

Singing Strategy



MMSVocal.connect

SINGING STRATEGY FOR MUSIC EDUCATION IN SWINDON
2015-18

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MMS Singing Strategy 2015-18



Singing can promote teamwork in a social setting, similarly promoting self-confidence and self-esteem. MMS believes that all children and young people should be able to access high quality opportunities for singing in school and the community as an entitlement.



Message from the Director, Make Music Swindon

Make Music Swindon (MMS) is a strategic alliance between organisations and individuals with involvement in music education. By working together, MMS will ensure children and young people receive music education that is high quality, wide ranging, sustainable and accessible, with progression routes. We aim to promote, support, develop and strengthen singing across Swindon.

Peter Clark MCMI, MMus, PGDip(Mgt), ARCM

Aims of this Document

The strategy provides a framework and direction for MMS vocal work for the next 3-years. This overarching strategy compliments a school singing plan, brings schools together to perform and offers training to school based staff.

THE BENEFITS OF SINGING:

Physical benefits:

Very young people have been shown to increase the amount, quality and understanding of speech development through singing activities such as counting games, nursery rhymes and finger play.

Singing increases blood flow and lung capacity.

Combined with movement or dance, singing helps combat obesity and increase general physical fitness.

Social Benefits:

Singing can lead directly to whole-school improvement, particularly through creating a greater sense of community and increasing social cohesion within the school.

Music lessons in school can help foster individuality, improve social skills and help create more positive attitudes in general. In studies, these effects have been particularly marked in low-ability, disaffected pupils.

Developmental benefits:

Singing can be used to prepare to start or to finish routine activities such as settling down to take the register or signify the end of the school day. Choose a well-known song or create a new song with your whole class.

Music can be used to reinforce mathematical development through the use of finger and counting games and exploration of musical instruments and sound-makers through sequencing and patterning. Studies have shown that school music lessons can benefit reading and language skills. Very young children have been shown to increase the amount, quality and understanding of speech developed through singing activities.

Our Vocal Vision

Singing should be at the heart of every school and be accessible to all. It is our vision to give every child and young person the best possible opportunity to sing and to raise awareness of singing in the community and beyond. We will work with partners to promote, support, develop and strengthen singing across Swindon.

Aims of the Singing Strategy

Make Music Swindon's Vocal Strategy aims to promote singing and develop high quality vocal work across the borough. We are keen to support singing in schools, sourcing appropriate repertoire and delivering vocal activity of the highest standard. Through the singing strategy, the Hub aims to:

Our Aims for 2015-18

• Aim 1 - To support schools
• Aim 2 - To promote singing to be more inclusive including, but not exclusively, work with specific groups and specialist approaches where necessary
• Aim 3 - To coordinate Borough wide singing/vocal activities
• Aim 4 - To signpost and promote progression and resources

"The only thing better than singing is more singing." - Ella Fitzgerald

Make Music Swindon

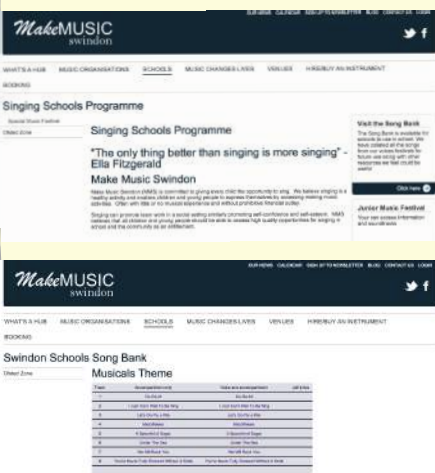
Make Music Swindon (MMS) is committed to giving every child the opportunity to sing. We believe singing is a healthy activity and enables children and young people to express themselves by accessing music activities, often with little or no musical experience and without prohibitive financial outlay.

"Once schools get the singing habit, in my experience, they never want to let it go." - Howard Goodall

Look at our Website

On-line strategy with a local song bank for the use by schools:

http://www.makemusicswindon.org/schools/singing_schools_programme



School Singing Strategy

Below are some key building blocks for developing and maintaining a strong singing culture in a primary school.

- Signposting children to Singing organisations
- Singing in assemblies and classrooms
- Specific CPD programmes delivered by specialists
- Networking events
- Singing clubs and school choirs
- The Singing School Curriculum / vocal support from MMSVocal.connect
- Taking part in MMS Voice Festivals and events

What's offered to schools

Singing Schools Programme

- We will inform you about how to sign up to Charanga resources
- We will show you around the resources available online for your schools through our hub website
- We will help teachers to understand and work through setting a singing strategy in your school.
- We will help you to develop a singing audit to enable us to help you plan for the 'Singing Schools' programme.
- Where needed, we will provide tuition for whole class or whole school singing in your school (At full cost recovery)
- We will Invite your school to take part in our annual voice festivals
- We will give you details of CPD and how to access resources, which are available to support singing in your school

We will also

- Give every Swindon pupil the opportunity to engage in singing
- Promote singing to disengaged/vulnerable children and young people
- Support schools in providing vocal opportunities including choirs
- Offer high quality singing events for children of all ages
- Establish links with the wider vocal community
- Increase teacher confidence in leading singing in the classroom
- Promote best practice across the whole range of vocal activity
- Provide training for freelance vocal practitioners to enhance their vocal leadership skills

Whole school song practice

As the children come into the hall, you can stand at the front and, without speaking, clap a rhythmic pattern and gesture to the children to copy you. Repeat this a few times, changing the rhythmic pattern each time. This allows late-comers to settle down before launching into singing and gets everyone focussed and paying attention.

You should aim to do a short warm-up before starting your song practice and you don't need to do anything fancy! A simple chewing gum exercise warms up the voice and gets everyone sitting well and thinking about breathing. Your warm up should last between 5 and 10 minutes, depending on the length of your song practice.

Once you have completed your warm-ups, sing a song that children already know and enjoy. Once children are happy and engaged in singing, you can move on to a new song and spend some quality time on teaching it. When approaching a new song, listen to the song first so children get a feel for it.

Finish your song practice with another song children know well or recap a bit they've just learnt.

Always finish with another song they know well or let them leave whilst singing the song they started the song practice with.

Current Projects

MMS currently has a busy calendar of vocal events across the academic year. Each year there are four large-scale, massed choir projects encompassing infant, junior, special and secondary schools to showcase their pupils' talents. There are two choirs, led by Swindon Young Musicians, as well as a number of community choirs, groups and singing ensembles.

Singing Pathway

Pupils should be able to access singing at any stage of their schooling. Once engaged in singing, pupils should be given the opportunity to develop their vocal skills, both in school and within the wider community.

EYFS & KS1

- Whole school assemblies
- Make a Noise
- Staff INSET
- Infant Voice Festival
- SYM Early Birds and Music Box

KS 2

- School Choir
- Junior Voice Festivals
- Staff INSET
- SYM Young Voices
- Community based singing

KS3+

- Schools Voice Festivals
- Singing Workshops
- Young Singing Leaders
- SYM Youth Choir

Classroom lesson

Singing can be easily incorporated into any lesson and is a great way to help pupils retain information. Start the day by singing the register. It doesn't matter what tune you use; just two notes will do. Or you could use a silly voice and just play with vocal sounds!

When you are ready to teach a song to your class, there are some basic rules you should follow:

- Make sure you know the song really well in advance of teaching it. It will make the learning process much easier and children will sing better the more confident you are.
- Demonstrate the whole song to the children, either by singing it to them or by playing the performance track from a CD.
- Teach the song a line at a time. Indicate it's your turn to sing by placing your hand on your chest (encourage children to listen at this point). When you want children to copy you extend your arm out in an inviting gesture.
- Once you have sung the song a line at a time, you will want to sing two lines together. In order to stop children coming in too soon, use your other hand to show a 'stop sign'.
- If you are working with early years or KS1 children you might want to use a puppet to help teach a song. When the puppet is 'hiding' it's your turn to sing. When the puppet pops up, it's the children's turn to 'sing with the puppet'.
- We want to encourage children to be independent singers so, as tempting as it is, avoid singing along with them!

Vocal Development Plan MMSVocal.connect

Over the next three years the Hub will continue to create new projects to support schools with their singing experience. MMSVocal.connect will create a variety of projects and opportunities for early years, infant, junior, primary and secondary schools



School choir rehearsal

Whether your choir rehearsal is 20 minutes snatched at lunchtime or a full hour after school, the key is to always start with a focussing activity. This could be a fun singing game or silly brain gym activity but it is essential to get children into the right frame of mind before singing. Warm-ups are another essential element of your rehearsal but they have to serve a purpose rather than just being done for the sake of it. You should know why you are doing a particular warm up and what benefit it is bringing to the choir. If you are working on a particularly tricky bit in one of your songs then you can incorporate it into your warm-ups and play around with it. You can then refer back to this when you come to rehearsing that section.

Always encourage good posture when either sitting or standing. When standing, feet should be as far apart as shoulders. Ask children to pretend to be zombies and bring their arms up in the air. After "three" ask children to drop their arms and notice where their arms end up (not by their side but a little in front of their thighs). Knees should be locked.

Development Plan - New for 2015 - 16

We will be looking to create new projects and opportunities such as:

New for 2015

School Singing Audit

Through our Bronze membership scheme, we have added a 45-minute singing audit with your school. Here, we will look to:

Assess your school and help you ensure that you are teaching singing to the highest possible standard

Help you to develop a sustainable, long-term, high quality singing plan, which is specific to your school's needs - A requirement by OFSTED

Inform you of other singing opportunities in the local area

Our Singing Champion will visit your school during a school day to discuss and, where possible, observe how singing works throughout the school. A short vocal questionnaire will be provided prior to this meeting.

From this audit, you will receive a full report that will also highlight any further support that you may wish to consider throughout the year.

Singing in the Classroom for teachers and TAs (Beginner level)

(See schools brochure Platinum membership scheme for more details)

Learn how to **improve your own singing**

Develop the confidence and skills to **lead singing with your own class**

6 x 90 minute twilight sessions in your school setting (one per Swindon school term)

Up to 20 staff per group (local schools can partner up to make groups)

Coming in 2016

Singing Playground

A borough wide project that will aim to develop the playground culture of singing through school workshops, teacher CPD and training a group of KS2 Singing Leaders to lead singing games in the Playground (See Schools brochure for more details)

Year 6 Post SATs Singing Day

An opportunity for Year 6 pupils to come to a central venue and have fun singing together. No prior music learning is required. The day will consist of warm ups and gathering songs, singing games and fun repertoire from around the world.

Additional Information

Documents that inform this strategy

- MMS Business Plan http://makemusicswindon.org/files/5014/1380/7834/Business_Plan_2014_-15.pdf
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- Department for Education 'The Importance of Music' - A National Plan for Music Education' (2011) http://makemusicswindon.org/files/1214/1284/6337/National_Plan_for_Music_Education.pdf
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- Arts Council England - 'Achieving Great Art for Everyone - A Strategy Framework for the Arts' (2011 - 2012)

Useful links and resources*

BOOK TITLE	PUBLISHER	COMMENTS
Voice Play	OUP	Early Years
Young Voiceworks	OUP	KS1
Junior Voiceworks (Books 1&2)	OUP	KS2
Singing Sherlock (Books 1&3)	Boosey & Hawkes	KS1
Singing Sherlock (Books 2&4)	Boosey & Hawkes	KS2
junior songscape	Faber Music	KS2
Songscape: Children's Favourites	Faber Music	KS2+
Songscape: from stage & screen	Faber Music	KS2+
Songscape: Earth, Sea and Sky	Faber Music	A selection of curriculum based songs for KS1&2

* These are just a sample of the resources we recommend. To view a more comprehensive list, visit our website.

Websites:

Make Music Swindon: http://www.makemusicswindon.org/schools/singing_schools_programme

Charanga: <http://charanga.com/site/>

Sing up! <http://www.singup.org/>

AIM - 1 TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS

Strategy Aim 1: To work in partnership with schools to develop and advocate opportunities for singing and vocal work in Swindon schools

Objective	Action	Lead Officer	Partners	Timescale	Desired Outcomes
To offer a wide range of vocal/singing CPD/ INSET for teachers to support and encourage singing in their school	Organise a wide range of vocal and singing CPD across Swindon	Singing Champion	Schools Community musicians Tutors	Mar 2015 Mar 2016 Mar 2017 March 18	To offer a single CPD programme that includes 3 courses per annum aimed at teachers and community singing leaders
To organise an Infant, Junior & Christmas Music Voice Festival	Continue to develop these Festivals in collaboration with a small working group from schools	Singing Champion	Schools Community Musicians Soundtronics Oasis Pertemps	Mar 2015 Mar 2016 Mar 2017 Mar 2018	To hold successful Voice Festivals throughout each year that are open to the public
To develop a secondary schools Voice Festival	Work with Heads of Music to offer a Voice Festival for Swindon secondary schools	Singing Champion	Secondary Heads of Music (Through Network meetings)	July 2015 July 2016 July 2017 July 2018	To hold a successful Voice Festival for secondary schools
To offer Singing Workshops to Secondary schools	work with nationally recognised coaches and voice specialist to deliver high quality voice workshops	Singing Champion	Nationally recognised singing coaches and professionals	June 2015 June 2016 June 2017 June 2018	Develop different genre and styles of singing for secondary school pupils
To Identify Swindon primary schools that do not have a school choir and support their staff with setting up a choir	Organise setting up a school choir INSET sessions	Singing Champion	Swindon primary schools Vocal leaders	December 2015	To have a choir in every Swindon Primary school
Develop a singing leaders programme for pupils attending Swindon Schools	Offer training and support for young aspiring vocalists	Singing Champion	Schools and community groups and ensembles	Jul 2017	Create young singing leaders in Swindon schools

AIM - 2 TO PROMOTE SINGING TO BE INCLUSIVE, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, WITH SPECIFIC GROUPS USING SPECIALIST APPROACHES WHERE NECESSARY

Strategy Aim 2 : To work in partnership to support and develop projects that use singing or vocal work as a tool to improve the lives of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those living in challenging circumstances across the borough.

Objective	Action	Lead Officer	Partners	Timescale	Desired Outcomes
To offer INSET for SEN school staff to support singing in their schools	Organise training for SEN staff based on recommendations from the schools 'Needs Analysis' once completed	Singing Champion	Special Schools Network meeting group	Jul 2016	To have INSET sessions aimed at SEN schools
To use existing resources to train more Music Leaders to support singing in SEN schools, particularly areas where there is currently little support	Find freelance tutors who are willing and keen to develop skills in supporting SEN music and encourage them to attend training in this area	Singing Champion	MMS SEN Team leader	July 2016	To have at least two freelance tutors available to support SEN schools with singing
To work with the Looked After team to offer training for social care professionals that promotes and advocates the importance of singing and music as a tool for placement stability for children and young people	Organise training for SBC Looked After Team managers	Singing Champion	Looked After Team and Adult Social Care	Jul 2016	To up skill social care professionals to complete CPD training and help them understand the importance of singing and music support placement for children and young people in care.

AIM - 3 TO CO-ORDINATE BOROUGH WIDE SINGING/VOCAL ACTIVITIES

Strategy Aim 3 : To have a co-ordinated approach to singing and vocal work across the borough where everyone can access what is on offer

Objective	Action	Lead Officer	Partners	Timescale	Desired Outcomes
To recruit five volunteer school singing leaders	Create Swindon Schools Singing Leaders role profile and advertise to schools	Singing Champion	Infant, Junior, Primary, Special and Secondary schools	October 2015	Five Swindon School Singing Leaders are appointed by October 2015
To support and encourage partnership projects with other SBC service areas that use singing and vocal work with adult Social Care, and libraries	Support other SBC services including any large scale singing projects	Singing Champion	SBC services	May 2016	A large scale event including schools, SBC services and other groups within the community

Strategy Aim 3a : To identify gaps in singing and vocal provision across the borough

To identify and ensure there is an individual responsible for singing in every Swindon school	To work with Swindon school Leaders and primary coordinators to identify an individual responsible for singing in every Swindon school	Singing Champion & School volunteer Singing Leaders	School volunteer Singing Leaders	Jan 2016	A list of every Individual responsible for singing in every Swindon school and awareness of gaps in provision
To advocate and promote singing and vocal work to schools where there are gaps in singing/vocal provision	To target schools where there is currently little or no singing/vocal provision using a variety of communication methods, for example, one to one meetings, emails, social media and through network meetings	Singing Champion	Swindon school volunteer Singing Leaders	Ongoing	To promote singing/vocal work in every Swindon school

AIM - 4 TO SIGNPOST AND PROMOTE PROGRESSION AND RESOURCES

Strategy Aim 4: To highlight and promote singing and vocal progression routes

Objective	Action	Lead Officer	Partners	Timescale	Desired Outcomes
To Introduce a 'find a group' section on the website	Encourage vocal organisations to put their information on to the Touchbass section of the website	Singing Champion; Web Master	All Vocal organisations	December 2015	To have an inclusive MMS website that includes a 'Find a Group' section. Progression case studies. Links to on-line singing resources and CPD programme by September 2015
Introduce a webpage app that highlights singing/vocal progression routes with case studies	Meet web designers to progress this work	Director & Singing Champion	Web designers and Delivery Manager SMS	July 2015	
To use the MMS website as a tool to promote online singing resources such as those offered by Charanga. Festival and other national vocal resources	Create a resource or link from other websites	Singing Champion and Vocal leaders	Freelance Vocal Practitioners	Ongoing	
To create a database of singing /vocal leaders addressing the gap in provision. For example the lack of vocal leaders and school based staff that would wish to lead one of the Voice festivals	Create a Database	Singing Champion	MMS Vocal offer freelance tutors and schools	Database by July 2015 and thereafter review each year	Create a database of vocal leaders (freelance tutors), and school based staff wishing to engage in the Festival CPD programme
To create a database of singing groups and choirs to include schools and community-led groups	Create Database	Singing Champion & Community Group Manager	Identified partners of the Hub - to include schools	October 2015	
To collaborate with Chanaga to develop online singing resources on the MMS interactive website	Liaise with Charanga regarding developing their resources	Singing Champion; Web Master	Charanga	Mar 2016 Mar 2017 Mar 2018	To have more singing resources available on the MMS interactive website

Swindon Young Musicians performing at the Wyvern Theatre as part of the Rotary Last Night of the Proms Concert 2014



Beyond the Barricade

To enjoy singing out of school, signpost your pupils that have an interest in developing their singing skills to Swindon Young Musicians (SYM); Swindon's No.1 Music Club for children and young people.

SYM Young Voices and Youth Choir offers unique performance opportunities. To find out more, please visit the MMS website:

http://www.makemusicswindon.org/community/swindon_young_musicians/swindon_young_musicians_club/

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More information:

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www.makemusicswindon.org

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