

Institution: University of Roehampton
Unit of Assessment: Panel C, UoA 25 Education
Title of case study: Sounds of Intent
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>This case study details the impact of <i>Sounds of Intent</i>, an internationally unique project concerned with music and children with special needs. It fills a gap in educational provision by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mapping the musical development of children with learning difficulties; - providing a curricular framework and readily accessible means of recording attainment and progress, thus; - enabling teachers to improve practice, so; - maximising pupils' opportunities for musical engagement and learning. <p>The <i>Sounds of Intent</i> website was launched early in 2012, using innovative software, and initiating a national programme of dissemination. By the end of July 2013 the site had attracted almost 3 million visitors from all over the world, who had downloaded nearly 400,000 resources. The impact on children in England can be gauged by the fact that 350 practitioners (representing almost 100 of the 500 or so schools offering specialist learning difficulties provision) were undertaking assessments and using the system to plan music curricula for their pupils.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The research underpinning this case study began in the late 1990s, and was conducted by Adam Ockelford (Visiting Research Fellow and Director of Education at the Royal National Institute of the Blind, and then Professor at University of Roehampton, 1995–to date) and Professor Graham Welch (Dean of Education at the University of Roehampton, 1990–2001). Adam Ockelford, used the data available from RNIB's Music Advisory Service to highlight issues in the provision of music education for children with learning difficulties in the UK (Ockelford, 2000). These included an apparent 'post-code' lottery, whereby the quality of music teaching was immensely variable between schools, a situation exacerbated by the lack of an agreed curriculum (which, it was asserted, should be based on an understanding of musical development). To verify these initial findings, Welch, Ockelford and Sally Zimmermann, Music Advisor at the RNIB, undertook a research project that gathered data from questionnaires and visits to 50 of the 500 or so schools in England which made provision for children with learning difficulties (Ockelford, Welch and Zimmermann, 2002). This study corroborated Ockelford's preliminary data and reaffirmed the need for a developmentally-based music curriculum framework for pupils with learning difficulties.</p> <p>The <i>Sounds of Intent</i> project was set up to address this need: a joint venture between the University of Roehampton, the Institute of Education and the RNIB, by Ockelford (UoR), Welch, Evangelos Himonides (IoE) and Zimmermann (RNIB). Research was conducted in four phases:</p> <p>Phase 1 (2001–2003) gathered and analysed data on hundreds of children's types and levels of musical engagement, using the expertise of a group of 12 experienced practitioners from a range of pedagogical settings and backgrounds. The first models of musical development were built up using the children's data, contemporary thinking in 'neurotypical' musical development, and Ockelford's 'zygonic' theory of music cognition. Putative models were evaluated by the practitioner group and modifications made, in an iterative process of development (Ockelford <i>et al.</i>, 2005).</p> <p>Phase 2 (2004) took the model developed in Phase 1 and, using an enlarged practitioner group ($N = 20$), developed teaching materials and pilot schemes of assessment, to enable the developmental framework to inform curriculum design and delivery in classrooms. A preliminary website was established which set out the findings and invited feedback from the field.</p> <p>Phase 3 (2005–2008) The core research team employed a Research Officer to trial the efficacy of the materials, collaborating with practitioners in a range of classroom settings to suggest improvements and modifications to the framework, assessment protocols and associated materials, and to produce a revised version to take forward to Phase 4 (see Ockelford, 2008).</p> <p>Phase 4 (2009–2011) The core research team, led by Ockelford as Professor of Music at the University of Roehampton, employed a further Research Officer to gather and analyse case study</p>

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materials (in the form of annotated video clips), teaching strategies and curriculum materials from over 20 schools to populate the *Sounds of Intent* website. The research was informed by the views of a practitioner group ($N = 20$), who evaluated the materials being produced and trialled the online assessment protocol (Ockelford *et al.*, 2011; Vogiatzoglou *et al.*, 2011).

3. References to the research

Ockelford, A. (2000) 'Music in the education of children with severe or profound learning difficulties: issues in current UK provision, a new conceptual framework, and proposals for research', *Psychology of Music*, **28** (2), 197–217. DOI: 10.1177/0305735600282009.

Ockelford, A., Welch, G. and Zimmermann, S. (2002) 'Music education for pupils with severe or profound and multiple difficulties', *British Journal of Special Education*, **29** (4), 178–182. DOI: 10.1111/1467-8527.00266.

Ockelford, A., Welch, G., Zimmermann, S. and Himonides, E. (2005) 'Sounds of intent': mapping, assessing and promoting the musical development of children with profound and multiple learning difficulties', *International Congress Series*, **1282**, 898–902. DOI: 10.1016/j.ics.2005.04.007.

Ockelford, A. (2008) *Music for Children and Young People with Complex Needs*, Oxford: OUP. REF2.

Ockelford, A., Welch, G., Jewell-Gore, L., Cheng, E., Vogiatzoglou, A. and Himonides, E. (2011) 'Sounds of Intent, Phase 2: approaches to the quantification of music-developmental data pertaining to children with complex needs', *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, **26** (2), 177–199. DOI: 10.1080/08856257.2011.563606.

Vogiatzoglou, A., Ockelford, A., Welch, G. and Himonides, E. (2011) *Sounds of Intent: interactive software to assess the musical development of children and young people with complex needs*, *Music and Medicine*, **3** (3), 189–195. DOI: 10.1177/1943862111403628.

Since 1999, the project has received over £230,000 from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, RNIB, QCA, and the AMBER trust, to support phases 1-4 of the research.

4. Details of the impact

Sounds of Intent originated in a need identified by Adam Ockelford among teachers working with children with learning difficulties, principally the lack of a suitable music curriculum, particularly for those with severe or profound intellectual impairment. The promise of 'entitlement for all' that had been enshrined in the National Curriculum had failed to deliver and the so-called 'P'-Levels (subsequently devised for those with learning difficulties in mind) lacked the necessary specialist subject content in music (see Ockelford, 2008). Hence, in 2001, Ockelford set up *Sounds of Intent* with the aim of constructing a developmentally-based curriculum framework, with supporting materials for teaching and learning, tools for assessment and for the recording of attainment and progress. *Sounds of Intent* has entailed rigorous academic research, because the work involved gathering data from teachers and therapists active in the field, using their experience and professional judgements to inform the analysis and development phases. The task of embedding *Sounds of Intent* thinking in practice was identified at the outset, and consequently its impact has been significant.

Although a number of practitioners had informally begun to use the website before the national launch in February, 2012, the impact of *Sounds of Intent* really began to be felt following this event, which around 100 practitioners, music service managers, music-education coordinators and policy-makers attended from across the UK. In terms of reach, as of August 2013, there were over 350 registered users (who can undertake assessments of children using the proprietary software), a number that is growing all the time, with 100 schools actively entering data (the target is to have 80% of special schools for children with learning difficulties, ie. 400 in the UK, signed up by 2015),

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over 1,000 pupils being assessed and over 2,000 session forms completed. Not everyone uses the site for assessment, but many use the resources that are available (for which registration is not necessary) and, since the launch of the website in February 2012, there have been over 2.5 million unique visitors and over 370,000 people have downloaded at least one resource. As the corroborating sources indicate, the impact on practice and provision is already being felt on a broad scale and, in light of *Sounds of Intent*, at least one school has re-evaluated its entire early communication curriculum.

Since the majority of the 40,000 or so children with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties (SLD or PMLD) in England are educated in around 500 special schools, it is on music coordinators in these establishments that *Sounds of Intent* has initially focused its efforts at building take-up. To this end, there is a strategy whereby Soundabout (a UK-wide special needs music charity chaired by Adam Ockelford) is leading on the *Sounds of Intent* roll-out. To support this work, they have won bids amounting to over £200,000, including £75,000 from the John Ellerman Foundation and £10,000 from the Council for Disabled Children.

Soundabout have a three-year plan in which 12 *Sounds of Intent* associate organisations will be identified, each of which will hold a regional conference in England and a national conference in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. By August 2013 there were eight such Associates, and five regional conferences have taken place – in the North East (at the Sage, Gateshead) and Yorkshire and Humber (in Leeds), Liverpool, Oxford and London. In addition, a national presentation was made at the 'NAME' (National Association of Music Educators) Conference in October 2012. The *Sounds of Intent* Associates are working within their region to set up local seminars for schools, music hubs and other music education providers. To date, 70 seminars have taken place (involving around 2,000 people) and a further 50 are scheduled.

Two schools, which were involved in the *Sounds of Intent* development, are particularly advanced in their use of the scheme. Brays School, Birmingham, as well as utilising *Sounds of Intent* to underpin its new music curriculum, has used it to formulate programmes of early communication, while St Hugh's School in Scunthorpe has a 'whole school' approach to *Sounds of Intent*, captured in a 'Music Manifesto', in which Teaching Assistants have been trained to use the assessment tool and to devise 'next steps' in the children's music curricula, based on the framework. The use of *Sounds of Intent* in Whitefield School in London, which was also involved in developing the framework, came to the attention of Ofsted, which refers to *Sounds of Intent* in written and video documentation, as an example of good practice (see <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/music-schools-wider-still-and-wider>).

Much music provision for children with learning difficulties comes through organisations such as 'Live Music Now', which employs 100s of musicians across the country. 'Jessie's Fund' and 'Drake Music' are major players too. All three organisations are using *Sounds of Intent* to evaluate the impact of what they do. The significance of this take up is that, for the first time, visiting musicians can integrate their delivery and assessment with a school's curriculum, as opposed to adopting an ad hoc approach – an area of weakness highlighted in Ockelford, Welch and Zimmermann, 2002.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. <http://soundsofintent.org/> The *Sounds of Intent* website. Evidence of usage available on request.
2. *Sounds of Intent* as an illustration of good practice in music education for children with learning difficulties: *Wider Still and Wider*, Ofsted report on music education in England, 2012, available on the internet at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/music-schools-wider-still-and-wider.
3. Early Years Teacher and Part-time Assistant Head, Villa Real School: "It makes a massive difference in the classroom ...The impact of the framework lens is so helpful" see <http://www.sagegateshead.com/join-in/accessible-learning/partnership-projects/drake-music-education-sounds-of-intent/>

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4. Teacher and Head of Music, St Luke's Primary School, Scunthorpe: "We have been implementing Sol at St Luke's Primary school for a couple of years and it has had a significant impact on the way we plan, teach and assess our pupil's musical... Now through training and using the website's videos and resources they have blossomed into an enthusiastic team, who are spurred on by the pupil's achievements. Through engaging in Sol planned sessions we have seen pupils begin to vocalise where they have made little sound before. We have seen pupils begin to react and show preferences to sound where only reflex responses had previously occurred. Thinking more clearly about the path of musical development has enabled the staff to identify pupils who are musically gifted, where previously these talents may have gone unnoticed. Several pupils with ASD have been encouraged to take up an instrument as a result. As a music leader, it has enabled me to measure small progressive steps, monitor pupil's achievements, manage musical intervention, and show progress where our previous systems failed. It has given me the confidence and knowledge to rewrite our school music curriculum with a greater focus on individual musical development. It has been positive to share the impact of Sol sessions with parents of pupils with complex needs. They have found it interesting to see how much progress their child has achieved musically in short periods of time where progress in other areas has been minimal."

5. Strategic Director, Special Educational Needs, Live Music Now: "had been looking for tools to support the monitoring and progress of pupils' musical development during LMN music sessions and was excited to learn about Sol. Several LMN musicians attended introductory Sol sessions in Liverpool, Manchester, Middlesbrough and London. In January 2013, musicians working in 8 schools started using the framework alongside class teachers and support staff. This has facilitated valuable discussions with teachers and support staff on aspects of children's musical progress during LMN sessions. Sol will be an important tool for LMN's ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes, and provide additional support for our young professional musicians as they develop their practice in special schools."

6. Composer, Epiphany Music Ltd: "I'm hugely impressed with the resource and since discovering it have been a great user and advocate. I was introduced to Sol at just the right time as we were embarking on a major project in partnership with Yorkshire Youth & Music, working in seven Special Schools across Yorkshire. At the outset, I had concerns about how we would monitor, track progress and evaluate. Sol solved all those dilemmas and saved me a huge amount of time. Glad I didn't have to reinvent the wheel!"

7. Music Co-ordinator, Reynolds Cross School, Solihull: "As music co-ordinator, Sol has made my job much easier, especially in terms of assessment. I found Sol extremely useful as I wrote the music curriculum and particularly helpful in terms of target setting. The whole school now uses Sol as an assessment tool and I find that to have such a clear and professionally well-respected tool specifically for music gives the subject more importance and weight in the eyes of colleagues who previously regarded it as somewhat peripheral."

8. "For Brays Special School, an outstanding primary school for children with physical, learning and complex medical conditions, the emphasis coming from all directions is 'creativity'. ... Brays is one of only five special schools in England to have received the accolade of becoming a National School of Creativity. ... Brays has been involved in trialling work through key collaborators on national research areas. ... A notable partnership, run by the University of Roehampton and the Institute of Education at London University called 'Sounds of Intent' reflects on the place of music in developing communication." <see <http://www.senteacher.org/resourcelinks/33/MusicSEN.html>>

9. <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Creativity+is+the+key+to+school's+track+record.-a0249668407>