



**The Stephen Joseph Theatre  
Outreach  
EYFS  
Speech and Language/Music  
Project 2021/2022**



## **Project Overview**

The SJT are currently working within Early Years settings in five schools across the Borough of Scarborough, North Yorkshire. Each school has been provided with a dedicated artist/practitioner skilled in music, song writing, story creation, drama, and in working with this young age group.

The practitioner spends a half day in each school, every week, working with the children on their enjoyment of music, reading, adding to their vocabulary, and developing their speech and language using arts- based activities.

All the children are participating in Arts Awards 'Discover' which is a great way of them solidifying learning without it seeming like a chore. This encourages very young children to be reflective of their work. On completion each child will receive a certificate from Trinity College London.

The project is designed in partnership with each school focusing on their children and where they need to develop skills, incorporating the curriculum through the music and drama to enhance their retention of learning.

Using music, singing, playing instruments and various drama activities we aim to compliment the work already done in EYFS to develop gross motor skills, fine motor skills, composing stories orally and physically, developing vocabulary and listening to instructions, plus much more. The activities, and how we deliver them, vary with each school; from one- to- ones with identified children, small groups of mixed abilities, and whole classroom activities. This flexible approach allows each child the opportunity to learn in environments that suit their specific needs.

# **Aims and Objectives**

## **Aims**

- Develop speech and language skills
- Develop gross and fine motor skills
- Listen to and understand instructions
- Compose stories orally and physically
- Growth of vocabulary
- Ask questions about learning, be inquisitive
- Encourage an enjoyment of reading
- Develop knowledge retention

## **Objectives**

- Through songs, movement and gesture develop the children's understanding of words and broadening their vocabulary
- Developing creativity and knowledge retention by creating stories and songs with the children in line with their curriculum
- Developing fine motor skills by learning how to play the ukulele and other instruments
- Through drama and music develop the children's ability to tell stories both physically and orally
- Using vocal warm up techniques promote diction, articulation, breathing



## Partner Schools

- Braeburn Primary and Nursery Academy (400 pupils approx)
- Friarage Community Primary School (363 pupils approx)
- Gladstone Road Primary School (800 pupils approx)
- East Ayton Primary School (205 pupils approx)
- Thomas Hinderwell Primary Academy (279 pupils approx)

We work weekly with **224** Reception aged children.

Through a series of conversations with teachers we discovered that all of these local schools, and indeed, schools nationally, had become very aware that during the pandemic the children entering their reception classes had less exposure to experiences where they would normally develop and enhance their gross and fine motor skills, vocabulary, and speech and language. This means many

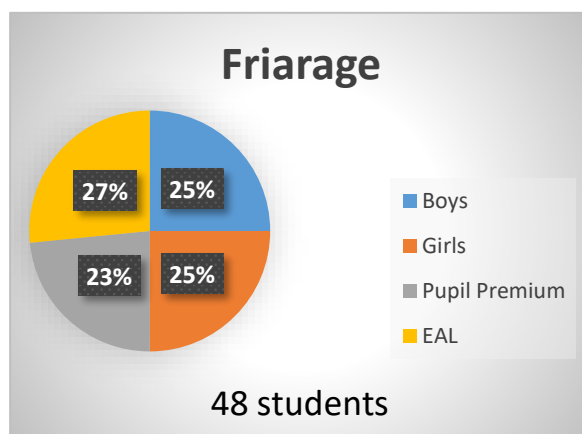
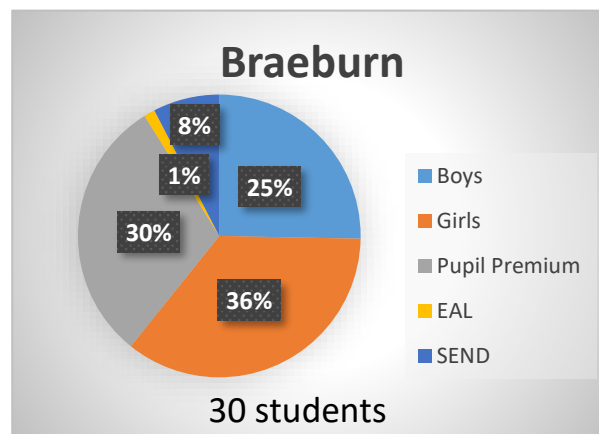
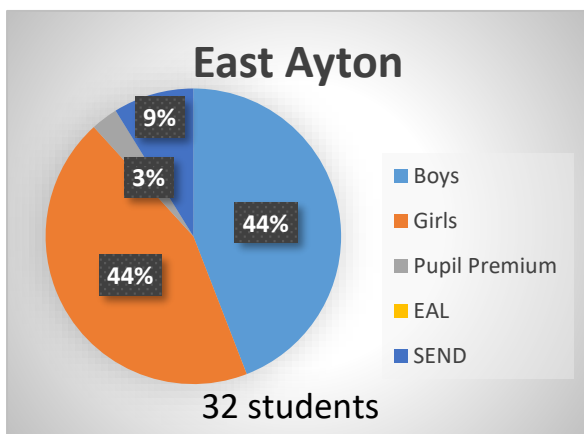
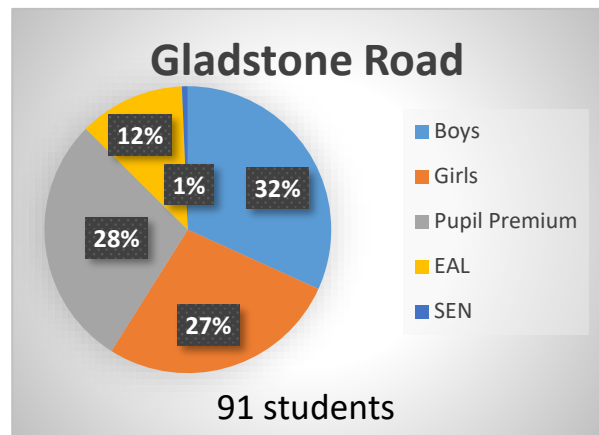
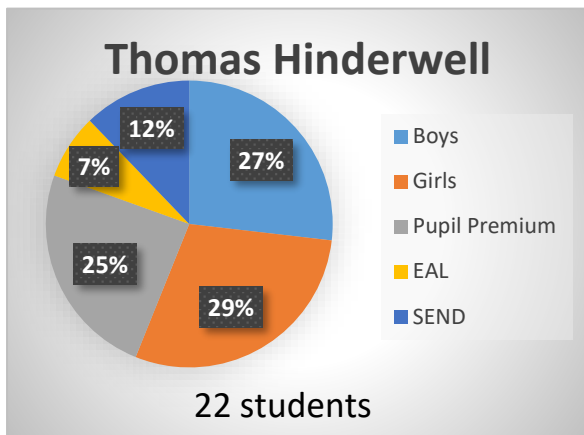


children arriving at school in reception requiring notably more input in these areas than previous cohorts.

*The EEF funded study by the University of York, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) and the Education Policy Institute (EPI) into the Impact of Covid on School Starters published an interim report in April 21 revealing that “children are struggling particularly with three areas of development: 1) communication and language development (96%; 55 of 57 schools) of schools reported being ‘very concerned’ or ‘quite concerned’; 2) personal, social and emotional development (91%; 53 of 58 schools) ‘very concerned’ or ‘quite concerned’; and 3) literacy (89%; 51 of 57 schools) ‘very concerned’ or ‘quite concerned’”.*



**School Reception Pupil Breakdowns** (correct at time of printing.  
Some schools still waiting for SEN plans)



# Teacher Feedback

We asked:

**What is your overall impression of the project so far? How is it working in your school?**

Positive. Very refreshing to have music at the centre. We also like the way that Alice formed relationships with the children first and then introduced individual/group/class inputs. Personally, I love her songs, the Seasons and the Planets as I think songs are an excellent vehicle for developing recall skills as if you sing it you remember it. Memory is developed through repetition of songs which are more easily remembered than words of speech.

**Have you seen any positive developments, related to this project, in the children's learning?**

LM in RR has become more confident and loves joining in with the singing and dancing. Singing has definitely helped with her speech and language development. Her confidence and communication skills have improved too. Generally, children have become more confident in the singing sessions and are moving to the music as well.

**How would you like to see this project develop over the coming months? Is there anything that worked particularly well and you would like to see more of, or are there any areas you feel we need to explore in more detail?**

Maybe have a singing focus at the beginning of the session as well as the end. Also, in the Summer months use singing and dancing outside as well as this worked well with RR when the photographer was in.

## **Any other comments**

Overall Alice is a very talented practitioner who has been a huge asset to EYFS on Thursday afternoon

## **Teachers Verbal feedback**

**Gladstone Road-** "I worked with Alice today and it was brilliant.

We even did some music together at the end of the day. She will be a great asset to our school."

"We like you! You better write that down! You're part of the furniture. All the children have really warmed to you, especially those that struggle. We love the fact that you are working in all the different areas with them, we used to have workshops, which was lovely, but this is better, you've been able to really get to know the children with you being here so much. And we love the songs, I can't get the four seasons out of my head. "

**Hinderwell-** "...on another note, our children are absolutely loving the sessions with Alice on a Friday as part of the Outreach Project. We are very grateful to be involved."

**Braeburn-** "The children have really enjoyed the sessions with Alice, they really like the ukulele lessons in small groups and have been able to use the correct terminology for the different parts of the ukulele. They've really improved with their attention and sitting on the carpet and enjoy the group work that they get to do, having smaller groups is great for them getting that adult interaction in small groups. They can remember all the songs and the actions for them, doing the actions has meant that the children that are nonverbal can join in, doing more songs with actions would be great. Doing more one to one with the kids next term would be really helpful. One of the students is getting a ukulele for Christmas because he's enjoyed the sessions so much. "

**East Ayton-** "The engagement the children have with you is second to none, I sing with them, and they sing along but when they see someone sing and play so well their engagement is so different, I love watching them with you. They really enjoy the group activities."



"It's all really good and we really like what you're doing. They all ask every week if you're coming in and sing the songs you write. They really loved 'find the words' game and I'd love it if we could have something like that again."

**Friarage-** "They came out today with great big smiles on their faces, they seem to really enjoy what they are doing with you. They remember the songs as well; they were singing one when you came in. They are getting really good at the songs. We need a CD with them all on!"

### Children's Verbal Feedback

#### We asked 'What do you enjoy the most?'

"I like it when you come, we get to sing lots of songs. The planet song is the best!"

"We learn how to play the ukulele and be a rockstar!"

"When we play ukulele and I get to play the red one and singing songs"

"When you read us stories and we sing songs"

"I like playing on your drum and making up stories"

"I learnt to be careful with the ukulele and how to play it and I helped you write a song about dinosaurs"

"I liked writing the dinosaur song and playing the ukulele"

## Email/social media feedback

- Really appreciate that you are linking our curriculum themes to your sessions.
- How the small groups are working so well, giving every child a chance to talk and explore.
- Starting to learn an instrument! How inspirational for our children. 😊
- As well as the focus on speech and language, it is fantastic how many links there have also been to support: fine motor and gross motor skills, PSED, listening and attention skills, turn taking.



**Thomas Hinderwell**  
@ThomasHinPri



This Friday, the children in Reception had their first ukulele lessons with Alice Kynman from the SJT and they absolutely loved it. What an experience for some of our youngest children in school. 😊



12:26 · 05/12/2021 · [Twitter Web App](#)

**3** Retweets **1** Quote Tweet **9** Likes

## Case Studies

Throughout the project I have worked with every child in each of the reception classes. These have been within small group settings, one-to-one's, and full class activities. Throughout this half term I have observed a selection of the students and have set them specific aims to help develop their skills in speech and language. The case studies below refer to children identified by their teachers as those needing different approaches to learning, for example those that are selective mutes, nonverbal or those that have behavior issues.

### **Friarage Case Study – Gender: F Age: 5**

#### **Background information**

S is new to the area and recently has stopped crying for the morning sessions after mum has dropped her off, she is on low attendance and English is her second language she is Romanian. She has a small vocabulary in English but can understand a lot. She has been engaged with me when I've been in the room observing.

#### **Aims for the year**

- **Be able to have a conversation with me**
- **Work with other people other than N**
- **Sing the full song**
- **Create own song**

Week 2- During the second session S was asked to leave the room as she had been misbehaving all day and was in wobbly behaviour, when the teacher asked for good listening and sitting S did neither and was taken into nursery where she spent the music section of the session. During free flow I was able to go and see S, she asked me to join in with their play of kitchens. She predominantly plays with N who also has English as a second language and isn't particularly sociable with other students

Week 3- S really engaged with the planets, playing with them, looking at the differences and singing the song. Although S doesn't always say the words she will sing/ make sounds that sound similar to it.

Week 4- S joined in with the season's song and helped create scenes for their freeze frames, she decided that dinosaurs lived on the beach whereas the rest of her group wanted to do sunbathing. S stuck to what she wanted to do. Would be nice to see her collaborating with the other students. Will be looking at teamwork games and exercises for this. S joined in with the song dancing along with it and would say some words when prompted. She joined in with all of the actions.

Week 5- Not at school

Week 6- S played with the puppets and explored the room with it, but didn't want to join in with a partner and preferred playing on her own. I spoke to the TA about this

and she said that this is really common and S doesn't like to play with anyone other than N. As there's a language barrier, they think that as her language develops, she'll be more confident in communicating with others.

Evaluation of Oct- December

S is really engaging with me and enjoys the work that we do. She doesn't communicate with anyone other than her friend N.

S's understanding of English is great; she will sometimes try to trick you that she doesn't understand when she doesn't want to do something. She doesn't say many words, but will copy you if you ask her to.

She regularly will say my name when I arrive without prompt and ask "ukulele" she will also sing the Seasons song "four seasons, autumn, winter, spring and summer" to me as that's her favourite and she wants to do it each week.

### **Gladstone Case Study – Gender: F Age: 5**

#### **Background information**

L is a selective mute; she will happily speak to peers but refuses to speak to adults. They are a very happy engaged and bright child and is high within class achievement and understanding. At home L is under a guardianship, little else is known about this situation.

#### **Aims for the year**

- **Have short conversations with adults**
- **Engage with music and storytelling by singing the songs taught and doing actions**
- **Initiate conversations and ask questions**

Week 1- L is a selective mute, has said very little in her time at school to the teachers, will happily speak to peers when they are in free flow learning environment, until an adult is close. On my first-time meeting L she was engaged with the teacher, making eye contact and visibly happy in the school environment, but not joining in with anything that involved answering questions or responding when the teacher asked the class to repeat a word.

During free flow L went to her workspace but didn't interact with any of the other children until they initiated conversation with her. She will happily play on her own and has shown enjoyment in the reading, kitchen and smartboard areas. L allowed me to join in with her play and tapped me on the shoulder to come and join her. Although she didn't speak to me, she did laugh and smile throughout the time I spent with her

Week 2- whilst watching the end of the maths session the teacher went around and asked the children how many number blocks they had in each circle, without hesitation she said the numbers within her circles. Into free flow L came up to me tapped me on

the shoulder and waved me over to her play area. We played in the kitchen area for some time, I went to see other children and each time she would follow where I went. We then went to the reading area and I was asked by other children to read stories. L chose "The Very hungry Caterpillar" As a small group of three we read through the book and at the section of what the Caterpillar eats throughout the week I asked how many and what the fruit was. L, along with the other children counted and shouted out the number and fruits he was going to eat. Her vocal participation continued with the next book and throughout my time with both Reception Red and Blue she followed me round and played on the ukulele when given the chance to. After speaking to the teachers, they were thrilled that she had engaged and spoken to me.

Week 3- I wasn't with L's class. Class teacher had said that L had asked "where's lady?" and she responded with next week. L seemed upset that I wasn't there.

Week 4- L was off

Week 5- L was very shy having not seen me for a while. She kept looking at me and then when I'd look back, she'd look away during their maths session. During free flow learning she would come and interact with me. In this session a few had stayed inside with me and we learnt the "four seasons" song. We then learnt this with the rest of the class when they came back in. L joined in with all the actions and was happy throughout and showed engagement through attention and dancing along with the song.

Week 6- With a different class

### **Evaluation October- December**

The work in Gladstone is predominantly through the free flow play. This I feel needs to switch slightly to add in a few more workshop activities, but to maintain the free flow aspect of the learning as the teachers have said that this is the preferred method of teaching and engagement with the young people.

L has exceeded my expectations this term, having only spent a few sessions with me she has really warmed to me which is evidenced in her speaking to me early on and continues to engage with me whenever I am in class.

The next step for L is to look at language within song. She has shown enthusiasm and engagement for the music, over the next term we'll be looking at getting L to be involved with the singing.

#### **Aims for next term**

- Contribute ideas in a conversation
- Sing songs with group
- Complete section 1 and 2 in arts awards
- Conversation with adult, myself or class teacher or TA



## Sample Session Plan

### Week 4 Braeburn

Ukulele Lesson- 6 Children per session

### Team Tigers

#### Warm up

- Make faces big, small, wide
- Siren
- Song to warm up faces- Little Green Frog
- Concentration game- Pass the clap making the clap clear pass it to the person next to you in the circle getting faster and faster each try.

#### Ukulele

- Let the students look at the uke and ask questions about what the different parts are  
Ask if they know the names of any of the parts (they should know strings from previous weeks)
- How to hold the uke  
On the back of each neck there is a sticker, place your thumb there and wrap your fingers around the neck  
Use your knee to rest the ukulele
- Open strumming the uke- How can we make it sound happy, sad, scary?
- Play the C chord
- Using the blank chord chart put a marker on where your finger needs to be. Which fret? Which finger?

## Team Lions : Seasons Song Lyrics

There are four seasons

Autumn, winter, spring and Summer

Four seasons

Autumn, winter, spring and summer

In autumn there is so much wind it blows leaves off the trees

In winter it gets freezing cold, it's below 0 degrees

In spring is where the flowers bloom and lambs come out to play

Summer it gets boiling hot we're on the beach all day

There are four seasons

Autumn, winter, spring and Summer

Four seasons

Autumn, winter, spring and summer

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>The Big Picture</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ukulele Lessons</li> <li>- Learn the different parts of the uke (frets,neck,strings)</li> <li>- Learn how to hold the ukulele</li> <li>- Learn names of strings</li> <li>- Learn how to strum</li> <li>- Learn the C chord</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Objectives</b>                           | <p><b>Retrieval from previous lessons on how to pronounce Ukulele</b></p> <p><b>Learning new skills on how to hold and play uke developing motor skills and fine motor skills</b></p> <p><b>Find enjoyment through playing the ukulele by playing it in different ways (fast, slow, loud, quiet)</b></p>       |
| <b>Number of participants and age range</b> | <b>48- Reception over two classes</b>  |
| <b>RESULTS &amp; OUTCOMES</b>               | <p><b>All children from Team Lions spent time with a ukulele. Each of them learned the different parts of a ukulele (Strings, pegs and frets)</b></p> <p><b>Team tigers learned the Seasons song and learned about the different seasons singing the chorus and joining in with actions on the verses.</b></p> |
| <b>Last Lesson</b>                          | <p><b>Added words to vocabulary (Mercury, Venus and Earth)</b></p> <p><b>Listened to the rest of the planets and had a go at saying the words.</b></p>   |
| <b>Next Lesson</b>                          | <b>Team Tigers will be having a lesson with the ukuleles and team Lions will be learning the Seasons Song.</b>   |
| <b>New Skills learnt</b>                    | <p><b>How to hold a ukulele developing fine motor skills</b></p> <p><b>Saying the words Ukulele, fret, strings and chord- Adding to vocabulary</b></p>   |
| <b>Challenges</b>                           | <b>To ensure that the learning was accomplished I spent longer with each group meaning that there wasn't enough time to do the same with Team Tigers.</b>  |
| <b>How challenges will be overcome</b>      | <b>We will swap over meaning that team tigers will have the uke lesson next week and Lions will learn the song about the Seasons next week.</b>  |
| <b>Positives</b>                            | <b>Behaviour- Case study (B) who had previously not engaged unless it was one to one engaged brilliantly in a small controlled group. Was incredibly focused and tried very hard to get all the tasks right.</b>   |

## Outcomes and Learnings

- The oral feedback from teachers shows us that the schools have found the work a valuable addition to their EYFS setting and that the children's learning has been enhanced.
- Participation from the children has been high throughout, including from those who may be more reluctant. We have noted that their listening and understanding skills have improved.
- The teachers have been open to working in partnership with us in the development of the programme of work allowing a tailored experience for their children.
- Weekly, we have observed the children's retention of knowledge and how proud they are of this learning.
- Through verbal feedback and observation, we have seen that the children are gaining a love for musical instruments, singing, song writing and story creation. Playing the instruments has also helped with fine motor skills.
- All the children have participated in Arts Awards Discover and have been able to revisit and reflect on their work.
- We observed that schools often have added or unexpected duties outside the regular planned activity; nativities, Ofsted, observations, staff illness, training, interventions, and closure due to Covid. It has meant that all plans must be flexible whilst still ensuring that the children's learning is not disrupted.
- Engaging with the children and developing their skills is the central element of the project, requiring the practitioner to differentiate and work in numerous ways to get the best outcomes.
- Creating strong relationships with staff and understanding their needs has been a crucial part of the process in making this project a continued success.
- Children that are EAL, non-verbal and selective mute have been incredibly engaged with the project. They have gained

confidence in speaking and communicating, and they have already developed their vocabulary through song.

- In some schools the attendance is very low for many of the children. This makes it difficult to have a meaningful impact on these children's learning and retention of knowledge.
- Through story- telling and creating through song, drama activities and reading to the children, we are hoping to see a longer term impact on enjoyment of reading throughout the children's time at school.





We have implemented a tailored approach to each school's curriculum, planning, and children's needs and worked in partnership with the EYFS lead, the classroom teachers and the children themselves.

The sessions are created specifically to support the curriculum and to compliment the teaching and learning already in place.

*"A 2016 study at the University of Southern California's [Brain and Creativity Institute](#) found that musical experiences in childhood can actually accelerate brain development, particularly in the areas of language acquisition and reading skills. According to the [National Association of Music Merchants Foundation \(NAMM Foundation\)](#), learning to play an instrument can improve mathematical learning and even increase SAT scores."<sup>1</sup>*



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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bright Horizons.com/family-resources/music-and-children-rhythm-meets-child-development>