Name Year

# Sheffield K Music Hub learn sing play enjoy!

# Learning Log

Give your child the gift of music www.sheffieldmusichub.org

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## Welcome!

Learning to play a musical instrument is one of the most rewarding things you can do as a young person. How many adults do you know wish that they had learnt an instrument when they were younger? Most importantly learning an instrument and becoming a musician is



great fun; developing your skills; telling stories through music and being the envy of all your friends. It is hard work too and along the way there are many challenges to learning and mastering an instrument, but if you work hard and remain dedicated those challenges will soon be a distant memory!

As a parent or carer, supporting a child or young musician who is learning an instrument can be pretty daunting too. Knowing how to support your child if you don't feel you are musical yourself, can be a little scary. Musical activities in Sheffield organised by the Music Hub and our partners are open to absolutely everyone. It is normal to worry if you will fit in with all these musical types, but there is no need to worry, we are a friendly bunch and you will be made to feel totally welcome.

We don't believe that forcing young musicians into a set amount of practice each day is the best way to develop musicality and skill on a instrument. There is no doubt that to get better you need to work hard, but this is best achieved by promoting the enjoyment of music outside music lessons; making music with other people and encouraging what we call 'mastery and refinement'. This means making sure that you get the music right many more times than you get it wrong.

Most importantly, get involved in as much as you can and always remember your music teacher is here to support you every step of the way.

Ian Naylor (Head of Music Education Sheffield)

# Some top tips for parents & carers - making the most of music at home



**Compiled by Colette Dutot, Music Hub Manager** 

- Help your child set up a special place at home to practise.
- Is there somewhere safe you can leave your instrument out of its case so you can pass a quick 5 minutes refining your skills?
- Establish a time to play, whatever time is best for your child.
- Instead of recording time spent encourage your child to record goals completed.
- Praise your child for each step forward.
- Never make or allow another child to make negative remarks about how your child's playing sounds. It takes time, effort and consistency to produce musical sounds.
- Learning happens in stages. Sometimes a student will work on something for a long time with no apparent improvement, and then discover a sudden leap in ability. Other times, learning happens very quickly. The important thing to stress is that consistent practice will yield results.
- Help your young musician set practice goals. Keeping a journal, not just a practice chart, helps track the peaks and valleys of learning a new piece or improving fundamental skills.
- As a parent, don't make judgements about the musical quality of your child's practice. Learning an instrument requires lots of squeaks, scratches and wrong notes.
- · Enjoy and have fun playing and learning together!

## 15 things...

Here are 15 things you can do with your child to inspire their creativity and support their musical journey!

Working hard, committing to practice and exploring their instrument is just the start of your child's musical journey. Children need musical inspiration and goals to really get them going, so by experiencing, listening and enjoying they will really find their own musical voice. Try doing these activities with your child this year; you will find that you won't be able to stop them playing if you do!

## How quickly can you complete all 15?

Make music with other children by joining a music gr	oup
Make a video recording of your child playing their favourite pieces of music	
Help them complete their "review moment"	
Listen to live music by going to as many concerts as you can	
Let your child teach you what they are learning	
Look up the pieces they are playing on YouTube and find as many versions as you can	
Create a collage about music including their favourite songs, musicians and instruments	е



If you're interested in achieving all of these 15 activities to support the musical journey with your child, the next few pages give you a step by step guide, with detailed examples of where and how you can get involved.

## **Joining a Music Group**

Making music together is one of the most powerful things a young musician can do to develop both their love of music and their all round musicianship. It really helps to accelerate progress. In Sheffield there are lots of options. You can join a music group with an instrument or you can join a choir (or both if you want to make super fast progression).

#### **Music groups**

The Music Hub offer groups to suit all types of instrument and styles of music. For children starting on their musical journey it is best for them to join an orchestra or a wind band where children join in together on lots of different instruments. There are loads of options including weekly rehearsals, holiday courses and half termly sessions on a Saturday. You don't have to join a Music Hub group, there are so many more opportunities including local brass bands, private music schools, community or church groups and in some cases, groups at your child's school.

#### **Choirs**

Singing is happening everywhere for children in Sheffield. It's very likely that your child will sing at school either in class or as part of assembly. If they don't why not call up your school and ask them why? The Music Hub can help train their teachers to be more confident and provides every school with a free book of songs to help get them going. If your child loves singing, then joining a choir outside school is a great idea. Try the Music Hub Festival Choir or Changing Voices (a choir just for boys), Sheffield Young Singers, Sheffield Cathedral Choristers or a local community choir.

You can find out about all the options available by visiting www.sheffieldmusichub.org/sing-and-play



#### Making a video recording

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Nearly every phone has the capability to make video recordings. When your child is playing their instrument take a video of them. Make sure you get their whole instrument in the shot. Play this back to them, ask them to point out the things they are doing well and what they think they could do better. Have a discussion with them about what they can do to improve their performance. If they are struggling with an answer it can help to ask them to think what advice their teacher may have given them already. Often when children see and hear themselves played back they are able to assess their own performance much better than they can when they are playing their instrument - you could see a big difference in their progress. If you are proud of their video tell them and show it to your family or friends. If you have any questions you could safely email the video to their music teacher asking their advice - the teacher may find this really helpful when planning your child's next lesson.

#### **Review moments**

If a young musician is able to review their own learning it is going to lead to much deeper musical progression. Every eleven weeks or so sit down with your child and help them complete a review of their progress, you can find them in your learning log on pages 24-25, 38-39 and 52-53. Ask them the following questions:

'What are you really pleased about / can you describe a magic moment?' This could include a piece they love performing, a tricky finger pattern they have mastered or a type of sound they have discovered on their instrument.

'Talk to me about when you have made music with other people.' Have they played duets with their teacher or a friend, have they joined a music group? If not this could be a great opportunity to encourage them to join a Music Hub Group.



What are your next steps to improve as a musician?' This is about asking your child to set some goals - they could think about the tips their music teacher has given them or you could watch back some of the videos you have made for some ideas. It's really important that this is not just focussed on the next few pieces of music in their book, it should focus on the skills they would like to develop in order to get better. Again, you can ask your music teacher for help, they will be more than happy to spend time in lessons helping your child set musical goals - it is their job!

#### Going to a concert to experience live music

Experiencing live music is really inspiring for adults and children alike. Pop concerts are a really great way to inspire young musicians to be like their idols - remember that many of these performers will have put in hours and hours of work over many years to achieve their goals. To be really inspired nothing can beat live acoustic music (this means music that is not played over loud speakers and relies on the skill of the musician to control their instrument to make a sound that can fill a room). There are many opportunities to hear live acoustic music in Sheffield so why not check out some of the following events. (*If you have purchased this learning log you will find enclosed some special offers for your first visit.*)

#### **Music in the Round**

Nothing is more inspiring than hearing world class musicians perform at the studio theatre at The Crucible. Sheffield is home to 'Music in the Round', one of the finest chamber music organisations in the country. Chamber music is special because all the musicians play their own part to make up the piece of music. Many of these musicians have spent years developing their skills. It's really friendly and informal and you will be made to feel really welcome. You get to sit really close to the musicians so you can

really experience the magic in person. Music in the Round have a diary full of family friendly concerts with stories set to music.

www.musicintheround.co.uk

#### **Sheffield International Concert Series**

Have you ever been inside Sheffield City Hall? It's a huge building with beautiful art-deco design. Large orchestras (over 100 musicians) come here to perform concerts as part of the Sheffield International Concert series. Our top tip - sit in the circle or the balcony for a birds eye view of the action, children also love counting the roses on the ceiling whilst they are listening to the music. Our friends at the Hallé Orchestra, a world class orchestra from Manchester, come to Sheffield as their second home so why not look out for a concert by them - there are about 7 concerts a year.

www.sheffieldcityhall.co.uk/sics

#### **Sheffield University Concert Series**

If you want to hear something different why not explore the concerts that are held at the University of Sheffield. You can hear choirs, orchestras and quite often something totally unusual and exciting.

http://concerts.sheffield.ac.uk

There are lots more opportunities to hear live music in Sheffield. For all concerts visit

www.classicalsheffield.org.uk

For concerts especially for children or concerts performed by young people visit

www.sheffieldmusichub.org/events



#### Let your child teach you

This is such a simple and effective way to help your child focus on their own learning goals. If they have to think about how they are going to teach you, it will naturally help them focus on the skills they need to improve themselves. It will also show you the massive challenge they have undertaken by learning an instrument. When they are teaching you it is a great opportunity to ask them which parts they find hard (you will find them hard too!). It is quite normal for young musicians to avoid hard bits when in reality these are the bits they should be spending most time learning!

#### Musical research - looking up versions on YouTube

There are so many benefits to this. It helps young musicians find their own musical voice (because there are so many ways to perform the same thing). If they know how it sounds as a finished article they are more likely to focus their practice, as they know what they are aiming for, and they may uncover a new piece of music they would like to master. Once they've completed their research they will then be inspired to devote more time to their new found passion by creating a playlist of their favourite new tracks and creating a visual collage of their favourite artists and musicians.

#### Talking to your child's school about music

A love of music can start at school. Is your child's school offering a broad and balanced curriculum with music (and other arts) at the core of learning? Do they offer a choir or music group? There are some primary schools in Sheffield with an orchestra of 100 children - we believe this should be possible in every school in the city. Encouraging your school to engage in Arts Mark and Arts Awards is a great way to inspire them and their pupils into a more creative life at school.

#### **Performances**

Aiming for a special performance is the best possible motivation, especially if you are encouraging your child to refine their playing. Exams can also help with this focus but it is important to remember that taking special music exams is just one element of learning an instrument and should not be the sole focus of learning. Just working from one grade to the next will seriously limit musical progression in the long term. All performances are an opportunity to celebrate musical progression.

#### Show your child that you are musical

It may feel hard to believe that you have a musical bone in your body. The truth is that music is in all of us. Even if you just enjoy listening to music this makes you musical. Playing your child your favourite music of all time helps to level the playing field and enables you to engage musically with your child. Of course, if you do play an instrument yourself, roll your sleeves up and get jamming with your child!





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# **Review Moment**

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Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions



- @sheffmusichub
- sheffmusichub
- www.youtube.com/user/SheffMusicHub
- www.flickr.com/photos/sheffieldmusichub

Website: www.sheffieldmusichub.org



# JOIN ONE OF **OUR WEEKLY** MUSIC **GROUPS**

We hold a range of after school music groups covering a wide variety of instruments and musical styles across the city

For ages 7 - 18 Beginner to advanced levels Numerous venues across the city

Bursaries are available

### Contact us:

Visit our website for further details www.sheffieldmusichub.org/sing-and-play or call 0114 250 6860

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