

Creative Health Evaluation Report to Public Health, May 2025

Pilot Project Overview – Music and Performing Arts Salford (MAPAS)

Venue/Service:	Music and Performing Arts Salford
ICP Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This project aligns with the ICP priority for children in Salford to have the Best Early Start. It supports the Transformation project for the Salford Early Years Delivery Model, prioritising early intervention to address inequalities and closing the word gap for Early Years children.
Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January to March 2024
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore how music can be used to enhance speech, language and communication development in pre-school children. To support and encourage families to sing and engage in musical play with their children. To give confidence to staff in pre-school settings to use their own voices to sing and use music to support speech, language and communication.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Family Hub team in Irlam – part of Salford City Council. Fairhills Pre-School in Irlam, identified in partnership with SCC's Starting Life Well team.
Theory of Change planning	<p>Proposed outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Children engage with the sessions; they feel confident to join in with the songs and actions and are secure enough to share their own creative responses to the music. The WellComm scores related to speech, language and communication are raised in children who have taken part in the project. Parents feel equipped to engage in musical play with their child; they have a range of resources to use as well as utilising well known nursery rhymes. MAPAS staff feel more confident in delivering sessions to younger children. They understand what works well and what could be done better to meet the needs of Early Years children. Staff in the Fairhills setting understand the benefits of using music to develop speech, language and communication and feel they have the skills to continue this work after the project concludes.

Pilot Project Activity & Participants – Music and Performing Arts Salford (MAPAS)

Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Hub staff identified 8 families to attend a 6-week course of music sessions held in the community room at Irlam and Cadishead Leisure Centre. Children attending Fairhills Pre-School also took part in a 6-week course of music sessions at their venue. A film showcasing the project at Fairhills can be found here: https://salfordcommunityleisure.co.uk/communities/creative-health/ A resource pack was provided to every family who took part and every child from Fairhills. A separate resource pack was also provided to the Fairhills setting for them to use with different children throughout the week and after the course concluded. Weekly sessions followed a robust plan based on current Tune into Talking sessions developed by MAPAS for work with children aged 3-5 but altered to make them more age-appropriate for a younger audience.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sessions followed the same format each week; hello song, fine motor song, song with props (scarves), gross motor song, song with instruments (egg shakers), goodbye song. A range of considered actions and vocabulary was used throughout.
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 families attended the Family Hub sessions across the 6-week course, with an average of 6 families attending per week. The Family Hub sessions were targeted at specific families so were not open access. We intentionally limited the number of spaces in this session so that we could respond in a more bespoke way to the children in the room. A total of 19 children attended sessions at Fairhills across the 6-week course, with an average of 16 children attending per week. The quantity of participants at Fairhills was based around the number of children attending the setting on the day of the session. Every child present on the day took part in at least some of the session. The demographic data below refers only to the children taking part, not any additional family members who attended the Family Hub sessions.

Demographics	MAPAS Tune into Talking project	Salford area
Please note that when this document is shared online (in the context of the film) we will redact personal / monitoring data.		
Gender		
Male		50%
Female		50%
Non-Binary		not known
Prefer not to say / did not answer		n/a
Ethnicity		
Asian, Asian British		6%
Black, Black British, African		6%
Mixed or multiple ethnic heritage		3%
Other ethnic group		3%
White British / White English / White Other		82%
Prefer not to say / did not answer		n/a
Disability		
Yes		19%
No		82%
Prefer not to say		n/a
Language at home		
English		n/a
Polish		n/a
Prefer not to say / did not answer		n/a

Pilot Project Outcomes – Music and Performing Arts Salford (MAPAS)

Theory of Change Outcomes	Results
<p>1. Children engage with the sessions; they feel confident to join in with the songs and actions and are secure enough to share their own creative responses to the music.</p>	<p><u>Fairhills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the first session at Fairhills, several children were crying when the tutors entered the room; this type of activity was unfamiliar to them, and they were unsure what to expect. No child was crying by the end of the session, and there were no tears on arrival on any other week. • For the first 2 weeks there were 2 children who could not engage for the full 30-minute session. One child is undergoing assessment for ADD; he maintained attention for around 15 minutes initially. As each week went on, he remained in the sessions for longer each time. • By week 2, every child accessed the session in some way. • There were 2 boys who the setting practitioners had commented were unlikely to engage particularly well. After the second week, the pre-school staff were delighted that both boys were smiling at the songs and joining in. <p><u>Family Hub</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a big range of confidence in the children attending these sessions. Some of the girls were strong characters and keen to lead the group. One boy was particularly shy and did not want to enter the room the first week. The tutors started the session, and this child eventually became more curious and joined in. On following weeks, he came straight into the room and sat down ready to join in. • In the first couple of weeks, the children watched the tutors carefully and some of them joined in with activities. By the end of the course, they were much more confident to join in when they recognised a song and were able to sing along with their parent rather than watch the MAPAS tutor. • The attention span of the group usually faded after around 20 minutes, so after a couple of weeks the tutors changed the format of the sessions to include more gross motor songs that the children were familiar with e.g. “If you’re happy and you know it stamp your feet”. By singing something they knew well, their attention was refocussed back to what the tutor was doing, and they joined in enthusiastically. <p>In both settings, the MAPAS tutors felt that the positive reaction from the children was aided by all adults in the room joining in with the activities.</p>
<p>2. The WellComm scores related to speech, language and communication are raised in children who have taken part in the project.</p>	<p>Both Fairhills and the Family Hubs reported that children’s scores on the WellComm (WC) assessment improved. A learning point for the future is making clear the format that we need WC data returned to us.</p>

Fairhills reported that 'Probably a third of the children had become more secure in the green of the section they should be in so if they had scored 8 previously this will have increased to a 9. In some of the children this has meant that when they were previously in Amber that they are now in green. Some children showed no difference in their actual scores but we as staff have seen that they have increased their confidence when joining in group singing sessions and overall in their play. Others that showed no difference in their scores however did complete the Wellcomm with more confidence than previously.'

The Family Hubs reported that:

Child	Before TinT – WC section 4	After TinT – WC section 4	Age	No. of sessions
A	Red	Amber	2	*
B	Green	Green	2	4
C	Amber	Green	2	5
D	Red	Green	2	6
E	Green (7)	Green (8)	*	5
F	Green (7)	Green (10)	*	6
G	Amber	Green	*	3
H	Green	Green	*	*
I	Unable to assess this child due to level of development		2	*

* Not recorded by practitioner undertaking WC assessment

NB: numerical score for the WC assessment was only provided for 2 children. This level of detail will be requested in advance next time.

- In future Tune into Talking pilot projects, we are going to request greater familiarity with the WellComm method so we can understand the detail re: moving through the traffic light system. E.g. we will capture more accurate data re:
 - number of sessions each child attends;
 - specific Wellcomm scale (e.g. the number within traffic light system) for all children before & after;
 - when children start within Red zone – we will ask practitioners to work with MAPAS on a short/light touch case study so we can better understand how TinT supports children with a SLC skill need. E.g. so can better understand the transition from Red to Green for Child D above. (All case studies will be anon.)
 - We will also ask for any EY Practitioner comments in addition to the score. E.g. if they felt a child was engaging better, but this might not show in the WC data.
- We are also going to ask Early Years Practitioners to complete a short/informal feedback form so we can capture their thoughts re: TinT.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And, where possible, we will also ask Parents/Carers to complete a short/informal feedback form so we can capture any parental observations re: this intervention.
3. Parents feel equipped to engage in musical play with their child; they have a range of resources to use as well as utilising well known nursery rhymes.	<p><u>Family Hub</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of the final Family Hub session, we conducted some informal feedback. All parents agreed that their child had enjoyed and benefitted from the session and that they had learned enough to be able to continue with musical play at home. All parents joined in with singing and musical activities throughout all sessions. Some families attended with younger siblings (babes in arms), and the tutors included these children in the session in an age-appropriate way to encourage full family engagement. At the end of the first session, each child was given a resource pack containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organza scarf Egg shaker Song sheet The song sheet suggested a variety of activities that could be done by parent and child at home using the scarf and egg shaker; these activities were based around well-known nursery rhymes and gave suggestions for how different games could be played in between the sessions and beyond. The children were particularly pleased to be given their own musical equipment, and parents reported that they were keen to play with them at home. <p>Resource packs were also provided to each child who took part in the project at Fairhills, but as we did not have direct access to parents, we did not measure the impact of that in this pilot project. We would look to send out feedback forms in the future to see if we could capture parental/carer feedback.</p> <p>A future learning point is for MAPAS to capture more formal (whilst still fun and creative) feedback from parents and practitioners. E.g. musical inspired comments cards for feedback/quotes, and recordable sound-buttons to capture quotes re: what worked well; what could be improved; specific insights into children's SLC development.</p>
4. MAPAS staff feel more confident in delivering sessions to younger children. They understand what works well and what could be done better to best meet the needs of this age range.	<p>Sessions were delivered, where possible, by 2 members of MAPAS staff. One tutor led the delivery, the other supported whilst noting the level of engagement. This enabled MAPAS staff to reflect together on improvements we could make to these sessions in the future.</p> <p>Tutor comment: 'I definitely feel more confident working with a much younger age group than I'm used to. This pilot project has given me huge insight into how I will improve future Tune into Talking sessions for this younger/pre-school age group – e.g. with the Family Hubs children (aged around 2, who attended with parents/carers and siblings) I am going to re-structure the sessions to a) set the scene; b) provide family bubbles with specific musical activities to do together;</p>

	<p>and then c) bring everyone back together to make music as a larger group.</p> <p>'It's interesting to reflect on how capture impact with this very young audience outside of scores and assessments. As I was leaving in my last session, I said goodbye to one of the boys that I hadn't heard speak at all during the sessions. He looked up and said "Cya Tom". The staff looked at me with shock and said "I can't believe that just happened, I don't think I've heard this boy speak before!". That might seem like a little thing – but that child developed the confidence and connection to use their voice for the first time. That's really impactful for me both personally and professionally.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tutors recognised that some of the children opened up/engaged throughout the project. Some of the kids didn't necessarily sing or talk to us but they joined in through movement or throughout the sessions they would use more eye contact. The one that comes to mind is the boy that was rolling/jumping in the middle of the circle in one of our last sessions together. To begin with he was really quite quiet but then he really opened up and engaged in his own way. • In terms of my thoughts, I felt that the sessions were much smoother/more successful in the pre school rather than the family hub. That may just be because I'm not used to working in family hubs or it could be the way the sessions were delivered/structured. Going forwards, I'd keep the preschool sessions the same but alter the plans for the family hub to include different chunks i.e time for parent and child to access resources in their own 'bubble' with some tutor input/guidance, then time all together singing songs tutor led, then the final block could be child led, creating responses to the songs or exploring the instruments/resources used. I feel that potentially we would get more out of the kids through having three stages/blocks to keep them engaged.
<p>5. Staff in the Fairhills setting understand the benefits of using music to develop speech, language and communication and feel they have the skills to continue this work after the project concludes.</p>	<p>Initially, the staff at Fairhills were unsure what to think about this project; it was something that they had been selected for rather than volunteered for, and they weren't sure what the benefit was likely to be.</p> <p>All staff joined in with the sessions and supported all children to access the project. They all sang the songs and joined in with activities enthusiastically.</p> <p>After the second session, a set of resources was left with the staff along with a copy of the session plan. One member of staff agreed to take the lead with this, saying "I'll definitely use these, I can think of other children in the week who will definitely benefit".</p> <p>As the staff got more familiar with the sessions, they began to see the difference it was making in children who wouldn't normally engage in</p>

	group activity. Tutors pointed out communication that was happening through music e.g. one activity encourages the children to listen to the song and follow the action the tutor is making with the shaker to know when to play and when to stop. When the tutor pointed out a child who was particularly good at this, the staff were amazed, saying “she’s normally so quiet, she only turned 2 last week! We wouldn’t have thought that she could understand this” .
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Pilot Project Case Studies – Music and Performing Arts Salford (MAPAS)

Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will plan for this differently in the next phase of Tune into Talking. The aim will be for settings to identify 2 or 3 children who are struggling with speech, language and communication skills – and ask the key workers to draft a short pen portrait that outlines the impact of Tune into Talking on this child’s development. We will also have a more formal but creative process for capturing quotes from practitioners, tutors, children and parents – whether that is a feedback form or a creative way of capturing quotes.
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Pilot Project Budget – Music and Performing Arts Salford (MAPAS)

Please see MAPAS Tune into Talking budget.xls for 6-weekly sessions get for confirmation of the cost of this intervention.