

## Impact Report 2021-22

### INTRODUCTION

This report uses data for the school year 2021-22, building on the findings of the previous Apollo Music Projects Impact Report covering the two school years 2019-20 and 2020-21.

This Impact Report supports the findings of the previous report, as well as our earlier Impact Report covering the school year 2018-19, published in February 2021. The reports demonstrate significant positive effects of our programme in two key areas:

1. Supporting children's ability to respond to the emotional content of the music and express this in writing.
2. Supporting children's wellbeing, shown in the way the children described their feelings while listening to the music.

Our annual evaluation forms for children taking part in our programme are designed to measure the impact of the programme on children's wellbeing and emotional response. They include questions about how the children felt listening to the music, and whether the programme affected their self-confidence, relaxation, concentration or the ability to control moods. We were very careful to ensure that the children were not guided or influenced in their choices. We analysed the data as objectively as possible, using key words to grade the answers when choosing between positive and negative responses, or in the case of the creative writing responses to two contrasting pieces of music (Q5). The results were again overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing the findings in the previous Impact Reports and going even further to show the positive effects of our programme on children's wellbeing.

### THE FINDINGS

We have analysed the results of 1,282 children's evaluations from the 2021-22 school programmes. The sample was very large, and the results in all questions were very consistent across schools and compared to previous years. The key findings from this year's evaluation were as follows:

#### Completed evaluation forms

2021-22

26 primary school programmes, 1282 children

#### Question 1 - What was the best thing about working with Apollo Music Projects?

48% said listening to the music was the best thing about the programme (the next highest was 14% for learning about music/instruments)

*2019-21: 56% listening to music*

#### Question 2 - How do you feel when you listen to the music we play?

94% expressed positive feelings - calm, relaxed, happy, amazed, inspired (6% negative - OK, bored, nothing much).

60% said they felt calm/relaxed or happy.

*2019-21: 95% positive, 63% calm/relaxed or happy*

#### Key Findings

- **94%** of children described positive feelings while listening to the music
- **60%** were more relaxed or calm while listening
- **79%** made a clear distinction between the emotional content of two contrasting pieces of music

**Question 3 - Has listening to the music helped you with any of these: more self-confident, more relaxed, better concentration, able to control moods, none of these?**

62% circled more relaxed

24% circled more than one choice

21% circled none of these.

*2019-21: 66% more relaxed, 30% more than one, 22 none of these.*

**Question 4 - Has the programme inspired you to learn an instrument?**

41% yes

27% no

39% already play one.

Several children chose more than one answer.

Among children who don't already play one: 60% yes, 40% no.

*2019-21: 36% yes, 28% no, 40% already play one*

*Among children who don't already play an instrument: 56% yes, 44% no.*

**Question 5 - Write a short scene or description suggested by each of two contrasting pieces (Shostakovich and Mendelssohn)**

79% made a clear distinction between the two pieces, which we determined using key words appropriate to the two pieces (eg running away, scared, war, fighting, dramatic for Shostakovich; wedding, funeral, happy, sad, mixed emotions, flowers, waves, nature for Mendelssohn)

*2019-21: 81%*

**SUMMARY**

These findings clearly show the beneficial effects of our programme on children's wellbeing, and reinforce the findings of our previous Impact Reports. The number of children able to demonstrate a clear distinction between the emotional content of two contrasting pieces of music performed live was extremely high, showing that they can understand and respond personally to the emotions expressed in the music by the composer and the performers. The remarkably high number of children who described positive feelings while listening to the music demonstrated the benefits to children's wellbeing of listening to live music, reinforced by the number of children saying they felt calm, relaxed or happy.

Our findings indicated that there are two distinct emotional responses involved in listening to music, one the response to the act of listening to music, and the other the response to the emotional content of the music. The report suggested that both of these emotional responses are necessary to listen to music with the kind of intense concentration and positive engagement the children exhibit at our workshops and concerts. Furthermore it suggests that our programme is designed in such a way that these two skills are developed during the course of the programme, whatever the individual abilities of the children taking part. The results of the current evaluation were very positive and consistent across schools, and consistent with the previous year's results. We were able to investigate the positive effects of live music on wellbeing in great depth, and the results indicated that the Apollo Music Projects programme is successful in supporting children's wellbeing and helping them to access and express their emotional response to music.

David Chernaik, CEO & Programme Director, September 2022

*"I liked being able to express my feelings through music."*

Year 5 pupil, Canonbury Primary School, Islington

*"I feel relaxed and feel like I'm in a different world when I listen."*

Year 5 pupil, Eldon Primary School, Enfield

*"It calms me like all my worries go away and I'm happy."*

Year 5 pupil, St. Dominic's RC Primary School, Hackney

*"I feel soothed, calmed and excited"*

Year 5 pupil, Oldhill Community School, Hackney

## Impact Report 2021-22 - Appendix

### Children's comments (selected)

"I liked being able to express my feelings through music."

Year 5 pupil, Canonbury Primary School, Islington

"I feel like something good is happening in me."

"We always had the chance to incorporate our own imaginations to the music."

Year 5 pupils, Devonshire Hill Primary School, Haringey

"I feel like I can really express myself."

"I really loved the music and it helped me with emotions."

"I feel sparked with creativity, curiosity and happiness."

"I feel relaxed and feel like I'm in a different world when I listen."

Year 5 pupils, Eldon Primary School, Enfield

"They are kind and play beautifully." Year 3 pupil, Gainsborough Primary School, Hackney

"Apollo is fun. Imaginative and interactive."

"I feel excited and want to keep listening."

"I feel lost in the story of the music."

Year 4 pupils, Gayhurst Primary School, Hackney

"I feel calmed and relaxed to listen to all the amazing music."

Year 4 Pupil. Grazebrook Primary School, Hackney

"I feel creative because I get inspired."

"I think the Apollo was so beautiful."

Year 4 pupils, Hoxton Garden Primary School, Hackney

"I usually feel calm, excited, sad and free." Year 4 pupil, London Fields Primary School, Hackney

"Very nice! And calming and it cheers you up."

"They always give us exciting things to do."

Year 4 pupils, Mandeville Primary School, Hackney

"I feel happy, calm and shocked that they play so beautifully."

"I feel soothed, calm and excited."

Year 5 pupils, Oldhill Community School, Hackney

"It inspired me to play the violin." Year 5 pupil, Orchard Primary School, Hackney

"It feels amazing because sometimes I never get to listen to music like this."

"I liked to have a chance to relax my mind and really think about the music."

Year 4 pupils, Rushmore Primary School, Hackney

"The best thing was the music and the kind people."

"The music gives me joy."

Year 5 pupils, Salusbury primary School, Brent

"I felt like I was in a dream."

Year 4 pupil, Shacklewell Primary School, Hackney

"I feel great when I listen to their music. It makes me happy."

Year 5 pupil, St. Dominic's RC Primary School, Hackney

**Shostakovich:**

"A haunted house, with ravens cawing demonically and spiders and bats making cobwebs and hanging from the ceiling. Witches creep around the house menacingly. The trees swaying and creaking in the wind. The music sounds scary."

Year 5 pupil, Ambler Primary School, Islington

"It makes me feel excited and it is really suspenseful which is what I like about the composer Shostakovich and I will consider listening to it in my own time."

Year 5 pupil, Eldon Primary School, Enfield

"You think something bad is going to happen to you as you walk past lots of trees in the middle of the night. You see a creepy person walking past you."

Year 4 pupil, London Fields Primary School, Hackney

"A suspenseful piece that is really interesting and if you close your eyes it builds something in you."

Year 5 pupil, Salusbury primary School, Brent

"Dramatic, intriguing tune, peaceful atmosphere, magical, powerful, getting ready for battle."

Year 5 pupil, Salusbury primary School, Brent

"Somewhere dangerous and creepy, somewhere dark, a creature wandering around."

Year 4 pupil, Springfield Community Primary School, Hackney

"I liked how it turned from exciting to calm to exciting again."

Year 4 pupil, St. John & St. James C of E Primary School, Hackney

"When I hear the music I sometimes imagine I am in some dangerous place. I felt a bit scared or terrified."

Year 4 pupil, St. John & St. James C of E Primary School, Hackney

**Mendelssohn:**

"It has a lot of flow as if they are playing it in the most perfect way."

"It's like I'm listening to a lullaby and all the bad things come out of my mind and I slowly fall asleep."

Year 5 pupils, Eldon Primary School, Enfield

"It feels very calm, happy, sad. It is heaven." Year 4 pupil, Rushmore Primary School, Hackney

"When I hear this I imagine that I am in space floating and looking at the stars."

Year 4 pupil, St. John & St. James C of E Primary School, Hackney