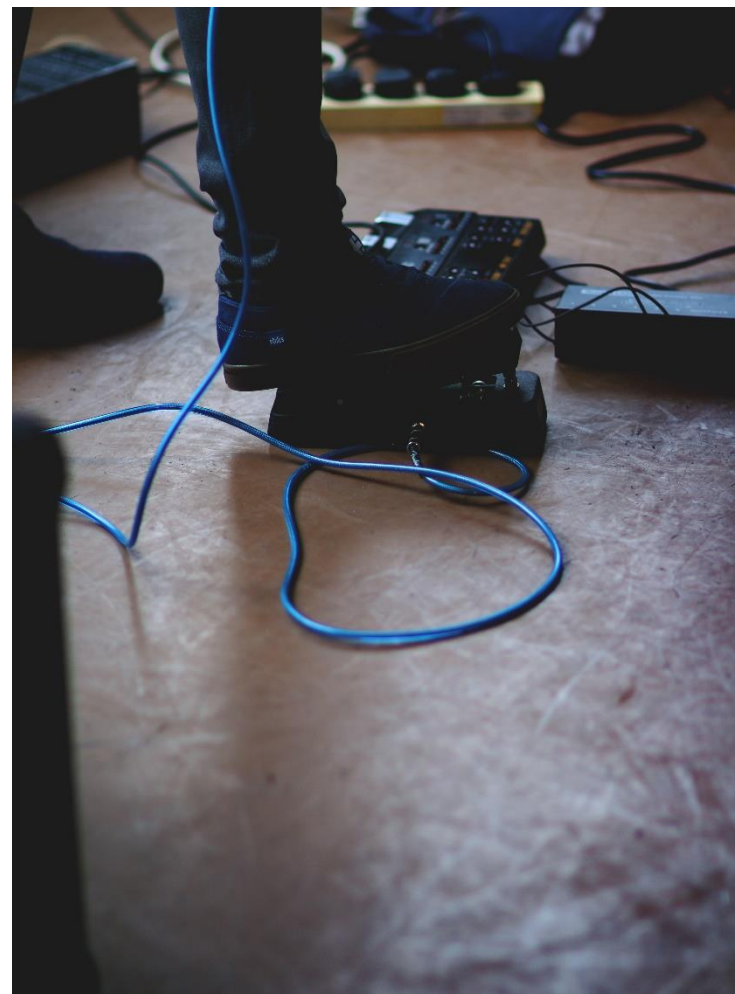
**Involvement:** Singing | songwriting | music production

**Impact:** Building enthusiasm for what they can achieve through the process of making music

“

I exhibit all types of emotion when creating music. When things are working it gives me a great rush of adrenaline, it feels like I am going to explode with joy!

This project has helped me build my confidence and reduce my anxiety to make me feel happy.



# 8. Providing young musicians with valuable technical skills and transferable skills

## Equipping participants with technical and transferable skills

Beyond equipping young musicians with technical skills in music making, ArtsTrain wished to develop interpersonal soft skills (e.g. teamwork, communication) for their future careers and lives.

When looking across the wide range of skills being assessed, from communication to technical skills, on commencing the programme the **levels were largely equal**; ranging from 47% saying that they had skills in the technical aspects of making music, to 60% who felt they had experience in analysing and understanding music.

The programme had the greatest impact on **interpersonal soft skills compared to technical and analytical skills**. Following the programme there was a 34% increase in the proportion of those who felt they could communicate with others through music, 29% increase in those who could work in a team, and 28% increase in those who could relate to other people. Furthermore, 77% of short survey respondents felt they had improved skills in making music following the programme (up 14%).

This was equally reflected by the Music Leaders, with **five out of seven** reporting **participants gained technical and transferable skills**.

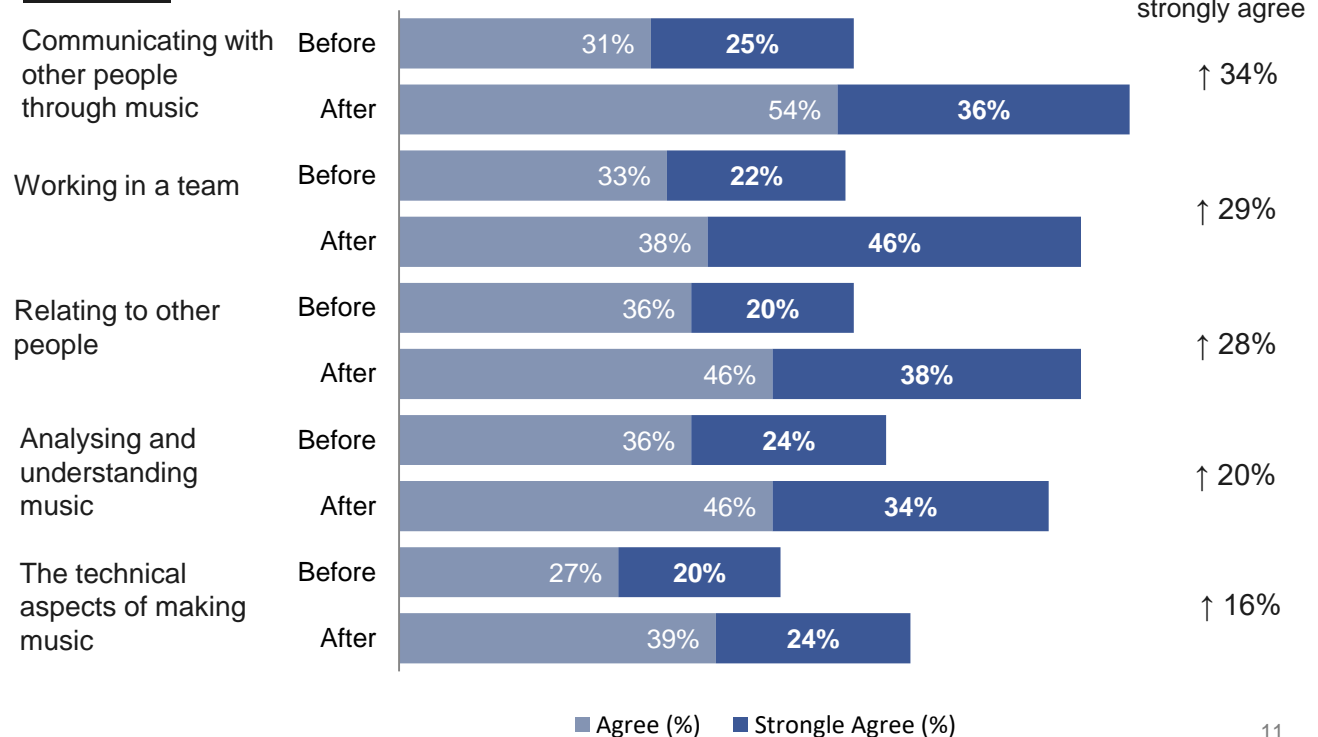
“ I've learnt **not to be scared to share ideas, how to communicate with others and share opinions**. All useful skills to have not just for music but in general.

- Participant, 14

“ Towards the end of the project, because they had developed familiarity with us as tutors, they were much **more keen and confident to try new things**. They were also **more able to effectively communicate this with us**. In the final session we noticed a huge difference in their focus and ability to feedback.

- Music Leader

### Pre and post participation measures for technical and transferable skill dimensions



n=55, 51

# Participant spotlight

**Name:** Peri, 17

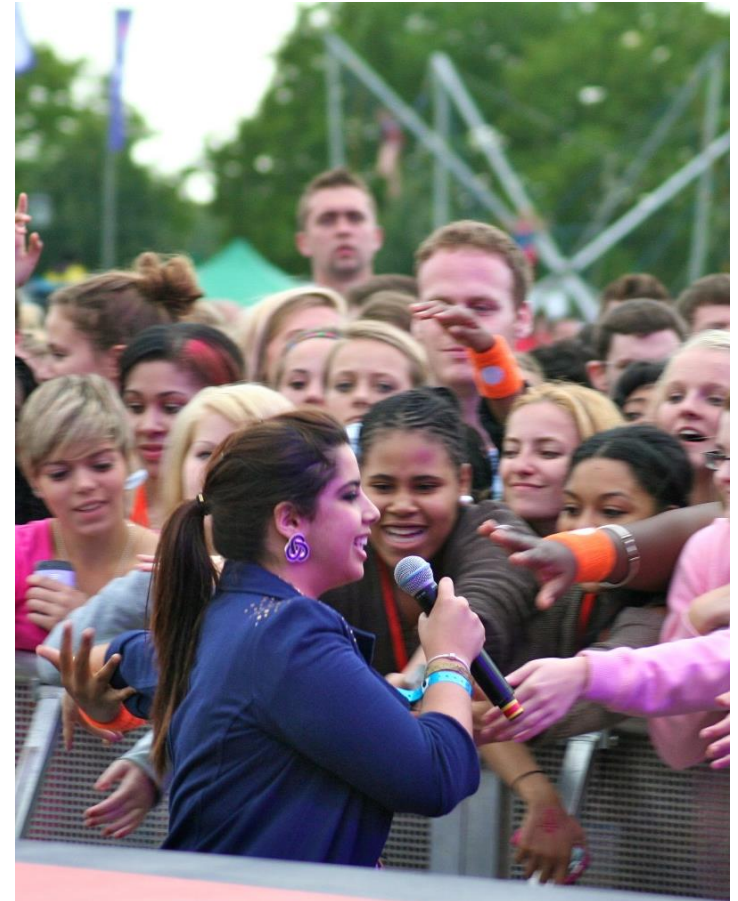
**Project:** Songwriting project in youth centre

**Involvement:** Singing | songwriting | performance | mentoring

**Impact:** Providing responsibility and opportunity to develop leadership skills

“

ArtsTrain took me on as a mentor for other young people and I helped to facilitate workshops. It's so empowering as a young person to be involved and be taken seriously. They took me seriously and respected me as a person and as an artist and It's still on my CV.



## 9. Learning in action – Project videos

As well as being provided with quantitative and qualitative feedback from participants, music leaders, partners and non-music professionals, BOP were provided with a selection of videos produced by and about the various courses that ArtsTrains ran. Links and short descriptions below.



### **Sounds of London**

Working with autism charity, CASPA, the children explored the sounds of London and provided creative opportunities for the group to write their own original music

**Outcomes explored:** Developing skills in music production, building confidence and teamwork, as well as self-efficacy in those with personal development challenges.

**Link:** <https://bit.ly/30U1LUg>



### **Music For Youth National Festival 2018**

A behind the scenes video of ArtsTrain Academy Bexley performing at Music For Youth's National Festival in Birmingham on the New Music Stage.

**Outcomes explored:** Developing technical skills in music production and performance, as well as transferrable teamwork and communication skills.

**Link:** <https://bit.ly/30TQ6ol>

---

Other ArtsTrain project videos:

- [Libraries At Night](#) - A night of live music hosted and featuring emerging young artists from South London hosted at Sidcup Library
- [Plastic by Nature](#) - Emerging writer [Emma Rogerson](#) explores the relationship between gentrification and the millennial identity



# 10. Building networks and providing opportunities for career progression

## Building strong learning communities

Working with SEND participants, ArtsTrain recognised in their delivery design that an inclusive learning environment was central to successful outcomes being achieved.

A key part of this, as highlighted by a Music Leader's observation, was that "all views and ideas had equal importance". In their workshop this supported the young people to build a strong rapport with one another; building peer communities and social capital with their own networks.

Building this sense of community was on occasion restricted through absences and exclusions, as well as contending with a different mix of participants on a weekly basis. As one Music Leader reported "this occasionally made progress slow and planning activities difficult".

The demographic of the individual workshops was also influential. As a Music Leader reported, on one occasion there were only two females in the group, making the group male dominated, which both of the girls struggled with.

However, the majority of Music Leaders noted that participants collaborated very well with each other and the tutors, growing in capability to appropriately respond to feedback which is a skill they can carry into their futures. One Music Leader said this specific area was "one of the strongest aspects of the project".

## Progression plans

Despite these restrictions and challenges, on completion of the programme...

- **Close to half of respondents (48%) felt ArtsTrain had a large influence on their plans to continue their learning**, with 43% feeling it had some influence. No respondents said it had no influence.
- **Participants planned to continue learning music over the next six months** - with 90% agreeing that they would (59% strongly agreeing and 31% agreeing). Only one participant didn't wish to continue with learning music.
- **83% of participants knew where to go to continue learning music** (37% strongly agreeing with the statement and 46% agreeing).

# 11. Added value for partners

## Fit with partners' organisational aims

In many cases, ArtsTrain complemented the wider aims and objectives of the delivery partners' existing curriculum. These were typically to deliver and support their students to gain the skills required to become as independent as possible, as well as allowing children to explore their identities in creative ways.

For one partner this augmented their ability to “develop self-awareness, independent and interpersonal skills”. For another, the artform of music was able to provide a valuable new stimuli for engagement and differentiation:

“ A lot of the children love music and this helps engage them into this. The staff have been fantastic and have **used their expertise to offer differentiation to ensure that all the young people were completely engaged and learning new skills** at all times during the session.

- Partner school

“ Participation, relationships and wellbeing are key areas that our service prioritise for development with our children, young people and families. This **project clearly connects with this and provides a creative and mindful space for personal development and expression.**

- Looked After Children's Service

## Learning from taking part in the project

- **New ways of working** – for one partner, they “learned different ways of capturing students' attention from a musical point of view”, and now looking to apply this approach to their other classes
- **Students can easily adapt** – when required, students can work alongside external agencies
- **Children and young people's response to music** – for one partner, they “learned how receptive the children are to music and have seen their turn taking and waiting skills develop as a result of the empathy and care shown by the staff looking after them”.

## 12. Reasons for poorer participation

### Why some participants did not complete the full programme

For some partners, they ended up with a smaller group than initially started the project. This was for a number of reasons.

For some, these were external, such as struggling to provide the level of support required and communication between the staff within the partner organisation and music leaders to meet the participants' needs and challenges:

“ We had different support staff in most weeks and sometimes there were no staff present at all...We felt this had a huge impact of the sessions. **Participants struggled with the inconsistencies and we believe it set a tone** for how the participants approached these sessions.

- Music Leader

“ There was also very little communication between staff and ourselves as to the participant's needs and challenges prior to sessions...With the right selection of children who were interested and **with more background information we could have planned and delivered better sessions**

- Music Leader

For others, this was more nuanced and within the cohort:

“ One girl was sensitive to sound, and was also only girl in the group. She didn't return after the first session and we felt this was more than likely because she **was intimidated by group of confident, able boys.**

- Music Leader

# 13. Conclusions and recommendations

- The survey findings indicate a strong performance across the intended programme outcomes. This is especially true in relation to musical communication, self-expression, self-efficacy and motivation
- The proportion of participants reporting that ArtsTrain has had a large influence on their decision to continue with music making (48%) is also significant; indicating that the experiences they have been provided with are central to their onward progression journeys (i.e. we can be confident that the progression is attributable to ArtsTrain)
- This indicates that the inclusive environment and bespoke approaches created by ArtsTrain practitioners is likely to be central to participants feeling supported, enabling them to progress within and beyond the sessions
- While it is difficult to make claims about how outcomes are causally related to each other (i.e. we don't know if the findings relating to self-efficacy and motivation (i.e. wellbeing) are created because of the more learning-focused outcomes being achieved, or vice-versa), the fact that such significant positive changes were achieved across all dimensions does give us confidence that these outcomes are correlated (i.e. it is likely that positive changes in one outcome are linked to the others)
- Future project design and evaluation should include opportunities for additional qualitative research to take place to explore this further, possibly incorporating a qualitative research element to explore causality
- The positive findings reported here indicate that the ArtsTrain model is highly effective at engaging and developing children and young people from a range of backgrounds, however more could be done to clearly understand and articulate the successful aspects of the model to partners and stakeholders (i.e. what are the specific aspects of delivery that are more and less successful with different groups?)
- It is recommended that partners are engaged in this process in future delivery with regular data capture around what is done differently within ArtsTrain sessions over and above 'normal' delivery. Our evaluation shows positive results at the whole group level, but these are likely to be different among sub-groups and when related to specific needs and barriers.

# Appendix

## Breakdown of ArtsTrain projects and partners

Project / Partner	Borough	Project dates	Organisational type	Project type	No. of young people taking part	No. of workshops
LSEC - Midfield Campus	Bromley	Sept 17-Dec 17	Educational Establishments	Formal	5	10
LSEC - BBA Orpington	Bromley	Sept 17-Dec 17	Educational Establishments	Formal	11	10
Erith School	Bexley	Jan 18-April 18	Educational Establishments	Formal	7	10
LSEC - Bexley College	Bexley	Jan 18-April 18	Educational Establishments	Formal	26	10
ArtsTrain Academy Bromley	Bromley	Jan 18-Jan 19	Arts organisations	Informal	10	35
ArtsTrain Academy Bexley	Bexley	Jan 18-Jan 19	Arts organisations	Informal	8	35
Lewisham Live/ The Albany	Lewisham	Jan 18- April 18	Arts organisations	Informal	16	10
CASPA	Bromley	Feb-18	Health/Wellbeing	Informal	29	8
MENCAP	Bromley	Feb-18	Health/Wellbeing	Informal	14	3
Chislehurst Girls School	Bromley	Apr-18	Educational Establishments	Formal	15	4
Chislehurst & Sidcup School	Bexley	Apr-18; July-18	Educational Establishments	Formal	7	14
Bromley College	Bromley	Apr-18	Educational Establishments	Formal	15	10
London Jazz Festival Collective	Bromley	Jun-18	Educational Establishments	Informal	20	18
Jus B Youth Organisation	Bromley	Nov-17-Aug 18	Health/Wellbeing	Informal	8	20
Looked After Children Service Bromley	Bromley	Jul-18	Health/Wellbeing	Formal	15	6
Looked After Children Service Bexley	Bexley	Aug-18	Health/Wellbeing	Formal	16	10
Bromley and Downham Youth Centre	Bromley	Oct 18-Dec 18	Health/Wellbeing	Informal	13	11
Langley School for Girls	Bromley	Nov 18 - Jan 19	Educational Establishments	Formal	21	18
Leisure Care	Bromley	April 18-Dec 18	Health/Wellbeing	Informal	24	20
Langley School for Girls – Wellbeing day	Bromley	Feb-19	Educational Establishments	Formal	19	10
Eden Park High School	Bromley	Feb -April 19	Educational Establishments	Formal	29	6
Beths Grammar School	Bexley	Feb -April 20	Educational Establishments	Formal	21	10
CASPA 2019	Bromley	Feb-19	Health/Wellbeing	Informal	22	6
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>294</b>

# Credits

## Written and prepared by

Joshua Dedman & Dr Douglas Lonie, BOP Consulting

**BOP**  
Consulting

—  
**BOP**  
Consulting

**BOP Consulting** is an international consultancy specialising in culture and the creative economy.

BOP convenes the **World Cities Culture Forum** (WCCF), an international network of more than 35 cities. [www.worldcitiescultureforum.com](http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com)

**London**

3 – 5 St John Street, London, EC1M 4AA

**Edinburgh**

16 Young Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4 JB

**Shanghai**

213 – 214, No. 585 Fuxing Middle Road,  
Shanghai 200025, China

**Web**

[www.bop.co.uk](http://www.bop.co.uk)

**Twitter**

@BOP\_Consulting

**Blog**

[www.bop.co.uk/articles](http://www.bop.co.uk/articles)