

Youth Leadership

Sing Up 2007-2011
Programme Evaluation
Theme 11

Sing Up 2007-2011 Programme Evaluation

Sing Up 2007-2011 was the Music Manifesto National Singing Programme, led by Youth Music, with AMV-BBDO, Faber Music and The Sage Gateshead, supported by Government. It aimed to raise the status of singing and increase opportunities for school children throughout the country to enjoy singing as part of their everyday lives, and to support all primary schools to become 'singing schools'.

Sing Up commissioned the Centre for Use of Research & Evidence in Education (CUREE) to undertake an external evaluation of the whole programme. The evaluations are presented as follows:

- Synthesis Report including Executive Summary
- Probe & Case Study Report
 - Themed Reports:
 1. Communications
 2. Health & Wellbeing
 3. Impact on Schools
 4. Learning Across the Curriculum
 5. Management of Change
 6. Musical Development
 7. Partnership
 8. Speech, Language and Communication
 9. Transition
 10. Workforce Development
 11. Youth Leadership

The full set of reports can be found on the Sing Up website: www.singup.org

Further information about CUREE can be found at: www.curee-paccts.com

Introduction

Sing Up 2007-11 was the Music Manifesto National Singing Programme, led by Youth Music, with AMV-BBDO, Faber Music and The Sage Gateshead, supported by Government. It aimed to raise the status of singing and increase opportunities for school children throughout the country to enjoy singing as part of their everyday lives, and to support all primary schools to become 'singing schools'.



Sing Up operated through four main strands of activity: a national PR and advertising **campaign** highlighting the benefits of singing; singing **resources**, through the twin vehicles of a website www.singup.org (including a 'Song Bank') and a free termly magazine with CD; a **workforce development** programme to build the confidence and expertise of primary school teachers, musicians and others in leading and supporting children's singing activities, with a supporting network of 30 Sing Up Area Leaders; **funded programmes**, supporting the development of singing activity around the country.

By March 2011 Sing Up had engaged with over 95% of state primary schools and over 90% of all schools with primary school-aged children in them.

Background

This report is focused on youth leadership and how it has been implemented by those involved in the Sing Up programme. For Sing Up, Youth Leadership relates to those young people who have developed as Young Singing Leaders. Sing Up defines a Young Singing Leader as 'a child or person aged 5-19 who is leading singing with other children, young people, or adults'. This can include activity such as leading singing in the playground, supporting other children with their singing (in a choir, classroom or out of school), and leading singing with adults. Sing Up describes leadership as falling into three categories:

Little I Leadership

- Supporting the learning and personal development of peers and younger children. For example, supporting their peer choir member with singing part of a song
- Leadership that is about children and young people making choices and taking action, for example, year 6 children arranging themselves into a group during play time and starting to lead playground songs

Big L Leadership

- Standing at the front of a group encouraging others to participate, for example, leading a choir
- Making decisions and taking responsibility or actions that affect others, for example, children deciding to set up their own choir and recruit other children into it

Baton Passing Leadership

- Often in everyday life or in a group, the person who leads and those who follow can change from moment to moment. Sometimes one person leads a group and sometimes there is leadership fluency where other group members will help or support the leader or even take full leadership themselves for a moment.

The aim of this theme evaluation is to synthesise impact data relevant to youth leadership from across the projects¹, and to differentiate, where possible, for different groups of leaders and participants. It also aims to identify the key processes behind the impacts. The report starts by contextualising the data in the aims of Sing Up and the projects themselves and the key processes and strategies employed. It then reports on outcomes, on leadership learning relevant to youth leadership, and on any other learning relevant to youth leadership.

2. For the purposes of this report, a project was defined as an aspect of activity carried out as part of the Sing Up programme. Projects therefore range in nature and include specific interventions; their types (e.g. Sing Up Awards); organisations and areas, leading a variety of strands of work; various communications activities and their analysis, etc.

Aim and Objectives

The programme as a whole aimed to build and develop a committed and effective workforce, including Young Singing Leaders, to lead singing in and out of the classroom and the school. Sing Up believed that creating opportunities for children and young people to lead would enable them to become more self aware, gain skills, exercise their power, initiate, share influences with others, and, in turn, have a positive effect on their own lives and the lives of others.

The aims of individual projects reviewed for this theme varied depending on their context and target audience. For example, Music and the Deaf aimed to integrate singing and signing into the practical activities of both young people with hearing and those with hearing impairment. Sing Up East Kent wanted to develop Young Singing Leaders from the Senior Section Guides, in partnership with Girl Guiding UK. Many school based programmes aimed to bridge the transition of children from primary to secondary school (Yorkshire Youth and Music (YYM), Vocal Force Selby, Music and the Deaf). Building confidence and improving the singing and performance skills of young people (including aspects such as posture, breathing) were also identified as key objectives for enabling young people to share their skills and lead singing in primary/junior schools (YYM, Vocal Force Selby, Choir of the Year).

Choir of the Year aimed to use choirs to inspire younger children, to raise the bar

for school choirs and to develop teenage Singing Leaders within the participating choirs. The participating Young Singing Leaders specified the leadership skills they wanted to gain as a result of taking part – these included communication, patience, discipline, confidence, creating their own activities and keeping children motivated. Specific aspects of leading singing that they wanted to improve were:

- understanding vocal range;
- keeping children quiet when needed;
- how to inspire the unenthusiastic;
- learning what's appropriate for different age groups; and
- assessing individual children's ability.

Vocal Force Selby reported on specific aims for their training of Young Leaders. These included developing the students' ability to teach the songs by call and echo, thinking about which pitch to start on, developing their familiarity with and understanding of warm ups. Their overall aim was to enable the young people to lead a small group of primary children.

Processes and Strategies

Resources

Sing Up provided sites with resources for how to engage young people as Singing Leaders. These included a 'How to' guidebook which comprised a description of what Young Singing Leaders are, the benefits of involving young people as leaders and the approaches and training that could be employed. A handbook was also devised for the young people, which included 'fun activities' (e.g. crosswords) and games to encourage them to reflect on their learning. Resources were provided on the 'Teaching Tools' section of the Sing Up website to support and engage Young Leaders.

Training and Development

In all sites the Young Singing Leaders received some form of training, especially those who were expected to lead primary school children. Activities undertaken by the Young Singing Leaders differed across sites, but a recurrent theme was being 'attached' to either junior choirs and/or primary schools. Choir of the Year, for example, partnered three youth choirs with a cluster of three junior choirs from primary schools in Buckinghamshire. The Young Leaders, together with their Musical Directors, led vocal workshops and rehearsal sessions to help develop their singing and performance skills.

In YYM, three to four Young Leaders were attached to two to three feeder primary schools, working with a group of year 5 or 6 pupils. The young people attended six training sessions focused on (in order): posture, breathing and warm ups; conducting skills; encouraging others to sing; communication pitching and internalising, performing and choosing repertoire; and in the final session –

rehearsal, showcase, and a presentation of their certificates. The Young Leaders, supported by the Sing Up Lead Artist or member of the music department staff, chose and taught one or two songs to their group of children. This culminated in an end of term celebratory performance at the secondary school. Before each school visit, the Young Leaders received a refresher Sing Up session with their music teacher and lead artist to feedback on previous sessions and plan for the next.

Music and the Deaf developed a 'Singing Buddies' programme. They worked with a secondary school with a unit for young people with hearing impairment, and involved year 6 pupils with hearing impairment from four feeder primary schools. Pupils from the secondary school worked in pairs to learn, teach and communicate the signing of songs, which were either memorised or sung from lyrics displayed in attractive visual media. The first visit to primary schools involved the young leaders thinking about which songs would be appropriate for teaching primary pupils, both vocally and with signs, how to teach a song, and how to support younger pupils who may be struggling. The second visit involved visiting a local 'feeder' primary school, where the 'buddies' (Young Singing Leader) taught younger children and shared their skills with them. This was followed by a session with the trainer, to reflect on their approaches to teaching, what worked and what didn't work, and how they could improve for next time.

Vocal Force Selby developed a 'Young Leaders' Squad' (year 7, 8 and 9 students) as part of their Bronze Arts Award. The group met regularly after school to develop their skills in leading singing, including aspects such as understanding the importance of warm ups and how to sing healthily. They were taught a range of material including warm up songs, call and echo songs and action songs; all of which would be relatively simple to teach to young children. All of the materials used were given to the Young Leaders in a Sing Up folder. As the Young Leaders progressed through the training, they practised leading the whole group, and gradually built up to when they would be expected to lead primary children. The students practised their newly acquired skills by leading two 50 minute sessions to a full class of year 5 children. This was followed by further training sessions to recap ideas and develop new materials ready for the 'transition visits', where they worked with primary children visiting the secondary school.



In Sing Up East Kent a partnership was formed with Girl Guiding UK through the Singing Champions project. A series of introductory sessions were held for those aged 14-18, followed by monthly singing sessions with the adult leaders and a residential weekend. This gave all involved (22 girl Guides and six adult Guiders) the opportunity to sing with three international artists. They also wrote five new compositions and began to lead their peers in singing.

2. See background section for a definition of 'little l' leadership

Activities across other sites varied depending on the level of skill of the Young Singing Leader – as sometimes children in primary schools undertook 'little l' leadership² responsibility. Typical activities included:

- choosing which songs to sing (Wylam First school, Gibside school – Sing Up Award Schools);
- leading a small group (i.e. class) in song (Burwell Village College, Wylam First school – Sing Up Award schools);
- co-leading workshops with primary children – small groups and whole school (Sing Up Bedfordshire – secondary);
- leading songs in the playground (Sing Up Bedfordshire – primary);
- creating their own 'bands' by choosing a small group of friends as 'members', and the style of music they would like to sing (Whitewood and Fleming);
- leading warm ups (Sing Up Bedfordshire);
- writing their own songs (Whitewood and Fleming);
- in depth involvement such as composition and lyrics, vocal styles and teaching these techniques to younger children (Pie Factory Music); and
- taking a lead role in the auditioning, casting and workshop process (Greenwich).

Whitewood and Fleming encouraged the very vulnerable young children in their programme to help with decision making and to become responsible for their own learning. The Singing Leaders and children were asked to question what they were doing regularly, and the Leaders were trained to look out for input from even the quietest of children. This usually took the form of questions in the session, such as 'Have I got that right? Is this what you mean? What shall we do next? Can this be better? How? Do we all like this?'. Quieter children would often suggest things in their notebooks, or through drawing pictures, which the Leaders also took into account.

Findings and Outcomes

Children and Young people as Participants and Audience

Reported outcomes relating to children and young people were overwhelmingly linked to increases in their positive perceptions of singing. Choir of the Year praised the Young Leaders as being 'a real inspiration' and as having a 'very positive effect on the [junior] choir'. They believed that this was because the junior choir was able to look to the Young Leaders for guidance and follow their lead when learning something new. Both Music Directors felt that having a new face with new thoughts and a different way of working was a positive thing for

the junior choirs. Feedback from the junior singers indicated that they were motivated and inspired by the Young Leaders that it had 'helped to improve [their] voices'.

'Choir of the Year found a similar effect specifically related to boys, as including a male Young Leader had a 'huge impact' on the boys in the choir – 'a great way for them to see that singing is something that boys do'

Many of the Young Leaders felt they had helped change the junior singers' perception of singing in a choir: 'that it is fun, cool and music doesn't have to be sung or presented in a 'traditional' way but there can be a different take using movement and drama'. The Music Director echoed this, describing the project as 'engendering positive perceptions of singing'. The Young Leaders also felt that it was useful for the juniors to see what they could achieve in the future.



The clusters found that positive role models were created by the older children for their primary counterparts. Choir of the Year found a similar effect specifically related to boys, as including a male Young Leader had a 'huge impact' on the boys in the choir – 'a great way for them to see that singing is something that boys do'.

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In the cases of YYM, Vocal Force Selby and the Sing Up Clusters, primary pupils became more familiar with their future school, helping to support the transition process. They also reported on outcomes relating to general enjoyment of singing. Vocal Force Selby Leaders reported positive outcomes relating to the children's confidence, motivation, and a sense of achievement as a result of the singing.

Musical learning and development in singing was also an achievement in these projects, please see the Musical Learning and Development Report for more details.

Adults as Trainers

'The project enabled them to 'reflect and take stock' of what good practice in singing looks like'

Choir Leaders involved with Choir of the Year reported that they enjoyed working with young people from various settings and that it was useful to gain an overview of the state of music in primary schools. The project enabled them to 'reflect and take stock' of what good practice in singing looks like. Being able to observe the group also allowed them to become more aware of individual members' strengths and weaknesses – allowing them to develop their practice in relation to the young participants' needs. Other Choir Leaders in the group felt that the project had helped to make participation in a youth choir an aspiration to young people, and that the non-competitive environment was a positive element to this.

'They are planning to run a series of CPD sessions across the region for primary and secondary staff on how to develop Young Leaders and how this can be used to bridge the transition gap between primary and secondary, as well as raising the profile of singing in schools'

Adult Leaders involved in the Girl Guiding project (Sing Up East Kent) felt that being involved helped them to gain confidence in their singing ability. One Adult Leader who attended the monthly singing sessions and the residential weekend expressed how her confidence to teach others to sing improved and that she was less insecure about the quality of her own voice. This finding was echoed by those at Vocal Force Selby, who reported that the co-facilitators had increased their confidence and self-esteem to run training sessions. The Lead Facilitator also noted that he had become a more 'thoughtful and effective practitioner'.

The Guiding County is planning to help spread their successful model to other Guiding Divisions throughout the UK. Similarly, trainers in YYM hope that the programme they developed will be taken on by other schools and clusters in York. They are planning to run a series of CPD sessions across the region for primary and secondary staff on how to develop Young Leaders and how this can be used to bridge the transition gap between primary and secondary, as well as raising the profile of singing in schools.

Adults as Participants

Positive outcomes for adults in participating schools/organisations concerned attitudinal change towards singing, in that teachers were recognising the importance of giving children and young people the opportunity to sing in school (Vocal Force Selby). Leaders involved in the Clusters also reported that through the transition work, primary and secondary teachers built good working relationships. It wasn't possible to isolate further meaningful findings about the impact of the programme in relation to Young Singing Leaders for adults.

Children and Young People as Singing Leaders

The evaluation found a considerable amount of useful data on the impact of the programme for Young Singing Leaders. The two key areas which emerged from the data, and which are reported below, are social and emotional learning, and skills and knowledge development.

Social and Emotional Learning

Social and emotional learning was identified by Sing Up as a key area for development as a result of engaging young people as leaders, and nearly all of the sites reported outcomes associated with this.

Young people in Choir of the Year improved their ability to work as a team and found working with junior choirs to be 'enjoyable, inspiring, fun, worthwhile and exciting', suggesting an increase in their enjoyment and engagement in singing activities. In this case the working relationship created between the junior choirs and the Young Leaders was reported as being 'the most successful aspect of the project'.

Similarly, Sing Up Cluster leaders found that working with children from other schools had a positive effect on the young people's social development; created positive messages for boys about singing; and also meant young people had more empathy for others. This was particularly true for Young Leaders in Sing Up Bedfordshire, where the Area Leader found that those from challenging social backgrounds:

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'...suddenly found themselves in a position of responsibility with their involvement really applauded and recognised by their audience of adults and children alike. They became ambassadors for their schools and overcame postcode barriers, working with peers who at one time had been considered rivals'.

Sing Up Bedfordshire leaders also found the Young Leaders gained maturity and a sense of responsibility. An increased ability to work as a team was reported by Young Singing Leaders in Sing Up East Kent.

'I feel like I've done something to help my confidence and improve my singing. I now know what it takes to lead and help others learn new songs'

In all cases young people felt 'more confident to lead', with some putting this down to having acquired more musical knowledge through the training (YYM), and some because their own self belief had improved (Sing Up Cumbria). East Kent Girl Guiding singing champions chose to arrange and lead a



performance to over 200 adult Guiders, and this was 'the first time they had been brave enough to lead each other and sing for people outside of their groups'. Others felt enthused and more passionate about singing as a direct result of their involvement (Sing Up Cumbria, YYM, Choir of the Year). Comments from young people included: 'More confident and I enjoy it more! I am totally going to start a group!' (Choir of the Year), and 'I feel like I've done something to help my confidence and improve my singing. I now know what it takes to lead and help others learn new songs' (Sing Up East Kent). In one case a boy who had behavioural problems became a Young Singing Leader and his behaviour has improved as a result – his teacher believes this is because 'it has given him a reason to feel good in front of people, and [he has gained] a skill he's proud of' (North West Partnership). Whitewood and Fleming found that letting young children write their own songs, and also choose which style of music they sang in a band, enabled them to establish their own interests, discover 'a voice of their own' and express/explore issues that were important to them.

Skills and Knowledge

The Young Leaders in Music and the Deaf learnt that teaching is 'not as easy as it looks', that you have to be flexible, observant and confident. The resources developed for use with the young people enabled them to reflect on their learning, and this was supported by sessions with teachers in their school.

In YYM the Young Leaders gained musical knowledge and learnt about factors that need consideration when leading singing with young children, including 'how to choose the appropriate song – e.g. high for little kids', 'how to stand – posture', 'how to be more interactive with the group', and 'how to conduct a piece'. This was also true for Choir of the Year Showcase: 'I feel more confident to lead because I feel I know more musical knowledge now. E.g. conducting and so on'. Following the residential weekend at Sing Up East Kent, the Singing Champions

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'A few of the Young Singing Leaders indicated how the project had enthused them to become teachers themselves, or to continue their musical development in education. For example, Choir of the Year Young Singing Leaders chose GCSE courses as a direct result of their involvement'

were invited to sing at an annual training event held for over 200 adult Guiders including the Region Chief Commissioner. A group of the girls attended and spent two hours leading their own rehearsal and arranging their own performance: 'I feel more confident to sing in public and I feel I am ready to teach other Brownies and Guides. I have learnt how to sing in two different languages, something I never thought I could do!' In all reviewed projects, the Young Leaders felt they now had the ability to lead a group in song. Area Leaders felt that including young people as Singing Leaders encouraged them to consider inclusion during planning so all members could participate, and brought good singing practice into primary schools.

Leadership was the skill cited as most improved for Choir of the Year Young Singing Leaders. Others were:

- learning how to encourage children whilst keeping them interested;
- learning and communication – 'we all had to be very clear and assertive for the children to copy and follow our instructions', 'I had to think about how I was doing things I do every week in a way that worked for the children'; and
- patience – 'I learnt that you need to keep a calm presence around the children and learn to let them talk to you...whether it be for help or a chat!'.

A few of the Young Singing Leaders indicated how the project had enthused them to become teachers themselves, or to continue their musical development in education. For example, Choir of the Year Young Singing Leaders chose GCSE courses as a direct result of their involvement, and a participant in Sing Up Cumbria reported that he wanted to work with young people on similar projects. A Young Singing Leader in Choir of the Year commented 'As I want to go into working with younger children myself, I found it a very worthwhile experience, in order to find out how everything works and to learn new techniques in communication and teaching'.

Leadership Learning

Some of the project identified key learning points concerning the training and development of Young Singing Leaders, particularly those that are planning on continuing the programme in the future.

The Lead Facilitator at Choir of the Year felt that the training could have been improved by:

- providing more regular training for the Young Leaders to keep the momentum going;
- reducing the amount of materials for the Young Leaders to get through for the showcase, so that they could spend more time on developing their skills; and
- allowing more rehearsal time on the day of the showcase.

Leaders at Vocal Force Selby identified the following learning points:

- At least one member of the school should work alongside the Sing Up facilitators from the beginning of the project, being trained up through the process itself, to ensure sustainability in the long term. The leaders didn't identify this need early enough during the project and the people involved were unable to continue with ongoing sessions (due to a variety of unstated reasons).
- Working with a bigger group (i.e. at least 20 students) would be more effective in the future, so that as a larger group the young people could feel comfortable and confident singing together. On some occasions when there were fewer students, they became quite self-conscious singing together.
- Future projects should take place over a shorter time frame, because:
 - the students need to gain an earlier experience of embedding their learning and putting the material into practice with primary children; and
 - as a result of the project being so long, some students got bored towards the end.

Leaders in the Sing Up Cluster work felt that schools needed more advice so that the organisational difficulties of involving Young Singing Leaders can be overcome and the element made compulsory (see below section for details of these difficulties).

Drivers and Challenges

Lack of time was consistently reported as a barrier to achieving the desired outcomes (Choir of the Year, Music and the Deaf, Whitewood and Fleming). The Sing Up Clusters found that the geographical location of schools also had an impact, especially in rural areas. Transporting secondary students to primary schools became an issue in terms of health and safety and child protection regulations.

Practical considerations such as the different timings of primary and secondary school days (particularly lunchtime), and the unwillingness of some secondary teachers to release the Young Singing Leaders from lessons on a regular basis prevented the young people from fulfilling the role to the extent they had wanted to. This latter point led to real frustration for the young people involved, as they could often only be present for the last 10 minutes of a rehearsal (Sing Up Clusters). This frustration was echoed in reports from Choir of the Year and Vocal Force Selby, where it was felt that more 'contact time' between the Young Leaders and junior singers would have led to greater achievements. Vocal Force Selby overcame such barriers by re-focusing their aims to become part of the transition work being done by Selby primary school and Selby High. This meant groups of primary children were led in a singing session as part of their pre-existing 'transition visits' to the secondary school.

One of the drivers for those involved at Music and the Deaf was gaining the support of the senior management in school, as they let both staff and pupils

off timetable for whole days to take part. At Vocal Force Selby, the leaders felt it was important for the Young Leaders to feel part of the bigger national Sing Up, and to understand the importance of what they were doing. The enthusiasm of the Young Leaders was also key to the success of such projects, and the leaders highlighted how the young people 'remained steadfastly positive' despite the barriers highlighted above.

Methods

Ninety nine project reports and related evidence, ranging between internal evaluations and external assessment, were selected by Sing Up as a basis for a number of synthesis evaluation reports. The documents were coded by a team of CUREE researchers as likely to yield evidence for each of the themed reports. The data were then extracted by the same team, using Nvivo software, for each of the themes identified by Sing Up. The data extraction framework, based on questions focused on both impact and processes for each of the themes, was agreed in advance with Sing Up. The resulting data was then analysed and synthesised so that the key messages for each theme could be reported.

The current report is based on the documents which were identified as containing data relevant to the theme of Youth Leadership. A total of 16 projects had information relating to the theme. Types of the evidence collected by the projects that provided the basis for this report included:

- pupils perceptions/quotes
- school staff perceptions/quotes
- external observation
- school staff interviews

Youth Leadership: Connections to the Wider Evidence Base

In terms of Youth Leadership the evidence from the wider knowledge base relates to young people having ownership of their learning, feeling motivated to learn, and taking an active role in their learning. Important components of singing based interventions include effective use of tools and resources, and training.

For all sites Sing Up provided a handbook detailing the benefits of engaging young people as Singing Leaders and the ways in which this could be achieved. A booklet was also devised for the Young Singing Leaders, to enable them to take responsibility for their learning and allow reflection. Vocal Force Selby added to these resources and provided their Young Leaders with a folder that included all of the materials (e.g. songs) they were using. A key aim in doing this was for the young people to feel that they were part of the 'bigger picture' in the Sing Up programme.

Training was strongly evidenced in all of the projects in this report, in both the process and impact data. Staff in the settings were trained, as well as the Young Singing Leaders.

There are strong links between the strategies employed in the projects and that of the wider evidence base about strategies linked to achievement. These include:

- teaching students how to take a critical stance towards learning and teaching to give them a deeper perspective on teaching processes;
- engaging students through context based teaching: enabling them to link their singing learning to relevant real-world experiences and, where appropriate, to school curricula; and
- students taking an active role in their own learning.

Further evidence comes from a 2005 systematic literature review³ exploring student perspectives on motivation to learn. The review found that students believed they were better motivated when curriculum experiences:

- were perceived as fun;
- were varied and participative; and
- involved collaboration.

In all the projects there was evidence of the enjoyment young people felt whilst undertaking leadership activity, and some young people expressed interest in using the new skills they had learnt in other situations at school. This included learning 'how to teach', and the considerations that need to be made when teaching younger children. The nature of most projects, especially those focused on transition, meant that the young people collaborated with each other and sometimes with teachers to learn effective ways of working with children. Similarly, the strategies employed by all sites were by their nature participative, involving young people in singing and in leading singing groups themselves. A key driver identified in the wider knowledge base was the use of role models, particularly for boys. Choir of the Year made good use of this strategy. They found that including a male Young Leader had a 'huge impact' on the boys' participation in the choir.

3. Smith, C., et al. (2005) A systematic review of what pupils aged 11–16 believe impacts on their motivation to learn in the classroom. London: EPPI-Centre Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

Glossary

Sing Up Awards

The Awards have helped schools to embed singing throughout their school life, encouraging them to celebrate their singing. There are three different levels of Award: Silver, Gold and Platinum. The Awards are specially designed to work across different types of school, including SEN settings.

Beyond the Mainstream (BTM)

Sing Up made a commitment to ensure that its work impacts upon all primary aged children, including children in SEN schools, Pupil Referral Units, looked after children, children with mental health issues and many others early in 2009, and the stream of work that underpins this commitment throughout the programme is called Beyond the Mainstream. BTM broadly focuses on children who can't access primary mainstream school (in SEN or PRU settings) as well as those who have difficulties accessing primary mainstream (including looked after children, children with EBD, children with mental health difficulties etc).

Sing Up Clusters

Sing Up Clusters have helped secondary schools to lead innovative singing projects with their feeder primary schools. The programme aims to train and inspire singing leaders and enables schools to work positively with pupils' transition issues. Clusters work with 240 schools across the nation, introducing exciting singing opportunities to over 7,500 pupils.

Sing Up Flagships

Sing Up Flagships are leading singing advocate organisations that work to share and develop best practice through projects, performances and resources. Nine organisations have worked as Flagships, with most programmes typically lasting 2 years. Thousands of children, practitioners and singing leaders have benefited nationwide from their work.

Sing Up Communities

Sing Up Communities have been run by arts organisations and music services that work with primary-aged children. They aim to place singing at the heart of the community. Each project has run for two years and aims to reach over 2,000 primary-aged children. Work includes the development of young singing leaders and encouraging singing out of school hours.

Vocal Force

Vocal Force was originally a project based on the innovative Vocal Union programme devised by The Sage Gateshead, before becoming part of Sing Up in 2008. Vocal Force aimed to foster a peer support network for sharing learning and exploring ways of sustaining networks. It has created over 60 bespoke projects to increase the skills, confidence and repertoire of more than 3,000 singing leaders.