

2016 Impact Report



*music makes
me happy*



Introduction

Welcome to our Impact Report 2016!

It gives me great pleasure to share with you what we have been able to achieve with the generous help of our supporters and the difference our work has made. To our knowledge, Music of Life is the only charity specifically focused on developing the musical abilities of disabled children with the concomitant benefits of improving their academic progress, their physical and mental health and their social engagement.

Our passion is to give our students the best possible experience when it comes to music. Our promise to them is to sustain the activities they enjoy for as long as we can. Our ultimate challenge is to raise ongoing funding for all the existing projects whilst adding new students every year.

Thank you to everyone who takes an interest in our work. We hope you will enjoy a little insight into Music of Life and its 2016 highlights!

Maria Teterina,
Founder and CEO



Overview

In 2016 we extended and improved our services, introducing more young people with a wide range of disabilities and special needs to regular music-making with our specialist teachers and workshop leaders.

We committed to more long-term projects taking on 2 new schools for weekly singing workshops and collaborating with new partners on the provision of individual lessons for some of the most disadvantaged young people living in Birmingham and Liverpool.

We worked with local music services and prospective partners to shape the future development of our in-school music provision and, as a result, will be introducing a number of new projects in 2017.

We continued to provide guidance and training to teachers in special needs schools, both through engagement in our sessions and through dedicated events requested and organised by the schools.




Our year in numbers

We provided 6,282 musical opportunities in 2016

- ✓ **690** one-to-one music lessons provided
- ✓ **355** students took part in regular musical activities
- ✓ **68** choral workshops delivered at three special needs schools
- ✓ **12** performances presented by our school choirs
- ✓ Our students took part in
 - **32** sessions with external groups
 - **26** performances organised by Music of Life
 - **34** rehearsals and 5 concerts with Guildford Choral
- ✓ **32** qualifications, certificates and awards achieved by our students
- ✓ **Over 11,000** people heard Music of Life students perform



“Kali has made massive improvements. Initially she would find anything in the room distracting, try and draw staff into unrelated conversations, damage instruments, draw on things etc. Now we are able to do up to 1 hour and 20 minutes of focused work! I use her attempts at distractions as inspiration for our composition. That way she isn’t really rebelling, but rather being creative.”



We always follow the student’s personal musical preferences to support them in what they feel is the most natural way of music-making for them. Our individual music projects, therefore, range from basic drumming to learning a classical instrument to a professional level and from sound-mixing and music technology to composition.



Individual lessons and support

We provide 1:1 weekly music lessons to young people with disabilities who cannot access training without our support.

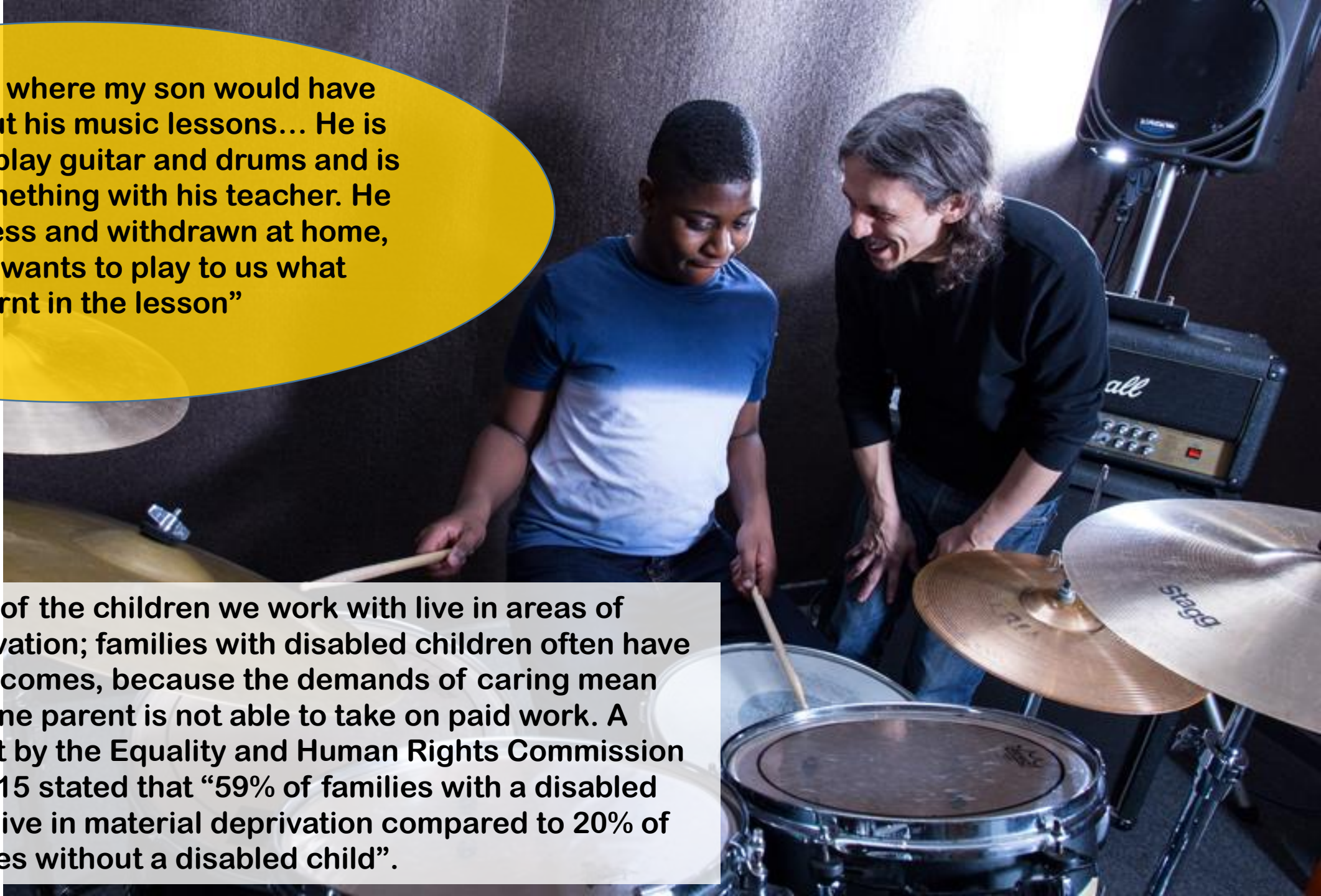
- ✓ **The number of lessons increased by 30% in 2016**
- ✓ **The range of instruments expanded to include guitar, cello, saxophone and music technology**
- ✓ **44% of students have joined a youth music group or ensemble as a result of improving their music skills**
- ✓ **74% of students achieved recognised qualifications, awards or accreditation**
- ✓ **100% of students moved up at least one level on a 5-point assessment scale**
- ✓ **62% of students moved up two levels on a 5-point assessment scale**




Individual lessons – evaluation statistics (based on 43 students)

<i>Five areas chosen by parents and teachers as the focus for improvement</i>	<i>The proportion of students who reported improvement</i>	<i>Examples of reported improvements</i>
Emotional well-being and confidence	65%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Self-esteem and confidence • Anxiety • Independence
Health condition	46%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine and gross motor skills • Hyperactivity • Breathing problems • Memory
Speech and language	39%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and volume of speech • Spontaneity • Vocabulary, sequencing and meanings of words
Social functioning and communication skills	61%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and applying appropriate social behaviour • Desire to communicate (tackling social self-withdrawal) • Verbal and non-verbal communications skills • Group-working skills
Behaviour	68%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictive or obsessive behaviours • Challenging and disruptive behaviours • Self-regulatory skills (managing emotions) • Concentration and focus

“I often wonder where my son would have ended up without his music lessons... He is so proud he can play guitar and drums and is always up to something with his teacher. He used to be restless and withdrawn at home, now he often wants to play to us what he learnt in the lesson”



 Many of the children we work with live in areas of deprivation; families with disabled children often have low incomes, because the demands of caring mean that one parent is not able to take on paid work. A report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission 2014/15 stated that “59% of families with a disabled child live in material deprivation compared to 20% of families without a disabled child”.

School workshops

We provide weekly choral workshops at state special schools mostly in areas of high deprivation where there is inadequate funding for musical activities. In most of the schools we work with there is no existing music provision or it may be insufficient or ineffective due to lack of funding, equipment and relevant skills.

- ✓ The number of singing workshops more than doubled in 2016
- ✓ We started to work with our first primary school
- ✓ The Music of Life choir at the Round Oak school in Warwick recorded their first CD that includes 10 tracks
- ✓ The number of students participating in a Music of Life choir typically increases by 1/3 within the first term as workshops become an increasingly popular activity
- ✓ 84% of teachers and school staff said in their feedback that participation in workshops led to improved behaviour and reduction in numbers of outbreaks of aggressive and disruptive behaviours in students
- ✓ 72% of teachers and school staff associate their students' improved focus and concentration in classroom to singing in the choir
- ✓ 64% of teachers and school staff associate improved academic performance with taking part in music-making activities





The Skilts School, Redditch

Mainstream primary school for boys with social, emotional and mental health difficulties . The Music of Life singing workshops have been running for three academic terms in which time the choir doubled in size.

“It is invaluable learning for our boys to have positive interactions with people outside their immediate community and to be working collaboratively.”

School workshops evaluation statistics (based on 230 students assessed in 3 schools)

<i>Reported Outcome</i>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>Evidence and examples given by schools</i>
Improved social and communication skills	182	79%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative work helps towards a more ‘can do’ attitude in students in other areas of their lives and school • Students have built up relationships with school staff and each other because of the programme • Feeling good about their contribution within a group crosses over into class activities
Improved musical skills	190	82%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are able to improvise following a cue and have the confidence to sing small solo parts • The choir’s listening skills have greatly improved – they are now able to listen to more complex instructions and follow them • Movement and dance elements promote self expression; • Students demonstrate the improved ability to feel rhythm and use their bodies to respond to it
Far reaching effects on academic performance	215	93%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students feel more confident about participation in a classroom • Remembering the words to the songs helps students across other subjects boosting literacy skills and speech/communication abilities. Singing games help develop numeracy skills, coordination, body awareness and memory • Students are able to concentrate for longer periods of time in lessons



***“The feeling at the end of each session
is of happiness and self-worth”
– a member of school staff***

MUSIC OF LIFE

I felt happy and proud.

Because I like, starting the
MUSIC OF LIFE School Choir.

Josh is 16, he has been singing in the choir and receiving 1:1 singing lessons with a Music of Life teacher since 2014. He is taking an enormous pride in his vocal abilities. Severely autistic, in his everyday life he struggles with answering simple questions and keeping track of the seasons changing; yet he knows very firmly Friday is the “Music day” as this is when he comes for a lesson with Cerys, then gets to sing his big solo with the choir at the workshop, which is something he looks forward to hugely. His lovely deep baritone was recently featured in the recording for the big fundraiser the Round Oak is holding to secure funding for continuation of the project.

We would like to thank the following Trusts and Foundations for their generous support of our work in 2016:

**The Henry Smith Charity
The Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust
The Hobson Charity
The Loveday Charitable Trust
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
The Brian Mitchell Charitable
Settlement
The Bridging Fund Charitable Trust
CHK Charities Limited
The Blackheart Foundation
The Eveson Charitable Trust**

**The Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust
The Margaret Westwood Memorial Charity
Warwick Relief in Need Charity
St Mary's Hall Trust
The Bascule Charitable Trust
Warwick Provident Dispensary
Roger Whitfield Foundation
The Albert Hunt Trust
The Winship Foundation
Pilkington General Charity
The Grey Court Trust**

We would like to thank our individual donors, who make it possible for us to plan ahead with confidence by donating regularly:

**Mr B Short | Mr and Mrs Clarkson Webb | Lady May | Mr and Mrs Bott | Ms Marilyn Vincent
Judge and Mrs Critchlow | Mr and Mrs Bevan | Mrs K Puffett | Mr and Mrs Bennett | Mr M J Crane Q.C.
Mr N Wilkinson QC | Mr and Mrs Clark**

In 2017 we will:

- Further increase provision of individual lessons and school workshops
- Expand into new geographical locations
- Initiate work with new project partners
- Appoint new teachers and workshop leaders
- Continue developing and improving the existing work