

Liverpool Cultural Education Challenge

Case Study

This case study summarises an aspect of effective practice which has contributed to raising the profile of cultural education in our school.

Name of school	BROUGHTON HALL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
Name(s) of cultural partner(s)	JENNIFER JOHN; HILARY BROWNING; JAMES DODD; PAUL LEONARD
Case study title	MUSIC MENTORS
Lead teacher	Ms Stephanie Hayes
Date submitted	18 th April 2018
Cost of the partnership	£2,500.00 for cultural partners matched by £2,785 in kind contribution from the school

Background - why you chose to do this work

Transition: Building on Resonate bids (via which we've been able to offer sponsored instrument lessons), we wanted to raise students' awareness of how they can work in the music industry and/or continue to enjoy it socially and culturally. This would support transition from KS3-4-5 & ultimately into industry paths, as well as encourage students to access the city's cultural opportunities throughout their lives.

Details (Who was involved and the details of it?)

Four artists (Jennifer John, *Sense of Sound*, vocalist; Hilary Browning, *RLPO*, cellist; James Dodd, *freelance*, drums/guitar and Paul Leonard, *freelance*, saxophone) agreed to visit Broughton Hall to perform for the whole KS3 cohort, as well as the interested KS4-5 students. They then offered the opportunity to work with them as mentees, being given guidance and advice about musical pathways as well as feedback to improve their musical performance skills.

The programme involved 30 students who participated playing a range of instruments including voice, violin, bass guitar, guitar, piano, drums, flute and saxophone.

Impact, outcomes, outputs (How did you measure the success of this? What evidence are you providing? What have you produced to share with other schools – this could be a film/scheme of work or lesson plan/CPD model that we can send electronically or offer to other schools)

Impact: Students now have a raised awareness of some of the local opportunities to be involved in or attend musical activities in Liverpool.

Outcomes: The launch concert was seen by almost 700 students and 30 students from across all years are currently on the mentoring programme. Jennifer John has also helped a Year 13 student gain an audition for continued study when she leaves Broughton Hall (result pending).

Outputs: A resource pack including: budget/costings; Project Schedule; PowerPoints and advice for other schools aiming to host a similar programme.

Evaluation (Did it make any difference? Were there any barriers? What would you do different next time? How will you sustain it?)

The opportunity for students to see live performances which most wouldn't choose to attend immediately gave all students a wider experience and appreciation of music, irrespective of their musical tastes. Many students commented on their enjoyment of the more unusual instruments which they'd never heard played live or appreciated fully how they worked: e.g. one Year 7 student loved the sound of the cello and a group of Year 8s were impressed by how the drums could be so exciting and perform a far greater range of material than they at first expected. I highly recommend the model of bringing professional artists in to schools to expose students to quality performances in the most cost-effective way.

The majority of students who applied to be on the programme were successful; the only barrier to this was for students who had never played the instrument they wanted to be mentored in, as this was not a tuition programme. Happily all vocalists could be accommodated as they didn't need to have any prior learning to access the workshops.

In terms of the *aims* of the programme, all students are receiving personalised attention from a mentor who is committed to helping them with their musical aspirations; we are also working towards performances for our Summer Concert in July 2018. Some of the mentors are making sure they regularly hold conversations about and around the music industry to help students truly appreciate the opportunities available to them and the lifestyle of a person working in the industry; some in practice feel more comfortable running rehearsals. If we ran another project, it would be good to either to train up the mentors in this aspect or try and secure mentors with some proven confidence/experience of this type of working relationship.

Sourcing the mentors has proven the most difficult part of the project. I approached various local organisations and some were far more helpful than others. I personally found it disheartening when some suggested I change the plans to meet their aims or serve a purpose for them. I strongly felt that students' needs were paramount and that I had enough experience and knowledge to recommend the best proposal for our students. It was also disheartening to find some organisations unwilling to recommend performers we could work with or give an estimate of the costs that might be involved. This made the project so much harder to realistically cost and plan and I eventually reached a point where I considered abandoning the programme. It was only as a result of the support and advice of individuals such as John McHugh and Jennifer John that I began to make progress and secure a group of artists to work with our students. Scheduling has proven a challenge – we needed more advance notice than I'd at first anticipated due to the working commitments of artists – but I truly found that "where there's a will, there's a way" and the artists' commitment and support enabled us to get the programme off the ground.

I'd like to sustain the impact of the project via maintaining contact with our mentors, ensuring all interested students have progression routes and any funding they need to pursue music, as well as trips to keep exposing them to a wide range of music and performance venues beyond school. I am however aware that the staffing in my department has been reduced and my job as a full time classroom teacher and head of department dominates my time; I am also deeply concerned at the lack of funding available to pursue musical opportunities for students whose backgrounds don't, for whatever reason, afford them such experiences. The current status of the arts seems to be at its lowest since I began teaching in 2000 and it's a challenging environment for students who wish to pursue them.

I'd like to thank the LCEP for funding such an inspirational project for our students. I hope other schools can make use of our experience when creating similar opportunities.