

Evaluation of a Voices Foundation Primer in Primary Schools

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Evaluation of a Voices Foundation primer in primary schools

Executive Summary

Introduction

Music education has an important role in contributing towards society's needs in relation to the culture industries and the continued development of active and constructive participation in musical activities. In addition to its role in developing musical skills many claims have been made regarding the benefits of music education in relation to a range of transferable skills.

The Government pledged in its election Manifesto and in the White Paper "Schools Achieving Success", that over time, all primary school pupils who wanted to should have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. This is part of the commitment that primary school pupils should experience a broad and rich curriculum, with opportunities for sporting and cultural achievement, alongside achieving high standards in literacy and numeracy. The Voices Foundation programme is intended to act as a complement to these instrumental pilots by allowing the investigation of the impact of a primarily vocal programme on schools.

The Voices Foundation is a national music education charity that has been working with primary schools on whole class vocal teaching for over ten years. The Singing Schools Programme for Primary Schools is designed to provide the training and support needed to help each teacher in the school, whatever his/her previous experience, to teach music as s/he teaches other areas of the curriculum by:

- using a planning and teaching programme to which most teachers can readily relate and which is in line with general primary school practices;
- setting levels of expectation which are high, realistic and practicable;
- providing the resources and advisory teacher support which facilitate and stimulate good music teaching practices; and
- achieving a level of musical skill which instills confidence and releases innovative teaching approaches.

The programme is targeted at all the teachers in schools, the intention being to enable them to teach music as they teach everything else in the curriculum. By working closely with the Curriculum Leader(s) for Music in the school, the programme also aims to provide subsequent sustainability in the music curriculum when the programme has been completed. The Voices Foundation programme is normally two years, but a specially designed one year programme is the subject of this evaluation. It offers a whole school programme involving all teaching staff and consists of:

- whole school in-service training;
- the support of trained advisory teachers; and
- additional training for curriculum leaders to ensure long-term sustainability.

The one year programme culminates in a 'showcase' event at which all classes share the work they have done in the course of the year.

Objectives of the current research

The evaluation concerned itself with two broad but interrelated impacts of the project:

- the impact on the teaching of music; and
- the impact on the performance and development of the school as a whole.

Methodology

The research was conducted in three phases.

During phase 1 contact was made with Local Authorities (LAs) and schools. Questionnaires were distributed to head teachers, music co-ordinators, teachers and classroom assistants, and pupils participating in the project. A checklist was developed to be used by teachers to assess the musical development of a sample of pupils deemed to be of different levels of attainment at the start of the pilot. Video recordings were made of lessons to enable comparison of change across the time span of the project. Interviews were undertaken with LA representatives.

During phase 2 of the research telephone interviews were undertaken with a sample of participating teachers, LA representatives and music co-ordinators to assess how they felt they were progressing at the mid-point of the year.

In Phase 3 of the research the materials used in Phase 1 were re-administered to assess the level of change. Not all of the previous respondents completed the questionnaires at the end of the primer. Questionnaires were distributed to school governors and parents. Videos were undertaken of classes. Interviews were undertaken with head teachers, and music co-ordinators.

The questionnaire findings are based on responses from 10 music co-ordinators, 12 head teachers, 70 teachers, 22 teaching assistants, 51 parents, 30 school governors, 695 children in Key Stage 1 (KS1) and 1583 children in Key Stage 2 (KS2).

Interviews prior to the programme being implemented were undertaken with the 3 LA co-ordinators, these were followed up by mid term interviews and post interviews with two of the three. Mid-term interviews were undertaken with 30 teachers. At the end of the school year interviews were undertaken with 11 music co-ordinators, and 9 head teachers.

Implementation of the primer

LAs selected schools to participate in the primer in a variety of ways. The LA co-ordinators viewed the training as beneficial for primary school teachers who lacked musical skills. After the original selection of schools, the LAs had little involvement in the primer.

The reasons given for school participation varied. Some head teachers wished to support the Voices Foundation as they had heard positive reports of the Foundation's

work. Most head teachers and music co-ordinators wished to strengthen the teaching of music in the school or to reduce reliance on the music co-ordinator and encourage class teachers to teach music to their classes themselves. In some schools there was a desire to enhance the curriculum and provide a balance to the current emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There was a general wish to enhance teachers' confidence, improve singing in the school and raise the profile of music.

The training

Overall, the training was generally well received and perceived as very effective. Through it staff developed knowledge of musical concepts, rhythm, pulse and pitch and practical singing skills. There were, however, a number of concerns. There were some reservations about the timing of the training. Staff did not like its provision at weekends, and for a substantial proportion of staff long sessions inhibited learning as did twilight sessions when staff were tired. In some cases teachers felt that the groups were too large and that this reduced their opportunities to ask questions and created stress when they had to sing individually. There was concern that KS1 staff were learning materials that they would never be able to use and it was suggested that KS1 and KS2 training should be separate.

For a substantial proportion of teachers the training process was daunting. They were fearful of singing for others and in some cases this was traumatic. Many teachers experienced difficulties in remembering the songs as the training was reported as too intense. Teachers expressed concern about establishing the appropriate pitch for singing in class and several teachers wanted clarification about which songs focused on which musical elements. Later training sessions were perceived as too difficult for non-musicians.

The role of the advisory teachers

The work of the advisory teachers was valued and their feedback was seen as supportive and helpful by the majority of teachers. Despite the emphasis on instilling confidence, for a substantial proportion of staff the process was still anxiety provoking. A few indicated that there were too many observation sessions and that there was no time for development between them. Termly rather than half-termly sessions were suggested. Where there were problems with the observation process the Voices Foundation was responsive and quickly addressed the issues. More opportunities to observe the advisory teachers teaching were requested and there were suggestions that a video outlining the nature of the primer would have been useful to introduce staff to the principles in advance of it starting.

The materials

The materials were well received by the majority of staff, although they were considered as being more suitable for younger pupils than older ones. A number of teachers thought that the songs were very similar, that their structures were simplistic, that they were dated, and that the content of some was inappropriate. There were also concerns that the order of materials was different in the book and on the CD. Teachers and music co-ordinators expressed concerns about progression. All children learned the same songs which were not differentiated by age.

Prior to the implementation of the Voices Foundation primer, in several schools, the music requirements of the National Curriculum were reported to be not being fully met. While the primer related well to the National Curriculum and satisfied most of its requirements concerns were expressed about the relative neglect of composing, listening and appraising and the lack of coverage of different genres, world musics and the use of instruments. Where schools had a strong tradition of instrumental tuition this was perceived as particularly important. The philosophy of the Voices Foundation is that the voice is the most appropriate medium for young children to develop aural skills as the children make the sounds themselves. In addition, the nature of the 'one year starter programme' based upon 'a carefully structured sequence of skills and concepts' inevitably restricted the number of possible learning outcomes and musical activities which could be engaged with.

There was variability in the extent to which the primer fitted with existing music activities. In some schools integration was no problem, in others existing practices were abandoned or the match was incompatible and non-musician teachers experienced stress in trying to deal with conflicting information.

The extent to which the materials were seen to integrate into the wider curriculum varied. A few teachers commented on the positive links with PE through movement, while others expressed concern that the songs did not link with particular topic work which they were undertaking with their classes.

Sustainability

Issues relating to sustainability included the turnover of staff in schools, and funding. Many schools did not have the resources to continue the training. Several indicated that one year of training was sufficient and that other curriculum areas needed to be addressed in subsequent years, some schools were continuing with the programme with a reduced level of support.

Transferability

While staff felt that the primer could be successful in any primary school they cautioned that it required total commitment from the head teacher and the staff and that it was very demanding of staff time. That time commitment was seen as worthwhile.

Evaluation by head teachers and music co-ordinators

All of the head teachers and music co-ordinators felt that the primer was well organised and that it had changed and improved music teaching in the school. Of the eight head teachers who responded to the rating scale element of the questionnaire all agreed or strongly agreed that the training was successful in helping the teachers improve their music teaching, that the music teaching in the school had changed, and that the materials had been integrated with previous musical activity. Seven of the eight indicated that the impact was sustainable in the long term and that the primer would be able to be implemented successfully elsewhere.

Seven music co-ordinators responded to the rating scale elements of the questionnaire. All agreed or strongly agreed that the training was successful in helping teachers to improve their music teaching, that the training materials were helpful, and that the primer had changed the way that music was taught in the school. Six out of seven agreed or strongly agreed that the primer materials integrated successfully with previous musical activity and with the National Curriculum, that the primer would have a long term impact, that it was sustainable in the long term, and that it would be able to be implemented successfully elsewhere.

Impact on teachers and teaching

Participation in the primer had a positive impact on teacher confidence in relation to teaching music and singing for the majority of teachers. Questionnaire responses from 19 teachers indicated that following the primer 79% were confident in teaching music to their class, 95% enjoyed teaching music, 74% were confident that they could sing well enough to teach music to their class, and 75% liked teaching music.

The 19 teachers responding all agreed that the training had been successful in helping them to improve their music teaching. 90% indicated that the training materials were helpful, 85% that the music teaching in school had changed as a result of the primer, 70% that the materials had been integrated with previous musical activity in the school, 75% that materials had been integrated successfully with the National Curriculum, 85% that that the primer had changed the way that they taught music and 90% that the primer would have a long term impact on music teaching in the school. 85% thought that the impact would be sustainable in the long term and 65% that it could be successfully implemented elsewhere.

For a few teachers, particularly those who experienced difficulties in singing in tune, the training and subsequent observations were stressful. The primer enhanced teachers' knowledge of key concepts and increased the repertoire of songs available to them. Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) particularly valued the experience. The primer resulted in music being taught more frequently, and often spontaneously within the class, for short periods of time. Teachers reported enjoying teaching music more. In Year 6 there were difficulties in maintaining the level of music tuition recommended by the primer in an examination year. While the overall evaluations were generally positive, teachers had concerns about pitching at the start of songs.

Analysis of the video recordings showed great variability in the quality of teaching and singing prior to the Voices Foundation programme. Evaluation by an Ofsted inspector demonstrated no statistically significant improvements in teaching or singing as a result of engagement with the programme, although evaluations by a teacher trainer did show some statistically significant improvements. Rating of the videos by a voices expert showed significant improvement in the quality of the children's singing.

Staff reported that the primer had raised their awareness of musical issues and led to greater discussion and consideration of their music teaching.

Impact on pupils

There were substantial improvements in pupils' confidence in singing and performing. Of the 19 teachers completing the questionnaire following the primer, 96% agreed that the pupils in their class enjoyed their music lessons, 95% that they enjoyed singing, 91% that they were confident in their music lessons, 82% that they had a well developed range of musical skills, 82% that they performed well, 87% that they had well developed listening skills, 96% that they loved music, 95% that they had positive attitudes towards music but only 32% that they had a well developed range of strategies for composition.

Teachers reported substantial improvements in pupils' confidence in singing and performing. Pupils enjoyed the singing activities and there were examples of them spontaneously singing in the play-ground. The quality of singing improved. The children demonstrated greater understanding of key musical concepts.

The questionnaire data revealed few statistically significant changes in the pupils' attitudes towards music following the primer. At KS1, there was a reduction in the percentage of children stating that school music was boring from 25% to 17%. At KS2, there was a negative change in pupils reporting that they liked doing music out of school from a mean of 4 to 3.8 and a reduction in enjoying class music lessons from a mean of 4.1 to a mean of 4. There was also a reduction in children's perceptions of their parents thinking that they were good at singing from 4 to 3.9.

Parents and governors were overwhelmingly positive in their evaluations of the impact of the primer on the musical skills of the children.

The assessment of change in musical skills undertaken by teachers in relation to children perceived to be low, moderate or high in musical attainment at the start of the primer showed statistically significant improvement across all elements. The greatest levels of improvement were seen in the low and moderately attaining children.

Behaviour and attitudes towards school

The primer did not appear to have any impact on the behaviour of the children outside of music lessons, partly because behaviour was already good. In music lessons, children were reported to be more focused, although there were exceptions. Some teachers indicated that listening skills may have improved and others pointed to enhanced self-esteem.

School ethos and community

The status of music had been raised in participating schools and a sense of community had developed because all staff and children were working on the same programme. There was some indication that the profile of some schools may have been enhanced in the community. The celebratory performances played a key role in this.

Conclusions

The Voices Foundation primer can be effective in improving music teaching in primary schools, particularly in the early years, providing that the senior management team in the school and the staff are committed to it, prepared to invest the necessary time and the teachers do not perceive themselves as 'tone deaf' and have an insurmountable fear of singing. Where teachers already have considerable musical knowledge and skills the benefits are small. The cost of the programme in its current form puts it beyond the means of many small schools and a slimmed down programme which is less intense may be more cost effective. Differentiation by key stage would also assist in reducing costs. There are issues relating to progression, the development of materials more attractive and challenging for the older students, and the need to develop ways of addressing all of the elements of the national curriculum.

Chapter 1: Background and aims

This chapter sets out the contribution that engaging with music can make to children's development, provides a description of the aims of the programme and outlines the objectives of the research.

1. The role and benefits of music education

Music education has an important role in contributing towards society's needs in relation to the culture industries and the continued development of active and constructive participation in musical activities. In addition to its role in developing musical skills many claims have been made regarding the benefits of music education in relation to a range of transferable skills. One strand of research has explored the effects of music on intellectual skills. This has proved extremely controversial. Research which claimed that listening to Mozart could improve spatial reasoning (Rauscher et al., 1995) has proved difficult to replicate (Chabris, 1999; Hetland, 2000). Studies of the effects of using the Kodaly method on other skills have had mixed results (Hurwitz et al., 1975), although music lessons designed to develop auditory, visual and motor skills have benefited reading skills (Douglas and Willatts, 1994). Learning to play a musical instrument has been shown to produce small temporary effects on spatial reasoning but not on other aspects of cognitive functioning (Rauscher et al., 1997; Costa-Giomi, 1999; Hetland, 2000).

Studies exploring the effects of increasing the amount of classroom music within the curriculum have found that children receiving extra music lessons kept up with their peers in language and reading skills despite having fewer lessons although there were differences between high and low ability groups (Spychiger, et al., 1993). Research using correlational techniques has investigated the effects of taking arts subjects on overall examination results. While taking music was positively related to better performance in other subjects this does not necessarily mean that it was the cause of it (Harland et al., 2000). From our current level of knowledge it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about the effects of listening to or active involvement in music making on other intellectual skills. The jury remains out (Overy, 1998; Staines, 1999; Hallam, 2001).

There are, however, demonstrable positive effects of involvement with music on children's personal and social development. Children receiving additional or regular classroom music lessons have shown increased social cohesion within class, greater self-reliance, better social adjustment and more positive attitudes. These effects are particularly marked in low ability, disaffected pupils (Spychiger, et al., 1993; Hanshumaker, 1980). Children of low economic status receiving individual piano lessons have exhibited increases in self-esteem compared with controls (Costa-Giomi, 1999). There is some evidence that involvement in music can increase social inclusion (Ings et al., 2000). A UK study of the impact of the arts in education (Harland, 1998, 2000) also showed that the most frequent overall influences on pupils were reported in relation to personal and social development. In music there were perceived effects relating to awareness of others, social skills, well being, and transfer effects. Variations in response between schools related to the degree of musical knowledge and experience that the pupils brought to the school curriculum. Some students

perceived the benefits of music classes in being listening to music and the development of musical skills while others referred to the sheer fun and therapeutic nature of music, how it gave them confidence to perform in front of others, how it facilitated group work, and how it enabled them to learn to express themselves. Those who played instruments mentioned an increase in self-esteem and sense of identity.

Research with instrumental music teachers supports these findings. They believe that the benefits of learning to play an instrument include the development of social skills, gaining a love and enjoyment of music, developing team-work, developing a sense of achievement, confidence and self-discipline, and developing physical co-ordination (Hallam and Prince, 2000). Other major national reports on the arts have emphasised their importance in developing a range of transferable skills including those related to creativity and critical thinking (NACCCE, 1999). Playing an instrument also enables the pursuit of interesting and rewarding social and leisure activities. Given the importance and range of these benefits it is important that as many children as possible are provided with the opportunity to learn.

2. Background to the programme

The Government pledged in its election Manifesto and in the White Paper "Schools Achieving Success", that over time, all primary school pupils who wanted to should have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. This is part of the commitment that primary school pupils should experience a broad and rich curriculum, with opportunities for sporting and cultural achievement, alongside achieving high standards in literacy and numeracy. The DfES and Youth Music supported 12 Local Education Authority pilots to test models of delivering wider instrumental opportunities in primary schools. Ofsted evaluated the projects and their evaluation report - "Tuning In" was launched at the Barbican on 3 March 2004 when 600 pupils from each of the pilot areas performed to a packed house. The Ofsted report was also produced in a DVD format, and copies were sent to every school in England. The Voices Foundation programme acts as a complement to these instrumental pilots by allowing the investigation of the impact of a primarily vocal programme on schools.

The Voices Foundation is a national music education charity that has been working with primary schools on whole class vocal teaching for over ten years. Since its establishment in 1993, the Foundation has worked with approximately 7,000 pupils and 300 teachers and has sold a range of singing-based music courses and programmes to primary schools and teachers throughout the country. Programmes are based on a singing-based approach developed by the Hungarian music educator, Zoltan Kodaly, and linked to the music National Curriculum by enhancing singing, listening and "thinking" skills, as well as the understanding and knowledge of musical concepts. A stated aim of the Voices Foundation is: *'To enable all children to realise their full potential through a singing based music curriculum, and to influence national perception of the vital importance of music in education.'* The 'dynamic and unique programme methodology' involves every teacher and every child in a primary school for at least one year. The Foundation argues that it has been shown that through the teaching methods adopted, which focus on the whole child's development, many of these schools have been helped to improve academic results dramatically through raising the children's self-esteem and communication skills. The Singing

Schools Programme for Primary Schools is designed to provide the training and support needed to help each teacher in the school, whatever his/her previous experience, to teach music as s/he teaches other areas of the curriculum by:

- using a planning and teaching programme to which most teachers can readily relate and which is in line with general primary school practices;
- setting levels of expectation which are high, realistic and practicable;
- providing the resources and advisory teacher support which facilitate and stimulate good music teaching practices; and
- achieving a level of musical skill which instills confidence and releases innovative teaching approaches.

The Programme aims to help pupils achieve a high standard of musicianship by:

- making use of a rich and accessible repertoire of vocal material from which many of the learning objectives are derived;
- enabling pupils to acquire those music skills and concepts which enable aural development and a progression of learning to take place, appropriate to the age and stage of the pupils;
- recognising the crucial role of the voice as a medium for personal response and performing capability; and
- encouraging pupil motivation so that pupils take their own initiatives and are comfortable when working independently of the teacher.

The programme is targeted at all the teachers in the schools, the intention being to enable them to teach music as they teach everything else in the curriculum. By working closely with the Curriculum Leader(s) for Music in the school, the programme also aims to provide subsequent sustainability in the music curriculum when the programme has been completed. Curriculum development within a skill concept-based programme of this kind is a lengthy process. With a Singing Schools programme which is only for one year, the experience of the Voices Foundation has been that teacher and pupil progress in a second year is markedly greater. The programme is linked to the National Curriculum Repertoire and includes an "international" repertoire of songs.

The one year programme which is the subject of the evaluation involved sixteen schools, recruited by the Voices Foundation. It offered a whole school programme involving all teaching staff and consisted of:

- whole school in-service training;
- the support of trained advisory teachers; and
- additional training for curriculum leaders to ensure long-term sustainability.

The one year programme culminated in a 'showcase' event at which all classes shared the work that they had done in the course of the year.

The work in schools took place over a one-year period from September 2004 and involved 16 primary schools. The Voices Foundation, with the approval of the DfES recruited three LAs to take part in the programme: one each from an inner city, urban and rural location. A total of 16 schools were included varying from 4 to 6 in each LA, selected in collaboration with the Local Authority and local Music Service. All participating schools were maintained primary schools in England. They included schools with established music traditions and those looking to develop a programme of musical activities for the first time. There was a mix of some relatively affluent and

a majority of more disadvantaged schools representing a range of schools in terms of their National Curriculum Test results and Ofsted Section 10 reports.

3. Objectives of the current research

The evaluation concerned itself with two broad but interrelated impacts of the project:

- the impact on the teaching of music; and
- the impact on the performance and development of the school as a whole.

It sought to assess the impact of the one-year project on:

Teaching of music including:

- pupils' musical development;
- pupils' attitude to music in schools, to active music-making and to singing in particular (including gender-specific outcomes); and
- teachers' confidence / ability to teach music;

Whole school development including:

- teachers' confidence / ability to teach across the curriculum in general;
- pupils' personal development – including motivation, behaviour, social skills, confidence, self-discipline and self-esteem;
- as far as can be judged within one year, pupils' attainment across other areas of the curriculum;
- the way the school is perceived – by the head teacher, parents, governors, staff and pupils;
- effective integration with existing schools and LA music activities;
- effective integration with the national curriculum;
- value for money;
- effective management and organisation;
- replicability of elements of, and /or the whole programme;
- a clear exit strategy; and
- legacy.

The focus of the research was measuring the impact of the Voices Foundation's work in schools with no previous experience of their work. All the schools selected to take part were new to the programme. The research also aimed to identify any other additional factors in the schools that may have had an impact on the success of the programme.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This chapter sets out the methodology of the research. The research was conducted in three phases.

2. Research design

2.1 Phase 1

During phase 1 of the research contact was made with the three LAs and the sixteen schools. A range of baseline data was collected. Questionnaires were distributed to head teachers, music co-ordinators, teachers and classroom assistants, and pupils participating in the project. A checklist was developed to be used by teachers to assess the musical development of a sample of pupils deemed to be of different levels of attainment at the start of the pilot. Video recordings were made of lessons in Phase 1 of the research to enable comparison of change across the time span of the project. Staff taking part in the video recordings were asked to set out the aims of the lesson to be taught, their experience of teaching music, and following the recording their assessment of the lesson itself. The videos were analysed using schedules derived from those used in teacher training and by Ofsted.

2.2 Phase 2

During phase 2 of the research telephone interviews were undertaken with a sample of participating teachers from the sixteen participating schools to assess how they felt they were progressing at the mid-point of the year. The telephone interviews addressed issues relating to:

- progress in implementing the methods learned;
- levels of confidence in teaching;
- the nature of the musical activities being engaged in;
- the extent to which this may have influenced their teaching in other areas of the curriculum; and
- the extent to which relationships with pupils were enhanced through the shared engagement with music.

2.3 Phase 3

In Phase 3 of the research the materials used in Phase 1 were re-administered to assess the level of change. This included the questionnaires for head teachers, teachers and pupils in the sixteen schools. Not all those completing questionnaires during Phase 1 of the research also did so in Phase 3. Teachers were asked to complete the schedules assessing the musical attainment of the 6 children in their class for whom they had completed pre-intervention schedules. Some changes were made to the post – intervention questionnaires to explore perceptions of the implementation of the programme itself.

Those members of staff who agreed to be videoed were recorded again in this phase of the research and comparisons made with their teaching and the performance of the pupils in the previous recordings. These teachers were interviewed as in Phase 1 of

the research. In Phase 3 of the research more teachers were willing to be filmed while teaching but the sample was not the same as in Phase 1. Only a limited number of the same teachers were observed twice.

2.3.1 Interview schedules for head teachers and music co-ordinators

Where possible brief interviews were undertaken with head teachers in the sixteen schools to provide greater insights into the impact of the programme. The open questions from the questionnaires were used as the basis for discussion. Head teachers who were interviewed were not asked to complete the open questions in the questionnaire. Their responses were restricted to those which provided a numerical evaluation of the impact of the project. Similar interviews were undertaken with a sample of music co-ordinators. These focused on the impact of the training on teachers and the sustainability of the changes in the longer term.

2.3.2 Questionnaires for parents and governors

Questionnaires were distributed to parents and governors in the sixteen schools by the school to assess their reactions to the intervention and the impact it had on the school. These questionnaires were very short. They addressed issues relating to their perceptions of the impact of the intervention on:

- the musical development of the children;
- the musical life of the school;
- their involvement in the musical life of the school;
- the confidence of the teachers in relation to teaching music;
- the children's confidence and self-esteem;
- the children's concentration and motivation in general;
- the children's social, emotional and behavioural skills;
- the ethos of the school; and
- public perception of the school.

2.4 The sample

The questionnaire findings reported here are based on responses from 10 music co-ordinators, 12 head teachers, 70 teachers, 22 teaching assistants, 51 parents, 30 school governors and the 3 LEA co-ordinators.

Questionnaire responses prior to the programme being implemented were received from 600 Key Stage 1 children in 13 schools. Of these 287 boys (51%) and 275 (49%) girls completed responses relating to gender. Of those responding to a question about age, there were 53 (9%) 4 year olds, 154 (28%) 5 year olds, 282 (50%) 6 years olds and 72 (13%) 7 year olds. Fewer questionnaires were received following the implementation of the programme. Where statistical comparisons were made between pre and post responses they were based on the 212 children who completed both pre and post questionnaires. Overall, responses were received from 695 KS1 children.

At Key Stage 2, data were obtained from 13 schools. A total of 1504 pupils responded. 377 (25%) from Year 3, 362 (24%) from year 4, 395 (26%) from Year 5 and 367 (24%) from Year 6. There were 722 (48%) girls and 744 (50%) boys with 2% not declaring their gender. Of these pupils 641 (43%) played a musical instrument,

860 (57%) reported that they did not. The number of post programme questionnaires received was 692. Where statistical comparisons were made between pre and post responses they were based on 600 children who completed both pre and post questionnaires. Overall, 1583 KS2 children completed questionnaires.

Interviews prior to the programme being implemented were undertaken with the 3 LA co-ordinators, these were followed up by mid term interviews and post interviews with two of the three (the third LA co-ordinator indicated that there was nothing to add to the first interview). Mid-term interviews were undertaken with 30 teachers. At the end of the school year interviews were undertaken with 11 music co-ordinators, and 9 head teachers.

2.5 Analysis of the data

The analysis focused on change brought about as a result of the intervention. Change was examined in relation to the questionnaire data, the checklist of children's musical development, and the evaluative schedules of the video recordings. Rigorous repeated measures statistical techniques were adopted, where sample sizes were sufficiently large, to assess whether any change observed could have occurred by chance. SPSS was used to analyse the data. These analyses were supplemented by the data derived from interviews with teachers and head teachers. In addition, descriptive statistics were provided for the post-intervention evaluations.

Chapter 3: The implementation of the Voices Foundation primer

This chapter describes how the Voices Foundation programme was experienced by the LA co-ordinators, head teachers, school music co-ordinators and teachers. It considers the LA perspective, the expectations of schools, and the possible benefits of school involvement with the programme. There is a focus on perceptions of the training programme, the work of the advisory teachers and the teaching observations that they undertook, the programme's materials, the scope within the materials for progression, and how the materials integrated with the National Curriculum, existing music activities and other areas of the curriculum. The extent to which the programme was seen as sustainable in the long term is considered and the ease with which it would transfer to other schools. The overall evaluations of head teachers and music co-ordinators are reported.

3.1 The Local Authority perspective

The way in which schools were selected to take part in the project was variable. In one LA all schools were given the opportunity to take part through attendance at the training course. In this LA, the response from schools was so great that there was a reserve list for places. In another LA schools were selected to be representative of different pupil populations:

'We selected to give three completely different schools. There is one with a big ethnic mix and there's one where children all come out of one housing estate. Two have difficulties but one is fine.' (LA co-ordinator)

The LAs were pleased to be offered free training opportunities for teachers:

'We have got in effect 28 teachers who come in, including the six schools so we have got 22 extra teachers for five days training free of charge which is stunning. We say we are working in partnership with Voices Foundation to encourage people to participate.' (LA co-ordinator)

The scale of the training was seen to be beneficial:

'All music co-ordinators have come to a five-day course which has given them a lot of support and backing. There is every sense that this will be beneficial in the longer term as teachers start to explore these ideas.' (LA co-ordinator)

Once the programme was being implemented in the schools, the LAs were somewhat distant from its operation. Some had provided funding and continued to act as a conduit for communications, while others provided accommodation for training. The initial contact between LA personnel and the Voices Foundation advisory teachers was reported as limited but increased as the project progressed and was reported to be excellent, overall.

3.2 School expectations of the Voices Foundation Programme

A few head teachers indicated that they had engaged with the project because they wished to support the Voices Foundation and *'the good work that it does'*. Others had heard positive reports about the work of the Voices Foundation and were keen to develop skills and knowledge of the teaching of singing in staff.

One school reported that the programme filled a gap because of the difficulties that they had in receiving instrumental tuition because of their remote location. For some schools there was a high priority for taking action as the school had failed an Ofsted inspection.

All participating head teachers wanted to strengthen the teaching of music across the school. For some it was the music-co-ordinator leaving or the possibility that this might happen that had pre-empted engagement with the project:

'The school lacks expertise in music, our former music co-ordinator left the school recently. Few teachers have music training or can play an instrument but we all have a voice.' (Head teacher)

Some head teachers were concerned that all of their staff should be able to deliver the music curriculum. This was perceived as increasing the likelihood of cross curricula links being made. There were also concerns about enhancing the curriculum in general, *'giving balance, breadth and creativity.'* Others felt that it would:

'Fill a gap in our curriculum – that it would inspire, energise, stimulate creativity in staff and pupils and in doing so support learning and the enjoyment of it.' (Head teacher)

Some head teachers reported that the project would fit in with other current school initiatives in developing children's self-esteem and confidence. In some of the schools there was a tradition of musical activity and the programme was being engaged with to enhance this:

'We firmly believe in the creative curriculum which is cohesive and allows all children to work to their strengths. Individual music tuition is being offered for violin and flute. All the children learn the recorders and drums. Our music co-ordinator is very experienced and enthusiastic.' (Head teacher)

In some schools, the Voices Foundation programme was perceived as a way to specifically improve singing skills in teachers with the aim of improving their teaching of singing, developing a love of singing in the children, giving every child in the school an opportunity to find his/her voice, improving singing intonation, enhancing the quantity and quality of singing and enabling the school to become *'a singing school.'*

3.2.1 Music co-ordinators' perceptions of the possible benefits of involvement with the project

The most commonly reported perceived benefits for music co-ordinators of becoming engaged with the project related to increased confidence for teachers, increased levels of musical activity in the school, a better quality of music teaching and being able to deliver the national curriculum in music more effectively. Providing teachers with support for teaching music was a key aim along with increasing their confidence so that teachers would know what each child should be learning at each stage. This it was hoped would raise standards and develop enjoyment and enthusiasm for music, although a few responses focused specifically on singing as opposed to music. For some schools the project was seen as a means of raising the profile of music in the school and developing a range of enjoyable activities:

'Raising the profile of music with the staff in the school. Enjoy doing music with their class – fun and enjoyable for all involved. Raise the community spirit and self-esteem of the children.' (Music co-ordinator)

3.3 The training programme

All of the LA representatives suggested that the training and support for schools offered by the Voices Foundation programme was very effective. Overall evaluations were positive some LA co-ordinators indicating that they wished *'every school could have it.'* Early feedback on the programme was favourable:

'The initial feedback is stunning. Everybody is thrilled with the training. There are some very good practical ideas. The teachers are really looking forward to the next one. There has been huge support and delight in the project.' (LA co-ordinator)

Schools were very positive about the way that staff were enthusiastic about the training, trying out ideas and undertaking practical activities with their classes. The way that the children responded encouraged and enthused staff to greater efforts. Music co-ordinators described how staff were able to introduce specific concepts:

'Staff are now using a repertoire of songs and are exploring ideas of thinking voices, pulse, rhythm, tempo, pitch and dynamics.' (Music co-ordinator)

Teachers felt that they had learned some songs that they could use and had increased their understanding of music. Learning a repertoire of songs to teach was important to many teachers. Teachers were looking for ideas, enthusiasm and inspiration. They also wanted to develop expertise in relation to teaching in ways more appropriate to their year groups which were technically more accurate. A few teachers expected that they would be taught to teach musical notation and expressed a desire to learn more interesting songs. Particular strengths relating to the training early on were the provision of resources, suggestions of specific goals to work towards and suggestions of how to meet them. Some specific aspects also received comment:

'Explaining about children's voices and the need to 'find' a voice. Emphasis on the different skills that can be learned through singing.' (Teacher)

Generally, the ongoing training was well received. Teaching the teachers to sing the songs themselves was beneficial as it gave them the confidence to teach them, more confident than they would have been from listening to a CD. Most teachers seemed happy with the extent of the training. Overall, they felt that they had gained in confidence and were empowered to plan and implement the music curriculum more effectively structuring a course of work with progression from one step to another.

Although the teachers were generally happy with the training provided there were some reservations.

3.3.1 Timing and length

Teachers reported that they were not happy with the timing of the training. In some cases the sessions were spaced too far apart during the first term and too close together in the second. Weekend training was not welcomed. Several teachers commented that the full day training required too much to be learnt at once and that half-day sessions were better. Where the training was at the end of the school day teachers reported being too tired to learn effectively.

3.3.2 Size of groups

Teachers reported issues relating to the number of staff being trained in any one session. Where groups were very large some teachers felt inhibited from asking questions because they feared being made to look foolish.

3.3.3 Focus

Teachers suggested that training should be focused on particular Key Stages. There was concern that teachers were learning things that they would not be able to use in the classroom:

'I think that incorporating foundation stage, KS1 and KS2 has been too much. I think perhaps that some separate sessions would have been useful.' (Head teacher)

Several teachers felt that the training could have been more focused and took too long for what was learned. Difficulties were also expressed in remembering all the songs and actions after the training was over, although generally, teachers felt that it was useful to be taught to sing the songs and do the actions.

3.3.4 Fear of singing

An issue very specific to this programme as opposed to others enhancing the teaching of music was teachers' fears about the nature of the training and having to sing aloud in front of other adults.

'People just didn't like the environment and having to sing in front of colleagues and they found it very threatening. It is a big thing to overcome.' (Teacher)

Teachers expressed concerns about the quality of their own singing, although many overcame their initial fears:

'Started off singing very quietly and feeling silly. Overcame this by letting my guard down knowing everyone was in the same boat'. (Teacher)

'On the day training session I felt out of my 'comfort zone' but decided to give it 100% effort and try to enjoy day.' (Teacher)

However, not all overcame the difficulties:

'The training was not effective at all. I find it very intimidating, embarrassing and down-right scary. I do not like performing and singing in public. I have not overcome these fears. I feel it is impossible to implement the training as it is too stressful.' (Teacher)

3.3.5 Memorising the materials

Teachers expressed difficulties in learning and remembering the songs and movements. There was a perception that there was too much to be learned in a short space of time. Even those with musical training indicated that it was difficult to retain all of the music learned in one day. Teachers devised their own strategies for remembering, which in some cases included rehearsing them at lunchtimes with other staff. One music co-ordinator suggested that it would have been beneficial to have had more repetition of work:

'Some teachers would have benefited if each new INSET had revisited some of the songs taught at the previous one.' (Music co-ordinator)

The pitch of the songs was inappropriate for some teachers in the training sessions, while others expressed concern that they were learning along with the children and that they lacked expertise in this area. Trying to remember everything themselves and teach the children proved problematic.

'I have trouble remembering the songs, learning words, putting actions together and remembering the tune. Plus leading the children in all of the above.' (Teacher)

3.3.6 The level of difficulty of the training

Teachers reported not understanding the technical terms and confusion over which songs taught specific aspects. These difficulties were overcome through the feedback given in observation sessions or asking for guidance from the school music co-ordinator. Concerns were also raised regarding the level of the last training session which some teachers had found extremely difficult:

'In the last two sessions the work was too technical for people who were non-musicians and what happened is that all the confidence that had grown was knocked away. It just got a bit too technical in the end.' (Head teacher)

For some teachers, particularly those who had no prior musical training, the whole of the Voices Foundation training was too difficult:

'I have had problems with the course. It's just been too hard, too over my head, this is due to my lack of expertise. Too much information and too quick.' (Music co-ordinator)

A number of staff felt very insecure about the training and others reported that the training was too inflexible and that it was not adapted to meet their needs.

3.4 The lesson observations and advisory teachers

The observations of teaching were felt to be helpful and the approach adopted was perceived as friendly rather than judgemental. Head teachers described the advisory teachers as 'effective' and 'inspired'. Teachers indicated that the Voices Foundation advisory teachers were passionate and enthusiastic. The feedback highlighted next steps clearly and appropriate songs were suggested for future use. The advisory teachers were reported to instil confidence.

'We have been very lucky with the Voices Foundation teacher working with us and her ability to draw people in and get them involved and guide them. She has been able to write succinct critiques of what she has seen, which has helped get staff back on track and properly engaged with what it is that we want them to do, which is children learning key concepts about rhythm and pulse and being able to know the difference between short notes and long notes and thinking about lyrics, singing in different parts.' (Music co-ordinator)

Teachers were anxious about being observed but the advisory teachers were reported to be very good at putting staff at their ease and the observations were reported as offering support and constructive criticism. However, not all the responses to the observations were positive. One music co-ordinator described the individual feedback from the classroom sessions as '*picky at times*', while a few staff felt that the programme was rather rigid and did not meet the needs of specific schools. Initial ideas proposed by schools were felt to have been ignored.

Advisors were reported to be available for contact through telephone and e-mail and readily offered guidance. One LA representative was impressed with the way the Voices Foundation responded when there were perceived difficulties relating to an advisory teacher in one school. Immediate action was taken and the situation was resolved. The Voices Foundation teachers were perceived as excellent and as being key to the project. Their interactions with the teachers in the classroom and the way that they supported them, positively, even when lessons were weak, was perceived as being effective and appropriate.

In one school, a few of the teachers commented that the visits and observations were too frequent and that there was insufficient time for skill development between observations. Termly, rather than half termly visits were suggested. Several staff indicated that it would have been useful to observe the advisory teacher teaching before attempting to implement the strategies themselves.

3.5 The materials

In the early stages of the implementation of the primer, there were delays in the materials being sent out so that some teachers had to manage without the booklet for several weeks.

The materials were on the whole well received. They were reported as being clear and understandable and helped staff to see how they might go about teaching music in a systematic way, although it was suggested that they might be more suited to some pupils than others. A few staff expressed a wish that there were more materials. A range of comments are reported below.

'The song material is a bit simplistic although I can see that it needs to be this way if everyone is going to be involved. At Christmas I found myself transferring the learning skills from the Voices Foundation songs to other songs, such as carols rather than doing their songs. Overall, though it is good and has a good structure.'
(Teacher)

'The songs are great. But I have done my own version of some of the songs – made them a bit more funky for the boys.' (Teacher)

'Sometimes the children find the songs quite boring. I wonder whether it might be possible to incorporate some more modern songs that the children want to sing.'
(NQT)

'The singing book is pitched at the right level but in the song book some of the songs seem a bit dated or even racist dealing with things we don't really want them to sing about in school.' (Teacher)

An important issue was the lack of the same ordering of the songs on the CD and in the book. Getting used to the organisation of the Growing with Music book proved problematic for some teachers while others wanted more guidance on what each song could offer:

'We might be concentrating on pitch for example and we need to be able to say which songs do that and pick them out of the book and may be our own resources so that all the teachers have one tape that can then be used rather than trying to dip and pull things out fairly randomly as it has been at times.' (Teacher)

3.5.1 Issues of progression

Lack of progression in the materials and the same songs being used with KS1 and KS2 and from Year 1 to Year 6, was also an issue although some teachers acknowledged that it was possible to do different things with the songs. The lack of appeal of the songs for the older children was a common criticism, many teachers commenting that the songs were 'babyish'. It was felt that Year 6 pupils would have responded better to something more sophisticated. Despite this teachers commented that the songs could be used to teach many different skills.

3.5.2 Integration with the National Curriculum

Concern was expressed that prior to the Voices Foundation primer the National Curriculum for music was not being fully followed in all schools:

'To be honest, in some schools very little music was taking place before Voices Foundation. What has happened with this project is that every child has had the opportunity to engage with music. Previously, although music is in the National Curriculum, some teachers simply didn't do it and children could go through their education with very little musical experience. With Voices Foundation it is possible for every child to have the opportunity. It has definitely been worth it.' (LA co-ordinator)

'Before Voices Foundation I was not doing much National Curriculum music. I did some listening but not much teaching of musical skills. This has all changed. Through the training I now feel really confident. The kids really enjoy it.' (Teacher)

The training supported the teachers in changing this situation:

'It does mean that we are all teaching music regularly and you know exactly what to do. So you teach it every week. It is straightforward to fit into the curriculum since you can drop in ten or fifteen minute sessions as appropriate.' (NQT)

There were mixed responses relating to the extent that the work integrated with the National Curriculum. In some schools teachers reported that the materials integrated very well, in others teachers were planning ways to ensure continuity, progression and integration. A few schools referred to difficulties with the multi-cultural perspective and several regretted that more use was not made of percussion instruments:

'Trying to fit it into the curriculum is the hardest thing, especially given SATs. I also wonder whether it could be more multi-purpose. I know that the focus is on voices but we have some wonderful percussion instruments and it would be good to introduce some percussion. The kids would really love it.' (Teacher)

A range of concerns were raised about the stress on singing alone:

'The programme is very much on singing, pitch and rhythm and on the basic skills but it doesn't tackle some of the other skills that the children need. It is difficult for non-musician members of staff to adapt the programme to something else.' (Head teacher)

Indeed there was some evidence that other aspects of the National Curriculum may have been reduced as a result of the introduction of the programme:

'My concerns are about the listening and appraising side and the composing as well. We are not doing a lot of it with the children. We can use singing to cover a large part of the music curriculum whereas before we might have used instruments.' (Teacher)

Teachers indicated that pressure on the curriculum, particularly in Year 6, meant that there was not always time to do music.

3.5.3 Integration with existing work in schools

The programme fitted in well with existing work in most schools but there were exceptions. In one case previous musical activity had been abandoned. Another school reported a lack of integration with instrumental music playing which was a strength in the school:

'The Programme didn't really integrate with other musical activities in the school, like instrumental teaching. We have lots of instrumental learning in the school – violin from reception, guitar, flute, recorder, saxophone and piano. Music is generally already given a high profile in the school and several children come from very musical backgrounds with families of musicians and some dancers.' (Music co-ordinator)

Prior to the introduction of the programme, some schools were developing systematic ways of teaching music through the implementation of other projects. In some cases the advice to teachers coming from these projects and that from the Voices Foundation was conflicting. Non-music specialists found this very confusing.

'We had a major difficulty. We have previously got our music programme from our music co-ordinator in the LA. We actually continued to do that at the same time when the Voices project was running and the two projects actually contradicted one another which was a little bit of an issue for our staff.' (Head teacher)

Specific programmes, previously followed, were temporarily abandoned to focus on the Voices Foundation work, although in some cases, not all, it was anticipated that the two would be integrated at some point in the future:

'It has really been in isolation – being bought in and done as a separate thing. We need to work on this and make sure that it becomes part of the whole music syllabus.' (Teacher)

3.5.4 Links with other curriculum areas

A few teachers reported being better able to make links with other aspects of the curriculum, for instance, Physical Education, history, language and different kinds of writing. However, others indicated that the range of songs provided by the programme was too narrow to facilitate links with other project work:

'I did not manage to integrate the Voices Foundation material into my topics that I was doing in the classroom. We've been doing the beach and pirates and we've learned a lot of pirate songs which the children absolutely loved. We looked through the material to see if there were songs that would support this topic and there wasn't anything so the actual range is not that good. It's a bit limited.' (Teacher)

3.6 Sustainability

From the LA perspective the programme was sufficiently effective to be sustainable. The only possible obstacle to this was a lack of funding. Some schools were committed to undertaking creative activities in school prior to the introduction of the

primer. In other schools the programme became part of their normal routine. One head teacher referred to the impact on individual members of staff which he felt would sustain the programme:

'The primer has enthused some staff and given them more confidence in their musical abilities. This will encourage them to continue to sustain and further develop their musical activities.' (Head teacher)

Some schools indicated that they would continue with annual INSET related to singing while others were continuing with the training and funding it from their own budget. Some were planning to adopt a reduced version of the Voices Foundation programme:

'We have decided to have Voices Foundation for a second year but in a scaled down version. It will be funded from our school budget, and I don't know if we will be able to sustain it after next year.' (Head teacher)

In some schools one year's training was felt to be sufficient to provide the teachers with the necessary skills to teach music. Other curriculum subjects were to be the focus for the next academic year. Other schools had taken on a music specialist to co-ordinate music in the school:

'We will not continue with Voices Foundation. We have employed a music specialist on the staff and she will take over the programme.' (Head teacher)

A further issue related to the turnover of staff in schools. When new staff were recruited to a school they were untrained. In one school a deputy head teacher had been the driving force behind the implementation of the programme and when he left the school the initial enthusiasm waned.

Head teachers indicated that the programme could be implemented in any school where there was no music specialist, but several indicated that for success the school leadership and staff had to be receptive. Some head teachers felt that *'every school would gain from the Voices Foundation.'*

3.6.1 Commitment to the programme

For the programme to be successful it was important that the head teacher and teachers were committed as it was demanding in terms of staff time. Teachers indicated that if the lead did not come from the top the programme would not be successful as it was a very demanding programme. In some schools teachers were reluctant to participate:

'Some of the teachers didn't want to take part in the project so there was a serious problem in that school.' (LA co-ordinator)

Despite this initial reluctance most teachers eventually warmed to the programme.

3.7 Evaluation of the programme by head teachers and music co-ordinators

In the interviews, the head teachers were very positive in their comments about the Voices Foundation staff. Their work was described as ‘*well managed*’ and ‘*excellent*’. A number of head teachers indicated that the programme had exceeded their expectations:

‘Definitely worthwhile. Teacher expertise and confidence have grown, as have the children’s confidence and enjoyment.’ (Head teacher)

‘We were very, very fortunate to take part. We greatly value and appreciate the expert support.’ (Head teacher)

‘It has been a very professionally run project and people who have delivered it have been very sensitive to the needs of school and staff and it has been really focused on building confidence both with children and staff, it has all been positive. It is a very brave project to run because it is trying to change the mind set of teachers. It is really changing people’s attitudes and I think that it has really been positive that staff who had a negative opinion about themselves now see themselves able to deliver music.’ (Head teacher)

Table 1 sets out the overall perceptions of the impact of the programme on music teaching of the eight head teacher’s who responded to the rating scale section of the questionnaire. Overall, the programme was seen to have a positive impact and there were indications that it could be successful in other schools. The remaining eight head teachers did not complete this section of the questionnaire.

Several head teachers had reservations about the extent to which the programme could be implemented in other schools:

‘It has been a luxury to have this project because we have actually devoted quite a lot of time to it. Time is very limited and there are lots of other aspects of the curriculum that need time and actually we had to put those on hold while we were giving the music so much intensive training. In some schools this would be too much.’ (Head teacher)

Several respondents indicated that it would have been helpful if there had been video footage demonstrating how the programme worked before it was implemented.

Table 1: Percentage and number of responses of head teachers regarding the overall impact of the programme

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don't know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The training was successful in helping the teachers improve their music teaching | | | | 38% (3) | 62% (5) |
| Music teaching in the school has changed as a result of the primer | | | | 62% (5) | 38% (3) |
| The primer teaching materials have been integrated with previous musical activity in the school | | | | 71% (5) | 29% (2) |
| The primer has changed the way that music is taught in the school | | | | 50% (4) | 50% (4) |
| The primer will have a long term impact on music teaching in the school | | | | 38% (3) | 62% (5) |
| The impact of the primer on music teaching in the school is sustainable in the long term | | | 12% (1) | 63% (5) | 25% (2) |
| The primer would be able to be implemented successfully elsewhere | | 12% (1) | | 38% (3) | 50% (4) |

* Figures in brackets are the number of head teachers responding

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

Table 2 sets out the evaluations of the programme by the seven music co-ordinators who completed the rating scale section of the questionnaire. Most were very positive about the programme's impact. One co-ordinator expressed some doubts relating to the way that the materials were integrated with previous musical activity and national curriculum materials and the extent to which the programme would have a long term impact or could be implemented successfully elsewhere.

Table 2: Music co-ordinators' evaluation of the programme

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don't know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The training was successful in helping the teachers to improve their music teaching | | | | 86% (6) | 14% (1) |
| The training materials were very helpful | | | | 29% (2) | 71% (5) |
| Music teaching in the school has changed as a result of the primer | | | | 14% (1) | 86% (6) |
| The primer has changed the way that music is taught in the school | | | | 14% (1) | 86% (6) |
| The primer teaching materials have been integrated with previous musical activity in the school | | 14% (1) | | 43% (3) | 43% (3) |
| The primer materials have been integrated successfully with the National Curriculum | | | 14% (1) | 43% (3) | 43% (3) |
| The primer will have a long term impact on music teaching in the school | | 14% (1) | | 14% (1) | 71% (5) |
| The impact of the primer on music teaching in the school is sustainable in the long term | | 14% (1) | | 29% (2) | 57% (4) |
| The primer would be able to be implemented successfully elsewhere | | | 14% (1) | 57% (4) | 29% (2) |

* Figures in brackets indicate the number of responses

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

3.8 Summary

The role of the LA in the implementation of the Voices Foundation programme was largely facilitative. Schools participated in the programme because they wanted to support teachers in being able to teach music confidently to their classes. The materials were generally well received. Teachers commented that they were more suited to the younger children, that there was a lack of progression through them, that they lacked breadth, that some elements of the National Curriculum were not addressed through them, and that they were not user friendly. The training was described as effective, although there were issues about its timing, the length of sessions and the amount of materials covered. The work of the advisory teachers was perceived as supportive and valuable. Some teachers suggested that more modelling of exemplary teaching would have been useful and that fewer observations would have left more time for development in between sessions. Overall evaluations by head teachers and music co-ordinators were positive and most felt that the programme was sustainable in the future. However, the intensity of the programme and the level of commitment required by staff and senior management to implement it, led some staff to doubt its successful transferability to other schools.

Chapter 4: Impact on teachers and school music co-ordinators

This chapter considers the impact of the programme on teachers and their teaching of music. It is based on questionnaire responses made by teachers, interviews undertaken with teachers and other staff, and evaluation of video-tapes made of teaching sessions.

4.1 Teacher confidence

There was general agreement that one of the major outcomes of the primer was the impact on teacher confidence. Prior to the primer many teachers were reluctant to teach music in their classes. The teachers themselves acknowledged their growing confidence and commented on it in their colleagues:

'It was apparent during the end of scheme performance that as a staff we had moved on in our confidence and attitude towards music – some more than others.' (Teacher)

The primer was particularly effective with staff teaching Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children. Particular gains were made in relation to confidence in singing:

'The teaching staff have certainly gained in confidence particularly in their singing voice, because they were quite insecure in singing in front of the children. This is important because if they are more confident they are also delivering better to the classroom.' (Music co-ordinator)

A substantial proportion of teachers admitted that prior to participating in the programme they were afraid to sing in front of any other adults:

'From a confidence element definitely. I am more confident delivering singing. Whereas before it would be something I would do in the afternoon when I didn't have a teaching assistant because I wouldn't be feeling that comfortable about singing in front of other adults I don't mind it now.' (Teacher)

4.1.1 Fears and difficulties with singing

For a few teachers fears about singing remained and apprehension in relation to the particular way in which they were being expected to teach. Some staff were very resistant to taking part in the primer, although in some cases this diminished over time. For a few teachers, who had genuine difficulties in singing in tune, the experience was traumatic:

'I am totally tone deaf. V says that it is impossible for somebody to be tone deaf but I cannot hear the notes at all and certainly cannot sing them back to anybody. After that last staff meeting I was really upset- I was embarrassed because I felt I have been made to do some things that I couldn't do and I think there should be more consideration. If somebody says look I really don't feel comfortable with this rather than being told you can do it when you really feel you can't. I mean I now know what

it is like to be a special needs child that doesn't understand what is going on.'
(Teacher)

One teacher experienced physical difficulties with the programme:

'I am an asthmatic who doesn't always find it easy actually to do the breathing to do with the singing so some things I don't have the singing ability.' (Teacher)

4.2 Enhanced teacher knowledge and skills

The teachers reported gains in musical knowledge. Their knowledge of musical terms and understanding had increased substantially:

'My knowledge of terminology and my basic skills slowed my progress initially but the training observations have made this less of an issue. The voices work has helped me gain confidence, has added to my basic knowledge of terminology and general music skills. It will without doubt make my music teaching much more dynamic, knowledgeable and interesting.' (Teacher)

Teachers reported developing specific musical skills and increasing their understanding of musical constructs, for instance, pulse, pitch, rhythm. Some experienced difficulties with learning to read music, although for some this was viewed as challenging and enjoyable.

All of the teachers had an increased repertoire of songs for teaching. This ensured that a wider range of music was available for teaching and other occasions. There were benefits to the implementation of the National Curriculum and teaching of music in general. The lesson plans provided structure and helped teachers to focus teaching and ensured coverage of relevant elements, for instance, pulse, tempo. The increased repertoire enabled children to learn a number of songs and increase their understanding of musical concepts. The programme was particularly appreciated by Newly Qualified Teachers:

'It is good to have appropriate songs to use with the children to teach specific musical skills such as rhythm. I have no knowledge of music and so this is very helpful. At the moment using the songs to teach the different rhythms is easy since they are straightforward.' (NQT).

Teachers reported that they were now able to assess children's musical development and their progress in singing:

'I am able now to know where to start with the children and also where to start with different ability children and also I am able to assess how well they are doing with their singing. I would know where to pull them on to next. I would have progression as well. My planning has become more efficient as well.' (Teacher)

As a result of increasing confidence teachers were undertaking musical activities more frequently:

'The kids really enjoy it: I wish I had more time to do this. I've got a better idea of what to do in music. In terms of change to my teaching I just do more music. Music before was probably an after thought. It is also more integrated with my teaching rather than perhaps relying on class assemblies.' (Teacher)

For those teachers with a strong musical background, the primer had little impact. For other teachers the programme had a clear impact on the teaching of singing. The increased confidence of the teachers facilitated an improvement in the children's singing:

'I have now got a singing staff. They can now teach singing confidently.' (Head teacher)

'It has had a positive effect on the teachers and teaching assistants and has encouraged people to sing without inhibition.' (Teacher)

4.2.1 Enjoyment and ease of teaching music

Increased skills and confidence led to increased enjoyment in teaching music:

'It has given me confidence and enjoyment. Whereas before I used to think 'Oh God, I have to do music!' Now I actually look forward to it and so do the kids.' (Teacher)

Increased enjoyment in turn led to more frequent music teaching:

'We teach the subject more frequently, on a daily basis and we feel that it has improved our delivery of the subject.' (Teacher)

Where teachers implemented what they had learned the impact on the children was positive:

'The children get so much enjoyment from the songs that they often spontaneously burst into song during art activities – then we all join in and it's another way of enjoying the work together. It also allows the children to see that there are some things where their skills are better than mine.' (Teacher)

Several teachers reported that it was easy to fit in bursts of singing between other activities and this encouraged good relationships with their pupils:

'I can use the Voices Foundation work for 10 or 15 minutes in the classroom as I wish. It is a really useful slot to be able to put in, which is also teaching a skill. It can also provide a useful break for the kids before we move on to another task. It helps them with singing in the classroom. The kids really like it. Once you've shown them the songs they can take over; they can be the teacher which is really good for them.' (Teacher)

The notion of using singing to provide breaks was commonly reported. The programme also encouraged the perception that music should play a part in the wider curriculum. Some teachers felt that the programme had been beneficial in giving them permission *'to take that time out to sing'*. In some classes singing became a part of the

everyday activities of the classroom and not restricted to ‘*music lessons*’ and more opportunities arose for making cross-curricular links. But several teachers, particularly of Year 6 pupils, felt that it was difficult to fit in the singing when there were examination pressures.

4.2.2 Difficulties in implementation

A recurring issue relating to the implementation of the programme in the classroom was the difficulty of pitching the start of songs. Teachers reported that they often started at an inappropriate pitch for the children:

‘I sometimes invite the children to set pitch with ‘off we go’. But I don’t think I’m always high enough.’ (Teacher)

Some teachers used chime bars to overcome this difficulty:

4.2.3 Teachers’ conceptions of their own skills and attitudes

The questionnaires made it possible to establish teachers’ perceptions of their own skills and attitudes towards music teaching. Of the teacher sample, 27% played a musical instrument, 3% had made an attempt to play at some point but the great majority had never played a musical instrument (70%). Teachers were asked to indicate their agreement with a range of statements relating to teaching in general, and teaching music in particular. The strongest agreement with the statements was scored 5, the strongest disagreement 1. Overall, teachers perceived themselves as effective and confident but were less confident in relation to teaching music. Table 3 sets out the responses before and after the implementation of the primer. Only 19 teachers completed the questionnaire following the primer and only three teachers completed both pre and post primer questionnaires. This meant that statistical analysis was not possible. However, the responses support the qualitative data in indicating an increase in confidence amongst most teachers about teaching music and singing. More teachers seemed to enjoy teaching music, and more disagreed that specialist teachers should teach music in the post primer responses.

Table 3: Teachers’ perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers

| | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| I am an effective teacher | Pre | | | 4% (2) | 67% (31) | 28% (13) |
| | Post | | | | 79% (15) | 21% (4) |
| Generally, I am confident about my teaching | Pre | 2% (1) | | 2% (1) | 68% (32) | 28% (13) |
| | Post | | | 5% (1) | 74% (14) | 21% (4) |
| I am confident about teaching music to my class | Pre | 9% (4) | 26% (12) | 9% (4) | 51% (24) | 6% (3) |
| | Post | | 11% (2) | 11% (2) | 63% (12) | 16% (3) |
| I enjoy teaching music to my class | Pre | 4% (2) | 23% (11) | 9% (4) | 53% (25) | 11% (5) |
| | Post | | | 5% (1) | 74% (14) | 21% (4) |
| I am confident about teaching singing to my class | Pre | 4% (2) | 33% (15) | 7% (3) | 47% (21) | 9% (4) |
| | Post | 5% (1) | 5% (1) | 16% (3) | 53% (10) | 21% (4) |
| I am confident that I can sing well enough to teach my music class | Pre | 11% (5) | 21% (10) | 2% (1) | 60% (28) | 6% (3) |
| | Post | 5% (1) | 11% (2) | 11% (2) | 63% (12) | 11% (2) |
| I am able to read music | Pre | 32% (16) | 28% (14) | 2% (1) | 30% (15) | 8% (4) |
| | Post | 16% (3) | 47% (9) | 5% (1) | 21% (4) | 11% (2) |
| I am able to play a musical instrument sufficiently well to use in music lessons | Pre | 33% (16) | 40% (19) | 2% (1) | 19% (9) | 6% (3) |
| | Post | 26% (5) | 47% (9) | | 21% (4) | 5% (1) |
| I like teaching music | Pre | 13% (6) | 17% (8) | 11% (5) | 51% (24) | 9% (4) |
| | Post | | 16% (3) | 11% (2) | 47% (9) | 26% (5) |
| I think specialist music teachers should teach music in primary schools | Pre | 2% (1) | 14% (7) | 14% (7) | 26% (13) | 45% (23) |
| | Post | 5% (1) | 42% (8) | 16% (3) | 11% (2) | 26% (5) |

* Data are presented in percentages

* Figures in brackets indicate the number of respondents.

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

4.3 Teachers’ evaluation of the programme

Teachers were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements relating to the impact of the primer. The responses are set out in Table 4. 100% agreed that the training was successful in helping them to improve their music teaching. 90% indicated that the training materials were helpful and 85% indicated that the music teaching in the school had changed as a result of the primer. 70% indicated that the primer teaching materials had been integrated with previous musical activity in the school, and 75% that they had been integrated successfully with the National Curriculum. 85% indicated that the primer had changed the way that they taught music and 90% that the primer would have a long term impact on music teaching in the school. 85% thought that the impact would be sustainable in the long term and 65% that it could be successfully implemented elsewhere.

Table 4: Teachers' evaluation of the programme

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don't know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The training was successful in helping the teachers to improve their music teaching | | | | 68% (13) | 32% (6) |
| The training materials were very helpful | | | 10% (2) | 65% (13) | 25% (5) |
| Music teaching in the school has changed as a result of the primer | | 10% (2) | 5% (1) | 50% (10) | 35% (7) |
| The primer teaching materials have been integrated with previous musical activity in the school | | 25% (5) | 5% (1) | 60% (12) | 10% (2) |
| The primer materials have been integrated successfully with the National Curriculum | | 15% (3) | 10% (2) | 55% (11) | 20% (4) |
| The primer has changed the way that I teach music | | 5% (1) | 10% (2) | 53% (10) | 32% (6) |
| The primer will have a long term impact on music teaching in the school | | 5% (1) | 5% (1) | 74% (14) | 16% (3) |
| The impact of the primer on my music teaching is sustainable in the long term | | 5% (1) | | 74% (14) | 21% (4) |
| The primer would be able to be implemented successfully elsewhere | | 5% (1) | 30% (6) | 45% (9) | 20% (4) |

* Data are presented in percentages

* Figures in brackets indicate the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

4.4 Analysis of the video recordings of teaching

20 videos were made of music lessons at the start of the implementation of the Voices Foundation primer and 29 of lessons following the implementation of the primer over the school year. There was enormous variability in the quality of the lessons given prior to the Voices Foundation primer. Some teachers were experienced musicians and the quality of the teaching and singing by the children was already of a very high standard. In contrast some of the teachers lacked confidence in their skills and the children's singing was hesitant and of poor quality. Where it was possible to undertake interviews prior to and following the lessons, the teachers demonstrated clear aims at the start of the lessons which they were satisfied they had attained by the end of the lesson. In some cases they commented that the children were distracted by the video being made.

The videos were evaluated by an Ofsted inspector, an experienced teacher trainer and a voice expert. Elements were evaluated on a scale from 1-10 with 10 being the highest score. In addition to the checklist provided the judges were asked if they wished to add additional categories. The judges did not always make judgements in every category. Table 5 sets out the ratings given for the sessions observed by the Ofsted inspector. The range of scores at the start of the implementation was very wide from 1-9 suggesting great variability in the quality of the teaching and singing. In the second set of videos the range reduced to 3-9. Where videos were available of the same teacher at the two different points in time the extent of change was calculated and statistical tests undertaken to establish if these differences were statistically significant. None were.

Table 5: Lesson observation grades (Ofsted inspector)

| | Ofsted Inspector pre | Ofsted Inspector post | Difference where paired samples were available |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Teacher use of appropriate strategies to promote high quality singing | 5.55 (20) | 5.9 (27) | .22 (17) |
| Teacher demonstration of understanding of the principles underpinning the development of high quality singing | 5.45 (20) | 6.0 (27) | .44 (17) |
| Teacher use of appropriate strategies for teaching new songs | 5.5 (17) | 6.4 (9) | 1.0 (3) |
| Teacher use of appropriate strategies to improve singing in the lesson | 5.7 (20) | 5.9 (27) | .17 (17) |
| Teacher demonstration of musical knowledge and understanding | 6.3 (20) | 6.4 (27) | .17 (17) |
| Teacher's generic classroom management skills | 6.8 (12) | 8.0 (1) | NMP |
| Children singing in tune | 5.7 (20) | 6.1 (29) | .2 (19) |
| Children singing rhythmically | 6.1 (20) | 6.3 (29) | .15 (19) |
| Children's dynamic range | 4.2 (20) | 4.8 (29) | .4 (19) |
| Children's clarity of diction | 5.8 (20) | 5.7 (29) | .2 (19) |
| Children's tone quality | 4.7 (20) | 5.1 (29) | .45 (19) |
| Children singing with expression | 4.4 (19) | 4.8 (29) | .3 (18) |
| Children singing in an appropriate style | 4.9 (14) | 5.0 (28) | .15 (12) |
| Children singing in parts | 4.5 (4) | 5.7 (12) | .5 (1) |
| Children's ensemble | 4.74 (4) | 5.4 (12) | NMP |
| Children's balance between parts | 3.5 (2) | 5.4 (12) | NMP |
| *Children's opportunity to sing individually | 5.75 (4) | 7.0 (1) | NMP |

* Figures in brackets indicate the number of videos evaluated in relation to each statement

* NMP = No matched pairs

* Items marked with a star were additional categories created by the Ofsted inspector

The ratings of the videos by an extremely experienced teacher trainer revealed statistically significant improvements in the teachers' use of appropriate strategies to promote high quality singing, demonstration of understanding of the principles underpinning the development of high quality singing, and the use of appropriate strategies to improve singing in the lesson. There were also significant improvements in the rhythmic singing of the children, the clarity of their diction, the tone quality of the singing and the quality of the ensemble. Table 6 sets out the details.

Table 6: Lesson observation grades (teacher trainer)

| | Teacher trainer pre | Teacher trainer post | Difference where paired samples were available | Probability |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|--|-------------|
| Teacher use of appropriate strategies to promote high quality singing | 4.1 (24) | 5.6 (27) | 1.5 (21) | .006 |
| Teacher demonstration of understanding of the principles underpinning the development of high quality singing | 4.1 (24) | 5.4 (26) | 1.3 (20) | .024 |
| Teacher use of appropriate strategies for teaching new songs | | 5.3 (3) | NMP | NMP |
| Teacher use of appropriate strategies to improve singing in the lesson | 3.6 (21) | 4.8 (24) | 1.2 (16) | .05 |
| Teacher demonstration of musical knowledge and understanding | 5.6 (25) | 6.3 (26) | .7 (21) | NS |
| *Management of musical activity | 6.6 (24) | | NMP | NMP |
| Children singing in tune | 5.6 (25) | 6.1 (27) | .4 (22) | NS |
| Children singing rhythmically | 6.0 (25) | 6.9 (27) | .9 (22) | .033 |
| Children's dynamic range | 3.9 (22) | 4.9 (27) | .9 (19) | NS |
| Children's clarity of diction | 4.6 (25) | 6.0 (27) | 1.3 (22) | .007 |
| Children's tone quality | 5.0 (22) | 6.0 (27) | .9 (20) | .009 |
| Children singing with expression | 4.2 (19) | 5.1 (27) | .8 (18) | NS |
| Children singing in an appropriate style | 4.6 (13) | 5.7 (26) | 1.3 (12) | NS |
| Children singing in parts | 4.0 (4) | 6.3 (12) | 2.0 (3) | NS |
| Children's ensemble | 5.4 (17) | 6.4 (25) | 1.1 (14) | .03 |
| Children's balance between parts | 3.5 (2) | 5.8 (12) | 2.0 (1) | N/A |
| *Children's general musical development | | 8.6 (5) | NMP | NMP |
| *Children's confidence as solo singers | | 7.1 (7) | NMP | NMP |

* Figures in brackets indicate the number of videos included

* NMP = No matched pairs

* N/A as there was only one case

* Items marked with a star were additional categories created by the teacher trainer

Table 7 sets out the ratings for the voices expert. There were statistically significant improvements in the evaluation of the children's singing between the beginning and end of the programme. The range prior to the full implementation of the Voices Foundation programme was 1-7 and at the end of the school year 4-8. On the basis of the quality of singing alone the programme was effective.

Table 7: Lesson observation grades by the Voice Expert: quality of singing

| | Voice expert pre | Voice expert post | Difference where paired samples were available | Sig |
|--|------------------|-------------------|--|-------|
| Children singing in tune | 3.5 (28) | 6.2 (28) | 2.6 | .0001 |
| Children singing rhythmically | 4.3 (29) | 7.1 (28) | 2.8 | .0001 |
| Children's dynamic range | 3.6 (28) | 5.6 (28) | 2.0 | .0001 |
| Children's clarity of diction | 3.8 (29) | 5.9 (28) | 2.0 | .0001 |
| Children's tone quality | 3.4 (28) | 5.6 (28) | 2.2 | .0001 |
| Children singing with expression | 3.8 (28) | 6.1 (28) | 2.3 | .0001 |
| Children singing in an appropriate style | 3.5 (28) | 5.8 (28) | 2.2 | .0001 |
| Children singing in parts | | 5.5 (2) | NMP | |
| Children's ensemble | 3.8 (28) | 5.0 (2) | 1.0 | NS |
| Children's balance between parts | | 5.5 (2) | NMP | |

* Figures in brackets indicate the number of videos included

* NMP = No matched pairs

Overall, the analysis of the video data indicated improvements in the quality of elements of the teaching of music and in the children's musical development. However, there was still considerable room for further improvement.

4.5 Change in the quality of music teaching in the school

The quality of teaching of music in the school was seen to have improved. Head teachers perceived that there had been improvement:

'Satisfactory teaching of music has become good teaching of music. Music is now a strength of the school.' (Head teacher)

An unexpected benefit had been that the primer had encouraged discussion and thought about how to teach music. Head teachers commented that it had enhanced the quality of thought about the music curriculum and consolidated knowledge. Teachers felt less reliant on the music co-ordinator to teach music:

'It has put music back in the hands of the class teachers rather than them thinking that this is something that someone else does. This has been easier with some teachers than others.' (Head teacher)

Overall, the program had been valued and had increased teacher skills and subsequently their teaching. However, for a few teachers, where singing was problematic, earlier teaching schemes had been easier to implement.

4.6 Summary

Overall, the primer had a positive impact on the teaching of music. For most teachers confidence had grown, they enjoyed teaching music and as a result did it more often. Singing was more spontaneous and was used as a means of breaking up other activities. It was also integrated better into the whole curriculum. For a few teachers,

however, who experienced personal difficulties with singing, the primer proved stressful and unhelpful. They preferred to use earlier teaching strategies which relied more on CD ROMs. For experienced musicians the primer offered little in terms of enhancing their knowledge although they did increase the repertoire of songs available to them.

Chapter 5: Impact on pupils' musical skills and attitudes

This chapter describes the impact on the musical activities and skills of the children in the participating schools. It draws on data from the interviews and questionnaires completed by teachers, music co-ordinators and the children.

5.1 Children's attitudes towards singing

In the same way that the teachers were reported to have become more confident in their singing so had the children. Staff reported that one of the main benefits was the progress that children had made in their singing including their confidence, singing in parts and their enjoyment. This led to an increase in their self-esteem. Increased confidence impacted on performance and collaborative work. Children were now happy to sing alone in public and were also more aware of the voice as an instrument. The impact on confidence was profound:

'The Voices Foundation motto is 'Transforming children through singing.' It couldn't be MORE true. It's been a wonderful year.' (Teacher)

The children not only gained in confidence they also enjoyed singing:

'The children have enjoyed it, especially the songs that they have been working with, A lot of them have got humour in them, they've got word play and they're not terribly serious. There is a sense of fun in all of this which is key to children's motivation.' (Head teacher)

These effects were not limited to the classroom but spilled over into the play ground:

'The children do enjoy singing. I've seen lots of improvement in my pupils. I also hear other year groups singing lots in the playground, all doing the actions. They were even out there this morning in the rain.' (Music co-ordinator)

For some classes singing became a part of everyday class work:

'The materials - the pupils love it. I'm the sort of person that I have to stop myself breaking into singing in the classroom but if I sing two words to a song they'll join in en masse now and just have a sing song at the drop of a hat. It's very nice.' (Teacher)

Some teachers commented on the enthusiasm of the boys who previously would not have participated in music making. However, the response of some of the older children was not so positive:

'Beginning in Year 6 has not been highly successful – numbers of children do not enjoy singing (they profess not to like it) so it has been hard to motivate them. Having shared my experiences with other teachers I have found that all Year 6 classes have found it quite hard going with some children.' (Teacher)

The older children were reported to prefer a more formal music lesson.

5.2 The quality of singing, performance, learning and understanding

In addition to the data from the video recordings which provided an objective assessment of the quality of the singing staff reported improvements. This related to the motivation of the children which enabled staff to be more demanding in their expectations:

‘Children are really engaging with music, participating and enjoying every activity. The children have a renewed enthusiasm for music and because they are so enthusiastic during the voices session that means that we can push it a bit and the quality of the singing has improved enormously.’ (Music co-ordinator)

The whole school ‘events’ were particularly successful and the confidence of the children led to improved performance. In addition more children were involved.

The children learned several important musical concepts and deepened their understanding of them:

‘All the children in my class have developed a MUCH better sense of pulse, pitch, rhythm and tempo.’ (Teacher)

The children also learnt to use their ‘different voices’:

‘The children have learned such a lot, Even my class (year 1) can now sing soh and me and the fact that they have got these intervals in their head is great. They’ve learned so much about rhythm and pitch and can use all their different voices.’ (Teacher)

Most teachers reported that the skills that they had learned had benefited the children in their class. The children were able to learn the songs themselves easily and often sang them in the playground.

There were some reported differences in the levels of responsiveness of children of different ages. The younger children seemed to be easy to motivate but there were some difficulties in engaging the Year 6 children. The teachers suggested that more modelling of how to work with Year 6 would have been beneficial and materials which were more appropriate for that age group.

5.3 Teachers’ questionnaire responses

Teachers completed questionnaires relating to the changes in pupils’ musical skills and attitudes as the primer was implemented. There were insufficient responses from the same teachers prior to and after the implementation of the primer to undertake statistical analysis. Table 8 sets out the responses pre and post the implementation of the primer. The responses supported those emerging from the interviews. Pupils were seen to enjoy their music lessons more, enjoy singing more, and be more confident in their music lessons. More pupils were perceived to take part in extra-curricular activities, and more teachers agreed that their pupils had a range of well developed musical skills. There was less change in relation to the development of strategies for

composing but pupils were seen to perform better, and have better listening skills. There were also more positive responses to statements about the children loving music and having positive attitudes towards music.

Table 8: Teachers’ perceptions of changes in pupils’ musical skills and attitudes towards music

| | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The pupils in my class enjoy their music lessons | Pre | | 2% (1) | 3% (2) | 48% (29) | 48% (29) |
| | Post | | | 5% (1) | 32% (7) | 64% (14) |
| The pupils in my class enjoy singing | Pre | | 2% (1) | 3% (2) | 48% (29) | 46% (28) |
| | Post | | 5% (1) | | 36% (8) | 59% (13) |
| The pupils in my class are confident in their music lessons | Pre | 2% (1) | 10% (6) | 5% (3) | 62% (37) | 22% (13) |
| | Post | | | 9% (2) | 55% (12) | 36% (8) |
| The pupils in my class take part in extra-curricula musical activities | Pre | 16% (9) | 26% (15) | 24% (14) | 31% (18) | 3% (2) |
| | Post | 14% (3) | 14% (3) | 14% (3) | 41% (9) | 18% (4) |
| The pupils in my class have a range of well developed musical skills | Pre | 10% (6) | 37% (22) | 19% (11) | 34% (20) | |
| | Post | | 18% (4) | | 68% (15) | 14% (3) |
| The pupils in my class have a well developed range of strategies for composing | Pre | 20% (11) | 34% (19) | 38% (21) | 9% (5) | |
| | Post | | 32% (7) | 36% (8) | 32% (7) | |
| The pupils in my class perform well | Pre | 3% (2) | 13% (8) | 5% (3) | 67% (40) | 12% (7) |
| | Post | | 5% (1) | 14% (3) | 50% (11) | 32% (7) |
| The pupils in my class have well developed listening skills | Pre | 3% (2) | 29% (17) | 10% (6) | 51% (30) | 7% (4) |
| | Post | | 9% (2) | 5% (1) | 55% (12) | 32% (7) |
| The pupils in my class love music | Pre | | 5% (3) | 5% (3) | 72% (43) | 18% (11) |
| | Post | | | 5% (1) | 64% (14) | 32% (7) |
| The pupils in my class have positive attitudes towards music | Pre | | 5% (3) | 3% (2) | 73% (44) | 18% (11) |
| | Post | | | 5% (1) | 59% (13) | 36% (8) |

* Figures in brackets indicated numbers of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number

5.4 Music co-ordinators’ perceptions of music education before and after the implementation of the primer

Responses were received from 8 music co-ordinators prior to the intervention and seven following it. Only 5 completed the questionnaire pre and post intervention. Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences (see Table 9).

Table 9: Music co-ordinators’ perceptions of pupils’ musical skills and attitudes before and after the implementation of the primer

| | Mean (N = 8) | SD | Mean (N = 7) | SD |
|--|-----------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| The pupils enjoy their music lessons | 4.25 | .46 | 4.57 | .53 |
| The pupils enjoy singing | 4.37 | .52 | 4.6 | .53 |
| The pupils are confident in their music lessons | 3.87 | .35 | 4.4 | .53 |
| The pupils take part in extra-curricula musical activities | 3.75 | .88 | 3.9 | .89 |
| The pupils in the school have a range of well developed musical skills | 3.2 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 1.0 |
| The pupils have a well developed range of strategies for composing | 2.25 | .7 | 3.4 | .97 |
| The pupils in the school perform well | 3.75 | .7 | 4.4 | .53 |
| The pupils have well developed listening skills | 3.2 | 1.0 | 4.4 | .53 |
| The pupils love music | 4.1 | .83 | 4.4 | .53 |
| The pupils have positive attitudes towards music | 4.6 | .52 | 4.6 | .53 |

* Maximum possible score was 5 *SD = Standard Deviation *N = the numbers responding

5.5 Head teachers’ perceptions of pupils’ musical skills and attitudes before and after the primer

Comparisons were made between head teachers’ responses to questionnaire statements before and after the Voices Foundation programme. Ten head teachers responded to the questionnaires prior to the delivery of the programme and eight following it. Six of these completed pre and post questionnaires. Table 10 sets out the mean responses to statements regarding pupils’ engagement with music in school. In general the head teachers were positive about pupils’ engagement with music prior to the programme being implemented and there was no statistically significant change in their responses following the implementation of the programme.

Table 10: Change in head teachers’ perceptions of the children’s engagement with music

| | Pre - programme | | | Post – programme | | |
|--|-----------------|-----|----|------------------|-----|---|
| | Mean | SD | N | Mean | SD | N |
| The pupils in the school enjoy their music lessons | 4.6 | .52 | 10 | 4.7 | .49 | 8 |
| The pupils in the school enjoy singing | 4.6 | .52 | 10 | 4.8 | .38 | 8 |
| The pupils in the school take part in Extra-curricula musical activities | 4.3 | .67 | 10 | 4.3 | .76 | 8 |
| The pupils in the school love music | 4.3 | .5 | 9 | 4.4 | .53 | 8 |
| The pupils in the school have positive attitudes Towards music | 4.5 | .5 | 10 | 4.6 | .53 | 8 |

* Maximum score is 5 *SD = the standard deviation *N = number of head teachers responding

5.6 Pupils’ perceptions of their musical activities

Key Stage 1 pupils

Table 11 sets out the attitudes of the KS1 pupils prior to and after the intervention. Generally their responses were positive about music, although there were some worrying negative responses to some statements given that the oldest children were only aged 7. Prior to the intervention 25% reported that school music and singing were boring. This percentage had reduced following the introduction of the primer. Statistical analysis revealed that there had been one statistically significant change as

a result of the programme. This was in relation to responses to the statement school music is boring. The mean of 1.6 reduced to a mean of 1.4 ($p = .012$).

Table 11: Attitudes towards music of KS1 pupils

| | Pre | Post | Pre | Post | Pre | Post |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|------------|------------|----------|----------|
| | Yes | Yes | Don't know | Don't know | No | No |
| I am good at music | 77 (371) | 75 (218) | 15 (71) | 15 (44) | 9 (42) | 9 (27) |
| I am good at singing | 81 (388) | 80 (232) | 11 (50) | 9 (26) | 8 (39) | 11 (31) |
| I like doing music at school | 79 (379) | 82 (239) | 9 (42) | 9 (27) | 12 (58) | 8 (24) |
| I like singing at school | 82 (390) | 82 (236) | 5 (23) | 10 (28) | 13 (64) | 9 (25) |
| I like making music | 83 (393) | 79 (228) | 9 (41) | 9 (27) | 9 (42) | 12 (35) |
| Singing is fun | 83 (397) | 82 (239) | 7 (35) | 7 (20) | 9 (45) | 11 (31) |
| Making music is fun | 86 (409) | 83 (240) | 6 (28) | 8 (24) | 9 (41) | 9 (26) |
| I like listening to music | 90 (429) | 88 (256) | 3 (16) | 7 (20) | 7 (31) | 5 (14) |
| Singing is boring | 25 (120) | 19 (54) | 8 (40) | 7 (20) | 67 (322) | 75 (216) |
| School music is boring | 25 (121) | 17 (49) | 8 (40) | 10 (28) | 67 (323) | 73 (213) |
| I like doing music out of school | 75 (359) | 61 (176) | 9 (42) | 18 (51) | 17 (81) | 22 (63) |

* Data presented are percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole figure

5.6.1 Key Stage 2 pupils

Table 12 sets out the frequencies of responses to statements about music and singing at KS2 prior to the implementation of the primer. 21% of pupils strongly disagreed or disagreed that they were good at singing. Only 65% reported liking singing at school, although 75% reported liking doing music at school. 17% either strongly disagreed or disagreed that singing was fun. 19% agreed or strongly agreed that school music was boring. Only 67% strongly agreed or agreed that they were good at music, while 68% agreed or strongly agreed that their parents thought that they were good at music. 46% thought that their class teacher thought that they were good at music and 47% that their class teacher agreed or strongly agreed that they were good at singing. This was a smaller proportion than their friends.

Table 13 sets out the percentage responses following the implementation of the Voices Foundation primer. The size of the responding sample was smaller. Using data from children who completed pre and post questionnaires it was possible to make statistical comparisons. There were few statistical differences.

Table 12: Attitudes towards music of KS2 pupils pre Voices Foundation

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| I am good at singing | 17% (219) | 4% (55) | 19% (250) | 13% (173) | 46% (592) |
| I like doing music at school | 10% (133) | 2% (30) | 12% (159) | 14% (184) | 61% (779) |
| I like singing at school | 15% (190) | 5% (58) | 16% (200) | 14% (174) | 51% (658) |
| Singing is fun | 13% (163) | 4% (48) | 12% (150) | 14% (184) | 57% (737) |
| Making music is fun | 7% (92) | 2% (21) | 10% (128) | 15% (196) | 66% (842) |
| I like listening to music | 4% (53) | 1% (15) | 6% (82) | 14% (178) | 74 % (951) |
| I like going to concerts | 10% (133) | 4% (47) | 20% (252) | 11% (142) | 55% (706) |
| I like performing in concerts | 21% (273) | 7% (87) | 18% (229) | 10% (129) | 44% (564) |
| Singing is boring | 64% (815) | 8% (106) | 9% (118) | 3% (41) | 14% (182) |
| School music is boring | 60% (743) | 10% (124) | 12% (148) | 4% (44) | 15% (190) |
| I like doing music out of school | 13% (168) | 3% (33) | 17% (213) | 12% (154) | 56% (719) |
| I enjoy the music lessons I have in my class | 11% (136) | 3% (38) | 12% (159) | 14% (175) | 61% (780) |
| I learn a lot in the music lessons I have in my class | 9% (115) | 3% (35) | 16% (207) | 16% (210) | 56% (727) |
| I am good at music | 11% (139) | 3% (42) | 18% (238) | 14% (187) | 53% (695) |
| My parents think I am good at music | 5% (68) | 2% (23) | 25% (332) | 15% (191) | 53% (691) |
| My parents think I am good at singing | 6% (81) | 3% (36) | 25% (321) | 14% (182) | 52% (680) |
| My class teacher thinks that I am good at music | 6% (77) | 2% (28) | 46% (591) | 13% (174) | 33% (429) |
| My class teacher thinks that I am good at singing | 6% (76) | 3% (38) | 44% (576) | 13% (172) | 34% (434) |
| My friends think that I am good at music | 9% (122) | 4% (57) | 33% (433) | 15% (190) | 38% (501) |
| My friends think that I am good at singing | 12% (150) | 4% (52) | 34% (447) | 14% (177) | 37% (474) |

* Data presented are percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole figure

Table 13: Attitudes towards music of KS2 pupils post Voices Foundation

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| I am good at singing | 14% (98) | 6% (39) | 24% (166) | 17% (115) | 40% (273) |
| I like doing music at school | 8% (52) | 7% (47) | 15% (103) | 19% (133) | 52% (356) |
| I like singing at school | 12% (81) | 8% (55) | 19% (129) | 17% (118) | 45% (309) |
| Singing is fun | 9% (63) | 7% (45) | 18% (122) | 17% (116) | 50% (346) |
| Making music is fun | 5% (35) | 3% (22) | 14% (94) | 21% (145) | 57% (395) |
| I like listening to music | 2% (15) | 1% (10) | 7% (51) | 16% (110) | 73% (504) |
| I like going to concerts | 9% (59) | 4% (29) | 25% (175) | 15% (104) | 47% (325) |
| I like performing in concerts | 19% (132) | 9% (61) | 23% (159) | 12% (81) | 37% (259) |
| Singing is boring | 56% (387) | 14% (94) | 15% (106) | 4% (29) | 11% (76) |
| School music is boring | 51% (356) | 12% (82) | 21% (145) | 5% (34) | 11% (75) |
| I like doing music out of school | 11% (78) | 5% (32) | 20% (141) | 16% (111) | 48% (329) |
| I enjoy the music lessons I have in my class | 6% (43) | 6% (42) | 19% (130) | 21% (142) | 48% (335) |
| I learn a lot in my music lessons | 5% (37) | 5% (32) | 19% (132) | 22% (152) | 49% (339) |
| I am good at music | 8% (54) | 5% (31) | 26% (179) | 17% (117) | 45% (311) |
| My parents think I am good at music | 4% (26) | 2% (16) | 30% (208) | 18% (121) | 46% (321) |
| My parents think that I am good at singing | 5% (37) | 3% (24) | 30% (208) | 14% (95) | 47% (328) |
| My class teacher thinks that I am good at music | 2% (14) | 2% (13) | 50% (348) | 17% (117) | 29% (200) |
| My class teacher thinks that I am good at singing | 3% (18) | 3% (18) | 52% (362) | 15% (102) | 28% (192) |
| My friends think that I am good at music | 7% (50) | 4% (30) | 38% (263) | 19% (129) | 32% (220) |
| My friends think that I am good at singing | 9% (62) | 4% (30) | 41% (281) | 16% (110) | 30% (209) |

* Data presented are percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole figure

Table 14 sets out the difference in attitudes towards music pre and post the implementation of the programme in KS2 pupils who completed both sets of questionnaires. There were small but statistically significant reductions in pupils' liking doing music out of school and enjoying class music in school. There was also a statistically significant reduction in pupils reporting that their parents thought that they were good at singing.

Table 14: Change in attitudes towards music of KS2 pupils

| | Pre | SD | Post | SD | Sig |
|---|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| I am good at singing (597) | 3.7 | 1.4 | 3.6 | 1.3 | NS |
| I like doing music at school (591) | 4.1 | 1.3 | 4.0 | 1.3 | NS |
| I like singing at school (596) | 3.9 | 1.4 | 3.8 | 1.4 | NS |
| Singing is fun (591) | 4.0 | 1.4 | 4.0 | 1.3 | NS |
| Making music is fun (588) | 4.3 | 1.2 | 4.3 | 1.1 | NS |
| I like listening to music (589) | 4.6 | .9 | 4.6 | .8 | NS |
| I like going to concerts (592) | 3.9 | 1.4 | 3.9 | 1.3 | NS |
| I like performing in concerts (591) | 3.4 | 1.6 | 3.4 | 1.5 | NS |
| Singing is boring (583) | 1.9 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.4 | NS |
| School music is boring (573) | 2.0 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 1.3 | NS |
| I like doing music out of school (597) | 4.0 | 1.4 | 3.8 | 1.4 | .002 |
| I enjoy the music lessons I have in my class (597) | 4.1 | 1.3 | 4.0 | 1.2 | .042 |
| I learn a lot in my music lessons (599) | 4.1 | 1.2 | 4.1 | 1.2 | NS |
| I am good at music (603) | 4.0 | 1.3 | 3.9 | 1.2 | NS |
| My parents think I am good at music (607) | 4.1 | 1.1 | 4.0 | 1.1 | NS |
| My parents think that I am good at singing (605) | 4.0 | 1.2 | 3.9 | 1.2 | .048 |
| My class teacher thinks that I am good at music (604) | 3.7 | 1.1 | 3.7 | 1.0 | NS |
| My class teacher thinks that I am good at singing (603) | 3.6 | 1.1 | 3.6 | 1.0 | NS |
| My friends think that I am good at music (604) | 3.7 | 1.3 | 3.7 | 1.2 | NS |
| My friends think that I am good at singing (603) | 3.7 | 1.3 | 3.6 | 1.2 | NS |

*Maximum score is 5 *SD = the standard deviation *N = number of head teachers responding

5.7 The perceptions of governors of the impact of the programme on pupils' musical skills

Completed questionnaires were received from 30 school governors. Table 15 sets out their responses. On the whole they felt that the programme had been beneficial in relation to the development of the children's musical skills and attitudes towards music. 100% agreed that the children's musical skills and their singing had improved. 97% believed that the primer had improved the children's interest in music and had developed the children's interest in taking part in musical activities. 93% agreed that the primer had instilled a love of music in the children.

Table 15: Governors’ perceptions of the impact of the programme

| | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|----------|------------|----------|----------------|
| Improving the children’s musical skills | | | 27% (8) | 73% (22) |
| Improving the children’s singing | | | 30% (9) | 70% (21) |
| Improving the children’s interest in music | 3% (1) | | 40% (12) | 57% (17) |
| Developing the children’s interest in taking part in musical activities out of school | | 10% (3) | 43% (13) | 47% (14) |
| Instilling a love of music in the children | | 7% (2) | 41% (12) | 52% (15) |

* Data presented are percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole figure

5.8 The perceptions of parents of the impact of the programme on children’s musical skills

A total of 51 questionnaires were returned from parents of children who were participating in the programme. Overall, they were positive about the impact of the programme on their children’s musical skills (see Table 16). 94% agreed that their child’s musical skills had improved, 96% that the primer had improved their child’s singing, 96% that it had improved their child’s interest in music, 68% that it had developed their child’s interesting in musical activities out of school and 84% that it had instilled a love of music in their child.

Table 16: Parents’ perspectives

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|----------|----------------|
| Improving your child’s musical skills | 2% (1) | 2% (1) | 2% (1) | 45% (23) | 49% (25) |
| Improving your child’s singing | 2% (1) | | 2% (1) | 49% (25) | 47% (24) |
| Improving your child’s interest in music | 2% (1) | | 2% (1) | 49% (25) | 47% (24) |
| Developing your child’s interest in taking part in musical activities out of school | 2% (1) | 14% (7) | 16% (8) | 35% (18) | 33% (17) |
| Instilling a love of music in your child | 2% (1) | 4% (2) | 10% (5) | 50% (25) | 34% (17) |

* Data presented are percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole figure

5.9 Perceived impact on musical development

Teachers were asked to select six children from their class who were perceived at the start of the primer to be low, moderate or high in musical ability. Nine schools provided data relating to low, moderate and high attaining students. These data enable the exploration of change in these pupils musical attainment over the period of the intervention. In the pro forma completed before the Voices Foundation programme data were available for 113 male pupils and 112 female pupils. 27 pupils from Year 1, 37 from Year 2, 39 from Year 3, 39 from Year 4, 36 from Year 5 and 41 from year 6. Overall this is a relatively balanced sample, although most of the students were White British (78%) with only very small proportions of other minority ethnic groups. There were similar proportions of those assessed of high, moderate, or low musical attainment.

In the follow up pro formas completed at the end of the year's work 6 schools provided case study pro forma. 80 case studies were completed, 38 male, 42 female. There were 18 from year 1, 18 from year 2, 13 from year 3, 14 from year 4, 6 from year 5 and 11 from year 6. The sample remained predominantly white. 24 students were classified as of low musical skills, 27 of moderate and 27 as high. Table 17 provides the means for each group for each category for the pre and post programme assessments.

Table 17: Comparison of the three attainment levels pre Voices Foundation

| | Low Pre | Low Post | Moderate Pre | Moderate Post | High Pre | High Post |
|---|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Enjoyment of music in school | 5.4 (70) | 6.8 (24) | 7.4 (76) | 8.4 (27) | 9.1 (73) | 9.3 (27) |
| Engagement with music out of school | 2.6 (46) | 3.6 (19) | 4.9 (49) | 4.3 (24) | 7.8 (52) | 7.7 (27) |
| Perseverance in musical activities in school | 4.4 (69) | 5.6 (24) | 6.9 (75) | 8.1 (27) | 8.9 (72) | 9.2 (27) |
| Motivation in class music lessons | 4.6 (70) | 5.9 (24) | 7.1 (76) | 8.2 (27) | 9.0 (73) | 9.4 (27) |
| Desire to achieve in music | 4.4 (70) | 5.9 (24) | 7.0 (76) | 8.1 (27) | 8.9 (73) | 9.3 (27) |
| Willingness to learn in music | 4.7 (70) | 6.1 (24) | 7.1 (76) | 8.3 (27) | 8.9 (73) | 9.4 (27) |
| Concentration in music lessons | 4.0 (70) | 5.3 (24) | 6.9 (76) | 8.0 (27) | 8.7 (73) | 9.2 (27) |
| Sense of pulse | 3.4 (70) | 5.6 (24) | 6.4 (76) | 7.9 (27) | 8.4 (72) | 8.9 (27) |
| Sense of rhythm | 3.2 (70) | 5.2 (24) | 6.2 (75) | 7.6 (27) | 8.3 (73) | 9.0 (27) |
| Sense of pitch | 2.9 (69) | 4.8 (24) | 6.0 (75) | 7.3 (27) | 8.3 (72) | 8.9 (27) |
| Ability to sing in tune | 2.9 (70) | 4.8 (24) | 6.2 (76) | 7.3 (27) | 8.4 (73) | 8.9 (27) |
| Ability to sing in time | 3.3 (70) | 5.1 (24) | 6.3 (75) | 7.5 (27) | 8.3 (73) | 9.0 (27) |
| Ability to sing with expression | 2.7 (64) | 4.0 (24) | 5.6 (68) | 6.9 (27) | 7.9 (67) | 8.3 (27) |
| Ability to sing by ear | 2.8 (61) | 4.8 (24) | 5.7 (66) | 6.9 (26) | 7.9 (61) | 8.5 (26) |
| Ability to sing from notation | 1.8 (45) | 2.7 (21) | 4.1 (43) | 4.7 (25) | 5.3 (40) | 5.8 (25) |
| Ability to move in time | 3.2 (63) | 4.2 (24) | 6.3 (70) | 7.4 (27) | 8.0 (67) | 8.6 (27) |
| Ability to read musical notation | 1.6 (42) | 2.8 (22) | 3.5 (44) | 4.4 (26) | 5.2 (41) | 6.0 (27) |
| Ability to understand structure | 2.0 (44) | 3.0 (24) | 4.7 (49) | 5.3 (27) | 6.0 (45) | 7.0 (27) |
| Composition skills | 2.1 (46) | 3.4 (21) | 5.0 (52) | 5.8 (23) | 6.1 (47) | 6.7 (24) |
| Improvisation skills - rhythmic | 2.5 (53) | 4.2 (21) | 5.3 (59) | 6.8 (24) | 7.0 (55) | 7.8 (24) |
| Improvisation skills - melodic | 2.3 (54) | 3.6 (21) | 5.0 (60) | 5.8 (24) | 6.6 (55) | 6.8 (24) |
| Performing skills individually | 2.4 (65) | 4.4 (24) | 5.8 (71) | 6.7 (27) | 7.7 (71) | 8.4 (27) |
| Performing skills in a group | 3.0 (68) | 5.0 (24) | 6.4 (75) | 7.7 (27) | 8.3 (72) | 9.0 (27) |
| Listening skills | 3.5 (69) | 4.8 (24) | 6.5 (76) | 7.6 (27) | 8.4 (73) | 9.0 (27) |
| Knowledge of the different contexts in which music is important | 2.3 (52) | 3.4 (22) | 5.0 (54) | 5.6 (25) | 6.8 (51) | 6.5 (24) |
| Understanding of musical genre | 2.2 (51) | 3.0 (22) | 4.7 (54) | 5.4 (24) | 6.0 (52) | 6.1 (25) |
| Appraising skills | 2.4 (54) | 3.6 (23) | 5.2 (54) | 5.8 (25) | 6.9 (54) | 6.7 (27) |
| Express themselves musically | 2.6 (59) | 3.7 (23) | 5.4 (63) | 6.0 (26) | 7.3 (64) | 7.3 (27) |
| Use of ICT in music | 2.0 (38) | 2.2 (15) | 3.8 (40) | 3.8 (19) | 4.9 (39) | 2.8 (19) |

*Maximum score is 10 *Figures in brackets indicate the number of respondents

The difference in pre and post assessments was calculated for each of the categories. These are set out in Table 18. Analyses were undertaken to explore whether there were statistically significant differences in the extent of gains for the different groups. There were highly statistically significant gains in performance for all of the categories except engagement with music out of school and the use of ICT in music. In most cases the greatest gains were made by the pupils who were in the weakest or middle group initially. Those already classed as of high attainment in the various categories made relatively little improvement.

Table 18: Differences in levels of change between children with low, moderate and high levels of musical skill at the start of the programme

| | Low | | | Moderate | | | High | | | Sig |
|---|-----|------|-----|----------|------|-----|------|------|------|-------|
| | N | Mean | SD | N | Mean | SD | N | Mean | SD | |
| Change in enjoyment of musical activity | 24 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 27 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 27 | 0.1 | 1.3 | .017 |
| Change in engagement with music out of school | 14 | 1.1 | 2.9 | 18 | 0.6 | 2.5 | 21 | 0.9 | 2.39 | NS |
| Change in perseverance in musical activities | 23 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 26 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 26 | 0.1 | 1.3 | .003 |
| Change in motivation in class | 24 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 27 | 1.1 | 1.7 | 27 | 0.2 | 1.15 | .022 |
| Change in desire to achieve in music | 24 | 1.7 | 2.0 | 27 | 1.2 | 1.9 | 27 | 0.3 | 1.3 | .015 |
| Change in willingness to learn in music | 24 | 1.6 | 2.1 | 27 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 27 | 0.3 | 1.2 | .016 |
| Change in concentration in music lessons | 24 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 27 | 1.0 | 1.7 | 27 | 0.3 | 1.2 | .0001 |
| Change in sense of pulse | 24 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 27 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 27 | 0.4 | 1.5 | .0001 |
| Change in sense of rhythm | 24 | 2.6 | 1.8 | 27 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 27 | 0.7 | 1.4 | .017 |
| Change in sense of pitch | 23 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 26 | 1.3 | 2.0 | 26 | 0.7 | 1.4 | .005 |
| Change in ability to sing in tune | 24 | 2.4 | 1.9 | 27 | 1.1 | 2.0 | 27 | 0.6 | 1.5 | .001 |
| Change in ability to sing in time | 24 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 27 | 0.9 | 1.5 | 27 | 0.7 | 1.3 | .001 |
| Change in ability to sing with expression | 24 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 27 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 27 | 1.0 | 1.3 | NS |
| Change in ability to sing by ear | 24 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 26 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 26 | 1.0 | 1.9 | .03 |
| Change in ability to sing from notation | 17 | 1.5 | 2.2 | 16 | 1.7 | 0.9 | 18 | 1.8 | 1.8 | NS |
| Change in ability to move to music | 23 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 26 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 27 | 0.7 | 1.8 | NS |
| Change in ability to read notation | 14 | 1.1 | 2.3 | 16 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 19 | 2.1 | 2.1 | NS |
| Change in ability to understand musical structure | 16 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 19 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 22 | 1.7 | 1.5 | NS |
| Change to composition skills | 17 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 18 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 19 | 1.8 | 1.8 | NS |
| Change in rhythmic improvisational skills | 19 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 21 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 21 | 2.1 | 1.8 | NS |
| Change in melodic improvisational skills | 21 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 21 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 21 | 1.9 | | NS |
| Change in performing individually | 23 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 26 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 26 | 0.9 | 1.5 | NS |
| Change in group performance | 24 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 27 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 26 | 0.8 | 1.6 | .01 |
| Change in listening skills | 24 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 27 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 27 | 0.8 | 1.5 | NS |
| Change in knowledge of musical contexts | 20 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 19 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 21 | 0.6 | 1.0 | NS |
| Change in understanding of musical genre | 19 | 1.3 | 2.2 | 18 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 21 | 0.8 | 1.4 | NS |
| Change in appraising skills | 21 | 1.6 | 2.1 | 19 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 23 | 0.9 | 1.1 | NS |
| Change in ability to express musically | 22 | 1.2 | 2.1 | 22 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 25 | 0.7 | 1.5 | NS |
| Change in use of ICT in music | 11 | .0 | 0.8 | 12 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 14 | 0.4 | 0.5 | NS |

*NS indicates that there were no statistically significant differences

5.10 Summary

The evidence presented above suggests that the children gained in confidence in singing as a result of engagement with the primer. The quality of the singing improved as did their enjoyment of engaging in it. These perceptions were shared by school staff, governors and teachers. The questionnaires completed by the children do not suggest such a marked change, indeed in the few statements at KS2 where there were significant changes these were in a negative direction. However, there is evidence that as children progress through school they become more self and school critical and the findings reflect this. The evidence from the video recordings indicates some improvement in the quality of teaching music and the quality of the singing of the children but with continued room for improvement.

Chapter 6: Impact on the children's behaviour in school

This chapter focuses on changes in the behaviour of the children more generally in school. Data are presented from questionnaires and interviews.

6.1 Behaviour in music classes

Most of the data emerging about behaviour in the interviews related to behaviour in music lessons. These comments were positive about the impact of the programme and the extent to which enjoyment influenced behaviour:

'The children really enjoyed the sessions so they always behaved and worked really hard.' (Teacher)

Teachers reported that the children had responded well to the voices work and as a result were generally 'on task' during activities. The musical activities seemed to encourage good behaviour:

'Respect, greater listening skills, taking turns, being silent whilst others are performing.' (Teacher)

Some teachers felt that there had been improvements in concentration and consequently in relation to ease in classroom management in relation to the whole curriculum but others believed that the changes only related to behaviour in the music lessons. A few teachers felt that the singing activities had sometimes had a negative impact on behaviour:

'It has on occasion led to silly behaviour – lack of concentration.' (Teacher)

Generally, however, those interviewed indicated that the effects were positive and that there had been an improvement in levels of co-operation in music lessons and concentration. This led to calmer behaviour:

'Greater concentration during music lessons and it has meant calmer behaviour. An increase in self-esteem has led to greater respect among pupils. The challenges in the teaching of songs have also held pupils' attention.' (Teacher)

6.2 Changes in behaviour throughout the school

Staff were cautious in attributing changes in behaviour to the implementation of the programme but nevertheless felt that there had been some benefits. Typically children were reported to have learnt to listen which had benefits across the curriculum:

'It is difficult to divorce from other areas but in developing the whole child it has been a very positive feature, even through things like sharing, listening and taking part in group work.' (Head teacher)

Some staff reported that the sessions had led to a rise in pupils' self-esteem:

'Children's confidence and self-esteem is nurtured during these sessions. This has an obvious knock on effect and impacts on learning.' (Head teacher)

6.2.1 Head teacher's perceptions of change in behaviour

Seven head teachers responded to statements pre and post the implementation of the primer. These are set out in Table 19. None of these differences were statistically significant.

Table 19: Change in head teachers' perceptions of pupils' behaviour

| | Pre | | | Post | | |
|--|------|-----|----|------|-----|---|
| | Mean | SD | N | Mean | SD | N |
| The pupils in the school are generally well behaved | 4.2 | .42 | 10 | 4.6 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school are able to concentrate on their work | 4.2 | .42 | 10 | 4.4 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school help each other | 4.3 | .48 | 10 | 4.4 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school are on time for school | 4 | .82 | 10 | 4.6 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school enjoy learning | 4.3 | .48 | 10 | 4.4 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school are well motivated | 4.2 | .42 | 10 | 4.6 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school generally have high levels of self-esteem | 4 | .82 | 10 | 4.6 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school attend school regularly | 4.2 | .92 | 10 | 4.6 | .53 | 7 |
| The pupils in the school are not involved in bullying | 4.1 | .32 | 10 | 4.3 | .49 | 7 |

* Maximum score is 5 *SD = Standard Deviation

6.2.2 The Governors' perspectives

Governors were asked to complete a questionnaire indicating the extent of their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements regarding behaviour and attitudes towards school. 31% agreed that the primer had improved the children's attendance at school, 78% indicated that it had improved attitudes towards school, 69% indicated that it had improved motivation towards school, 77% that it had improve co-ordination skills, 48% concentration on work, 69% communication skills, 89% self-confidence and 90% social skills. See Table 20 for details.

Table 20: Governors' perceptions of the impact of the primer on behaviour

| | Disagree | Don't know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|----------|------------|----------|----------------|
| Improving the children's attendance at school | 1% (5) | 52% (15) | 10% (3) | 21% (6) |
| Promoting positive attitudes towards school | 4% (1) | 18% (5) | 46% (13) | 32% (9) |
| Improving the children's motivation towards school | 10% (3) | 21% (6) | 55% (16) | 14% (4) |
| Improving the children's co-ordination skills | | 23% (7) | 50% (15) | 27% (8) |
| Improving the children's concentration on their work | 7% (2) | 45% (13) | 38% (11) | 10% (3) |
| Improving the children's communication skills | 3% (1) | 28% (8) | 48% (14) | 21% (6) |
| Raising the children's self-confidence | 3% (1) | 7% (2) | 48% (14) | 41% (12) |
| Improving the children's social skills | | 10% (3) | 55 (16) | 35% (10) |

* Data are presented as percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

6.2.3 Parents' perspectives

Table 21 sets out the percentage levels of agreement by parents relating to the impact of the primer on their children's behaviour and attitudes towards school. 32% agreed that it had improved attendance at school, 72% that it had improved attitudes towards school, 58% that it had improved motivation towards school, 70% that it had improved co-ordination skills, 79% listening skills, 53% concentration, 63% communication skills, 68% children's well being, 83% raising children's self-confidence, and 69% improving social skills.

Table 21: Parents' perceptions of the impact of the primer on behaviour

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don't know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Improving the children's attendance at school | 15% (7) | 38% (18) | 15% (7) | 21% (10) | 11% (5) |
| Promoting positive attitudes towards school | 2% (1) | 14% (7) | 12% (6) | 52% (26) | 20% (10) |
| Improving the children's motivation towards school | 4% (2) | 22% (11) | 16% (8) | 42% (21) | 16% (8) |
| Improving your child's co-ordination skills | 2% (1) | 8% (4) | 20% (10) | 56% (28) | 14% (7) |
| Improving your child's listening skills | 2% (1) | 10% (5) | 10% (5) | 51% (26) | 28% (14) |
| Improving the children's concentration on their work | 4% (2) | 18% (9) | 25% (12) | 43% (21) | 10% (5) |
| Improving the children's communication skills | 2% (1) | 21% (10) | 15% (7) | 44% (21) | 19% (9) |
| Promoting a sense of well being in your child | 2% (1) | 20% (10) | 10% (5) | 43% (21) | 25% (12) |
| Raising the children's self-confidence | 2% (1) | 12% (6) | 4 % (2) | 53% (27) | 30% (15) |
| Improving your children's social skills | 2% (1) | 17% (8) | 10% (5) | 46% (23) | 23% (11) |

* Data are presented as percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

6.2.4 Teachers' perceptions

Data were available before and after the Voices Foundation primer for teachers' perceptions of the behaviour of the children in their class. Only 4 teachers completed questionnaires before and after the implementation so statistical analysis was not appropriate. Table 22 sets out the percentage responses before and after the implementation of the primer. Because the sample was very different on the two occasions it is very difficult to draw any conclusions. Generally speaking the teachers agreed that the children were well behaved and concentrated well. Most responses were positive except for those relating to self-esteem and bullying.

Table 22: Teachers’ perceptions of children’s behaviour, learning and self-esteem

| | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don’t Know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The pupils in my class are generally well behaved | Pre | 2% (1) | 3% (2) | 2% (1) | 82% (49) | 12% (7) |
| | Post | | 9% (2) | 5% (1) | 59% (13) | 27% (6) |
| The pupils in my class are able to concentrate on their work | Pre | | 12% (7) | 5% (3) | 75% (44) | 9% (5) |
| | Post | | 5% (1) | 9% (2) | 77% (17) | 9% (2) |
| The pupils in my class help each other | Pre | 3% (2) | 12% (7) | 3% (2) | 70% (41) | 12% (7) |
| | Post | | 5% (1) | | 64% (14) | 32% (7) |
| The pupils in the school are on time for school | Pre | 5% (3) | 2% (1) | 5% (3) | 70% (42) | 18% (11) |
| | Post | | | 14% (3) | 59% (13) | 27% (6) |
| The pupils in my class enjoy learning | Pre | 2% (1) | 2% (1) | 7% (4) | 80% (48) | 10% (6) |
| | Post | | | 5% (1) | 50% (11) | 46% (10) |
| The pupils in my class are well motivated | Pre | 7% (4) | | 3% (2) | 77% (46) | 13% (8) |
| | Post | | 5% (1) | 5% (1) | 50% (11) | 41% (9) |
| The pupils in my class generally have high levels of self-esteem | Pre | 2% (1) | 20% (12) | 7% (4) | 62% (37) | 10% (6) |
| | Post | | 9% (1) | 14% (3) | 36% (8) | 41% (9) |
| The pupils in my class attend school regularly | Pre | 3% (2) | 5% (3) | 2% (1) | 65% (39) | 25% (15) |
| | Post | | | 9% (2) | 46% (10) | 46% (10) |
| The pupils in my class are not involved in bullying | Pre | 2% (1) | 15% (9) | 8% (5) | 65% (39) | 10% (6) |
| | Post | | | 14% (3) | 55% (12) | 32% (7) |

* Data are presented as percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

6.3 Pupils’ perceptions of their behaviour

One of the aims of the study was to explore whether there were changes in other aspects of children’s behaviour in school and their own self-knowledge. The following figures and tables outline the pre and post intervention data.

6.3.1 Key Stage 1 pupil responses

Table 23 sets out the percentage of pupils responding in each category to each statement before and after the Voices Foundation primer. There were few statistically significant differences between responses before and after engagement with the programme. There were statistically significant differences in responses to statements about calming down quickly after getting angry ($p = .0001$), getting upset if they couldn’t do their work ($p = .006$), and wanting to do well in their work ($p = .005$). These differences were all in a positive direction. There were no significant differences in relation to any of the other responses.

Table 23: Key Stage 1 children’s responses – pre and post the Voices Foundation primer

| | Yes Pre | Yes Post | Don’t know Pre | Don’t know Post | No Pre | No Post |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| I try to help people when they are sad | 91% (549) | 89% (259) | 7% (39) | 8% (24) | 2% (14) | 2% (7) |
| I know what things I’m good at | 86% (517) | 82% (239) | 12% (69) | 13% (38) | 2% (14) | 5% (13) |
| Other children want me to play with them | 82% (493) | 76% (219) | 12% (70) | 19% (55) | 6% (38) | 6% (16) |
| I like coming to school | 84% (503) | 83% (241) | 5% (28) | 7% (20) | 11% (65) | 10% (29) |
| I can tell when I feel sad | 80% (391) | 83% (242) | 10% (50) | 10% (30) | 9% (46) | 6% (18) |
| I can tell when I feel happy | 92% (442) | 92% (266) | 5% (24) | 5% (15) | 3% (16) | 3% (9) |
| I know when my friends are starting to get sad | 73% (350) | 71% (206) | 15% (71) | 14% (40) | 13% (61) | 15% (44) |
| I know when my friends are starting to get angry | 70% (335) | 73% (212) | 14% (66) | 13% (38) | 16% (76) | 14% (39) |
| If the work is hard I still try to do it | 90% (435) | 90% (262) | 7% (32) | 6% (18) | 4% (19) | 3% (10) |
| I calm down quickly after I have got angry | 64% (311) | 69% (199) | 15% (71) | 16% (47) | 21% (102) | 15% (44) |
| I get upset if I can’t do my work | 42% (200) | 30% (87) | 10% (49) | 9% (27) | 48% (227) | 61% (176) |
| I like my school | 90% (428) | 90% (262) | 3% (14) | 5% (15) | 7% (32) | 5% (13) |
| I work quietly in my class | 78% (378) | 75% (218) | 10% (50) | 15% (44) | 11% (54) | 10% (28) |
| I can take turns | 91% (440) | 90% (260) | 4% (19) | 7% (21) | 5% (24) | 3% (9) |
| I like me | 86% (417) | 85% (246) | 5% (22) | 7% (19) | 9% (44) | 9% (25) |
| I am good at some things | 90% (422) | 84% (244) | 6% (29) | 14% (39) | 4% (18) | 2% (6) |
| I can work by myself | 82% (395) | 80% (231) | 9% (41) | 11% (32) | 9% (44) | 9% (27) |
| Sometimes other children are unkind to me | 71% (337) | 68% (196) | 6% (30) | 15% (43) | 23% (107) | 18% (51) |
| I sometimes bully or pick on other children | 21% (96) | 14% (41) | 7% (33) | 15% (43) | 72% (337) | 75% (218) |
| I tell the teacher if anyone is unkind to me | 85% (406) | 82% (239) | 4% (19) | 8% (23) | 11% (53) | 10% (28) |
| I want to do well in my work | 90% (434) | 95% (274) | 6% (30) | 3% (9) | 4% (18) | 2% (7) |

* Data are presented as percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

6.3.2 Key Stage 2 pupils responses pre-intervention

Table 24 provides details of the extent of change between the KS2 pupils pre and post intervention responses to statements about their and others’ emotions, attitudes towards school work and school itself. There were some statistically significant changes but most were very small. There were significant changes in responses relating to other children wanting to play, being allowed to join in play, liking coming to school, and liking school. These were all in a negative direction. There was a significant difference relating to whether children would still try to do something if they found it difficult. This was also in a negative direction. Responses to the statement about listening well in class were also significantly lower and there was an overall increase in the reported extent of involvement in bullying other children. These negative changes are unlikely to be a result of the programme as there is evidence that as children develop and become more aware of their own behaviour they tend to become more critical of it (Hallam et al., in press).

Table 24: Key Stage 2 responses

| | Number of respondents | Mean pre | Mean post | Sig |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|------|
| I try to help people when they are sad | 600 | 4.2 (.7) | 4.2 (.76) | .NS |
| I know what things I'm good at | 599 | 4.3 (.87) | 4.4 (.8) | NS |
| Other children want me to play with them | 600 | 3.8 (1.1) | 3.6 (1.1) | .017 |
| I like coming to school | 600 | 4.0 (1.3) | 3.8 (1.3) | .002 |
| I can describe how I am feeling most of the time | 595 | 3.7 (1.2) | 3.7 (1.1) | NS |
| I get upset if I don't do something well | 594 | 2.8 (1.4) | 2.7 (1.4) | NS |
| I find it difficult to make new friends | 589 | 2.9 (1.5) | 2.7 (1.4) | NS |
| I know when people are starting to get sad | 597 | 4.1 (1.0) | 4.0 (1.0) | NS |
| If I find something difficult I still try to do it | 603 | 4.5 (.85) | 4.4 (.84) | .034 |
| I'm easily hurt by what others say about me | 600 | 3.4 (1.4) | 3.4 (1.4) | NS |
| I am usually calm | 596 | 3.6 (1.3) | 3.5 (1.2) | NS |
| I calm down quickly after I have got angry or upset | 595 | 3.4 (1.4) | 3.4 (1.4) | NS |
| Other children let me play with them | 592 | 3.9 (1.1) | 3.8 (1.1) | .037 |
| I laugh at other children when they get something wrong | 598 | 1.8 (1.2) | 1.8 (1.2) | NS |
| I have lots of friends at school | 599 | 4.2 (1.1) | 4.2 (1.2) | NS |
| I find it easy to pay attention in class | 590 | 3.6 (1.2) | 3.7 (1.1) | NS |
| I worry about the things I can't do well | 597 | 3.3 (1.4) | 3.3 (1.3) | NS |
| I like my school | 591 | 4.3 (1.1) | 4.2 (1.1) | .003 |
| I work quietly in my class | 594 | 3.5 (1.1) | 3.5 (1.1) | NS |
| I want to do well in my work | 600 | 4.8 (.64) | 4.7 (.64) | NS |
| I am happy being me | 600 | 4.4 (1.1) | 4.4 (1.1) | NS |
| I get on well with my teachers | 597 | 4.3 (1.0) | 4.3 (.95) | NS |
| I sulk or argue when I am told off | 590 | 2.2 (1.4) | 2.3 (1.3) | NS |
| I can ask a question and wait for an answer | 596 | 4.0 (2.4) | 4.0 (1.1) | NS |
| I can take turns | 597 | 4.4 (.98) | 4.3 (.9) | NS |
| I listen well in class | 595 | 3.9 (1.1) | 3.8 (1.1) | .012 |
| I like coming to school | 596 | 4.1 (1.3) | 3.9 (1.3) | .012 |
| I sometimes bully or pick on other children | 594 | 1.7 (1.2) | 1.9 (1.2) | .016 |
| I am good at some things | 594 | 4.5 (.85) | 4.5 (.8) | NS |
| I can work without my teacher's help | 590 | 3.9 (1.2) | 3.9 (1.1) | NS |
| I find it easy to concentrate on my work | 590 | 3.7 (1.3) | 3.7 (1.1) | NS |
| I am sometimes picked on or bullied by other children | 596 | 3.1 (1.6) | 3.1 (1.5) | NS |

* Maximum score is 5 * NS = Not significant

6.4 Summary

Overall, there appear to have been few positive changes in the children's behaviour and attitudes towards school as a result of the primer. The adult observations suggest that confidence, self-esteem, and listening skills may have improved but there appear to be little significant improvements elsewhere.

Chapter 7: Impact on the school and its community

This chapter considers the perceived impact of the Voices Foundation programme on the whole school community, the status of music in the school and the impact that enhanced musical activity may have had on the perceptions of the school in the community.

7.1 Status of music in the school

There was a perception that the profile and status of music had been raised in the participant schools:

'It has raised the profile of music. It has made us realise that we had neglected it before.' (Music co-ordinator)

'Music has a higher status in the school as a result of the Voices Foundation.' (Head teacher)

There had been a change in the way that staff worked together in relation to music teaching with the music co-ordinator sharing responsibilities with other staff. As a result there had been an increase in the perceived importance of music teaching. As the whole school had engaged in the programme the profile of music was raised throughout the school.

Head teachers were asked to indicate their agreement with a range of statements relating to the status of music in the school. These are set out in Table 25. They indicated prior to the programme that music was a high priority in the school and had high status but were less confident about their school's musical achievements. There were some changes in relation to these perceptions as a result of the implementation of the programme but they were not statistically significant.

Table 25: Change in head teacher's perceptions of the status of music in the school

| | Pre-programme | | | Post-programme | | |
|---|---------------|-----|----|----------------|-----|---|
| | Mean | SD | N | Mean | SD | N |
| Music is a high priority in the school | 4.4 | .52 | 10 | 4.3 | .49 | 8 |
| Music has high status in the school | 4.2 | .92 | 10 | 4.9 | .38 | 8 |
| We advertise out school's achievements in music in the prospectus | 3.3 | 1.3 | 9 | 4.6 | .53 | 8 |
| We have a high reputation for our musical achievements | 3.6 | 1.1 | 9 | 4.2 | .84 | 8 |

* Maximum score is 5 *SD = the standard deviation *N = number of head teachers responding

All of the governors agreed that the primer had had an impact on the musical life of the school and had raised the status of music. The responses of parents were more mixed although overwhelmingly they also agreed (see Table 26).

Table 26: Governors’ and parents’ perceptions of the programme’s impact on the school profile

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|----------|----------------|
| Governors’ responses | | | | | |
| Improving the musical life of the school | | | | 28% (8) | 72% (21) |
| Raising the status of music in the school | | | | 31% (9) | 69% (20) |
| Parents’ responses | | | | | |
| Improving the musical life of the school | 2% (1) | | 6% (3) | 49% (25) | 43% (22) |
| Raising the status of music in the school | 2% (1) | 2% (1) | 8% (4) | 55% (27) | 33% (16) |

* Data are presented in percentages, figures in brackets indicate the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

7.2 School ethos and the wider school community

Head teachers indicated that the primer offered the possibility of generating a greater sense of community and providing inspiration for the pupils and staff:

‘Greater community feel from working on a project together. Enjoyment and fun in the daily curriculum. Energised, positive children who feel more able to learn and a greater awareness and understanding of the power of music to uplift and inspire creativity.’ (Head teacher)

The interviews at the end of the programme indicated that in some schools this had been the case. Head teachers spoke of *‘community feel, active involvement, energy and enthusiasm’*, and *‘an already cohesive team’* working *‘together more closely’*. Others reported that it had generated a feeling of community. Several of the head teachers also indicated that the primer had raised the profile of the school in the community, improved public perception of the school and improved school ethos (see Table 27). Positive comments in the interviews about school ethos supported this.

Table 27: Head teachers’ perceptions of the programme’s impact on the school profile

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don’t know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|---------|----------------|
| The primer has raised the profile of the school in the community | | 13% (1) | 13% (1) | 50% (4) | 25% (2) |
| The primer has improved the ethos of the school | | 25% (2) | 13% (1) | 38% (3) | 25% (2) |
| The primer has improved public perception of the school | | 29% (2) | 13% (1) | 29% (2) | 29% (2) |

* Data are presented in percentages, figures in brackets indicate the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

7.2.1 Governors’ and parents’ perceptions of the impact on the school profile

The school governors were positive about the impact of the programme on the musical life of the school, and the way it had raised the status of music in the school but held more mixed views relating to the impact on encouraging greater communication between home and school and increasing parental involvement in the school. In general, however, the impact on school ethos and the perceptions of the

school in the community were perceived to be positive. While the majority of the responding parents believed that the programme had had a positive impact on aspects of the school's activities, their views were less positive with regard to the extent to which it had encouraged greater communication between home and school and increased involvement in the musical life of the school (see Table 28).

Table 28: Governors' and parents' perceptions of the programme's impact on the school profile

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don't know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|----------|----------------|
| Governors' responses | | | | | |
| Encouraging greater communication between home and school | | 14% (4) | 28% (8) | 31% (9) | 28% (8) |
| Increasing parental involvement in the musical life of the school | | 7% (2) | 10% (3) | 55% (16) | 28% (8) |
| Enhancing the ethos of the school | | 3% (1) | 7% (2) | 31% (9) | 59% (17) |
| Raising the profile of the school in the community | | | 17% (5) | 45% (13) | 38% (11) |
| Improving the public perception of the school | | | 21% (6) | 46% (13) | 32% (9) |
| Parents' responses | | | | | |
| Encouraging greater communication between you and the school | 4% (2) | 28% (14) | 14% (7) | 40% (20) | 14% (7) |
| Increasing your involvement in the musical life of the school | 2% (1) | 16% (8) | 4% (2) | 56% (28) | 22% (11) |
| Improving the ethos of the school | 2% (1) | 8% (4) | 12% (6) | 60% (30) | 18% (9) |
| Raising the profile of the school in the community | 2% (1) | 8% (4) | 12% (6) | 48% (24) | 30% (15) |
| Improving your perception of the school | 2% (1) | 14% (7) | 6% (3) | 56% (28) | 22% (11) |
| Improving public perception of the school | 2% (1) | 10% (5) | 18% (9) | 45% (23) | 26% (13) |

* Data are presented as percentages, figures in brackets are the number of respondents

* Percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

7.2.2 The role of musical performance

It was apparent from the interviews that the celebratory performances had a positive impact. The Voices Foundation end of year celebrations provided opportunities for parents to engage more with the school. In some schools a choir after-school activity had been established as a result of the success of the concert. Teachers welcomed the emphasis in the end of year celebrations on showing the process rather than the final product. In some schools the implementation of the programme had led to the introduction of musical performance:

'We will have a public assembly at the end of the year in which each class will perform in front of the parents. This is something we have never done before.' (Head teacher)

'We had a very enjoyable singing celebration. The children all took part in that and enjoyed one another's efforts and applauded one another. We haven't done that before, had an afternoon together simply singing songs.' (Head teacher)

The programme had led to improvement in the quality of public performances. Some of these were outside of the school:

'The status of the school was already high but the Voices Foundation programme has enhanced the music curriculum. The choir has benefited from a range of vocal activities which enhanced their performance at the local music festival. We have choir activities after school and public performances with other schools, music festivals, mass songs.' (Head teacher)

7.3 Summary

Overall, the Voices Foundation Primer had a positive impact on raising the status and profile of music in the school. In addition there was an impact on school cohesion, team work and a more positive ethos developed. The performances provided opportunities for parents to engage with the school in addition to enhancing the confidence of the pupils.

Chapter 8: Summary and conclusions

This chapter provides a summary of the findings and draws some conclusions about the impact of the Voices Foundation programme on music teaching in the participating schools and pupil learning.

8.1 Summary

8.1.1 The Local Authority perspective

LAs selected schools to participate in the primer in a variety of ways. The co-ordinators viewed the training as beneficial for primary school teachers who lacked musical skills. After the original selection of schools, the LAs had little involvement in the primer. They were supportive of the programme because it provided training and support for schools in music teaching where previously they believed there may have been little musical activity. They praised the quality of the training and the ongoing support offered to the teachers. However, the level of commitment to the programme required of head teachers and school staff was perceived to be substantial. This was seen as problematic for some schools.

8.1.2 Reasons for engagement with the programme

Head teachers were keen to engage with the Voices Foundation programme because of a perceived lack of expertise in their staff or because they valued music in the curriculum and wished to enhance their existing provision. The specific reasons given for school participation varied. Some wished to support the Voices Foundation as they had heard good reports of the Foundation's work. Most head teachers and music co-ordinators wished to strengthen the teaching of music in the school. Some head teachers wanted to reduce reliance on the music co-ordinator and encourage class teachers to teach music to their classes themselves. In some schools there was a desire to enhance the curriculum and provide a balance to the current emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There was a general wish to enhance teachers' confidence, improve singing in the school and raise the profile of music.

8.1.3 Head teachers' evaluations of the success of the programme

Head teachers were positive about the implementation of the Voices Foundation programme and valued the quality of the training, and the effectiveness and efficiency of the advisory teachers. They believed that the effects of the initiative would be sustained in the long term and some were continuing to fund the support for teachers for the following year. Others felt that the initial training was sufficient to meet the school's need. Generally it was felt that the programme could be implemented elsewhere, but the commitment and motivation of head teachers and staff was cited as being a key factor in the extent of the programme's effectiveness. Overall head teachers and music co-ordinators felt that the primer was well run and organised and that it had changed and improved the music teaching in the school.

8.1.4 The training

Overall, the training was generally well received. Through it staff developed knowledge of musical concepts, rhythm, pulse and pitch and practical singing skills. There were some reservations about the timing of the training. Staff did not like its provision at weekends, and for a substantial proportion of staff long sessions inhibited learning as did twilight sessions when staff were tired. In some cases teachers felt that the groups were too large and that this reduced their opportunities to ask questions and created stress when they had to sing individually. There was concern that KS1 staff were learning materials that they would never be able to use and it was suggested that KS1 and KS2 training should be separate.

For a substantial proportion of teachers the training process was daunting. They were fearful of singing for others and in some cases this was traumatic. Many teachers experienced difficulties in remembering the songs as the training was reported as too intense. Teachers expressed concern about establishing the appropriate pitch for singing in class and several teachers wanted clarification about which songs focused on which musical elements. Later training sessions were perceived as too difficult for non-musicians.

8.1.5 The role of the advisory teachers

The work of the advisory teachers was valued and their feedback was seen as supportive and helpful. Despite the emphasis on instilling confidence, for a substantial proportion of staff the process was still anxiety provoking. A few staff indicated that there were too many observation sessions and that there was no time for development between them. Termly rather than half-termly sessions were suggested. Where there were problems with the observation process the Voices Foundation was responsive and quickly addressed the issues. More opportunities to observe the advisory teachers teaching were requested and there were suggestions that a video outlining the nature of the primer would have been useful to introduce staff to the principles in advance of it starting.

8.1.6 The materials

The materials were generally well received, although they were considered as being more suitable for younger pupils than older ones. Some teachers thought that the songs were very similar, that their structures were simplistic, that they were dated and that the content of some was inappropriate. There were also concerns that the order of materials was different in the book and on the CD. Some teachers and music co-ordinators expressed concerns about progression. All children learned the same songs which were not differentiated by age.

Prior to the implementation of the Voices Foundation primer, in several schools, the music requirements of the National Curriculum were not being fully satisfied. While the primer related well to the National Curriculum and satisfied most of its requirements concerns were expressed about the relative neglect of composing, listening and appraising and the lack of coverage of different genres, world musics and the use of instruments. Where schools had a strong tradition of instrumental tuition this was particularly important.

There was variability in the extent to which the primer fitted with existing music activities. In some schools integration was no problem, in others existing practices were abandoned or the match was incompatible and non-musician teachers experienced stress in trying to deal with conflicting information.

The extent to which the materials were seen to integrate into the wider curriculum varied. A few teachers commented on the positive links with PE through movement, while others expressed concern that the songs did not link with particular topic work which they were undertaking with their classes.

8.1.7 Sustainability

Issues relating to sustainability included the turnover of staff in schools, and funding. Many schools did not have the resources to continue the training. Several indicated that one year of training was sufficient and that other curriculum areas needed to be addressed in subsequent years, some schools were continuing with the programme with a reduced level of support.

8.1.8 Transferability

While staff felt that the primer could be successful in any primary school they cautioned that it required total commitment from the head teacher and the staff and that it was very demanding of staff time. Overall, however, that time commitment was seen as worthwhile.

8.1.9 Impact on teachers and teaching

Participation in the primer had a positive impact on teacher confidence in relation to teaching music and singing for the majority of teachers. For a few, particularly those who experienced difficulties in singing in tune, the training and subsequent observations were stressful. The primer enhanced teachers' knowledge of key concepts and increased the repertoire of songs available to them. NQTs particularly valued the experience. The primer resulted in music being taught more frequently, and often spontaneously within the class, for short periods of time. Teachers reported enjoying teaching music more. In Year 6 there were difficulties in maintaining the level of music tuition recommended by the primer in an examination year. While the overall evaluations were generally positive, teachers had concerns about pitching at the start of songs.

The videos made prior to the introduction of the programme and one year into its implementation showed that there had been development in teacher skills as a result of the primer and also in the quality of the children's singing, although there was still room for further improvement.

Staff reported that the primer had raised their awareness of musical issues and led to greater discussion and consideration of their music teaching.

8.1.10 Impact on pupils

There were substantial improvements in pupils' confidence in singing and performing. Pupils enjoyed the singing activities and there were examples of them spontaneously singing in the play ground. The quality of singing improved. The children demonstrated greater understanding of key musical concepts. In Key Stage 1 there was a significant reduction in pupils reporting that music was boring.

In KS2 some questionnaire responses changed in a negative direction. This is unlikely to be related to the implementation of the programme per se. As children progress through school they become more self aware and critical. However, the materials in the primer were reported by teachers to be less well suited to the older children.

Parents and governors were overwhelmingly positive in their evaluations of the impact of the primer on the musical skills of the children.

The assessment of change in musical skills undertaken by teachers in relation to children perceived to be low, moderate or high in musical attainment at the start of the primer showed statistically significant improvement across all elements. The greatest levels of improvement were seen in the low and moderately attaining children.

8.1.11 Behaviour and attitudes towards school

The primer did not appear to have any impact on the behaviour of the children outside of music lessons, partly because behaviour was already good. In music lessons, children were reported to be more focused, although there were exceptions. Some teachers indicated that listening skills may have improved and others pointed to enhanced self-esteem.

8.1.12 School ethos and community

The status of music had been raised in participating schools and a sense of community had developed because all staff and children were working on the same programme. There was some indication that the profile of some schools may have been enhanced in the community. The celebratory performances played a key role in this.

8.2 Conclusions

There is a clear need for primary school teachers to receive training and support in relation to teaching music in primary schools. Many lack the requisite skills and consequently lack confidence. In many cases this means that music has not been given the time it deserves in the curriculum and teachers have not enjoyed teaching it. The evidence from this evaluation indicates that teachers can develop the skills they need.

A key philosophy of the Voices Foundation Programme is that aural development is best achieved by 'transactional use of the voice', particularly in the primary phase. The voice is perceived as the most appropriate performing medium as the child makes the sound, whereas when using an instrument the child makes no sound. The Foundation contends that the use of voice is more appropriate for the primary child's

acquisition of the most basic music skills and concepts. This therefore reduces the need for the use of instruments. In addition, the programme was designed to be a 'one-year starter' based on a carefully structured sequence of skills and musical concepts. This limited the inclusion of the whole range of musical activities, particularly composition, improvisation, listening, appraising, and the extent to which world musics and different genres could be explored.

The Voices Foundation primer can be effective in improving music teaching in primary schools, particularly in the early years, providing that the management of the school and the staff are committed to it, prepared to invest the necessary time and the teachers do not perceive themselves as 'tone deaf' and have an insurmountable fear of singing. Where teachers already have considerable musical knowledge and skills the benefits are small. The cost of the programme in its current form puts it beyond the means of many small schools and a slimmed down programme which is less intense may be more cost effective. Differentiation by key stage would also assist in reducing costs. There are issues relating to progression, the development of materials more attractive and challenging for the older students, and the need to develop ways of addressing all of the elements of the national curriculum.

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