

# PLYMOUTH MUSIC ZONE

## EVALUATION

*MAY 2009*

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## SUMMARY

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### The brief

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The aim of the evaluation was to test the hypothesis:

**“The work of Plymouth Music Zone has a profound personal, educational and social impact on children and young people. It satisfies all the important outcomes defined in the government’s ‘Every Child Matters’, ‘Youth Matters’ and related frameworks. As such, Plymouth Music Zone should be more recognised by statutory agencies as a high quality, vital service provider that could be commissioned to further support front line provision for children and young people in the city.”**

In order to fully test this hypothesis part of our brief was to design and apply evaluation systems that would help PMZ to:

- To evidence the value of its work.
- Monitor and ensure the quality of its work.
- Elicit the views of participants, music leaders and partners.

This document describes the systems (Appendix One), tests most of them, and combines the results into an evaluation. It is intended that PMZ will continue to use the systems in the future.

### Methodology

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Our methodology consisted of:

- Review of background documents on PMZ.
- Workshop sessions with PMZ staff to introduce and develop evaluation systems.
- Consultation with commissioners in the local authority.
- Analysis of enrolment form data on participants.
- Analysis of activity form data on activities.
- Analysis of outcome questionnaires for young people currently engaged with PMZ.
- Follow up interviews with young people who engaged with PMZ some time back and in most cases are not still attending classes.
- A survey of music leaders.
- A survey of partners.

## Principles for evaluation

The evaluation has been designed to reflect PMZ’s culture, with these principles:

- **User empowerment.** The young people and adults who take part in PMZ are the centre of the organisation, and they are the centre of the evaluation. Participants and music leaders are encouraged to feel ownership of the evaluation system.
- **Integration.** Wherever possible evaluation tools are integrated with class/project activities and exercises.
- **Focus.** The evaluation is focused on a few, powerful messages communicated through high quality data rather than attempting to be comprehensive. Wherever possible PMZ draws on existing evaluation, for example on the social impact of the arts, rather than carrying out primary research itself.
- **Excellence.** The evaluation distinguishes between ‘transformational’ classes and projects, which have detailed, exemplary analysis of outcomes, and usual classes and projects, which should have less onerous evaluation.

## Conclusions

The different evaluation methods provide a clear and consistent picture of PMZ. The organisation provides an inspiring, supportive and motivating environment in which young people can express themselves, increase in confidence and gain a sense of achievement that motivates them to be ambitious for themselves. The music leaders create a safe, non judgemental environment in which young people have significant opportunity to exercise choice and responsibility. This environment, together with the inherent great appeal of music to young people, helps to reduce the participants’ stress. The equipment and space at PMZ reinforce the impression of a professional space that is full of opportunities. These opportunities are made available to a large number of young people, regardless of their financial circumstances and special needs. Impacts endure over time, either through giving young people a foundation to make positive choices in their lives, or through fostering a life-long interest in music.

The findings from this evaluation fit well into the framework of Every Child Matters:

Be healthy	79% of respondents to the outcome survey say that the PMZ class makes them feel less stressed, 69% of respondents say that music helps them to deal with things in their life, and 76% say that PMZ makes them feel good about themselves. 81% of respondents to the outcome survey and all of the respondents to the follow up survey say that they are happier as a result of the class. PMZ classes enhance happiness because of the positive environment in the place, the chance for self expression, and the sense of achievement.
Stay safe	84% of respondents to the outcome survey – and 88.9% of respondents to the follow up survey - say that the class has made them feel more confident. Confidence is important because it is a factor in avoiding bullying. PMZ builds confidence because of the support from the tutors, the challenge of performing and the sense

	of achievement from developing skills and from peer support. In addition, 84% of respondents say that they feel they belong at PMZ, 74% say that they feel their opinion matters and 82% say that they are more able to express themselves.
Enjoy and achieve	73.7% of respondents to the outcome survey – and 88.9% of respondents to the follow up survey - say that they love the classes. A further 18.4% of respondents to the outcome survey – and 11.1% of respondents to the follow up survey - say that they like them. There is a clear framework to understand how PMZ creates this enjoyment. 84% of respondents to the outcome survey say that they feel encouraged in the group and 76% say that the class encourages them to be more ambitious for themselves. The survey also shows skills development. 69% say that the class makes them more interested in education or training. 76.9% of respondents to the follow up survey say that the classes definitely encouraged them to set high standards for themselves. It does this through encouragement from tutors and peers, role models and the desire not to let the group/band down.
Make a positive contribution	52% of respondents to the outcome survey say that they are more interested in volunteering in the community as a result of the classes.
Achieve economic well-being	48.1% of respondents to the follow up survey said that the classes definitely helped them to make positive choices about their future. 51.8% said that their current activity was directly or indirectly motivated by their classes at PMZ. All respondents were in education or employment. None was unemployed.

These achievements are in no small measure the result of the dedication of music leaders. Both staff and students emphasise the friendly and supportive environment at PMZ. 96.0% of respondents to the follow up survey say that the PMZ class is better than music in school, with the rationale being around freedom, quality of equipment, commitment in the group and chance for practice. Our evaluation shows that music leaders have a strong feeling that their job is worthwhile. There is considerable recognition of the special qualities of PMZ among its partners. The leadership is also seen as showing integrity and responsiveness. The one concern about the organisation is about its capacity to deal with the many pressures placed on it.

The programme of evaluation that we prepared for PMZ is ambitious and demanding. The organisation's interest in this level of reflection is itself evidence of commitment to high quality and responsiveness. Further work to improve the quality (completeness and consistency) of data recorded from evaluation forms will reinforce this commitment.

Our evaluation supported the hypothesis in our brief.

## INTRODUCTION

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### Background to Plymouth Music Zone

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Plymouth Music Zone (PMZ) is the largest community music organisation in the South West. It was set up in 1999 and originally operated under the Plymouth Education Action Zone. In 2003 PMZ gained Youth Music Action Zone status from the National Foundation for Youth Music. PMZ also has funding from DRCP for 2008 to 2010.

PMZ's vision is:

**To be a cutting edge community music organisation recognised as a model of excellence both locally and nationally. It believes in a vibrant approach to music based education and training that is flexible, adaptable and expertly led by Music Leaders. Its work is all about quality and innovation as well as fun and inspiration.**

PMZ's mission is:

**To make a real difference to people's lives by providing high quality music-making opportunities for young people and training for adults. It passionately believes in the power of music and the skills of our Music Leaders to be a powerful agent for personal, social and educational development by putting children and young people at the very heart of what we do.**

As well as learning musical skills, music is used as a tool for people to develop interpersonal skills and aspiration.

PMZ's values are:

- Enterprise
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Dynamism
- Excellence
- Accessibility
- And Inspiration.

PMZ's Business Plan for 2007-2010 foresees a transition from charity to social enterprise, diversifying its income base to reduce its reliance on grant funding. Over the four years the target is to move from 29% generated income to 49%.with the total income increased slightly (from £410,000 to £435,000). The business plan states that PMZ serves 1,500 children in 70-80 ongoing weekly workshops, with over 12,000 children so far enrolled in regular music activities and over 46,000 children and adults experiencing music in one year alone.

The target markets for future work and development are:

- Schools (early years, primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral units).
- Youth and community centres.
- At risk children and young people and those not in education, employment or training (NEETS).
- Pre-school and early years settings.
- Special educational needs.
- Training for young people and support for professional development.
- Training for music leaders, INSET for schools and training for community and education based organisations.
- Out of school hours music activities.

PMZ's funders include Youth Music, Space for Sport and Arts, The Excellence Cluster, Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership, RIO (Real Organisation, formerly Creative Partnerships), Plymouth Youth Music Service, Plymouth City Council, Big Lottery, Arts Council England and schools.

## The brief

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In order to fully test this hypothesis part of our brief was to design and apply evaluation systems that would help PMZ to:

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## Methodology

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Our methodology consisted of:

- Review of background documents on PMZ.
- Workshop sessions with PMZ staff to introduce and develop evaluation systems.
- Consultation with commissioners in the local authority.
- Analysis of enrolment form data on participants.

- Analysis of activity form data on activities.
- Analysis of outcome questionnaires from 35 young people currently engaged with PMZ.
- Follow up interviews with 27 young people who engaged with PMZ some time back and in most cases are not still attending classes.
- A survey of 15 music leaders.
- A survey of 22 partners.

### Principles for evaluation

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The evaluation has been designed to reflect PMZ's culture, with these principles:

- **User empowerment.** The young people and adults who take part in PMZ are the centre of the organisation, and they are the centre of the evaluation. Participants and music leaders are encouraged to feel ownership of the evaluation system.
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- **Excellence.** The evaluation distinguishes between 'transformational' classes and projects, which have detailed, exemplary analysis of outcomes, and usual classes and projects, which should have less onerous evaluation.

### The arts in education

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There is a strong argument that the arts are unique and uniquely positive:

- The arts are relevant across a wide range of learners. The arts provide routes into learning for children or young people who do not respond to academic learning. They do this through embracing multiple intelligences (Gardner; 1993), but also through valuing strong emotion and high energy. As Fiske observed "Some of the qualities that are most appreciated in the arts get students into trouble in school" (Fiske; 1999). The implication is that students who are at a disadvantage in academic subjects can be at an advantage in the arts. The Annenberg Institute concluded that the arts have a wide relevance because they give "equitable access to excellence". The arts are equally relevant to the highly skilled. As Fiske commented "The arts provide new challenges for those students already considered successful. For those young people who outgrow their established learning environments, the arts can offer a chance for unlimited challenge" (1999).
- The arts provide a positive environment for achievement. The arts allow for growth without failure. The Annenberg Institute observed that "In many educational settings, when a student fails to understand, the response is remedial work. Too often this means 'once again but slower and louder'. By contrast, arts teachers frequently have an entirely different strategy: they build a repertoire of ways of teaching".
- The arts provide a more holistic or real world approach to learning. Fiske concluded that "While learning in other disciplines may often focus on development of a single skill or

talent, the arts regularly engage multiple skills and abilities” (1999). They engage on a sensory, emotional and cognitive level: “While much learning in the arts focuses on technique, past forms and masters and market issues, the content of art is personal, drawing on the experiences and perceptions of each young person” (Heath, in Weitz; 2002).

- The arts empower learners. The arts encourage people to be more active in their own learning rather than passive recipients of content. The arts allow positive risk taking. They respect rather than avoid complexity. By these means, arts instruction can have effects on the teachers, but also on the teaching environment. Fiske has argued that “When the arts become central to the learning environment, schools and other places become places of discovery” (1999). Williams, from the Centre for Creative Communities (1995), argues that the arts are special because they activate mental energy by awakening and educating the imagination “the seat of our learning processes themselves.”
- The arts respect individual identity. Although group output sometimes dominates in the arts, each individual participant has a separate and respected role.

## Music

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Music is special because:

- It requires and develops intense listening.
- It is accessible. It often requires the performer to replicate what someone else has done, or perform what some one else has written. It provides scope for self expression but gives a clear structure.
- Musical memory is very strong. Indeed often the music is how audience members remember a performance or film.
- It gives common cultural reference points across the ages.
- It is hard wired into the brain. Of all the art forms music is “the most closely tied to the emotions.” (Sacks, 2007) However, as Schopenhauer emphasised, music “reproduces all the emotions of our innermost being, but entirely without reality and remote from its pain”
- Musical ability can remain in people who are disabled or unwell. Our own evaluation of Share Music for VAN in 2003 quoted the leader, a neurologist, who explained that music ability, often high level ability, can remain in individuals who have otherwise severe brain damage.
- Storr observed that music draws attention to otherwise overlooked or repressed thoughts and in this way serves a function similar to that of dreams. He concluded that spontaneous musical memory is ‘biologically adaptive’.

References are from Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain by the psychiatrist Oliver Sacks (2007).

## LOGIC MODEL

### Conceptualisation

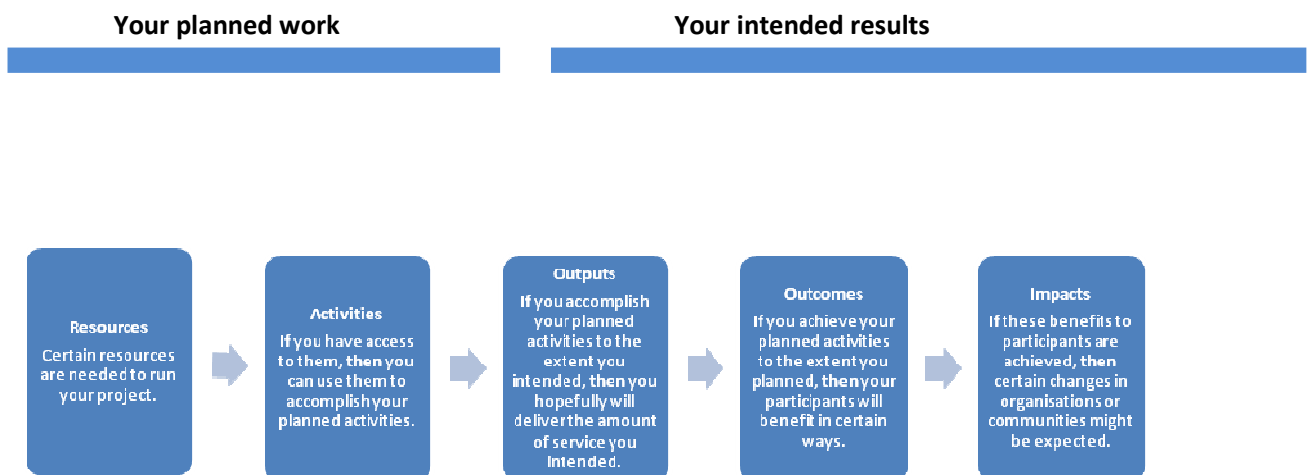
Conceptualisation is an essential first stage in evaluation. It serves to:

- Translate objectives into precise success measures and thereby into indicators.
- Clarify the theory of change behind a programme, the mechanisms whereby it will create the intended outcomes and impact.
- Test the assumptions underlying a programme.
- Test whether different partners share assumptions about the programme.
- Identify the different programme elements and contextual factors that will affect impacts.

Weak conceptualisation undermines not just the evaluation but also the implementation of a programme.

### Logic model

A logic model is a visual depiction of a programme or project. Logic models were originally developed and popularised by The Kellogg Foundation in the United States. By plotting the different stages in a programme – the actions and assumed consequences (outcomes) - logic models provide a simple but powerful way of interrogating the causality assumed by a programme. Logic models are read from left to right:



Logic models are useful to:

- Clarify hidden assumptions in programmes.
- Give a short visual account of a programme.
- Show the range of evaluation questions that could be asked of a programme.

Logic models are not intended to be comprehensive. The key with logic models to encapsulate the key elements of the programme. Logic models can and, indeed should, be refined over time as partners increase their understanding of how the programme does or should work.

An example of a logic model for Plymouth Music Zone is:

RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT TERM OUTCOMES	LONGER TERM OUTCOMES	IMPACT
<p>DRCP</p> <p>Youth Music funding ends in 2010</p> <p>Big Lottery (People's Millions) £50k for the multi-sensory facility</p>	<p>Weekly sessions, drop in and projects with children, young people and adults</p> <p>Devonport Music and Youth Worker</p> <p>Apprentice Music Leader</p> <p>YM application also mentions music industry seminars, invited guest speakers, networking, young enterprise scheme, work placements, a volunteering programme</p> <p>TEMPO young people's forum</p>	<p>Number of participants</p> <p>Profile of participants</p> <p>Targeting of Devonport</p> <p>Progression</p>	<p>Participants have fun</p> <p>Participants increase their confidence, self esteem, communication, interpersonal skills, musical skills, aspirations, physical coordination, and happiness</p> <p>PMZ is seen as a centre of excellence</p> <p>Agencies recognise the value of music e.g. Music on Prescription</p>	<p>Participants are more resilient, have stronger mental health, are more active in society, and have greater access to services</p> <p>PMZ is sustainable</p>	<p>Legacy</p> <p>Urban regeneration</p>
<p>ASSUMPTIONS</p>	<p>PMZ can become an embedded part of the cultural infrastructure of Devonport Activities will benefit from a link to the sporting facilities</p> <p>That participants gain from having a mix of ages in the workshop</p> <p>PMZ has the skills and resources to cater for all age groups</p>			<p>Classes will act as diversionary activities for offenders and potential offenders</p>	<p>That benefit will be focused on Devonport</p>

The logic model shows that PMZ has a relatively long chain of causality between its activities and its expected impact. It would not be practical to design the evaluation to measure each link in this chain. PMZ should draw on existing research that demonstrates later links, especially those between shorter and longer term outcomes, longer term outcomes and impact.

## PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS AND ACTIVITIES

### Introduction

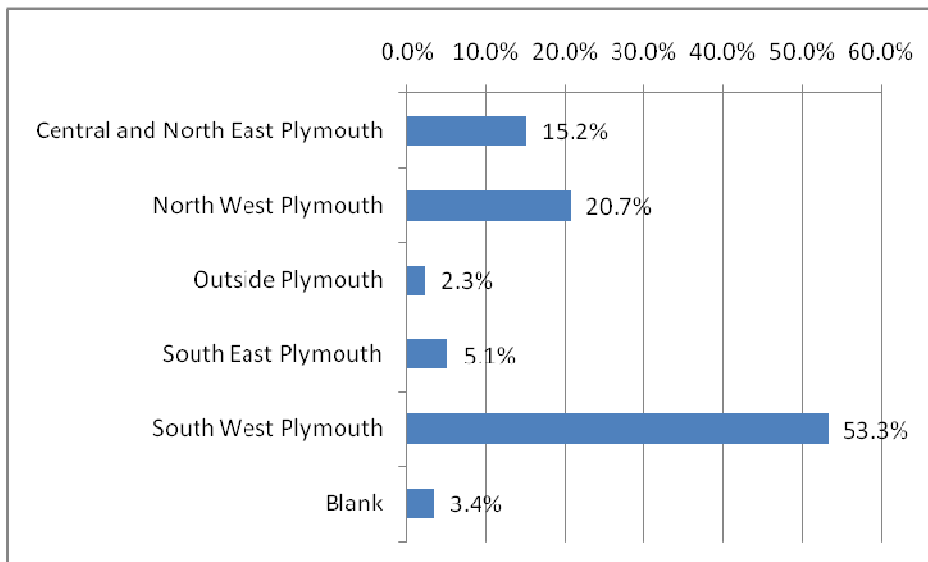
We have information on 527 participants registered as currently active and 58 activities during the period January to March 2009.

### Profile of participants

#### Area

Participants come from all over Plymouth and beyond.

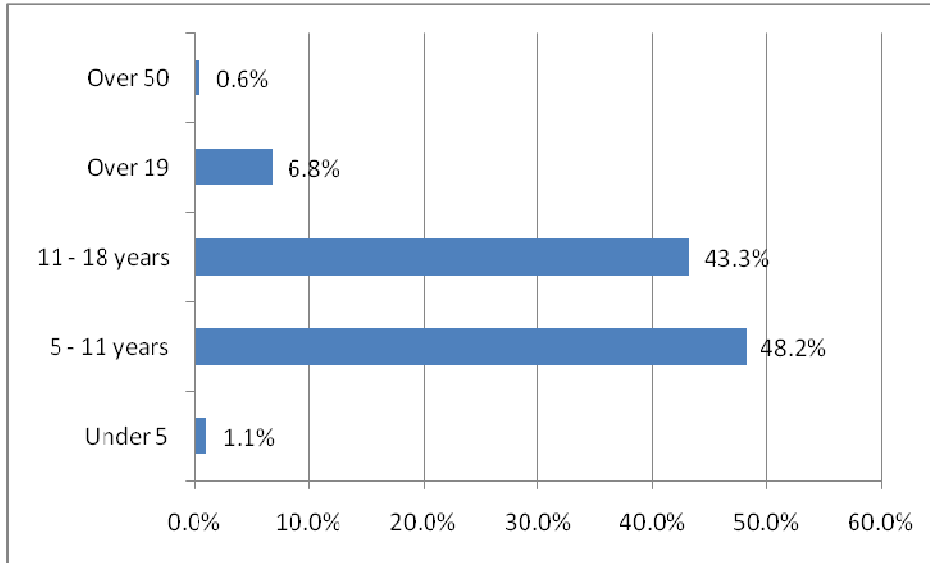
**Figure 1: Area where participants live**



#### Age

PMZ works mainly with children and young people. There is a fairly even balance between children from primary and secondary school ages.

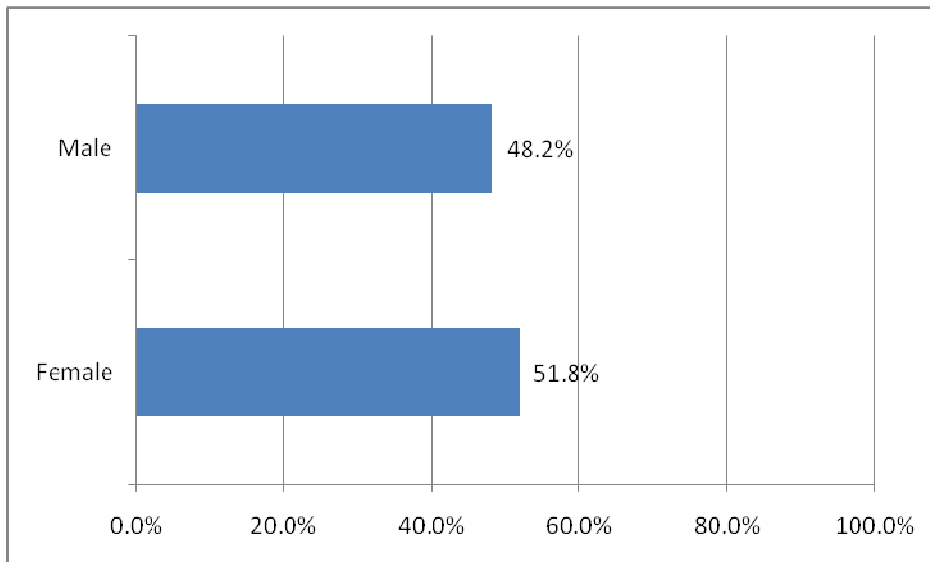
**Figure 2: Age profile of participants**



## Gender

The gender profile of active participants at PMZ is very even.

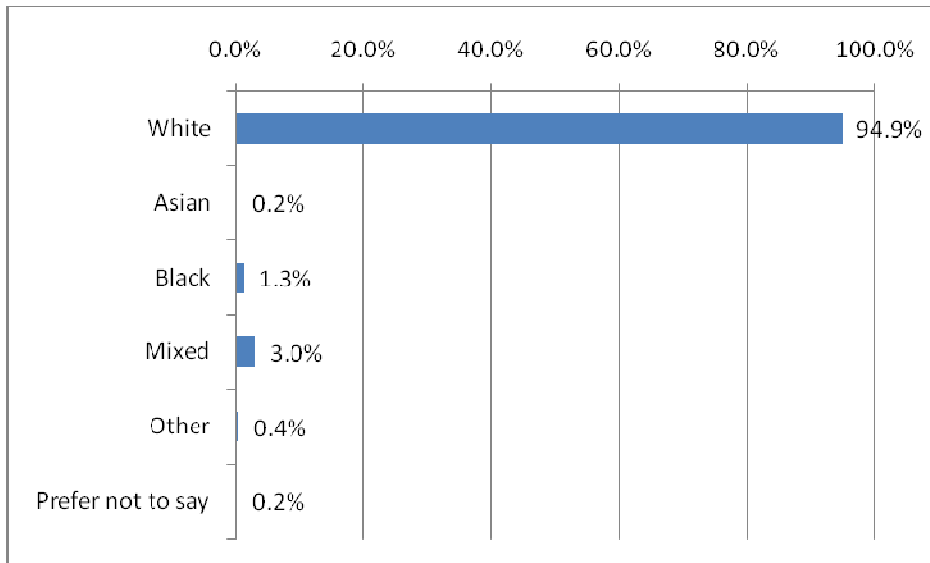
**Figure 3: Gender profile of participants**



## Ethnicity

94.9% of participants are White.

**Figure 4: Ethnicity of participants**



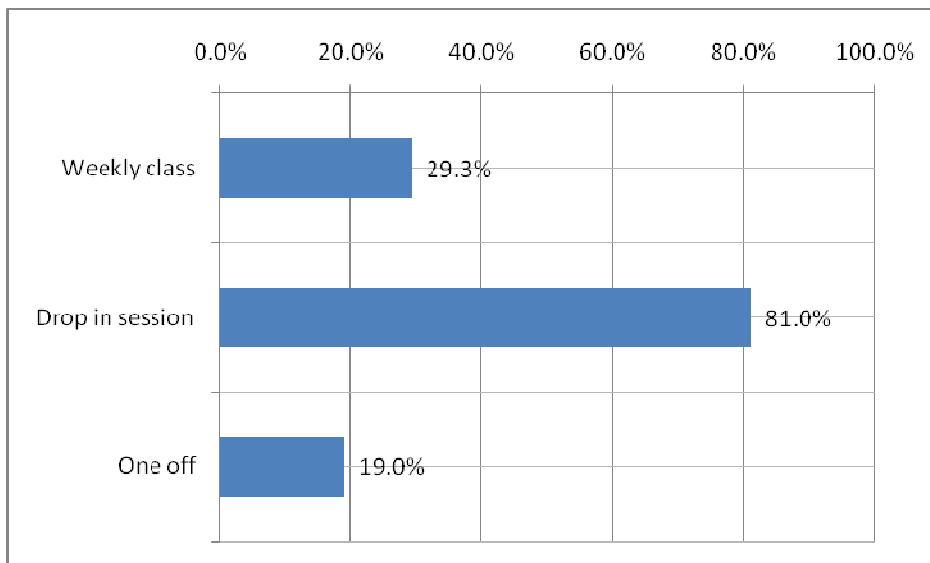
### Disability

10.2% of PMZ participants are disabled, often severely disabled. An additional 3.6% have asthma.

### Profile of activities

Between January and March 2009 PMZ ran 58 activities, with most being drop in sessions (one activity could be more than one of these types).

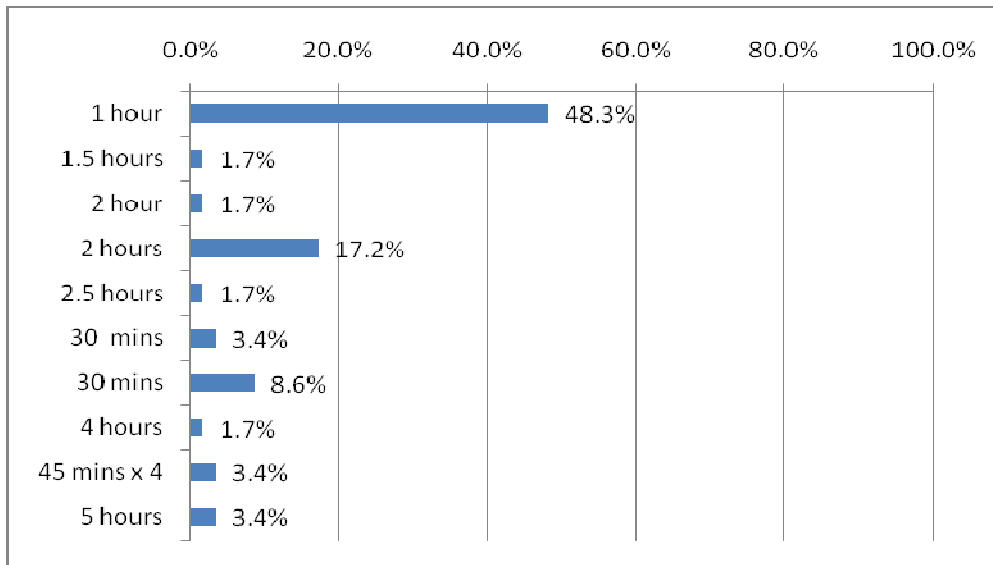
**Figure 5: Type of activity**



## Sessions

During this time period PMZ ran 482 sessions.

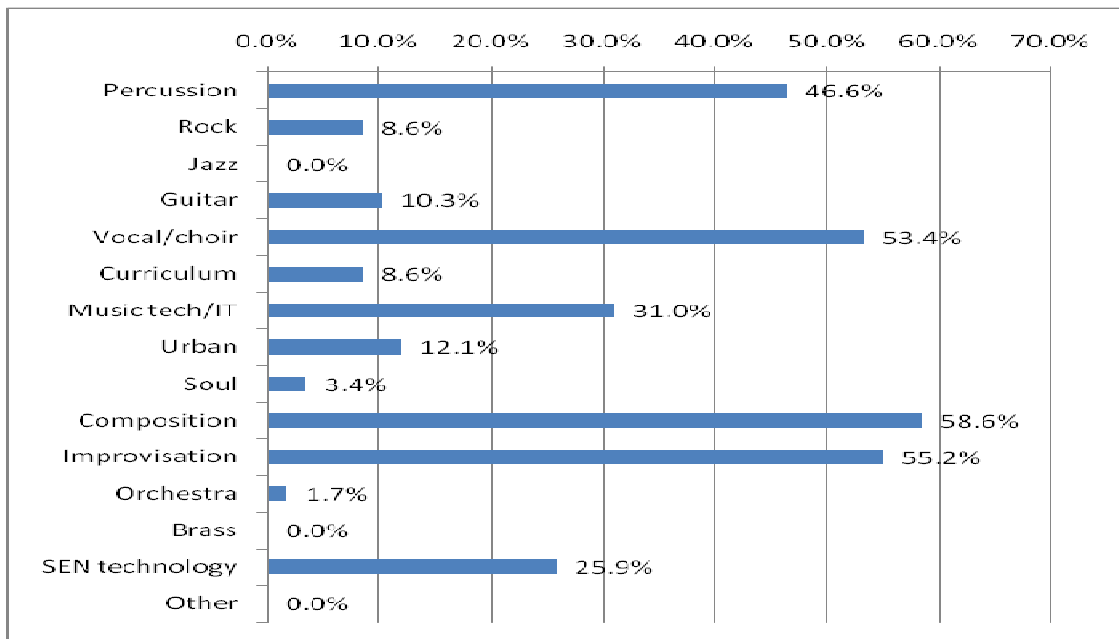
**Figure 6: Length of sessions**



## Music genres

Activities cover a wide range of music genres (one activity could be more than one of these genres).

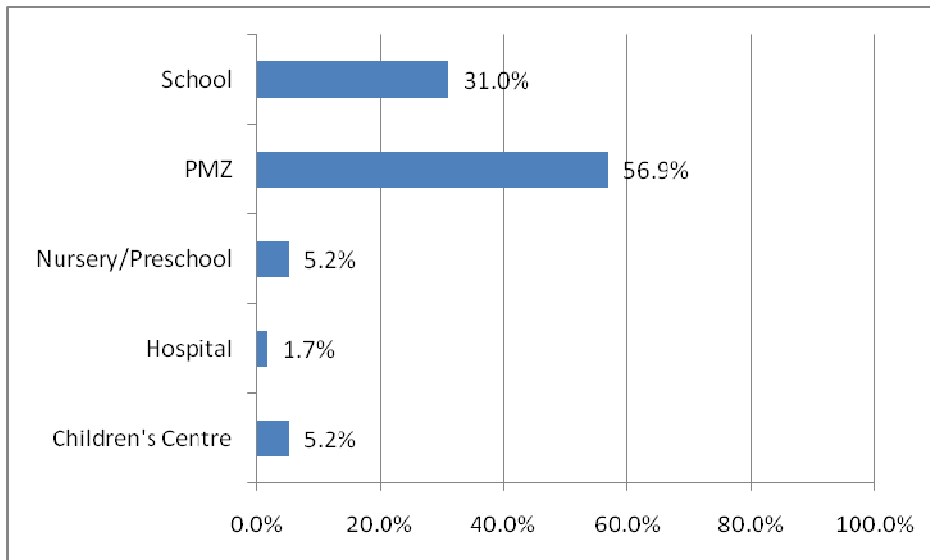
**Figure 7: Music genres**



## Venue

43.1% of activities take place through outreach at schools, preschools, children’s centres or hospitals.

**Figure 8: Venue of activities**



### Targeting

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10 of the 58 activities were specifically targeted at special needs groups, including one to one activity.

### Performances

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19 of the 58 activities produced an end product, with an overall audience of 300 people.

## OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANTS

### Introduction

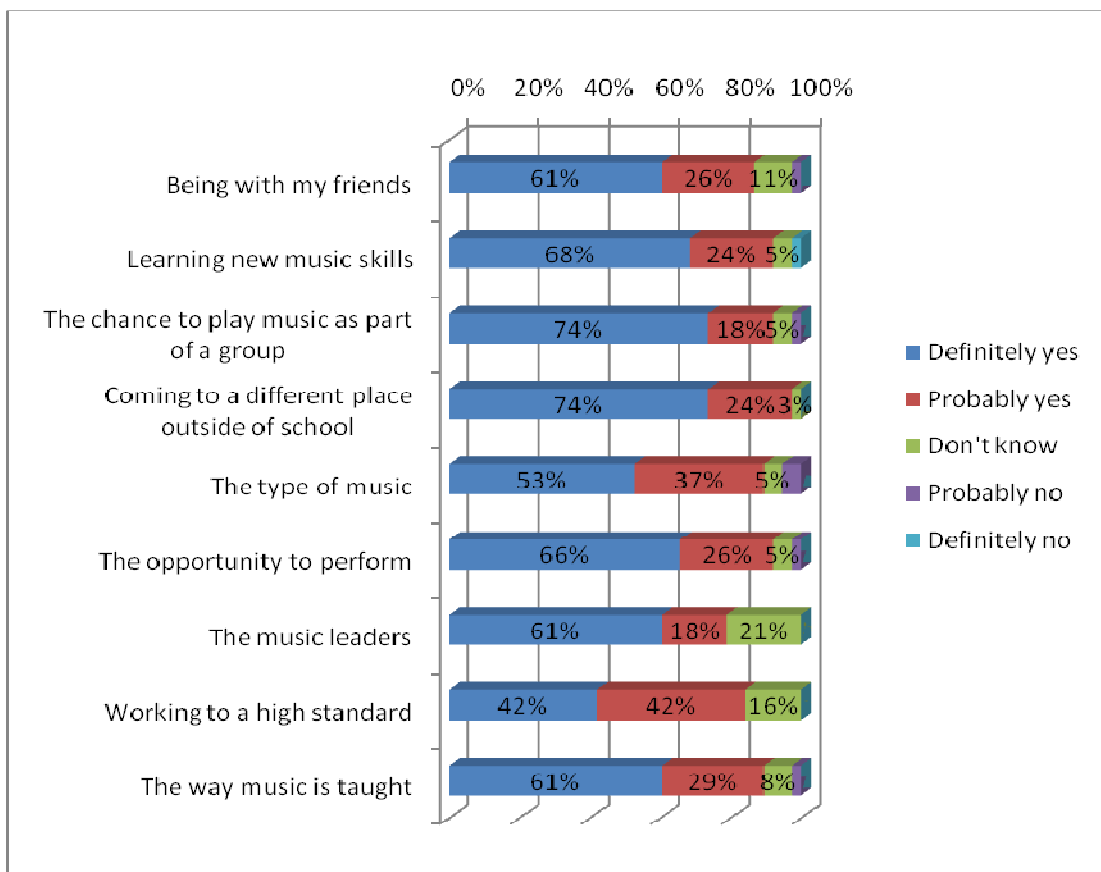
Participants lie at the heart of PMZ. This section considers the experiences of participants and how they benefit from these experiences.

### Outcomes survey

PMZ has introduced the outcomes questionnaires into five classes so far: Thursday Streetbeatz, Roof Raisers, e2e Tuesdays, DRCP Streetbeatz and Saturday Sounds.

The average attendance from each respondent is 85.2 sessions. This shows the high level of contact participants have with PMZ.

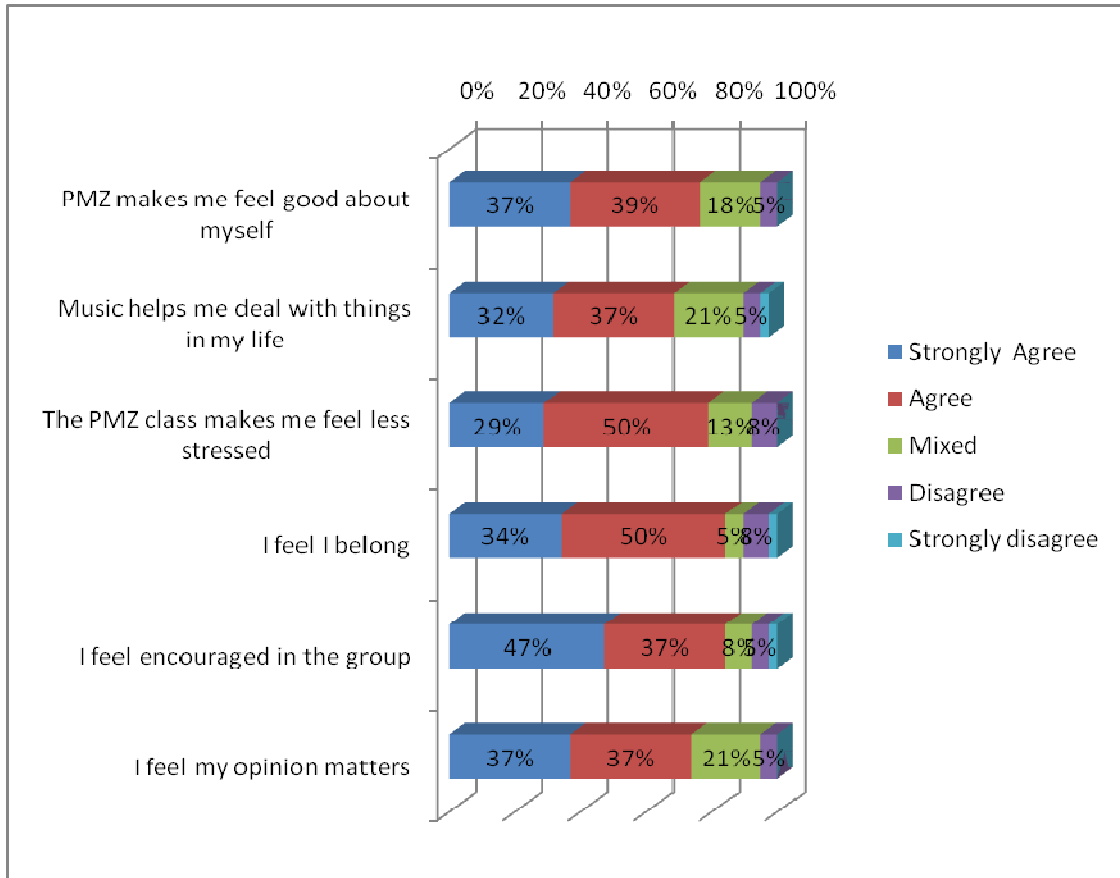
Figure 9: What aspects of the classes at PMZ do you enjoy? (n=35)



73.7% of respondents say that they love the sessions, 18.4% say they like them and 5.3% are neutral. There are many things that participants like about the classes. More than 80% of respondents like the chance to play music as part of a group, coming to a different place outside

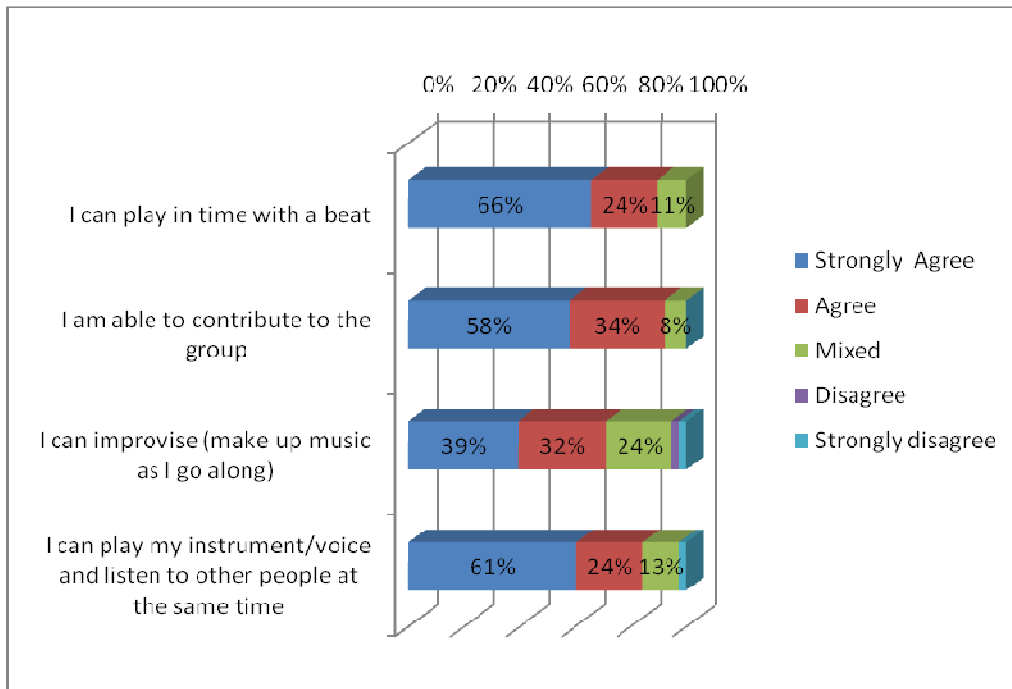
of school, learning new music skills, the opportunity to perform, the music leaders, the way music is taught, being with their friends and working to a high standard. More than half the respondents describe all except the last of this list in strong terms.

**Figure 10: How do you feel about Plymouth Music Zone (PMZ): which of these apply to you when you are in the PMZ class? (n=35)**



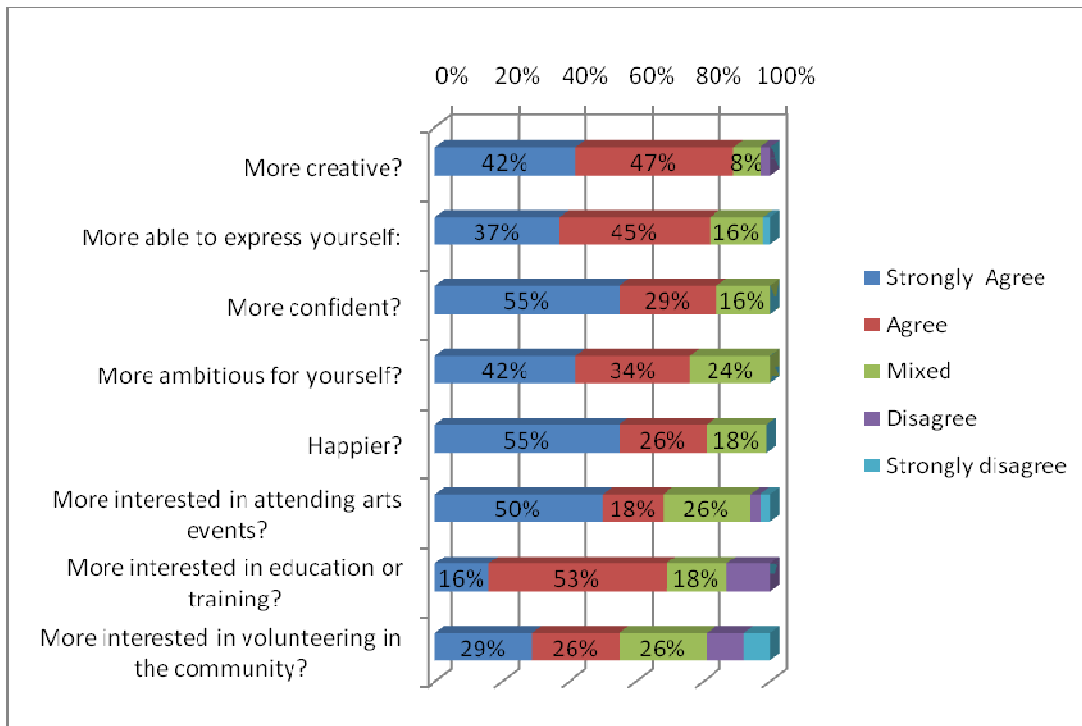
More than 70% of respondents feel that they are encouraged in the group, that PMZ makes them feel good about themselves, that their opinion matters in the group, that they belong in the group, that music helps them deal with things in their life and that the PMZ class makes them feel less stressed. Roughly 30% of respondents feel that these effects are strong.

Figure 11: Which of these can you do now? (n=35)



More than half of the respondents say that they can play in time to a beat, play an instrument/sing and listen to other people at the same time and can contribute to the group. In addition 39% says that they can improvise.

Figure 12: What effect, if any, has the class had on you? Are you: (n=35) xx



More than 70% of participants feel that they are more creative, more able to express themselves, more confident, happier and more ambitious for themselves. More than 50% of participants are also more interested in attending arts events, more interested in education and training, and more interested in volunteering in the community.

34% of respondents are male and 66% female. 55% are at school and 42% are at college or university.

### Follow up survey

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PMZ selected four classes to be included in the follow up survey:

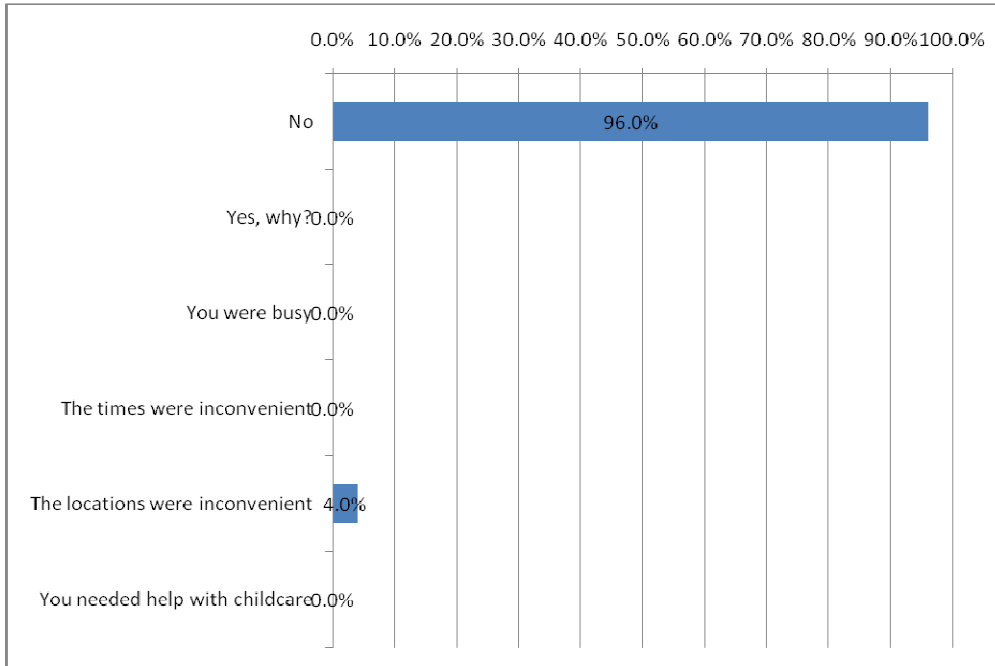
- Soul Mates. This was a large soul band (including brass and vocalists) running over several years. Members of group gave numerous performance opportunities and were a flagship band for PMZ.
- Saturday Sounds. This is a workshop group that meets every Saturday, writing songs and giving performances.
- TEMPO. This is a group that meets once every two weeks. It has been involved in numerous exciting music based projects such as recordings for community radio broadcasts, development of music IT projects and performances. It also facilitates PMZ's Young People's Forum.
- Street Beatz. This is a weekly session for young people who are into urban music, hip hop, rap and RnB. It covers song writing and music technology.

These cover a range of activities, with a deliberate bias towards greater depth of involvement.

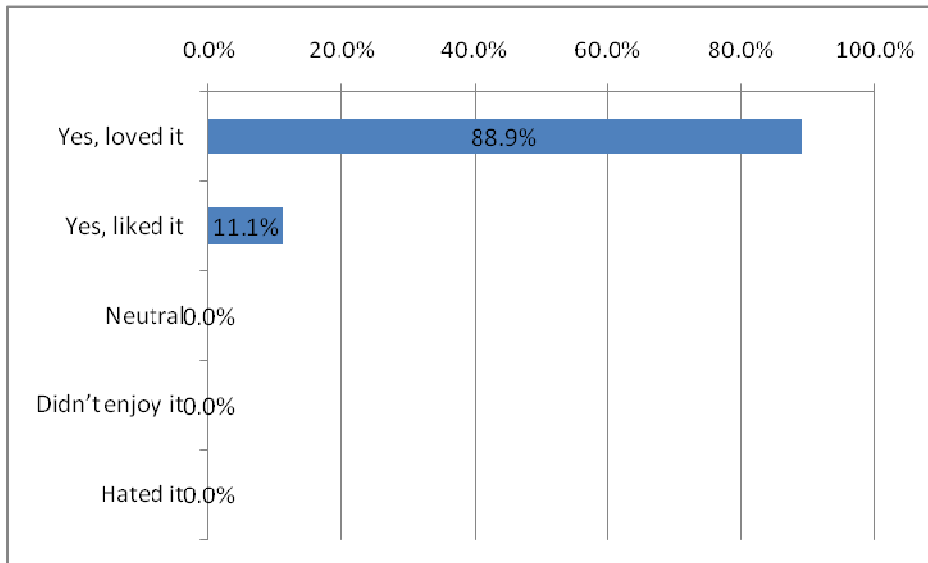
We interviewed 27 young people, 11 male and 16 female, with an average age of 18.3. Two described themselves as disabled. On average interviewees said that they attended sessions at PMZ over 4.15 years. However this ranges from three to nine years. Only 33.3% are still going to classes at PMZ, hence their suitability for a follow up survey which looks at long term, sustained impact.

Only one of the interviewees said that they had any problems attending. This was to do with the location.

**Figure 13: Any problem attending (n=25)**



**Figure 14: Did you enjoy being involved in the class? (n=27)**

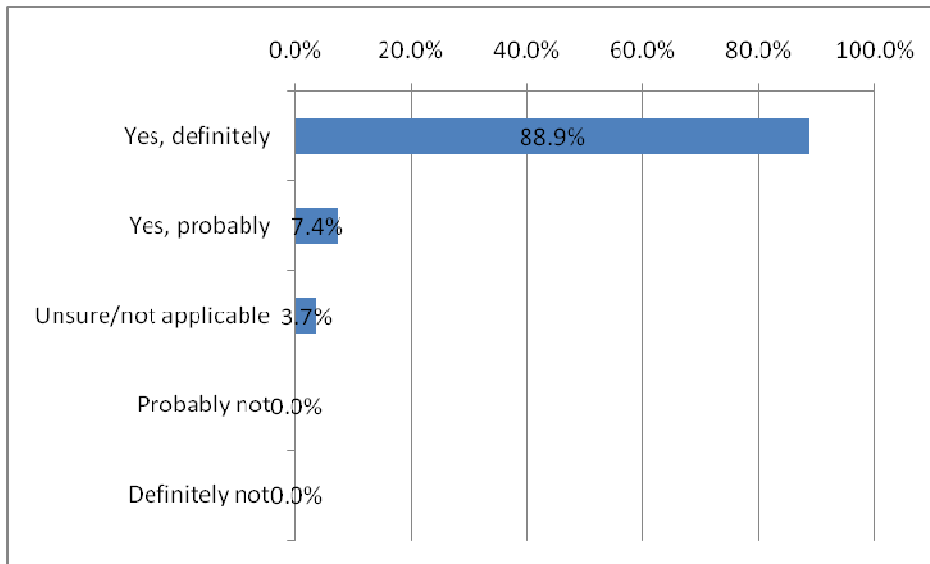


88.9% of respondents said that they loved being involved in the project. No one was negative or neutral. Interviewees explained their answer by talking about the environment, tutors and social context:

- **Environment.** “Great atmosphere and good banter with tutor and peers.” “The people there are amazing, they treat you like adults. I am 17 and have been going since I was 14. They are really talented there and open minded and encourage and inspire you. I was not outgoing before I went to PMZ.” “It was a nice environment and we had fun.”

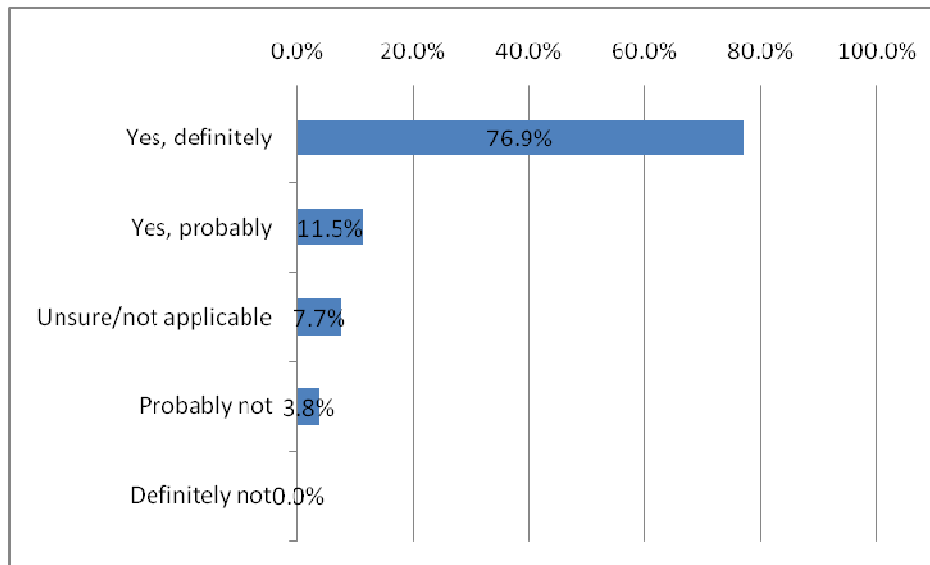
- **Tutors.** “Tutors are enthusiastic. They are lovely people and they know what they are talking about.” “The people that did it were really good, the tutors were friendly and helpful and were not critical, they would suggest ways to do things.” “You get to learn a lot”
- **Social context.** “Meeting new people and being in the situation where you can help others.” “Got experience of team working from a young age, learnt how to be a team player.”

Figure 15: In the long term, did the class increase your confidence? (n=27)



88.9% of interviewees said that PMZ sessions definitely built their confidence in the long term. It did this through:

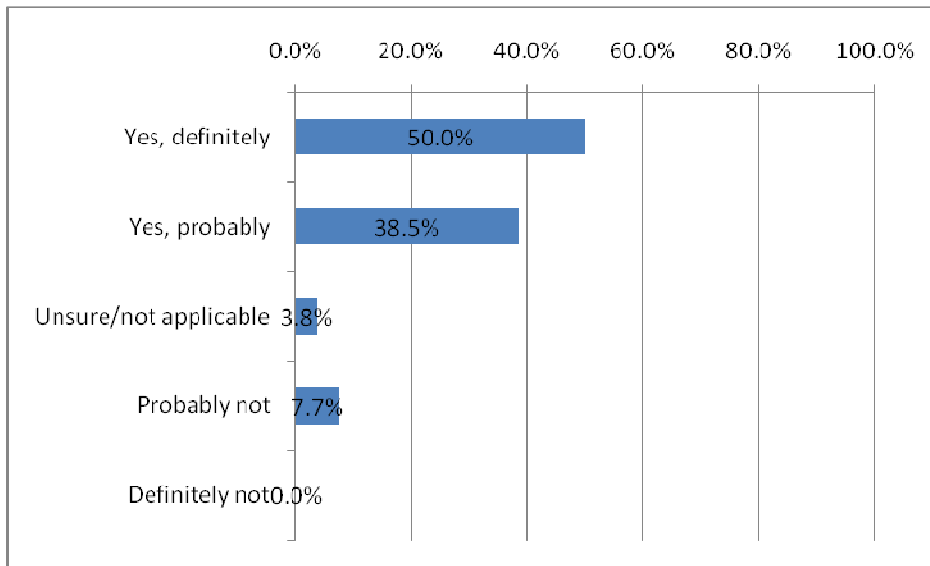
- **Support from tutors.** “The people at PMZ believed in me and it gave me confidence, I have my own band now.” “They push your boundaries, ease you into new stuff so you feel more comfortable doing more stuff.” “I never used to promote what I do. The tutor taught me how to produce what I do, how to manage and get gigs. Its given me loads of confidence.”
- **Performance.** “We do a performance every Christmas. We do concerts and we perform in front of people even in lessons so it really builds your confidence. It's really opened me up.” “I never thought that I would be on the stage performing and that I could become good at something if I worked hard.” “Live performances, singing and entertaining others brings you out of your shell as there is nowhere to hide.” “Playing in front of large crowds increased my confidence.”
- **Skill development.** “It improved my understanding of things, which gave me confidence in my abilities.”
- **Peer support.** “I was the youngest there and socialising with other musicians was part of the experience.” “The band was supportive and it boosted my confidence without realising.”

**Figure 16: Did the class encourage you to set high standards for yourself? (n=26)**

76.9% of respondents said that the class definitely encouraged them to set high standards for themselves. It did this through:

- **Encouragement.** “They tell you to do the best you can, to get as far as you can.” “We practiced once a week and if you were not so good in class then the tutors would help you get better so it taught me to try to achieve a certain level.”
- **Motivation.** “I hate it if I cannot go. I go even if I am ill. I have been given so much. I feel that I cannot let them down.” “It makes you feel good about yourself and you want to make a good impression.”
- **Role models.** “I practice more, I want to be like my teachers, I want to be a music leader in an organisation or running my own business.” “It encourages you to practice more and helps increase your ability to play better. The tutors are inspiring and it makes you want to be like them.”
- **Supporting the team.** “It was difficult at first, when we did fairly lengthy sets you had to really work at it. Playing bass in the band, I wanted to be good for the other band members, so you would set high standards.” “When I was in the band as everyone was relying on you, they pushed you.”

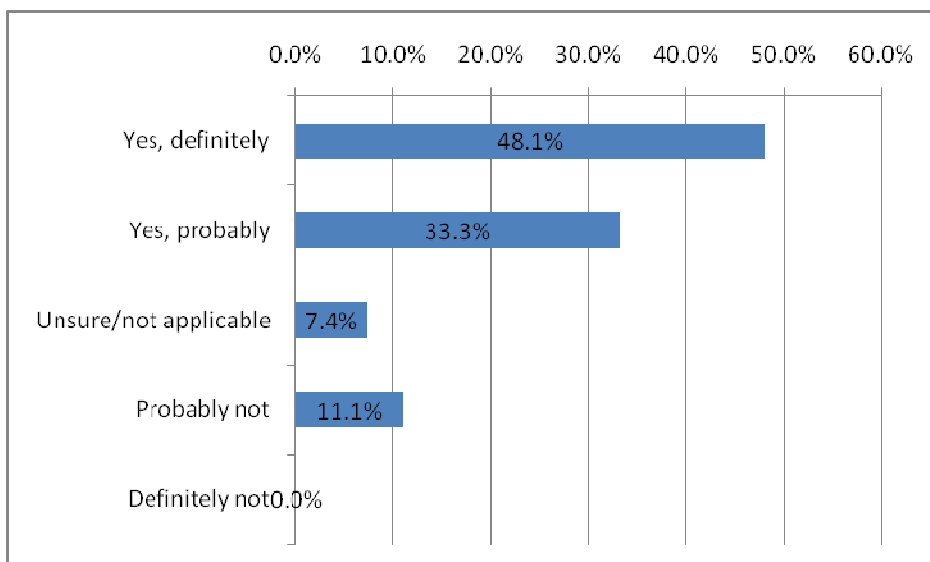
**Figure 17: Did the class develop your creativity? (n=26)**



50.0% of interviewees said that the class definitely encouraged them to be more creative. It did this through:

- Introducing them to different types of music.
- Supporting song writing.
- Group inspiration. “Talking to group members and bounding ideas off each other.” “Every time I go I feel a lot more ideas.”

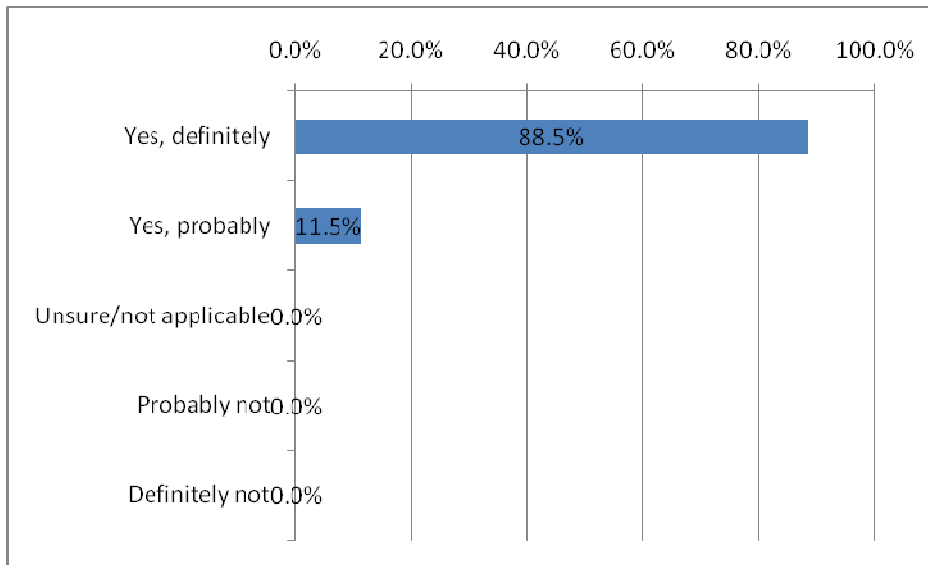
**Figure 18: Did the class help you to make positive choices about your future? (n=27)**



48.1% of the interviewees said that the class definitely encouraged them to make positive choices about their future. It did this through:

- **Advice.** “The staff helped me, they were amazing and they had more of an idea what my skills were. They helped me to decide what to do.” “There’s an awful lot of support from staff. They always had time to chat. I listened to their experiences and it encouraged me. They acted as role models.”
- **Achievement.** “It broadened my horizons, I struggled at school choosing my options and PMZ gave me something to do.” “It helped me feel positive about my future just by being at PMZ and being involved.”
- **Music.** “I now do a music course at college, BTEC national Diploma in Music, which was inspired partly by Music Zone. I want to be a music teacher and do what music zone does.”

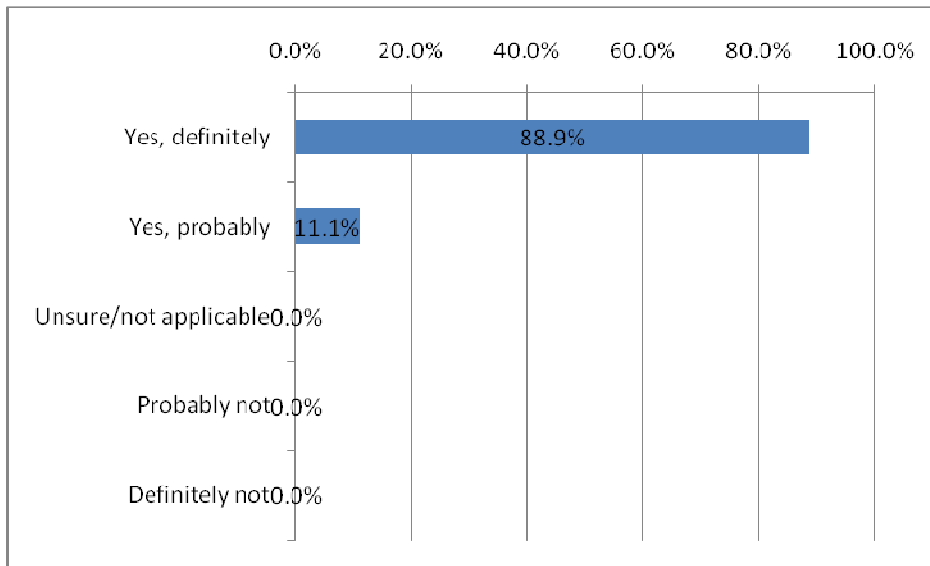
Figure 19: Did the class give you a chance to express yourself? (n=26)



88.5% of the interviewees said that the class definitely gave them a chance to express themselves. This was through:

- **Encouragement.** “The tutors always encourage you to say what you feel and think and speak your mind.” “When you have ideas you are allowed to express it, you are not ignored and the idea is used.” “The staff ask you what you want to do, they never tell you.” “The tutors are very good listeners they take stuff on board.”
- **Music.** “Especially in song writing, your emotions come out when you are playing and writing, it’s like a therapy.” “Through song writing and recording. It relieves tension and helps me to express myself.” “I just became me through singing.”
- **Supportive group.** “It’s a nice environment within the group, a chance to feel and say what you want without someone saying something bad to you.” “You can say what you think about different things with everybody and they listen.”

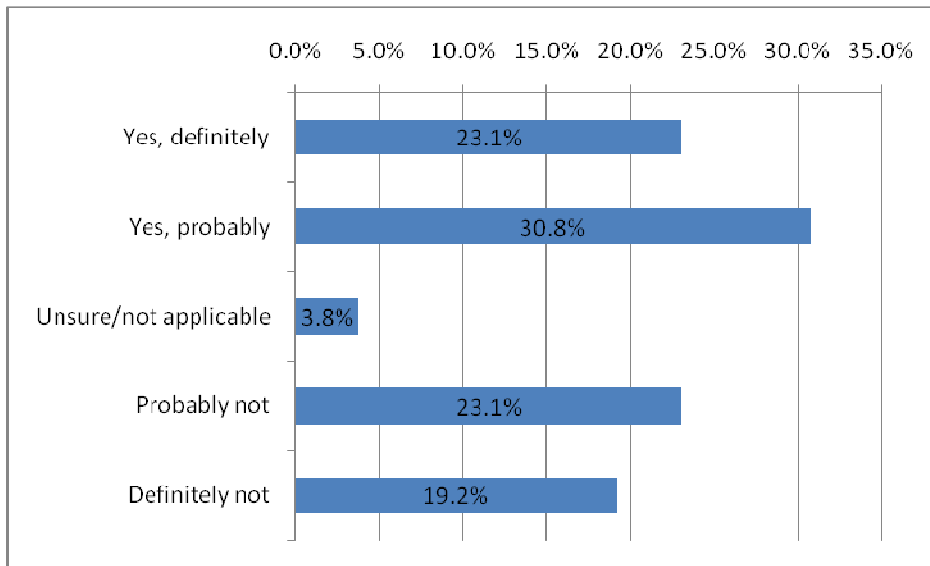
Figure 20: Do you feel happier as a result of the class? (n=27)



88.9% of the interviewees said that the class definitely made them feel happier. This is through:

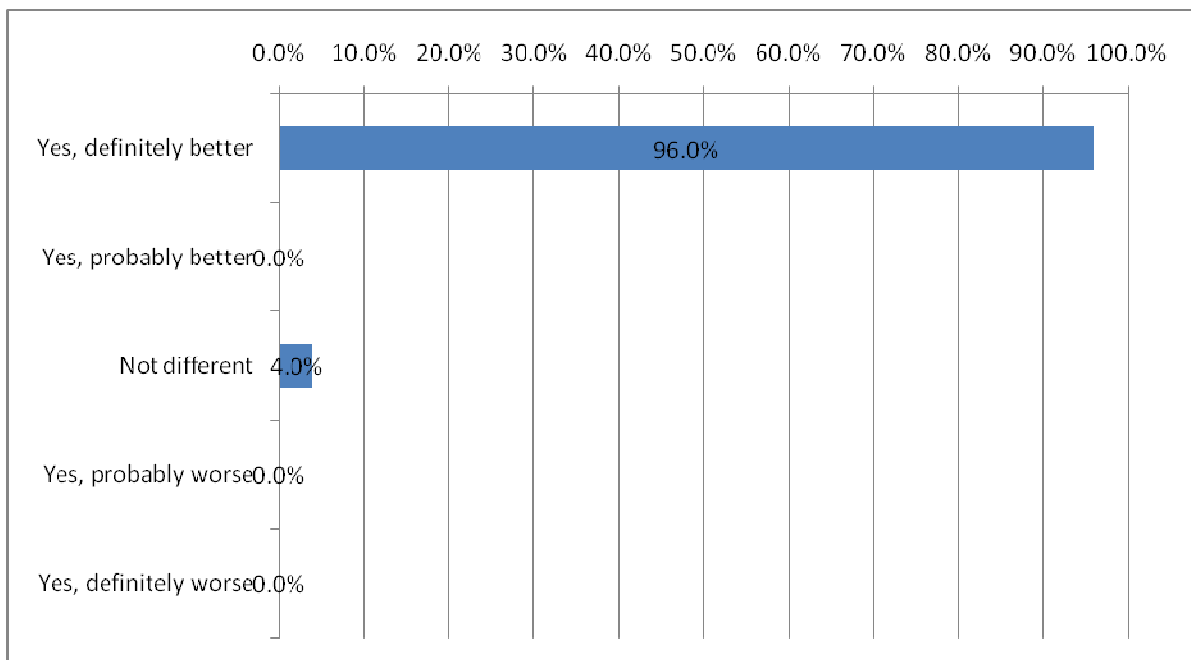
- **Something to look forward to.** “If I have a bad week I always feel better when I know I am going to PMZ on a Saturday.” “It’s one of the highlights of the week.” “It broke up the week well which could be stressful and it was something to look forward to.”
- **Self expression.** “It makes you feel more like yourself. If I am not happy I can express my feelings by chatting to tutors and peers.”
- **Environment.** “Absolutely I cannot imagine life without PMZ, they have been such a big part of my life, invaluable support and everything that they throw at you, there is always someone there to pick you up. It’s great.” “Each time I go there it’s a happy place to go, its somewhere you can feel comfortable.”
- **Achievement.** “I worked hard and it felt good.”

**Figure 21: Did the class encourage you to attend arts events? (n=26)**



23.1% of the interviewees said that the class definitely made them want to attend arts events. In most case this was limited to music. They had a wider source of information on possible events from tutors at PMZ and other band members.

**Figure 22: Was it different working with music out of school rather than in school? (n=25)**

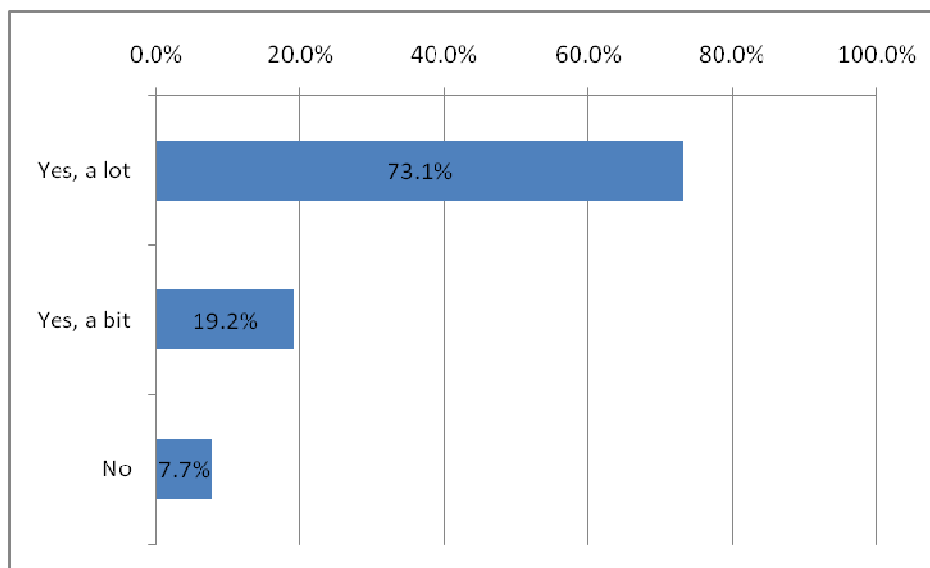


96.0% said that the class was definitely better than music in school.

This was because of:

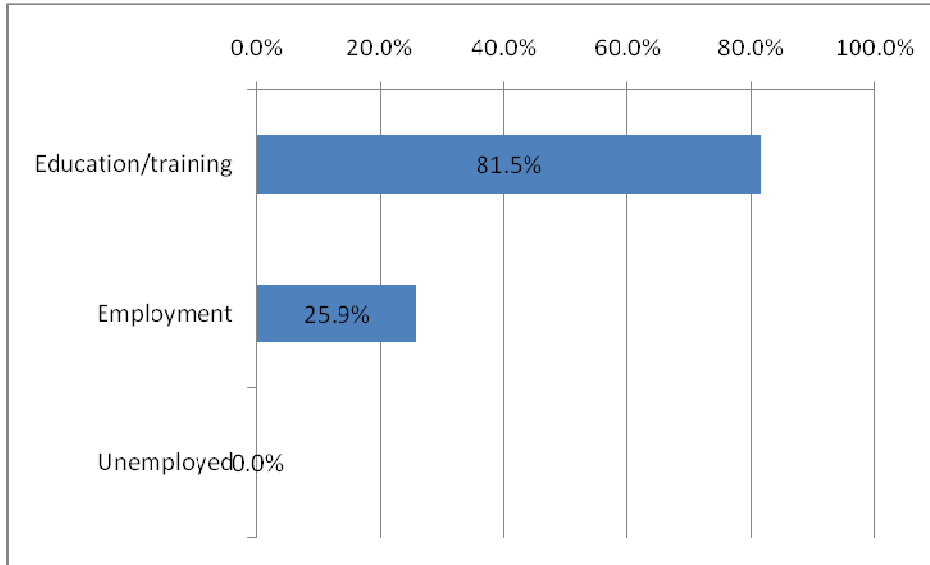
- **Freedom.** “In school there are restrictions, at PMZ you have a say in what you do.” “They treat you differently, it’s a nicer atmosphere.” “It allows you to be your own person and not just follow a set of rules.” “PMZ has got a unique vibe to it. You are restricted at school.” “Different approach, you were there because you chose to be there not because you had to. There was also more choice of things to do there.”
- **Practice.** “It’s all theory in school. It does not teach much.” “It was different, much more fun and practical and we got to hang out with real musicians.”
- **Less pressure.** “School is more pressured. You can’t get stuff wrong. PMZ say it’s OK to get it wrong, and they help you work through it.” “They don’t put you on the spot all the time.” “A lot more laid back at PMZ, I felt more comfortable there. In school something was expected of you. At PMZ it was about you rather than grade progression.”
- **Equipment.** “More space and equipment at PMZ.” “Better at PMZ as the technology at PMZ is advanced.” “Far better equipment and facilities at PMZ.”
- **Committed group.** “You learn easier at PMZ than you would at school, there is no one there to distract you.”

Figure 23: Have you kept up your music practice since the class? (n=26)



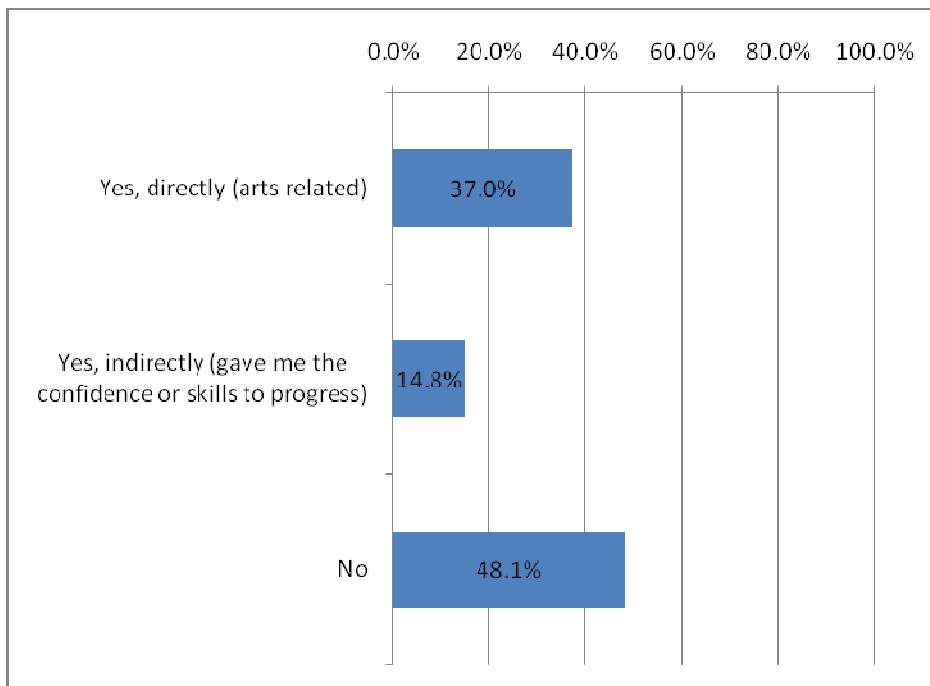
73.1% of respondents said that they had kept up their music practice a lot since the class.

**Figure 24: What are you doing now? (n=27)**



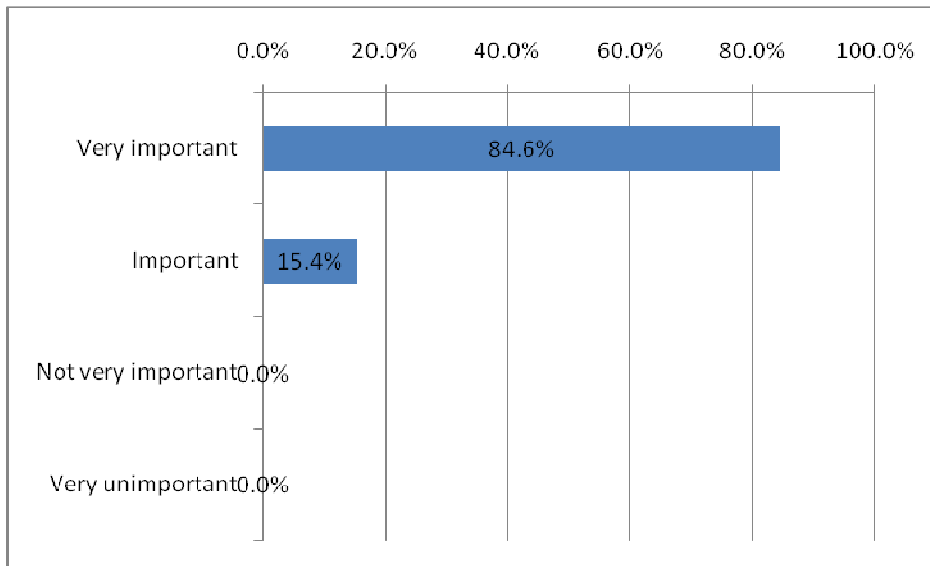
81.5% of interviewees are in education. None is unemployed.

**Figure 25: Was this in any way motivated by your classes at PMZ? (n=27)**



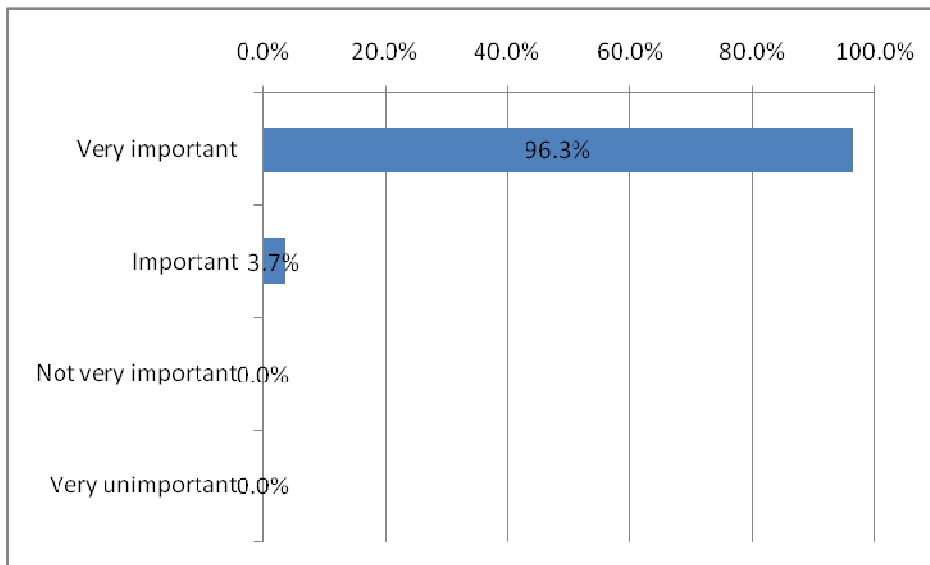
51.8% of interviewees said that their current activity is directly or indirectly motivated by the classes at PMZ.

**Figure 26: How important is/was PMZ to you? (n=26)**



84.6% of interviewees said that PMZ was very important to them.

**Figure 27: How important is music to you? (n=27)**



96.3% of interviewees said that music was very important to them.

## OPERATIONS

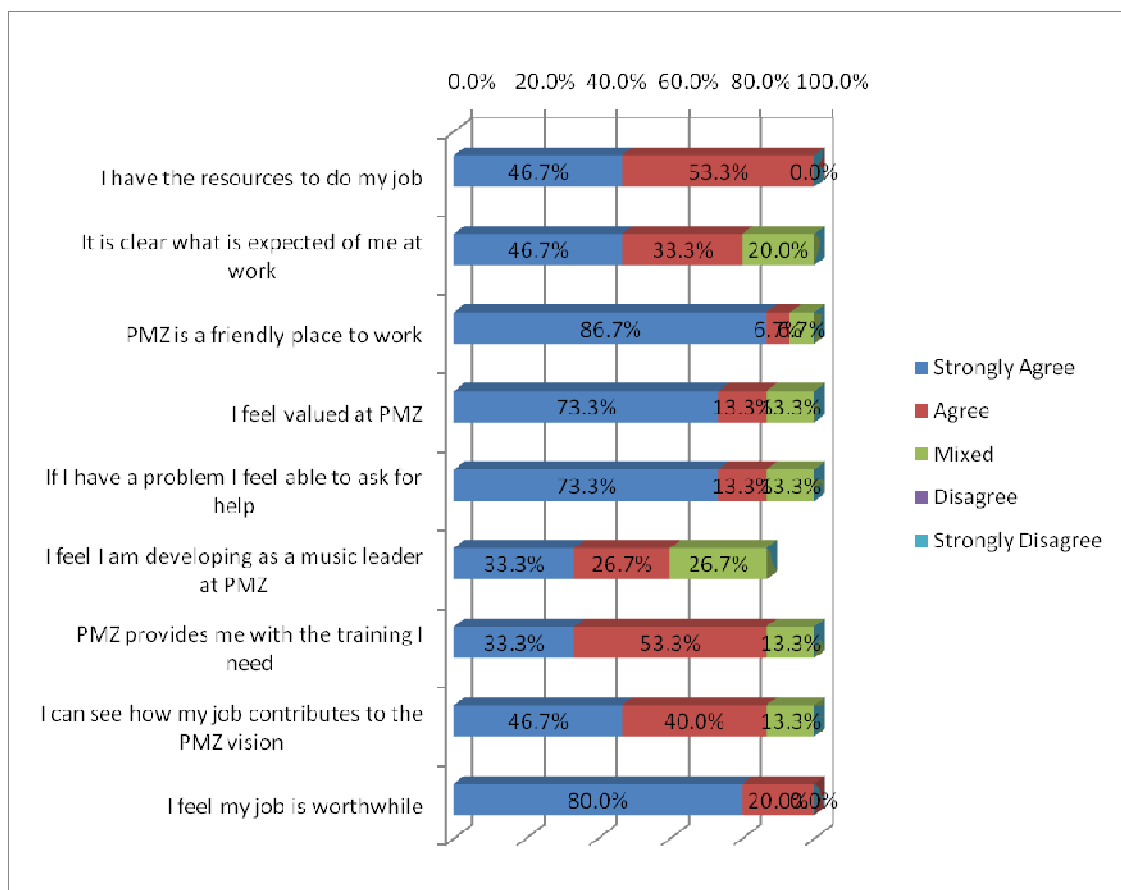
### Introduction

Organisational achievements are only sustainable with the engagement and support of stakeholders. This section considers the views of two key groups of stakeholders: music leaders and partners.

### Employee satisfaction

The survey of 15 music leaders produced strongly positive results. None disagreed with any of the statements. Music leaders were especially positive about the friendliness, worthwhile nature and supportiveness of PMZ. Respondents were positive, but slightly less so, about the clarity of expectations, resources to do the job, and professional development.

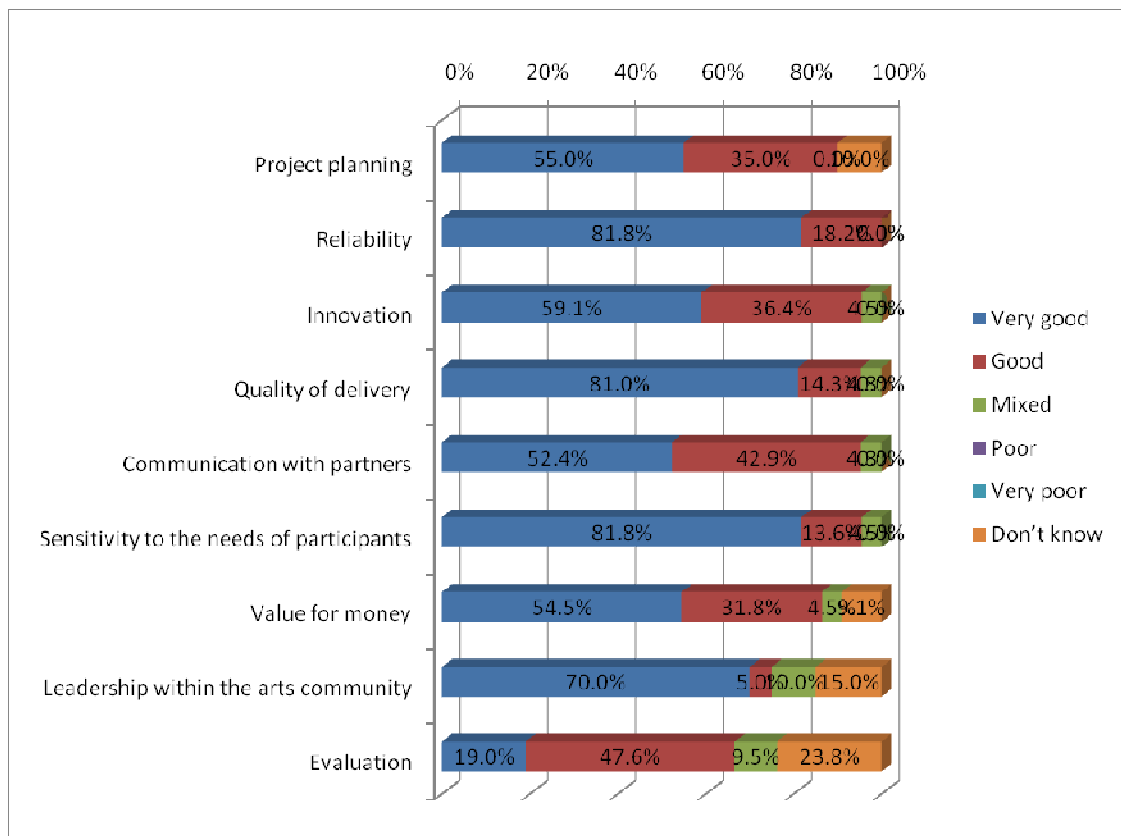
Figure 28: Survey of music leaders (n=15)



Partner satisfaction

We received 22 responses to a survey of PMZ partners. This is a good response given the short time given for response (a week). Over 80% of respondents rated PMZ as very good on quality of delivery, sensitivity to the needs of participants, and reliability. No respondent considered PMZ to be poor on any of these indicators. Lower scores on evaluation and leadership in the arts community are in part a reflection of respondent’s lack of knowledge about PMZ on these subjects.

Figure 29: How do you rate PMZ on these criteria (n=22)



The strengths of PMZ were described as:

- **Responsiveness.** “PMZ are a pleasure to work with as a partner organisation - efficient, reliable and always willing to help to make things work well.”
- **Sensitivity to children’s needs.** “We work with a huge range of disabilities and PMZ have responded appropriately to each child and provided high quality and enjoyable experiences.” “Responding to individual needs both of the children and teachers - providing additional support / advice as needed.”
- **Access.** “PMZ provide opportunities for inclusion for service users and accompanying staff, whatever their ability or level of understanding. Their knowledge and understanding of people with learning difficulties is clearly evident in the planned activities they provide. Our service users have really developed their music making skills.”

- **Communication.** “Always great communication prior to programme starts and throughout and respond to each pupil individually.
- **Quality.** “A unique and truly creative arts environment that allows children and young people to get involved in, learn new skills and have fun in a relaxed environment. The staff are highly skilled and have excellent participation skills to engage different children and young people with additional needs.” “Clear focus, good people and team, good work, quality and integrity.” “Clarity of offer. Genuine commitment to high standards.” “Access to a wide range of instruments, some quite specialised.” “Excellent musicians- very experienced. Lessons at the zone have been well planned.”
- **Leadership.** “Excellent role models. Perceptive leadership.” “Integrity and entrepreneurial approach of director.”
- **Efficiency.** “Efficient and pragmatic delivery. PMZ get things done.”

The weaknesses of PMZ were described as:

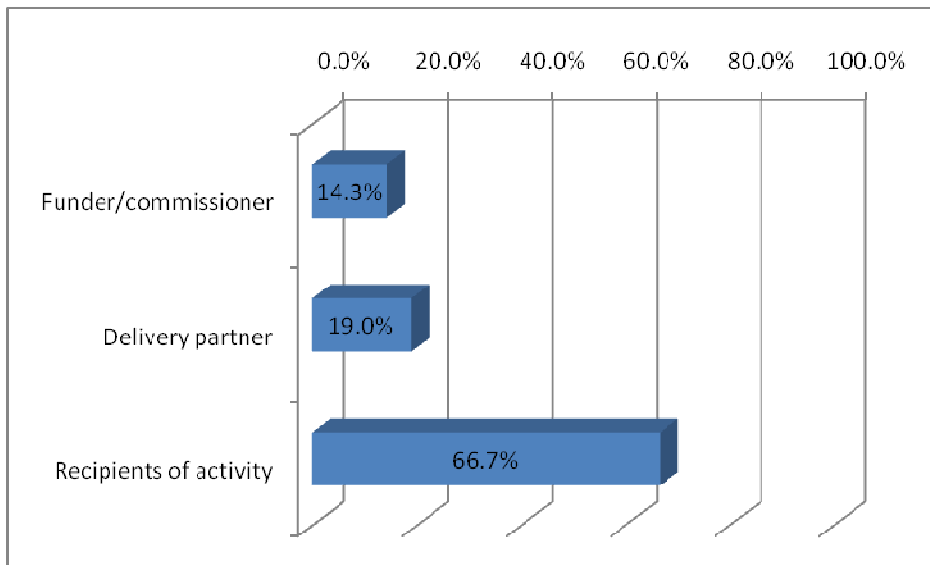
- **None.** “I don't think PMZ has any really. I think more could be done to publicise the great service to a wider audience who may not think they can get involved with music.” “I don't believe PMZ have any weaknesses! We have been attending MZ sessions for quite some time now and in our opinion they have gone from strength to strength.”
- **Capacity.** “There are no weaknesses that we have found except that they don't have the capacity to do more.” “No evidence of weaknesses known here but (like everywhere) we feel they may be under-resourced in central admin role - leaders seem to be run off their feet!” “Taking on too much for the resources available. Not utilising the potential of the corporate and adult music/singing market.”
- **Communication.** “We would like feedback from PMZ - we feedback to them, but in order to fully utilise them for the needs of the children, their feedback would be useful.” “Communication sometimes is a little patchy but this is due to the turnover of work rather than not wanting to.”

The main opportunities for PMZ were identified as:

- Working with children who are otherwise excluded from the arts, special needs.
- Under 5s.
- Working with adults and the corporate market.
- Therapy.
- Supporting staff professional development.

The sample includes funders, delivery partners and recipients of activity.

**Figure 30: Relationship with PMZ**



All respondents said that they would definitely like to work with PMZ again in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS

The different evaluation methods provide a clear and consistent picture of PMZ. The organisation provides an inspiring, supportive and motivating environment in which young people can express themselves, increase in confidence and gain a sense of achievement that motivates them to be ambitious for themselves. The music leaders create a safe, non judgemental environment in which young people have significant opportunity to exercise choice and responsibility. This environment, together with the inherent great appeal of music to young people, helps to reduce the participants' stress. The equipment and space at PMZ reinforce the impression of a professional space that is full of opportunities. These opportunities are made available to a large number of young people, regardless of their financial circumstances and special needs. Impacts endure over time, either through giving young people a foundation to make positive choices in their lives, or through fostering a life-long interest in music.

The findings from this evaluation fit well into the framework of Every Child Matters:

- **Be healthy.** 79% of respondents to the outcome survey say that the PMZ class makes them feel less stressed and 69% of respondents say that music helps them to deal with things in their life. 88.9% of respondents to the follow up survey say that they are definitely happier as a result of the class.
- **Stay safe.** 84% of respondents to the outcome survey – and 88.9% of respondents to the follow up survey - say that the class has made them feel more confident.
- **Enjoy and achieve.** 73.7% of respondents to the outcome survey – and 88.9% of respondents to the follow up survey - say that they love the classes. A further 18.4% of respondents to the outcome survey – and 11.1% of respondents to the follow up survey - say that they like them. There is a clear framework to understand how PMZ creates this enjoyment. 84% of respondents to the outcome survey say that they feel encouraged in the group and 76% say that the class encourages them to be more ambitious for themselves. The survey also shows skills development. 69% say that the class makes them more interested in education or training. 76.9% of respondents to the follow up survey say that the classes definitely encouraged them to set high standards for themselves.
- **Make a positive contribution.** 52% of respondents to the outcome survey say that they are more interested in volunteering in the community as a result of the classes.
- **Achieve economic well-being.** 48.1% of respondents to the follow up survey said that the classes definitely helped them to make positive choices about their future. 51.8% said that their current activity was directly or indirectly motivated by their classes at PMZ. All respondents were in education or employment. None was unemployed.

These achievements are in no small measure the result of the dedication of music leaders. Both staff and students emphasise the friendly and supportive environment at PMZ. Our evaluation shows that music leaders have a strong feeling that their job is worthwhile. There is considerable recognition of the special qualities of PMZ among its partners. The leadership is

also seen as showing integrity and responsiveness. The one concern about the organisation is about its capacity to deal with the many pressures placed on it.

The programme of evaluation that we prepared for PMZ is ambitious and demanding. The organisation's interest in this level of reflection is itself evidence of commitment to high quality and responsiveness. Further work to improve the quality (completeness and consistency) of data recorded from evaluation forms will reinforce this commitment.

Our evaluation was designed to test the hypothesis:

**“The work of Plymouth Music Zone has a profound personal, educational and social impact on children and young people. It satisfies all the important outcomes defined in the government’s ‘Every Child Matters’, ‘Youth Matters’ and related frameworks. As such, Plymouth Music Zone should be more recognised by statutory agencies as a high quality, vital service provider that could be commissioned to further support front line provision for children and young people in the city.”**

The evaluation confirms this hypothesis.

## APPENDIX ONE: THE EVALUATION SYSTEMS

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### Outcomes

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#### Enrolment form

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PLZ already had a good enrolment form. We amended some of the questions to match the performance indicators proposed by Plymouth Council Children's Services.

Enrolment forms cover:

- Contact details.
- Age.
- Sex.
- Ethnicity.
- Disability.
- Whether the young person is in education.
- Musical background.

#### Activity form

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The activity form gives background information on each class or set of classes:

- Type of activity.
- Music genre.
- Venue.
- Local authority area(s) where the course took place.
- Dates for the course.
- Total number of sessions
- Length of each session
- Number of participants at the second session
- Number of participants at the last session
- Any targeting
- Any end product

#### Outcomes form

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We designed an outcomes questionnaire to provide self reported information on participants' experience of PMZ's activities. This asks about:

- Aspects of the class that participants' enjoyed.
- Effects of the class on their wellbeing.
- Skill development.
- Outcomes such as creativity, self expression, health, confidence, aspirations, interest in arts/learning/volunteering.
- How to improve PMZ classes.

## Follow up questionnaires

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The follow up questionnaire was designed to track the long term impact of PMZ activities. This asks about:

- Any problems attending.
- Confidence.
- Aspiration.
- Creativity.
- Positive choices.
- Happiness.
- Interest in attending arts events.
- Whether they have continued their music practice.
- Strengths and weakness of PMZ.
- Their background.

## Process

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### Observation framework

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The observation form provides a structure to compile information on the quality of practice. The form was designed to reflect PMZ's code of conduct.

The form covers subject such as:

- Preparation.
- Age appropriateness.
- Engagement.
- Aspiration raising – linked to the Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust Plan Priority 10 Raising Aspirations.
- Health and safety.
- Any possible improvements.
- Any lessons for PMZ.

### Feedback from music leaders

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This employee satisfaction survey covers:

- Resources to do the job.
- Clarity of objectives.
- Support to do the job.
- Culture at PMZ.
- Professional development.
- Satisfaction with the job.
- Any other support needed.

### Partnership survey

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The partnership questionnaire asks about:

- Project planning.
- Reliability.
- Innovation.
- Quality of delivery.
- Communication with partners.
- Sensitivity to the needs of participants.
- Value for money.
- Leadership within the arts community.
- Evaluation.
- Overall strengths.
- Overall weaknesses.
- Opportunities for PMZ in their area of work.

### [Training feedback form](#)

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We devised a feedback form to provide information on respondents' experience of training:

- Detail.
- Clarity.
- Inspiration.
- Format.
- Organisation.
- Overall satisfaction.