

BABIGLOO

MUSIC FOR BABIES

Evaluation Report

April 2019

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Report commissioned by:

Arts Development Company and Babigloo

NELL FARRALLY
Arts & Culture
Evaluation ~ Research ~ Consultancy

babigloo
music for babies

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About Babigloo

Babigloo is a non-verbal approach to music making for babies aged 0 to 12 months and their parents/carers. The Babigloo musicians create a multi-sensory environment which encourages listening, communication and playfulness between babies and their parents/carers using live and recorded music, sound, movement, gesture, visual and tactile materials, babies' vocalisations and non-verbal communication. Babigloo music making sessions last around 45 minutes, balancing structured activities which build on babies' sensory perceptions, with spontaneous vocal and non-verbal interaction with the babies.

The Babigloo musicians (Jenny Gordon, Michele O'Brien and Colin Phillimore) trained with Professor Paulo Lameiro in non-verbal approaches to music making with babies, drawing on the music learning theories of Professor Edwin E. Gordon.

Babigloo in Poole and East Dorset Children's Centres 2018-19

In 2018 to 2019, the Arts Development Company worked with Babigloo to co-ordinate a year-long project for families in Poole Children's Centres (led by Borough of Poole) and East Dorset Children's Centres (led by Action for Children). The project, funded by Youth Music and Poole Arts Service, was structured in 3 phases across the year, offering 9 x weekly sessions for families in 6 different locations in Poole and Dorset. A total of 61 families took part over the year (62 babies and 68 adults), practice sharing opportunities involved 47 people (including musicians, music educators, local authority elected members, and early years and children's services professionals) and 24 people took part in professional development sessions. The intended outcomes of the project were:

- To develop musical understanding and communication in parents, babies 0-12 months and project staff using the Edwin Gordon Music Learning Theory.
- To develop the music making of project staff to use the non-verbal Music Learning Theory of Edwin Gordon in their activities with babies 0-12 months. Training and practical experience for the workforce staff embedding sustainability.
- To enable parents and babies, identified as facing barriers to music, to develop their musicality for themselves and their babies as a tool to improve their mental health.

About the project evaluation

The Arts Development Company appointed a freelance evaluator, Nell Farrally, in June 2018 towards the end of Phase 1. The evaluator's role was to create an Evaluation Plan and Framework, review existing data collection tools and potentially create new ones, co-ordinate evaluation activities, collate and analyse data, and write a summative evaluation report and case studies.

The Evaluation Plan and Framework described the evaluation approach as collaborative and outcomes-focussed. Collaborative evaluation involves stakeholders in the evaluation design, data collection, interpretation and reporting. As the major project funder Youth Music (YM) advocates an outcomes approach to project design and evaluation, the Babigloo evaluation drew on YM's *Taking an Outcomes Approach* document.

As the children's centre partners would be following their own evaluation processes, care was taken to align data collection for the project with the centres' existing methods and procedures, both to avoid duplication of effort and to minimise asking families for feedback.

The evaluation framework identified at least 2 indicators for each outcome, with at least 2 sources of evidence for each indicator to ensure a range of perspectives. Data collection methods and sources of evidence for the evaluation included:

- Written 'post-it note' comments by parents/carers
- Parent/carer's end of phase questionnaire
- Interviews with parents/carers by the evaluator
- Unsolicited emails from parents to the musicians and social media posts by parents
- Online questionnaire for key staff in each phase
- Written questionnaire regarding staff training session
- Evaluators' observation notes
- Families' monitoring data held by the children's centres.

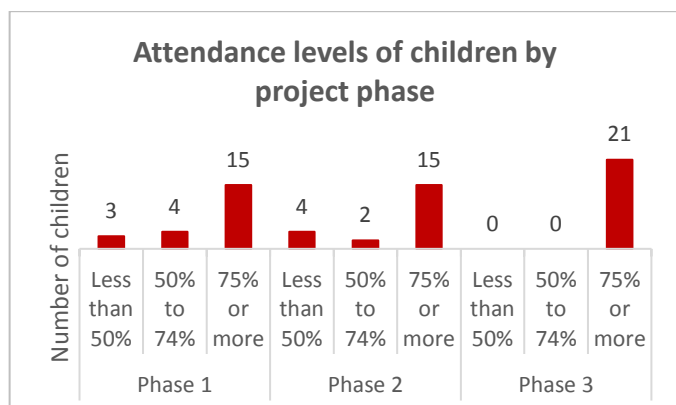
At the end of each phase the children's centres collated and analysed the data collected to review how Babigloo had addressed their organisational outcomes and priorities. The children's centres' own analysis and interpretation of data was invaluable to the overall project evaluation described in this report. Due to Poole and East Dorset's differing documentation, monitoring and evaluation processes, there is not one consistent data set for the whole project.

Summary of quantitative data

A total of 61 families took part across the 3 phases which included 62 children and 68 adults. This number of adults includes each family's primary caregiver who attended each week and other family members who attended sessions occasionally such as partners and grandparents. The target to involve 60 children in the project was met. In addition, each phase had a final celebration event where further grandparents and family members took part, although the exact number was not documented. The numbers of people involved in the project were:

61 families
(62 babies and 68 adults)
3 Babigloo musicians
6 other visiting musicians
1 composer/music co-ordinator
6 children's centre staff
24 participants in CPD
47 visitors/observers
1 Project Manager
1 Project Evaluator

Crucial to understanding the success of Babigloo is the pattern of families' attendance – did they sustain their involvement throughout the project? For Poole Children's Centres, one key indicator they use to judge the success of all their programmes is the proportion of children who attend for less than 50% of sessions, 50% to 74% of sessions, or 75% or more sessions. For each of the 3 Phases, the numbers of children in each attendance category are shown in the bar chart below.



Putting these attendance figures in context, children's centre staff considered Babigloo to have a very high level of sustained attendance when compared to other programmes the centres offer.

A further key indicator of the project's success is how well it involved families for whom it was intended. The project outcomes were rather unspecific about the characteristics or circumstances of families which Babigloo hoped to involve: *"parents and babies identified as facing barriers to music"*. However, in the Youth Music funding application, Babigloo identified *"Specific Challenges Faced by Target Group"* as: *Economic Deprivation, English as an Additional Language, Mental Ill Health, Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and Rurally Isolated*. Collecting data about participating families' characteristics and circumstances was dependant on the children's centres existing monitoring data practices, which did not necessarily align with the terms above.

In Poole, *"priority groups"* was the term used to identify families who needed support additional to *"universal"* services offered to all families. Poole Children's Centres document the number of families who take part in every programme from priority groups. Priority group characteristics of families who took part in Babigloo were: *Summer Born, Involvement in Social Care, Teenage Parent, Domestic Abuse, Children identified as having Special Needs and Disability (SEND), Families with 2 or more vulnerabilities, LSOA, Disadvantaged 2 year olds, Risk of low achievement*. The centres aim to involve 80% of families from priority groups in programmes they offer or support, such as Babigloo. Whilst there is not a consistent alignment with the Youth Music classification of characteristics, the children's centres priority groups is the best source of data available to Babigloo about the numbers of families who experience challenges or characteristics which enable them to access support additional to universal services. For each of the 4 Poole settings, the numbers of *"priority group"* characteristics amongst the families are shown in table 1 below. Families may have more than one characteristic, but the total gives an indication the level of additional support families were receiving.

Table 1: Priority group characteristics of Poole families

	Total children	Total priority group characteristics
Setting 1 (TS)	11	2
Setting 2 (OT)	11	13
Setting 3 (RM)	6	18
Setting 4 (BS)	13	23

These numbers show that children in Phase 2 (settings 3 and 4) had a higher level of priority group characteristics than children in Phase 1 (settings 1 and 2).

East Dorset Children’s Centres (settings 5 and 6) were not able to provide data about families’ circumstances. The musicians, however, were aware that Setting 5 families were all receiving children’s centre support, although in Setting 6 all were ‘universal’ families.

One method of gathering feedback from parents was a written questionnaire which had “before and after” scale measurement questions and open-ended qualitative questions. For Phase 1, the scale measurement questions were created by children’s centre staff. For Phase 2, the questions were revised by the evaluator to address the project outcomes more specifically. For Phase 3, they were adapted again by staff. Both Poole and East Dorset centres used collated responses to judge the overall impact of Babigloo and whether families had experienced an increase in confidence and frequency of music making.

Table 2: Percentage of Phase 1 parents who increased confidence and frequency of music making.

Increased confidence to:	Setting 1	Setting 2
Sing with your baby	71%	75%
Use music at home	43%	75%
Listen and respond to your baby’s voice/movements	86%	75%
Allow for silence	57%	75%
Attend a group with your baby	57%	87%
Increased frequency of:		
Play music at home	43%	62%
Sing to your baby	57%	62%
Make vocal rhythms	100%	75%
Play a musical instrument	57%	75%
Follow your baby’s lead through their voice/ non-verbal cues	100%	100%

Table 3: Percentage of Phase 2 parents who increased confidence and frequency of music making.

Increased confidence to:	Setting 3	Setting 4
Attending group with your baby	100%	89%
Joining in and singing/making music with your baby	100%	100%
Singing and making music with your baby for fun at home	83%	89%
Singing and using your voice to communicate with your baby	100%	89%
Using music at home for a purpose	83%	89%
Sing to your baby	100%	78%
Listen to music chosen with your baby in mind	100%	89%
Using instruments, musical toys and sound makers with your baby	100%	100%
Respond to your baby’s musical behaviour	83%	100%

Inferences from these responses are discussed on page 9 later in this report.

East Dorset adapted the questionnaire to request before and after responses to rating scales. However, their method of administering and analysing the questionnaire meant that it was not possible to understand change for individual families from these rating scales, only the mean average change for the cohort as a whole. The before and after mean average scores from a 10 point rating scale were compared to produce an average change score for each question:

How confident do you feel when interacting with your baby?
How confident are you attending a group singing with your baby?
How confident are you to sing at home with your baby?
How often do you sing to your baby during the day?
How often do you use music for fun at home with your baby in a day?
How often do you listen to music at home for a purpose eg. to soothe or distract your baby?
How confident are you to listen and respond to your baby’s voice and movements?
How often do you use instruments, musical toys or other sound makers when playing with your baby?
How confident are you to use signing to communicate with your baby?
How often do you respond to your baby’s musical behaviour eg. their voice or rhythmic movements?

Many parents’ response ratings to these questions were relatively high before taking part in Babigloo. This meant that the mean average scores showed only a little change – between 1 and 2 points for most questions. There was, however, positive change regarding all the questions above. The areas where families expressed the most change were: listening to music at home more to soothe and distract, and the frequency of responding to their baby’s musical behaviour. The after scores showed that all parents responded to their baby’s musical behaviour every day.

Unfortunately, the methods of data collection and analysis limits the understanding of how families individually experienced change due to taking part in Babigloo.

Summary of qualitative data

Parents' feedback

The different sources of qualitative data from parents were grouped together for thematic analysis:

- Parent/carer's end of phase questionnaire
- Written 'post-it note' comments by parents/carers
- Interviews with parents/carers by the evaluator
- Unsolicited emails from parents to the musicians and social media posts by parents.

Whilst there was some variation in the wording, the style of questioning for the questionnaire, post-it note comments and interviews was similar – intentionally broad and open-ended. Examples of questions were: *Has anything changed for you as a result of attending Babigloo?*, *Please tell us about your experience of Babigloo?*, *What has been most important to you about the Babigloo sessions?*

There were 2 kinds of interviews with parents by the evaluator – short opportunistic interviews at the end of Babigloo sessions which asked 1 or 2 questions, and longer phone interviews for parents who had agreed to feature in case studies. The case study interviews had greater detail and asked some questions which were more directed to eliciting information related to the project outcomes.

Template Analysis, a system of thematic analysis which combines pre-conceived themes (linked to the project outcomes) with flexible open coding to enable understanding of unanticipated responses and outcomes, was used to draw out the main themes from the parents' feedback. Table 5 on page 6 shows the themes with quotes to illustrate each theme.

Whilst the purpose of this kind of qualitative analysis is not to count the prevalence of the different themes to determine what is important, it was notable that many parents' feedback commented on making more music at home, Babigloo helping them to feel relaxed and enjoy time with their baby, and how much their baby enjoyed Babigloo. For many parents, their comments revealed a sense of feeling isolated. Just getting out of the house, meeting other parents, making new friends and the non-judgemental atmosphere were important to people. Some parents' comments showed an empathy for the difficult circumstances others were experiencing. The non-verbal approach was valued by parents and eased their participation.

It feels like quite an effort to get out of the house and go to another group where everyone's going to be talking about how well your baby is sleeping and all of the standard conversations... if you're feeling slightly stressed out about those conversation topics, it can get a bit wearing sometimes. I wasn't really like that with Babigloo I think because there wasn't that pressure to have conversations.

There was a strong call from parents for more Babigloo – to be able to continue beyond 9 weekly sessions and for Babigloo sessions for toddlers and older children.

Children's Centre Staff Feedback

An online written questionnaire created by the evaluator was completed by the member of children's centre staff in each phase who had been most involved. For Poole, this was the Early Learning and Development Practitioners who supported the weekly sessions. In East Dorset, it was the Centre Lead.

A question which asked for general feedback received responses which reiterate the parents' perspective:

Families reported babies were more relaxed, slept for longer and calmed down if the music was played. Some said they had never used classical music before with the baby but were doing so now.

It has certainly helped to engage families who in the past have not engaged with groups. 100% of parents from [name of centre] said it gave them confidence to then attend other groups after this. Parents reported feeling a lift in mood, and really looked forward to the group each week. I think it made the parents feel special and they appreciated the group so much.

Asked specifically for their thoughts on Babigloo's approach, responses were:

I have never witnessed a group such as Babigloo before and had reservations before the programme started but to watch the babies so fully involved and mesmerised each week has been amazing.

Babigloo offers parents something they have never had before. It works particularly well with parents with anxiety as they know there is no pressure to talk to anyone else. I have seen the parents at the end of the group and they stick together like they are part of a secret club. It has helped to build friendships through shared experiences, and the fact that no one talks in the group, it puts everyone on a level playing field.

Practitioners felt that working with Babigloo had supported their professional development. One practitioner said that she had used things she had learnt from Babigloo in her work: *"use of different musical styles with babies, to encourage the parents to be quiet so the babies' voices can be heard, to use props in different ways"*. Another had not as she felt it was important the sessions were "special" and mimicking Babigloo activities in other groups would dilute their impact. Babigloo for older children was something the practitioners would like.

The Babigloo team collected written feedback and notes from professionals who visited the sessions. The observation notes of a student midwife who attended over several weeks noted the social benefits to new parents and babies' development, and provided insight into *why* the non-verbal approach is effective at supporting communication.

The sessions focused on enhancing the babies fine motor skills and the five senses were at the heart of the sessions. The communication techniques in the sessions are the use of sounds, music and movement (mainly hand gestures) which is how babies communicate. This means they are engaged instantly because everyone in the room has equal communication skills.

Setting 1 was an infant school where many families' older children were pupils. The Deputy Head wrote about families in a general way:

It was such an incredible experience for our families and had a huge impact on some of our most vulnerable families.

At the start of Phase 3, the Babigloo team ran a CPD session for children's centre staff. Out of 9 participants, 6 completed evaluation forms which showed that everyone found the session interesting and informative. All participants rated the session as *excellent* or *very good*. The non-verbal approach and the theory behind it were new to several people and some said they would try to incorporate it into their work.

Evaluator's observation notes

The project evaluator visited each setting once and made notes which had a dual purpose – they were observations which documented babies and parents' engagement, whilst also documenting personal reflections. These notes prompted reflective discussions with the Babigloo team in addition to critical-friend style questioning to encourage them to think about their approach and future development. One example of this is the nature of child-initiated activity within a performative adult-devised structure.

A further interesting example from the notes concerned the choice of music – primarily Western classical with some traditional British tunes, jazz and popular music. The evaluator's notes attempt to articulate her own feelings about the choices of music and what is effective about Babigloo's approach.

Babigloo have always been clear that the use of classical music is important to their approach. I've been a bit reserved about that – I'm wary in my own practice of imposing a cultural hierarchy – the idea

that classical music is somehow of better quality than other types of music. If I were to try to describe in words what's happening in this room – parents are invited by the musicians, through gesture, to dance around with their babies to Bach's Cello Suite in G – that sounds really high-brow! But it's not at all. What's taking place here feels very natural and authentic. All parents are joining in with the dancing and no one looks uncomfortable. It fits within the context of the experience Babigloo have created. It feels really special and poles apart from some "classical-music-is-good-for-you" outreach activities for children which I've experienced.

These personal reflections were shared with the Babigloo team.

Visiting musicians' notes

One of the visiting musicians made reflective notes which demonstrate the engagement of babies and parents in the music making.

I was struck at the outset by how alert to the actions and sounds of the Babigloo ensemble the babies were – discovering that this was week 5 in a series of sessions explained something to me: an attitude that I felt in the babies and carers that I might describe as "the attentive expectation of gratification!"

These notes also captured the essence of the music making experience, the importance of embodiment to musicality and an appreciation of the non-verbal approach to early years music making.

As a musician, I thought the section where the first 5 notes of a simple major scale (up and down) were represented physically through the synchronised rising and falling of the 3 pairs of arms – simultaneously associated with various pitched vocal textures – made particular musical and physical sense. The great (but not loud) emphasis given to the tonic (root-note) by the placing of hands on the floor seemed to go very deeply to our human understanding of music – where the physical and the vocal and the musical are mostly one and the same.

The practitioners moved through a series of sensory 'provocations' (as I'm learning they are called) that, without exception, seemed to be received by the babies with intelligent satisfaction. No time was wasted trying to dress up these stimulating events in a verbal or conventionally rational narrative, and yet there was a sense of significance to it all, for me – and I think for the carers and babies.

Table 5: Themes from parent’s qualitative feedback with illustrative examples.

Music	
More music and sounds at home	<p><i>Using music more at home.</i></p> <p><i>We started to use more music and baby language at home.</i></p> <p><i>We sing the songs at home. Even with our older children.</i></p> <p><i>We have brought some instruments and play at home daily now.</i></p>
Ideas for making music	<p><i>I’ve come away with lots of ideas.</i></p> <p><i>I’m going to make the butterfly at home. [Child’s name] loved it. He was just staring at it.</i></p>
Exploring sounds	<p><i>Such a lovely way to explore sounds.</i></p> <p><i>My baby has learned to make new sounds.</i></p>
Music in everyday activities	<p><i>Developed our musical skills in everyday activities.</i></p> <p><i>I now use more variety of music at home and to distract and sooth.</i></p> <p><i>She is settling better at night and the music has helped with a few meltdowns.</i></p>
Appreciating how much babies enjoy music	<p><i>I have learnt how much my baby loves music.</i></p> <p><i>I think he would say he loves it. He really seems to like music and making a lot of noise.</i></p>
Broader range of music	<p><i>We listen to more types of music at home.</i></p> <p><i>Babigloo changed our outlook a little bit... it never would have occurred to me to play her any classical or instrumental music.</i></p> <p><i>Before we went, all we really sung was nursery rhymes but now it’s great because I’m more confident making a load of noise with him really.</i></p>
Quality	<p><i>Quality music for babies, qualified staff.</i></p>
Live music and instruments	<p><i>Loved the live music.</i></p> <p><i>All the real instruments and musicians have been amazing.</i></p> <p><i>I’ve really liked the live musicians... really interesting because it’s something the babies haven’t really had a chance to see before.</i></p> <p><i>I was exposed to such high quality instrumental music close up, which was a first for us both.</i></p>
Emotional wellbeing	
Babies’ enjoyment	<p><i>[Child’s name] thoroughly enjoys these classes and I think she was even singing along in yesterday’s class.</i></p> <p><i>Babigloo on a Thursday means that [child’s name] is so, so happy for the entire day. The older he gets, the more you can see how much of it he takes in and he absolutely loves it!</i></p>
Parental enjoyment at babies’ pleasure	<p><i>It has been incredible to watch my baby’s responses to Babigloo, lovely to see him relax and enjoy him in such a supportive environment.</i></p> <p><i>Seeing [child’s name] enjoying it so much, was just really nice.</i></p> <p><i>My daughter and I absolutely love Babigloo. Seeing my 9 month old dancing and clapping to the sounds and music is truly amazing. I don’t want it to end.</i></p>
Uplifting	<p><i>Such an emotional uplifting time for me to bond with my baby.</i></p> <p><i>Helped lift my mood and something nice for [babies’ name] after hospital appointments on Thursday mornings.</i></p>
Relaxation	<p><i>I have been able to relax more with [baby’s name] and enjoy soothing time.</i></p> <p><i>Relaxing, learning how to entertain and sooth my baby with just music.</i></p>
Coping with life / parenting	<p><i>I always left feeling a lot better than when I went in. If it was a bad day, I left feeling a bit more resilient.</i></p> <p><i>With how calm it makes him, it’s a lot easier on me.</i></p>

Parent / baby relationship	
Bonding	<i>It allows us quiet time to bond together. A great bonding opportunity for the two of us.</i>
Time together / time out	<i>We love singing and playing together so much more. Getting out and spending quality time with my daughter and seeing how much she enjoys it.</i>
Communication and language	
Recognition that Babigloo has developed babies' communication	<i>It's helped with her vocal development and to relax before bed.</i>
Parental understanding of language development	<i>Has helped baby's communication skills lots of babble and repeating of sounds learnt at group. Concentrating on her, listening more to her sounds, and focus more on textures, repetition and sounds. We go outside and ooo, brrrr.</i>
Non-verbal communication	<i>I now use music and body language instead of just talking. It was fascinating to watch how they could capture the mood of a song, even though it didn't have any words.</i>
Babies' development	
Attention and engagement	<i>I was really pleasantly surprised when we went to Babigloo, how drawn in by it she was. It completely captured her attention. She is very relaxed during the sessions, very engaged and lots of interaction with other babies. My baby's reaction! It held his attention like nothing else.</i>
Physical development	<i>[Child's name] has been diagnosed with low muscle tone and struggled with tummy time and sitting up. He was so focused on the music that he now can sit up, roll and do tummy time happily.</i>
Taking part in a group	
Confidence, socialisation and developing relationships	<i>Interacting with lots of different people and building confidence. Both of our confidence has grown and it is amazing to see how much his development has changed and grown. I am more confident being with my baby and happier to take her to other groups now.</i>
Group atmosphere, environment, belonging	<i>This group is for me, it makes me feel good. The non-verbal nature makes it different from other groups. It is non-judgemental and welcoming. If somebody was feeling very down or very isolated... that sort of environment would be a lot more accessible than a lot of children's groups would be.</i>
Meeting people and getting out	<i>The people are nice and friendly. Getting out, meeting new friends. Getting out of the house and interacting with other parents.</i>
Mixture of people – support/understanding of others' circumstances	<i>It was relaxing, in non-judgemental company. We have both gained in confidence coming to the classes and mixing with different people and exploring music. It was nice that there was that space after the sessions where you could talk to people, somehow... because of people who were there and the situations they were in.</i>

Feelings about Babigloo

General appreciation and superlatives	<i>Fantastic, loved it all!</i> <i>Amazing, will be so sad that this has come to an end.</i>
Different kind of group	<i>It's so different!</i> <i>Attending a class focussed on the babies and their development. Something completely different from other classes.</i> <i>It's so different and unique. The first week I went I wasn't expecting it. I thought it was a bit strange. It shocked me.</i> <i>Weird but brilliant.</i>
Comparison with other baby groups	<i>I tried going to Jo Jingles. I couldn't stand it. It was the same songs every week. What I love about Babigloo is that its real music and the theme and props are different every week. We can't wait to see what the next week will be.</i> <i>Best baby group ever attended.</i>
Want to continue / do more Babigloo	<i>Really enjoyed it and would love to do it over again.</i> <i>I wish it didn't have to stop – we had really loved it and have looked forwards to every week, even when we have been having a bad week. We would love a follow up course.</i>
Relationship with musicians	<i>Wonderful staff made our experience enjoyable.</i> <i>I never felt that I didn't want to go or like I didn't have the energy to go, partly because... well they're just so nurturing, to the parents as well as to the babies.</i>
Variety of materials, stimuli and sessions	<i>[Loved] all the materials used and waned all about.</i> <i>The different objects used each week – especially under the sea.</i>

Records of practice sharing

It is a strong feature of Youth Music supported projects to share aspects of practice within the music education and community music sector through blogs and publishing case studies. The project manager wrote [a piece for Arts Professional](#) and the evaluator created 2 case studies of families from Phase 2 which was posted on the Youth Music Network website and shared via social media. In addition, the Babigloo team were proactive at inviting professionals to visit and observe for themselves. A total of 47 people visited over the year including: student midwife, Poole Children's Centre Services Manager, Dorset Music Service Project Manager, Soundstorm's Director, Poole's Mayor, CBSO's Learning & Participation Manager and other family members such as grandparents. Feedback from visitors was documented.



Musicians' reflective diaries

The 3 Babigloo musicians kept reflective diaries throughout the project, to document activities and also to aid their own professional practice. These diaries have not been analysed for this report, but were used for formative evaluation by the musicians.



To what extent did the project achieve the intended outcomes?

The Babigloo evaluation adopted a collaborative approach, therefore the judgements in this section of the report were drawn together by the evaluator, based on the different data and evidence, in discussion with the Babigloo musicians and project manager.

Outcome 1

To develop musical understanding and communication in parents, babies 0-12 months and project staff using the Edwin Gordon Music Learning Theory.

Outcome fully met

Parents, children's centre staff, other visitors and the evaluator all recognised how Babigloo had facilitated using music to enhance parent-child communication.

Some parents and professionals admitted scepticism about the non-verbal approach at first, but through experiencing Babigloo and seeing the impact on babies, they became advocates – wishing for more sessions and for Babigloo to continue with older children.

Outcome 2

To develop the music making of project staff to use the non-verbal Music Learning Theory of Edwin Gordon in their activities with babies 0-12 months. Training and practical experience for the workforce staff embedding sustainability.

Outcome partially met

In Phase 1 and 2, the children's centre assigned an Early Learning and Development Practitioner to be a consistent presence for the families and the Babigloo team. Whilst the ELDP's did report learning from Babigloo and using some techniques in their work, there is no evidence of "embedding sustainability". Due to the highly specialised and skilled nature of Babigloo, and the materials and resources used in the sessions, it was perhaps not a realistic outcome for Babigloo's music making approach to be sustained or embedded beyond the time-limited project.

In setting 5 there was not a consistent staff member provided by the children's centre – different people attended which limited any personal learning for staff.

Outcome 3

To enable parents and babies, identified as facing barriers to music, to develop their musicality for themselves and their babies as a tool to improve their mental health.

Outcome fully met

Many parents spoke of making more music at home, of listening to and making a broader range of music, of using sounds and vocalisations more, and recognising how much their babies enjoyed and responded to music and other sensory stimuli.

Parents also recognised how music helped their babies to relax – both during Babigloo sessions and at home. Families used music to sooth and calm babies. The nature of the supportive group and the opportunity for a relaxed time together or "time out" contributed to families' wellbeing.

"Identified as facing barriers to music" is a vague term which perhaps suggests disadvantaged families or those requiring more support than universally offered to all new parents. Overall, Babigloo's success at involving children's centre "priority groups" was mixed. The short lead-in time for Phase 1 following the confirmation of funding, meant that recruitment of families was done quickly. Phase 2 had the highest level of priority groups – perhaps due to the longer time for planning and recruitment of families.

Setting 1 families were primarily recruited due to having older children at the infant school, rather than receiving support from the children's centre. They had the lowest level of priority group factors. The general pattern of parents' responses to the measurement scale questions, showed there was a lower percentage of parents who experienced change in Setting 1, compared to the other settings. The quantitative data on pages 2 and 3 shows that in settings with higher numbers of "priority group" families, a greater percentage experienced change, suggesting that Babigloo had more impact on "priority group" families than families who were supported by universal services.

Phase 3 involved a new relationship between Babigloo and East Dorset Children's Centres and recruitment of families was slow, leading to the involvement of mainly non-priority group families.

Reflections: What was important or valuable to people about Babigloo?

As well as the intended project outcomes, the open coding approach to data analysis revealed a number of additional aspects of the project which it feels important to acknowledge.

The group environment with a “non-judgemental” atmosphere was valued by parents which they contrasted with other baby groups they had experienced. The social mix of families was noted, and parents empathised with others who they perceived to be experiencing difficulties in their lives. The musicians noted how

The relationships the musicians fostered with babies and parents were valued, described as “nurturing” by one parent.

Many parents remarked how different Babigloo was to other baby groups, music groups and music making families already did at home (eg. nursery rhymes) – and they delighted in this difference and baby-focused activity.

Reflections: Challenges and things to improve or develop

The timescale of the project development cycle and confirmation of funding meant there was a short lead-in time to recruit families for Phase 1. This resulted in a lower level of priority group families than might have been possible if there had been more time. This is a common challenge for projects where there is a requirement to commence activity within given timeframes following funding confirmation. The rhythm of school terms was also a factor when scheduling activities.

Babigloo originally planned to work with North Dorset Children’s Centres for Phase 3, but due to changes in personnel, this partnership did not develop as planned. East Dorset Children’s Centres were receptive to working with Babigloo and staff were supportive of the project. The additional partnership development time because of this change meant that there was a lower level of priority families than otherwise might have been possible. In addition, staff who supported the Setting 5 and 6 sessions in East Dorset, were not actively working with the families who attended. Although staff supported the sessions well, there was not the same kind of connection between staff and families as there was in the Poole Centres. This meant there was less referral to other services.

Working with 2 different children’s centre partner organisations meant that differences in monitoring, data collection and evaluation were inevitable. The lack of comparison between the 2 organisations’ data, limits the overall conclusions about the impact of Babigloo. It was not foreseen that East Dorset would adapt the questionnaire so

that only comparison of mean average scores was possible, rather than individual families’ questionnaire responses. More resources for evaluation could have enabled the evaluator to have a greater role in collecting data from parents, rather than relying on children’s centre staff, however, this may have proved disproportionate within the modest project budget.

Babigloo worked hard to create support by commissioners and decision makers who could help them to reach more families through further work. Visitors were whole-heartedly supportive of the work and saw the value of the Babigloo’s approach to music making. However, no one was in a position to discuss financially supporting further work. The year Babigloo Music for Babies took place was a time of great change for local authority structures as Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth moved to become unitary authorities. This may have impacted on any headway the Babigloo team could have made to developing support for further work.

Conclusion

Babigloo was a project valued by families and children’s centre partners. It strongly achieved 2 out of 3 of its intended project outcomes. Outcomes around workforce development were met in part. Parents and children’s centres would like more Babigloo sessions. The Arts Development Company and the Babigloo musicians continue to seek funding to offer further music making in Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth.

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