

# MUSIC OF LIFE

*music makes  
me happy*

**2018–19  
Impact Report**



# CEO's introduction

I am delighted to introduce the Music of Life 2018-19 Impact Report. This year has seen a sustained increase in the provision of regular music-making opportunities for disabled children and young people bringing the total of students we have supported since Music of Life's inception to over 2,500.

The unique and constant feature of our work is continuity. We work with young people over long periods of time helping them achieve more in all areas of their lives, not just musically. Whilst the positive impact of regular music-making is undeniable, facilitating access to high-quality musical activities for underprivileged disabled children and young people is a challenging task.

Our mission is to build and strengthen the life skills, well-being and confidence of disabled children and young people through music making. Through our evaluation process we learn how fundamental these developments can be, which makes us determined to reach out to more students over time, expanding our provision in existing areas and introducing new projects and partnerships in more areas around the country. This vision informs our ambitious growth plans and we hope that the findings from our new Impact Report will inspire our current funders and win us new supporters, enabling us to fulfil our mission for the benefit of a growing number of disabled children and young people who are not able to access music making without our support.

I am extremely grateful to everyone who contributed to this report sharing their thoughts and providing feedback – children and parents, teachers, workshop leaders and our partners. I would also like to thank the Music of Life Board of Trustees, our volunteers and our wonderful team for setting such high expectations in every aspect of our work ensuring the services we provide meet their own professional standards.

I hope you find the report inspiring!



**Maria Teterina,  
Chief Executive**



# 8,604

Individual music opportunities provided  
by Music of Life in the 2018-19 academic year

*"What I like about Music of Life sessions is that everyone around is smiling and we all do things together"*





## *Why it is good for Andrew to play piano*

**As Andrew's music teacher and form teacher I have witnessed great improvements in his self-confidence, his ability to communicate in group discussions, and dealing with his anxiety better.**

“Andrew has been having piano lessons in school provided by Music of Life. He has taken his grade 1 piano exam and passed with distinction.

He performed at the Music of Life concert last year in the Birmingham Town Hall which was his first live performance to an audience. He was quite anxious about doing it but after his performance he was extremely proud.

Andrew performed this year at the MAC in Birmingham at the 'Summer Sounds 4' concert. He performed alongside his class friends from year 7.

His ability as a pianist is clearly evident and I do believe he will go on to pass several more ABRSM piano grades in the future. However it is improvements in the areas of emotional well-being, confidence, social functioning and communication skills that I have observed major progression which is extremely pleasing to see.

Being blind I know that music is a major part of Andrew's life and having support from Music for Life by providing him with piano tuition is absolutely wonderful.”

J McGonagle - Music Teacher

The charity was established in 2003 and since then has supported over 2,500 children. Our vision is of a world where disabled children and young people have the same access to music-making as any other child. Through long-term engagement, the children experience the joy of making music, which positively impacts upon their academic performance, social life and health. Their schools, families and local communities also benefit from the improved health and well-being of the children.

We support children and young people aged 7-25 with a wide range of physical and learning disabilities, individually or in group workshops, in special needs schools. When they are ready, we also help them to integrate into community-based activities such as joining a youth choir or playing in a band, which helps to widen their social circles and gain acceptance from their non-disabled peers. It also helps non-disabled groups learn how to accommodate the needs of our students and to value their contribution.

# Music of Life

## **Our vision**

Our vision is for all disabled children and young people to be able to access, and benefit from, music-making opportunities

## **Our mission**

Our mission is to build and strengthen the life skills, well-being and confidence of disabled children and young people through music making

## **Our programmes**

### **Weekly music workshops**

at special needs schools, mostly in areas of high deprivation, where there is little or no funding for musical activities

### **Specialist music lessons**

for individuals

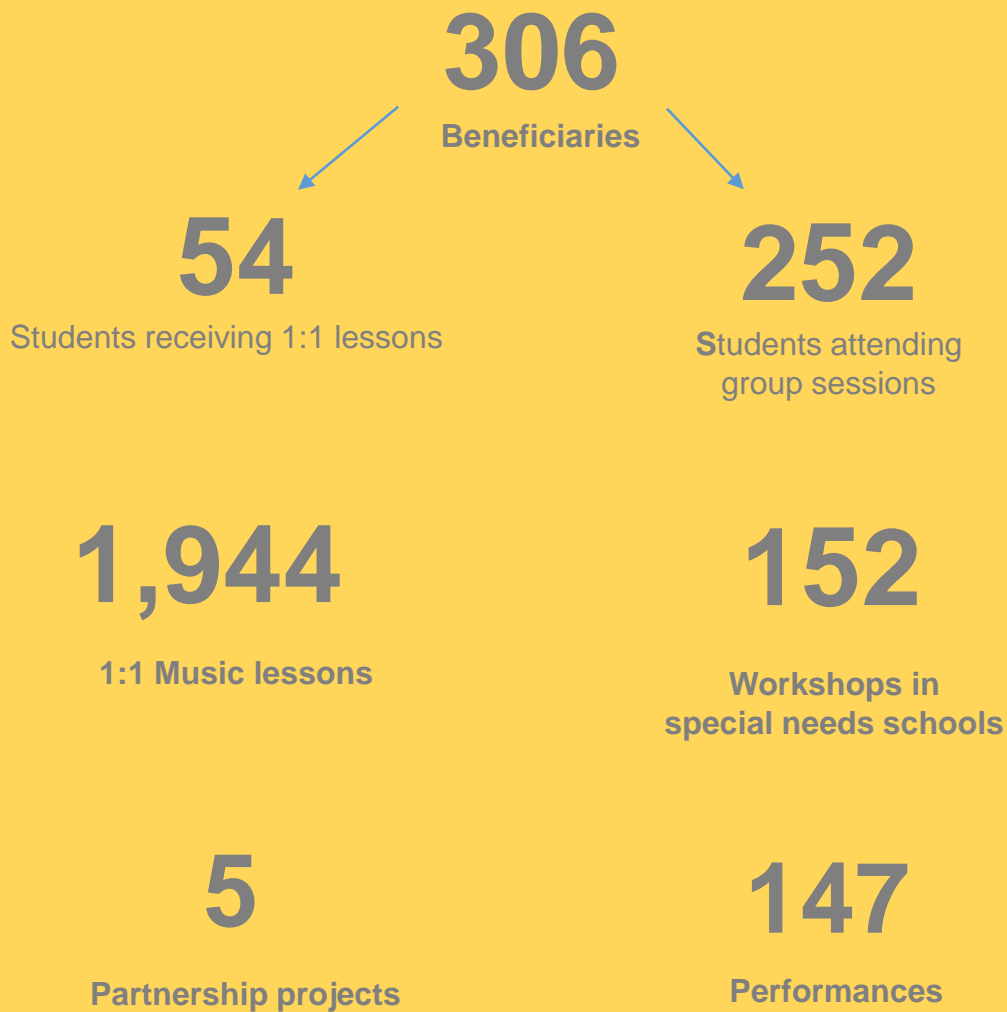
### **Support/Advocacy**

for disabled young people who feel ready to join mainstream musical activities such as local choirs and youth bands, with the provision of adapted transport where required

### **Community integration activities**

to encourage disabled and non-disabled participants to work together in music-making activities

## 2018-19 in numbers



# 2018-19 in numbers

## Our beneficiaries' conditions\*

Autistic Spectrum Disorders	48%
Deaf / Hard of Hearing	26%
Blind / visually impaired	12%
Down's syndrome	8%
Cerebral palsy	10%
Other learning disabilities	22%
Other physical disabilities	18%
Beneficiaries on Pupil Premium	78%

\*Many of our students have more than one condition, therefore the total above exceeds 100%

## Summary of music provision

**195**

Voice

**15**

Strings

**11**

Keyboard

**12**

Wind

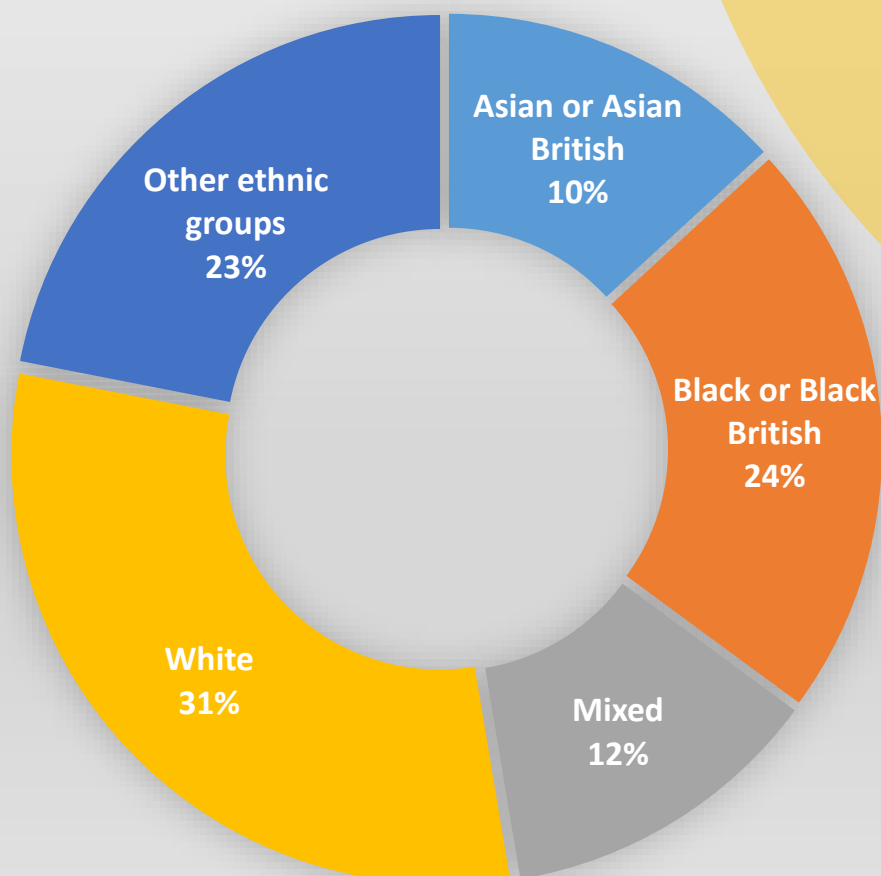
**5**

Music technology

**68**

Percussion/Other

## Ethnicity



## Individual Lessons Programme

**Music of Life provides 1:1 music training to disabled children and young people who have no opportunity to access such training without our help. We carefully match our students with highly qualified music teachers and monitor their progress closely through our evaluation process.**

We also provide adapted transport and professional accompanists, as well as contributing to the cost of instruments, music software, subscriptions and exam fees. Our teachers help us to cater for students' broader musical needs, for example liaising with youth music groups, schools, festivals and competitions on their behalf. Some teachers continue to support students when they join youth ensembles to ensure they can participate fully.

Our lessons are provided free and typically continue for 3-5 years, sometimes much longer. In addition to steady musical progress, every student benefits physically and emotionally; many achieve musical qualifications and some will go on to study music.

**There is no statutory provision for the services we deliver. We work in collaboration with local music services to provide in-depth specialist music training that is beyond the local budget and capacity.**





# Progression and attainment Individual Lessons Programme

## 100%

of students moved up at least one level on a 5-point assessment scale

## 62%

of students moved up two or more levels on a 5-point assessment scale

## 42%

of students have joined a youth music group or ensemble as a result of improving their music skills

## 94%

of students achieved recognised qualifications, awards or accreditation including:

**14 ABRSM exam successes up to Grade 8 Distinction**

**5 Trinity exam successes up to Grade 8**

**18 Arts Award certifications**

**18 Music of Life course certificates**



# How singing lessons help Miah



“Miah has singing lessons in school provided by the Birmingham Music Service through Music of Life Individual Lessons Programme. Miah is blind, autistic and has a physical disability. She can display very repetitive and emotional behaviour so for her to take part in performances outside of school can be challenging.

Miah performed at the Birmingham Symphony Hall as part of the primary schools choir accompanied by a full orchestra. This is the 3rd year running that she has taken part and it is a delight to be able to take her there due to her excellent singing voice.

A major part of Miah’s life is listening to music; she knows the words to a vast amount of songs (all from memory and self taught). She is always excited when she has her singing lesson and she has to work hard on her emotions and try not to scream. This has improved greatly over the last year and she really works hard on her emotional well-being.

**Miah is understanding more about appropriate social functioning as part of a choir and communicating better when she feels the need to scream or get over excited.”**

J McGonagle - Music Teacher

**Individual Lessons Programme**

# Key findings from our Individual Lessons Programme evaluation reports 2018-19

**The Individual Lessons Programme caters for children with a wide range of conditions, including deaf children with no prior experience of music, children with autism, visual impairments and severe learning difficulties and deaf-blind children as well as children with multiple disorders.**

Consequently, the range of challenges our teachers are tackling is as wide as the range of abilities we are striving to nurture and support.

We ask our respondents – teachers, parents and students – to answer questions and give additional feedback that helps us understand what impact music lessons have beyond musical progress itself.

## Improved learning skills

Young people develop skills that contribute to improved literacy, language, numeracy, planning and problem solving, an enhanced ability to absorb and process information, better memory and greater ability to concentrate, approach tasks creatively and work independently

## Reduced social isolation

Music lessons help improve social skills, the ability to communicate and work in ensembles and often result in opportunities to engage in group activities and make friends

## Improved emotional well-being

Music lessons help increase confidence, resilience and motivation; they improve the ability to manage feelings, emotions and behaviour, develop empathy, self-awareness and self-advocacy



# The summary of feedback from 26 teachers, 42 parents and 54 students receiving individual lessons

## Improved learning skills – reported by 86% of parents and teachers

- Improved word recognition, better information processing – music supports language development through words and phrases used in songs, the sense of ending and starting a tune
- Improved numeracy – through learning and recognising rhythmical patterns and music time signatures
- Expanded vocabulary – as students learn songs with words, participate in musical games and discuss new topics with their teachers
- Significant improvement in concentration and listening ability – this is a particularly valuable skill that students take back to their classroom, which has been repeatedly noted and praised by many of their non-music form teachers
- Improved ability to work independently – many teachers and parents are delighted to report how willingly and enthusiastically the students practice independently between the lessons

## Reduced social isolation – reported by 90% of all respondents

- Lessons enable students to participate in youth music groups and ensembles
- Over time, engagement levels improve both in music lessons and other activities
- Students become more willing to communicate with other people including someone new, which for some children is a huge development
- They do better at forming and maintaining friendships

## Improved emotional well-being – reported by 94% of all respondents

The most common observation from teachers and parents is that the students benefit emotionally and their ability to manage their negative feelings grows. Music eases frustration and phobias, reduces aggressiveness and sense of loneliness. As students' confidence grows, they become more aware of their own and other people's feelings and learn how to deal with them using their newly found skills.

## Support/Advocacy and Community Integration

Individual lessons help develop music skills and confidence to enable students to perform on stage, both solo and in groups. Our teachers are often the first people in our students' lives to take them out to make music with mainstream groups and perform in public, which can be the start of a life-long personal and musical journey.



*"My lessons with Nigel have been life-changing. I've developed this year more than ever and Nigel has given me opportunities to play live music outside of school through his contacts, which have been amazing experiences for me."*

Harry, Music of Life student, guitar

# Choral workshops at special needs schools



**In 2018-19 we continued our rolling programme of choral workshops in 3 special needs schools in Birmingham, Warwick and Coleshill.**

Many of the students who attend these workshops live in areas of high social and economic deprivation and feedback from families and schools reveals little or no funding for music-making activities.

**Participating schools report significant and sustained improvements in the behaviour of students with considerably fewer outbreaks of aggressive and challenging behaviours.**

One of the major barriers to sustained music programmes in special school settings is the lack of qualified staff at schools and the cost of expert provision. For school workshops, our approach is to run weekly sessions involving 20-50 students led by our highly experienced professional musicians for at least two years during term time, delivering steady musical progress and other measurable benefits, from improved communication skills to positive changes in medical conditions. We also support the school staff to help them integrate our philosophy and approach into the wider curriculum using effective techniques that stimulate students' development in such areas as literacy, numeracy, coordination, speech and social interaction.

## What our workshop leaders say



### ***Suzzie Vango, Head of School Programmes for Music of Life, conductor, composer and singer:***

“Working in special needs schools is not only a great privilege but a welcome challenge to my expertise as a choral leader. Every week we face the same children, but how the rest of their day is going hugely affects the way they come in and start a session. The youngsters often show huge enthusiasm towards singing and fill the room with joy, which can bring so much satisfaction to us as session leaders, but due to their individual complex needs, this is not an easy outcome every week for everyone.

It is our job as the workshop leader to work with the students, other members of the team and the staff (who are all wonderful) to ensure they feel safe to stay to the end of the session and eventually leave feeling positive, fulfilled and happy.

**I have found this work with Music of Life in these schools some of the most rewarding in my career as a vocal practitioner and every year that the project grows and we work with more of these amazing youngsters, I become more and more inspired.**

Empathy, teamwork, inclusion, passion for singing, commitment, setting high expectations, these are all qualities that you should already possess as a workshop leader and working in this environment really helps develop these skills to a new level.”



***Emma Cockbill, workshop co-leader and pianist:***

“I think the impact of what Music of Life does for the young people concerned is incredible, it has made me re-think everything I do in music. However, I also want to say that I think that everyone, even us when we're there and seeing it first hand, actually underestimates the impact. The reason for this is that we do not see these young people when they are not in a Music of Life session!

**So often we are told that the young people we work with cannot sit, cannot focus, cannot behave in the way one expects at school. However, what we see is quite the opposite.**

We hear the most amazing and eloquent descriptions of what the songs make them feel – ‘Feel like I can do anything I want to’, ‘powerful’, ‘brave’, ‘happy’. We also see young people moved to tears (not of distress or even sadness, just emotion) but most of the time we see joy, delight, energy and a desire to learn. It is such an amazing privilege and every day I work with the young people of Music of Life, I end the day feeling inspired and more able to face the world.”



## The following responses were collated from evaluation at 3 schools representing the total of 224 beneficiaries:

**86%** of school staff agreed or strongly agreed that workshops enabled the acquisition of transferable skills contributing to improved literacy, language, numeracy, planning and problem solving

**88%** agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops resulted in reduced isolation, improved social development and communication, increased confidence, resilience, motivation and self-advocacy

**96%** agreed or strongly agreed that workshops strengthened school communities through role modelling and strong engagement as students develop rapport with each other, with members of staff and, through performances, with wider communities

*It is truly wonderful to be a part of something that involves and engages such a broad cross section of our school community. Music of Life workshops make a positive impact on our pupils and are incredibly enjoyable for all involved.*

**Lizzie Godwin, Key Stage 1 Phase Leader  
Woodlands Special School**

## Pioneering programme of music provision for Deaf children in London

We have been working at the Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children since 2017. We engage the whole school through group workshops (Key Stage 1) and the provision of 1:1 instrumental tuition on cello, recorder, ukulele and violin (Key Stage 2).

**The unique feature of this ground-breaking project is that it is delivered by professional musicians who are themselves Deaf.**

The arrival of Ruth Montgomery and Eloise Garland, both highly acclaimed workshop leaders, teachers and advocates for the importance of music education for Deaf children, who are fluent in British Sign Language, quickly overcame the mistaken beliefs and scepticism of the teachers (70% of whom are Deaf) and also of parents who felt that music was 'not for Deaf people'.

***"I am Deaf, so I didn't think I could do music. But now I know what music is, and I can do it! I attended the session to help children in my class, but I ended up really enjoying it myself, and we were all participating!"*** – member of support staff, Frank Barnes School.

Just seven months after the start of the project, pupils from the school joined 2,000 Camden mainstream school children at the Royal Albert Hall fully participating in a performance involving singing in the choir (using British Sign Language) and playing instruments in the orchestra. The success of the pilot led Music of Life to become an official partner of the Camden Music Hub.

We saw the power of Deaf teachers teaching Deaf students for the first time in this setting while the staff reported the wide-ranging impact in improved learning skills, reduced social isolation and improved well-being. As a result of the successful pilot at Frank Barnes, we will now extend the programme to other special schools for children who are Deaf and have other disabilities.

We will continue to monitor and evaluate the expanded programme and will learn more and adapt as we go along. An important part of the programme will be sharing learning with teachers, music services and other charities. Our ambition is that this programme will be instrumental in changing the way Deaf students are taught and will influence other organisations in the educational mainstream to include music in the curriculum to support the development of disabled children's capabilities.

**Workshops at Schools Programme**



***Eloise Garland with her cello students at Frank Barnes school***

**“This project has been particularly unique in that the music sessions have been delivered in the children's first language - British Sign Language - as well as spoken and written English, by two professional musicians who are also Deaf.**

Having the opportunity to learn music has also led to exciting new experiences for the children, such as the concert at the Royal Albert Hall for the very first time.

As well as supporting language and social development, we have seen the children grow in confidence and creativity through music over the year. Music truly is a wonderful subject that allows all children to grow in many areas, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, social background, or even their ability to hear.”

**Eloise Garland - Musician, Teacher, Producer, Deaf Awareness Campaigner**

**Workshops at Schools Programme**

# Organisational Summary

A copy of the full 2018 Report and Accounts can be obtained from [www.musicoflife.org.uk](http://www.musicoflife.org.uk), the Charity Commission or Companies House.

## Patrons

Evelyn Glennie CH, DBE  
Denise Leigh

## Trustees

Ray Longbottom (Chair), Sarah Kolkman (Treasurer), Robert Blencowe, Eleanor Chuck, Catherine Clarke, Harvey Jones, Chris Newstead, Jeff Sutherland-Kay, Theresa Veith

## Team

Maria Teterina, Chief Executive  
Suzzie Vango, Head of School Programmes  
Birgitta Clift, Fundraiser  
Shruti Soni, Accountant  
Cecily Liu, Events Coordinator (volunteer)  
>50 music teachers, workshop leaders and support musicians

## Our delivery partners

Birmingham Services for Education  
Camden Music Services, London  
DaDa Youth Ensemble, Liverpool

## Music of Life Foundation Statement of Financial Activities For the year ended 31 December 2018

		2018		
	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2018
		£	£	£
Income from				
Donations	2	15,293	109,208	124,501
<b>Total income</b>		<b>15,293</b>	<b>109,208</b>	<b>124,501</b>
Expenditure on				
Raising funds		19,116	-	19,116
Charitable activities		9,517	107,802	117,319
<b>Total expenditure</b>	3	<b>28,633</b>	<b>107,802</b>	<b>136,435</b>



# Thank you

**With no public or statutory funding, we rely entirely on donations from individuals, trusts and foundations to support our work. The generosity of our benefactors helps us to ensure the sustainability and further development of our long-term programmes during a challenging period in the funding of music education.**

## Our supporters

- BBC Children in Need
- Angela Gallagher Memorial Fund
- Austin Edwards Charity
- Baron Davenport's Charity
- Brian Mitchell Charitable Trust
- Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust
- CHK Charities LTD
- Dumbreck Charity
- Edith and Jack Griffiths Charitable Trust
- Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust
- Eveson Charitable Trust
- Grey Court Trust
- Gowling WLG Trust
- Hopkins Sayer Trust
- J and R Howard Trust
- John Sumner Trust
- Lillie Johnson Trust
- Marchus Trust
- Margaret Westwood Memorial Charity
- Mercers Company
- Norton Foundation
- Pamela Barlow Charitable Trust
- Philip Bates Trust
- Roger and Douglas Turner Trust
- Sobell Foundation
- St James's Place
- St Mary's Hall Trust
- Warwick Provident Dispensary
- Warwick Relief in Need Charity
- The Henry Smith Charity
- The Loveday Charitable Trust
- The Postlethwaite Music Foundation
- The 29th May 1961 Charity
- True Colours Trust
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- Mr and Mrs Clarkson Webb
- 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
- Ms Julia Dias

## Support us

**If you would like to find out more about how to support our work, including sponsoring a student or a school, please contact Maria Teterina, Chief Executive at [mteterina@mofl.co.uk](mailto:mteterina@mofl.co.uk) or by calling 020 7813 5472**

## Contact us

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**Registered Charity Number: 1102827**

**Company Number: 4963498**



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*I feel very proud when I sing in the choir. I know I can do well and I feel special. I think we all are very special because we can sing!*

**Eddie, Music of Life workshop student**

