



Pilot Music project  
Supported by Sound Connections  
Implemented by The Music House for Children in Cathnor Children's Centre

## **BOOGIE BABIES – MUSIC SESSIONS**

### **End of project Report**

- Generally sessions for babies worked well. Spontaneous responses from babies – to all sounds introduced. Baby babble proven to work well. Identified that in some cases songs/movements used for toddlers not developmentally appropriate (parent becoming tiresome lifting and swinging child) Prominent interests parents and children held were as a result of using Facilitators playing musical instruments i.e guitar and flute.
- IH recommends home made instruments to introduced (which have proven very successful to IH over the years during CC music sessions). Utilising resources in home environment i.e. pans and spoons, small plastic milk bottles containing items to shake. Improvising at bath times etc – sponges – splish, splosh splash. This will enable parents/carers with ideas around play and learning at low or no cost (musical instruments can be costly)
- Words and/or sentences in languages other than English are very effective in group work and proven successful when considering participation and belonging – families feeling valued and respected.
- Positive planning, communication and working relationship between the Children's Centre and Music House maintained throughout the pilot period proved to be essential to achieving outcomes. Mix of skills between Music House and the Centre's Snr Early Years worker proved to be very positive.
- Felt that possibly age group could be decreased to 0 – 2 years as developmentally a big difference between babies and 3 year olds (who could be approaching 4)! The ethos of bringing music to very young babies is wonderful and you just need to observe their responses to a particular activity or song to see the benefits. I believe that this type of activity can improve bonding between the child and parent and be a place to relax and unwind together. It can also build parents confidence in the relationship with their child.
- This service was aimed at reaching the more vulnerable and hard to reach families who might not usually access music sessions or be aware of the benefits of music for the very young. In the early sessions families were targeted by the Centre Manager and there was a good mix of different ethnicities; language; religion and socio-economic background present. However due to the very good reputation of the Music House in the area and word of mouth between families we observed an increase in families attending who would usually attend these sessions at other venues and who were not in the most need of the service. As numbers were limited in the session for health and safety reasons, this subsequently led to an increase in numbers of white middle class families attending and a decrease in the diversity of service users accessing the sessions. Whilst the sessions were extremely busy and well attended, this issue was disappointing to all of us. Given this experience, I would recommend that any future similar project should be aimed at a specific services and service user group who would be most benefit from this input, e/g in Hammersmith & Fulham - a Women's refuge; Shepherds Bush families Project who work with families who are homeless or in temporary accomodation/asylum seekers etc ; a special needs group; a voluntary sector project or charity. This would offer a fantastic opportunity to vulnerable and hard to reach families.

All comments taken from Cathnor Road Children's Centre team -  
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