

AYM-hosted national network for musical progression

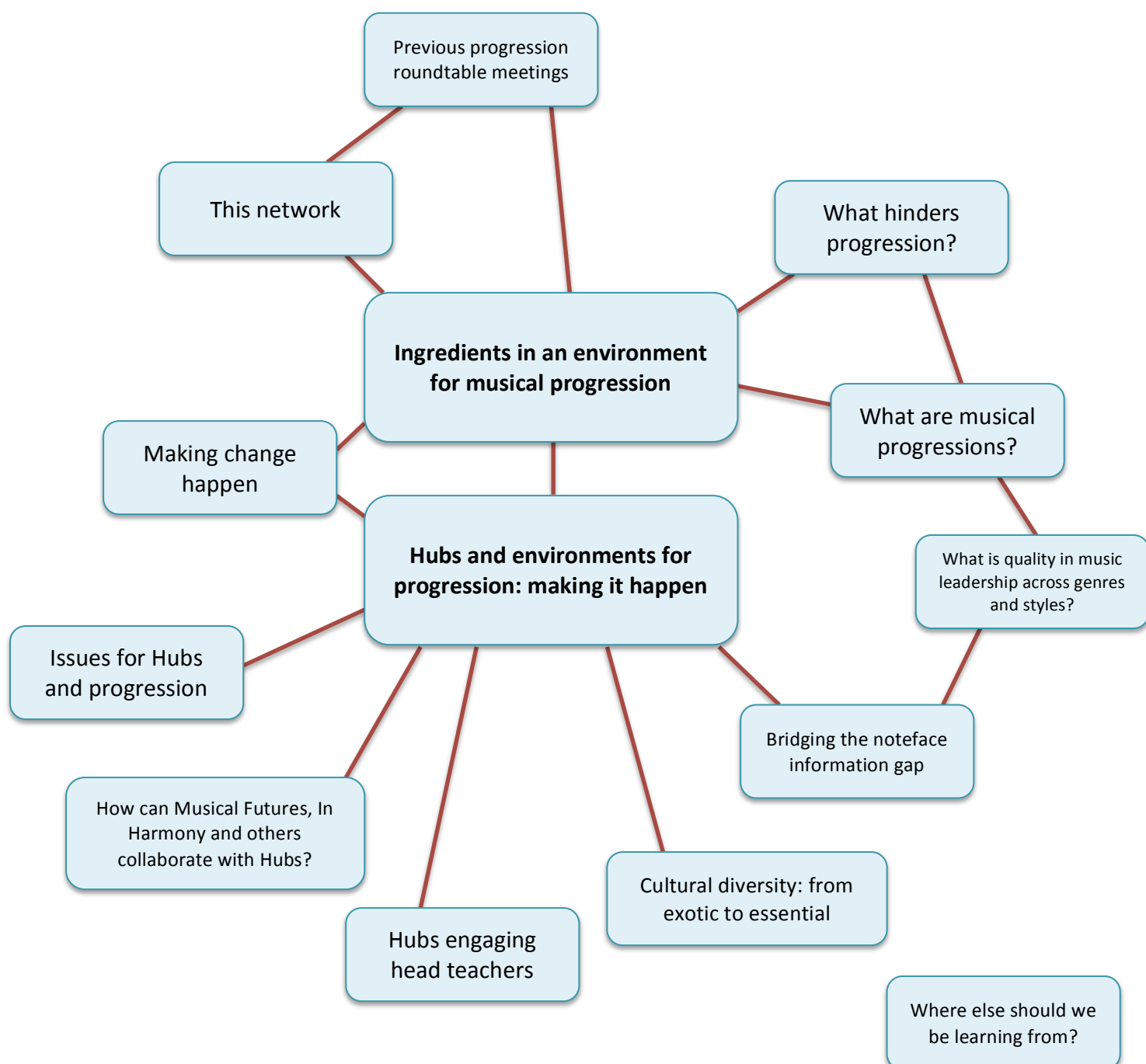
Meeting 1, 21st June 2012, RNCM, Manchester

Participants: Carolyn Baxendale (Bolton Hub), Nick Beach (Trinity Guildhall), Kyrstyna Budzynska (Royal Academy of Music), Hester Cockcroft (Awards for Young Musicians), Philip Flood (Sound Connections), Peter Garden (RLPO), Fran Hannan (Musical Futures), Karen Humphreys (RNCM), Steve Jinski (The Sage Gateshead), Heidi Johnson (NYMAZ), Mike Johnson (independent music teacher), Alok Nayak (Milapfest), Fiona Pendreigh (NAME/FMS/ACE), Tina Redford (Brighter Sound), Carol Reid (Youth Music), Ben Sandbrook (Independent), Lisa Tregale (South West Music School), Paul Weston (The Garage), Justin Woolford (The Change Co.)

Apologies: Lincoln Abbots (ABRSM), Richard Clark (Mighty Creatives), Adrian Chappell (Musical Bridges), Syrie Cox (Southend YMCA), Andrea Creech (Institute of Education), Jane Dolby (Southend YMCA), Marina Gall (Bristol University), James Garnett (NAME), Anna Gower (Musical Futures), Sean Gregory (Barbican/Guildhall), Fran Hanley (MU), Virginia Haworth-Galt (FMS), Valerie Hayward (Wiltshire Music Service), Penny King (ACE), Surya Turner (Kuumba), Simon Webb (CBSO), Judith Webster (YMV/Music for Youth),

Key Questions:

- What practice can we share in supporting children and young people's musical progression to become 21st-century musical adults?
- How can Hubs, with our support, most effectively support children and young people's progression and realise their musical potential?
- What action do we need to take individually and collectively to help this happen?



This network (AYM-hosted national network for musical progression: *Musical Progressions Roundtable*)

Ben Sandbrook and Hester Cockcroft described some of the proposed principals for this network of individuals. It aims to bring organisations and individuals together for three core purposes:

- *cohering*: sharing practice, networking people together, understanding issues and opportunities
- *inspiring and informing*: injecting new practice and knowledge
- *mobilising*: forging strategic focus for change and influencing policy

It is the 'network's network' – owned and driven by its participants and only as effective as they want it to be. The network meetings will aim for a creative and collaborative atmosphere, at the same time as being focused, open-minded and proactive, with concrete actions and next steps towards positive change. This network will work closely alongside other groups and organisations. To this end, BS and HC have agreed with representatives from NAME, FMS and MEC that will each collaborate to circulate information and ensure lack of duplication.

There was some discussion about composition of the group. Invitations for this first meeting had been on the basis of striving for broad, rather than comprehensive, representation.

It was suggested that some of the key roles for this group should be:

- mobilising forces and stakeholders, being active and proactive together
- managing information flows (about news, events and effective practice) to our respective circles of influence and communication
- being a 'reference group' for musical progression that takes clear leadership without being overwhelmed by having to make too many decisions, and being open about what we're focussing on, for instance, with Hubs.

Multistakeholder Roundtables on Musical Talent and Potential, 2009-10

This network builds in many ways on the series of multistakeholder roundtables that Awards for Young Musicians and Musicians Benevolent Fund held between 2009-10. These roundtables were similarly attended to this network, and addressed similar issues, the findings of which this new network will be building on. Various outputs and outcomes of these roundtables were described, as cited below.

Related materials:

- 'How are excellence and progression experienced by 21st-Century musicians and what can we do to support them?' (<http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/features/how-are-excellence-and-progression-experienced-21st-century-musicians-and-what-ca>)
- 'Ingredients to create an environment for musical progression' (<http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/visualisations/ingredients-create-environment-musical-progression>)
- Poster of progression journeys, progression environments and progression ingredients: <http://www.bensandbrook.com/progression-environments-ingredients-poster>
- Poster of 'Agents in the progression environment': <http://www.bensandbrook.com/agents-musical-progression-environment>
- A film presentation of the 3D 'exploding pyramid' progression model: <https://vimeo.com/44297787> (from *Creating tomorrow's musical adults*: <http://bensandbrook.com/?q=node/3>)

Ingredients in an environment for musical progression

There was through the day's discussion a general endorsement of and support for the environments and ingredients approach to supporting musical progression (as depicted in an inverted pyramid-type structure of individual musical journeys, as distinct from the focus on the more directed and linear progression routes), as reflecting the reality of young people's musical journeys and how they are effectively supported. There was a consensus that this would be a useful approach for Hubs and others to adopt in supporting musical progression, and that this network could support and promote. There was a broad agreement that many Music Services have not traditionally adopted this approach – instead focussing on relatively narrow progression routes towards established excellence.

Several specific points arose:

- What's needed is 'substantiation' of the ingredients: what do they mean in practice?
- Some people don't have, or don't make, the time for reflection and taking on new things. We need to have stories and tangible, understandable materials that make sense of this approach immediately and useably for different audiences, including teachers, schools, musicians etc.
- The tangle of journeys in the inverted pyramid is untidy – but this untidiness (which characterises all creative journeys) should be celebrated, and acknowledged. It indicates, for instance, how complicated communication is in such an untidy system!
- We should talk about a 'draft' set of ingredients, that is continually updated and revised.

We could back up the graphic with 'code of practice' i.e. few bullet point principles such as:

- Individual progression journeys need to be the primary and guiding focus, rather than the systems and organisations that might support some of those journeys
- The whole environment, through which those journeys take place, needs to be considered holistically, rather than focussing on particular well-trodden progression routes through that environment.
- There are many ingredients in an environment for progression, and they are often complex. These ingredients can only be provided in full by many different stakeholders (including schools, music organisations, music leaders, parents and young people individually and collectively) and therefore informed collaboration is essential.
- Musical adults take many different forms (e.g. listeners are still musical adults), so we should consider excellences not excellence, and progressions not progression
- We don't know what will be considered excellent in the future, nor in which fields it will be considered, so today's excellence(s) should be used to inspire and enrich today's journeys, but personal or even collective opinions on what excellence is should not overly determine the destinations of those journeys: 'whose excellence is it anyway?'

What are 'musical progressions'?

Hubs need each, or collectively, to have a clear working definition of progression, that is fit for purpose, including for young people/parents/educators/industry, that they use with their partners and with ACE. So what is progression?

There is a considerable weight of academic and practical theory and practice around musical progression, particularly in Western Classical music education. This needs to be properly taken account of – and at the same time it needs to be taken account of critically. In some cases an overly narrow definition or understanding of musical development/musical progression - belonging to classical music and involving a focus on skills for playing instruments and for singing - may

have a disproportionately significant impact on perceptions and understandings of musical progression in general and, hence, on music education. The reality is that there is an enormous range, perhaps becoming more enormous, of different 'professional musical adults' and ways in which adults are musical and do things musically, or with music. So there was a broad agreement that talking in the plural about progressions, excellences and journeys – as opposed to a singular concept of progression, excellence, and routes – would be a productive step in the right direction, as well as a better understanding of the range of 'destinations'.

It was suggested that a subsequent meeting of this network could focus on these issues: defining/describing progressions, excellences, destinations etc., accounting for different theories and bodies of practice, and looking at futures in the creative economic landscape. It was also thought that answering, or at least leading on, some of these questions would be a useful function for this network.

Related materials

- *Different points in four different progression journeys:*
 - o *Film of a four-year-old singing his Rain Song:* <http://player.vimeo.com/video/31246453>
 - o *Films of young musicians demonstrating 'facets of musical potential' :* <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/visualisations/facets-musical-potential>
 - o *Film of Passport young musicians doing body percussion workshop:* <http://player.vimeo.com/video/31137544> (from Passport online learning materials: <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/content/music-passport-project-learning-materials>)
 - o *Film of Peter Gregson, professional cellist, making cross-arts cello film:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQeuJrYPL04&feature=player_embedded
- *Creative Choices – CCSkills' site for careers in the creative and cultural sector:* <http://www.creative-choices.co.uk/>

Making change happen

The music education sector is enormously varied – both in the different agents, activities and organisations involved, and in the quality of their practice. To address the issues of quality, and ultimately to realise *all* children's musical potential, we will need to effect significant and multifaceted (for the diversity of the sector) change. Sometimes this change will need to be revolutionary, sometimes evolutionary – sometimes rapid, sometimes incremental and gradual.

Justin Woolford, from The Change Co., presented to us on the subject of effecting change and the lessons from campaigning organisations, including various case studies and practical tools. He talked about: principles of good communications (simple, visual, accessible, engaging, proactive, starting where your audience is); instrumental communication; what makes people tick (motivational needs and values); and described various tools and resources.

In the discussion that followed, several points were made:

- To make change, we need to be focussed on what change we are trying to make, and to/with whom, before we can work out how to make the change. For example, ISM were effective in making change with policy makers with their poll of parents' views of music's importance, because parents are voters.
- Building agency is particularly important for effecting change – giving people the ability to change things.
- We're giving music education back to young people (they often own it anyway, doing it on their own) so we should be supporting them – not giving education to them.
- We need to support young people as the agents of change and owners of their own progression journeys. Passionate people's creativity – a hidden agent for change.

Related materials:

- *'Communications for Change: values, principles, examples and tools', Justin Woolford*

Hubs and environments for progression – making it happen

What are we, as this network, going to do to support hubs to co-create environments for musical progression in their localities?

There was consensus that what we, as this network, are looking to achieve (around Hubs and environments) is *progression environments for all children to do all they can musically*. For this to happen, teachers and other supporting adults will need to be able to respond to children's individual needs (as opposed to what the teachers want). And for this to happen, managers and senior leadership teams will need to be able to support their teachers.

To make this happen, in and through Hubs, we might need to provide some kind of communication package for Hubs, making sense of the approach for Hubs and empowering them to do it. This might include:

- the benefits of environments, presented in an accessible way
- stories of organisations and individuals who have adopted an environments approach
- case studies of young musicians' progression environments, including those of Classical musicians which might not fit the perceived 'norm'
- self-assessment framework for ingredients
- a professional learning offer around environments
- template business plan sections / strategies for environments
- and a safe conducive environment *for Hubs* to be able to change

Issues for hubs and progression

Support for Hubs: Given the extent of change in the music education landscape in England, and the development of the new Music Education Hubs, support and guidance will often be required. To whom do Hubs turn round and say "Look, I'm not sure I know what I'm doing"? Various answers were suggested, including other Hubs, the FMS, the FMS regional networks, The Sage Gateshead's North East network for Music Services, ACE Hub Relationship Managers, and YM-funded regional progression networks.

Trust and relationship building: There is a strong impetus for collaboration and partnership working in the music education landscape, as enshrined in the whole Hub programme. Collaboration and partnership working require strong relationship building, relationship maintaining and trust, none of which are always straightforward, particularly if there are financial implications and complicated previous relationships. Some Hubs may be more advanced in their capacity for managing partnerships than others – an area of potential support need for Hubs, in supporting musical progression as elsewhere.

Related materials:

- *'13 Tasks of partnership working', Rob Hunter* (<http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/visualisations/building-partnerships-between-music-organisations-and-care-organisations-pa>, from 'Looked after Children and Music')

Leadership: Challenge, change, collaboration: all will require strong leadership, and appropriate kinds of leadership. Given the remit of Hubs to provide musical and progression opportunities for all children, Hubs are going to need to deliver activities with their DfE funding, and tap into other sources of funding, and mobilise other 'agents' in the progression environment that they have no direct control or traditional influence over. So strong leadership (from in front, from behind, from within – from the top of organisations and from elsewhere within them), with guiding vision, and effective strategy

with children and young people at the centre is going to be vital for hubs. Effective strategy will need to pay attention to being locally aligned and appropriate, to empowerment and supporting creativity, and to good partnership working.

Related materials:

- *The FMS recently ran a conference dedicated to leadership in the Hub landscape* (<http://www.thefms.org/training-and-events/conferences>)
- *'Leadership for progression'* (<http://www.bensandbrook.com/?q=node/11>)

How could Musical Futures, In Harmony and other initiatives work with hubs to support progression?

There was agreement that these and other programmes and initiatives could and should support hubs. They could do this through:

- networking (taking part in Hubs' networks and inviting Hubs to join theirs)
- communicating (ensuring Hubs are aware of their work)
- disseminating findings and helping with implementation
- working openly with Hubs – sharing needs, aspirations and expectations.

Related materials

- *Musical Futures website:* www.musicalfutures.org.uk
- *Musical Bridges website:* www.musicalbridges.org.uk
- *In Harmony website:* www.ihse.org.uk

What constitutes quality in music leadership when working across a range of musical styles and genres?

The more the music education sector comes together – collaboratively, in partnerships, and in consensus, around young people at the centre – the more pressing, perhaps, will be a cross-sectoral understanding of what high quality music leadership entails.

Various consensus documents exist – most notably the Music Education Code of Practice, which was originally developed consultatively by Sound Sense and MusicLeader, and is now used by several music education bodies. The Qualified Music Educator qualification, currently in development at ACE/CCSkills with a cross-sectoral steering group, will hopefully come to a new, updated consensus to be rolled out and adopted across the music education sector in various different iterations.

Beyond these core frameworks, it will be important to make individual examples of effective practice visible, tangible and communicable for the music leaders, educators, managers who should benefit from them, as well as Higher Education bodies, CCSkills and CPD providers.

It was suggested that the formal sector should be supported to understand the outcomes approach to quality assurance, which has been in operation in the third sector for some time, and which is now coming in to formal sector policy. And at the same time, the non-formal sector needs to understand and work with formal frameworks, including Ofsted, the qualifications framework and national curriculum.

Related materials

- *Music Education Code of Practice:* <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/practice-write-ups/music-education-code-practice>
- *Qualified Music Educator: updates pending*

- *Practice-sharing websites:* www.teachingmusic.org.uk, <http://www.youtube.com/user/MTMUTeaching/>, <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk>,
- *Outcomes approach:* <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/funding/evaluation-outcomes-approach>, <http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/tools-and-resources/outcomes-and-outcome-indicators>

Hubs engaging headteachers

How can the Hubs successfully engage Headteachers who might be 'unconverted' to the impacts of music education so that they'll commit some resources to its development in their schools?

There was some agreement that Hub leads need to promote the central place of all schools with all partners and the full workforce. The HE sector and employers could connect better with schools to promote employment opportunities.

It was suggested that more widespread support for informal music-making, building students' transferable skills, and integrated combinations of formal/non-formal/informal practice, could help to generate confidence across the Headteacher networks that the Hubs (a) know how to help with achieving non-musical student outcomes and (b) can deliver effectively, being clear about routes into employment with schools. In general, it will be important to demonstrate the argument about the impact of musicality/music-making on young people's transferable skills e.g. confidence, self-esteem, propensity for other learning etc.

Hubs could also look to develop on-going one-to-one relationships with individual Heads ('making friends'), developing a clear local strategy that Heads understand straight away and know how to engage with.

Related materials

- *'The case for cultural learning: key research findings', Cultural Learning Alliance:* <http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/page.aspx?p=93>

Cultural diversity: from 'exotic' to essential

How can we make sure that culturally diverse musical styles are seen as essential to a young person's growth and not an 'exotic' add-on to the programme?

Tackling this challenge needs to be a bipartisan effort between those yet to be exposed to or convinced of different cultures' value in education and those representing different and diverse musical cultures: the unconverted and the converters. So people who feel their musical cultures are marginalised or undervalued need not to be defensive but to confidently share examples of their effective practice in ways that will be accessible to those from other cultures.

There was suggestion that we need to develop a mechanism/forum to facilitate this. This would ideally lead to an identification of similarities – this in turn could lead to an 'opening of the door' to creating collaborations and demystifying elements for the understanding and enrichment of all.

Related materials

- *'Navigating Difference: cultural diversity and audience development', Arts Council:* http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/navigating-difference-cultural-diversity-and-audience-development/

Ofsted and creativity

How can we support Ofsted to develop a more informed understanding of creativity, thus permitting schools and hubs to nurture creativity?

The recent Ofsted music triennial, *Wider still and wider*, was a strong report on many fronts but for some its approach to creativity was disappointing, with creativity being equated to composition, with creativity development being delegated to music technology, and with some fairly didactic composition teaching being held up as exemplary. Added to this, several anecdotal reports voiced at the network meeting, describe teachers from Early Years to KS5 feeling that they cannot use creative techniques and creative approaches because they'll fall foul of the Ofsted tick boxes.

It was suggested that there needed to be more clarity and consensus about creativity, what creativities are, and how they're developed and assessed. It was also suggested that we should look to identify examples and evidence of where schools with a particularly creative ethos have seen significant performance improvements across the curriculum.

Role models and goal models for creative careers

How can hubs help young people to develop their understanding of the breadth of musical careers, given the changes in the creative economy? If support for musical progression focussed on individual journeys, on environments, on progressions and on excellences, then it will be increasingly important that young people, as well as parents, teachers, Hubs etc., have a good understanding of the different 'destinations' for those journeys.

Hubs should take responsibility for being informed and aware of different opportunities in their area for progression, for musical careers, for industry relations etc. And Hubs should take some responsibility for informing others, e.g. through young people-friendly web portals. Hubs should also have a good grasp of the breadth of careers and destinations for musical adults.

Hub partners may need to develop skills and capacity in providing Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). The MusicLeader programme found that IAG became the central service it needed to provide: helping music leaders develop their professional careers by guiding their individual professional journeys and helping them to navigate the landscape, based on their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. MusicLeader regional networks could support Hubs to develop their IAG capacity.

Related materials

- CCSkills' Creative Choices website for careers in the creative and cultural sector: <http://www.creative-choices.co.uk/>
- Finding and choosing opportunities to make music – guidance for young people and supporting adults on learning opportunities and choices, based on progression ingredients: <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/visualisations/guidance-young-people-finding-and-choosing-opportunities-make-music>

What key issues hinder progression?

Various issues were cited:

- Insufficient understanding of progression in teachers and other supporting adults
- Lack of informed choice for young people and supporting adults
- Focus on narrow linear progression routes and a 'failure model', wherein the system tends to support only a small few towards excellence and fulfilment: most will fail.

- Sometimes too much focus on progression might actually hinder progression: sometimes no progression is OK!
- Personal and organisational agendas being more important than individual progression journeys

Where else should we be learning from?

- Hubs and other music education organisations could learn about practice with young people from Sports (including the Youth Sports Trust), from social work and from youth work sectors
- They could learn about progression and excellence – and the benefits from sharing practice across art forms - from the Foundations for Excellence platform.
- Music education organisations could learn about organisational development and models of partnership working from Community Interest Companies, Social Enterprises and Corporates
- Taking a step back, Hubs should also look at how they learn as organisations, e.g. through action learning sets, action research, learning cultures etc.
- We should look to field some of these external sources of learning in future network meetings.

Related materials

- Youth Sports Trust: <http://www.youthsporttrust.org/>
- Foundations for Excellence: <http://www.foundations-for-excellence.org/>
- DBIS CIC pages: <http://www.bis.gov.uk/cicregulator/>
- Social Enterprise UK: <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/>

Bridging the noteface information gap

What are we, as this network, going to do to help circulate the body of knowledge, experience, practice to the 'noteface'?

There was a broadly held view that one of the issues holding back music education, including support for musical progression, is that the knowledge, understanding and skills around developing effective music education practice often doesn't reach the people that stand to benefit from them: there is a significant gap between the body of information and the people at the 'noteface'. As a consequence, there is an enormous variety in the informedness and the quality of the practitioners in music education: from the well-informed cutting edge to the static person who's been practising the same thing they were taught themselves fifty years ago. Various reasons behind this were suggested, including:

- lack of knowledge about how to share practice effectively,
- lack of commitment and funding for, and provision, of professional development opportunities
- the complicatedness of communicating and managing information in the complex and multi-faceted music education world
- the amount of information, and of information sources
- the difficulty of cracking the perpetuating cycle in which teachers teach their own educations, without accommodating the riches of development and diversity or meeting the needs of pupils who are very different from them. (This can be an issue with NQTs out of college, just as it can with teachers who've been teaching for decades – with jobbing musicians dipping into education, as with head teachers.)

Various effective strategies for sharing and disseminating practice were cited:

- Musical Futures' peer-to-peer learning model that reflects the local context

- SoundConnections' Early Years network with a 'core group' of teachers offering advice
- The professional coaching model that is used extensively in sport
- In general, sometimes you need to focus on the issue not the practitioner.

It was generally agreed that managing information could be a key function of this network, given that all of its members have strong circles of influence and communication.

Related materials:

- 'Effective Sharing of Practice', Luke Dickens
(<http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/research/sharing-effective-practice>)
- Sound Connections' London Early Years Music Network
(<http://www.sound-connections.org.uk/what-we-do/information-and-training/london-early-years-music-network-leymn>)
- Musical Futures Champion Schools Network
(<http://www.musicalfutures.org.uk/ChampionSchools>)
- 'Sharing effective practice', Ben Sandbrook
(<http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/resourcepacks/sharing-effective-practice>)