



Furthering Talent

2021 Review



Supporting musical young people from low income families

Welcome!

Welcome to the Furthering Talent (FT) 2021 Review. We hope you enjoy reading about all the fantastic work that has taken place across the country over the last 12 months, despite the obvious challenges we've all faced.

- We've been able to keep most Furthering Talent students continuing to learn their instruments via a blend of online and in person weekly lessons.
- This year has seen diverse music making opportunities ranging from beatboxing, to composing, to learning about classical South Asian instruments, and everything in between.
- We've brought teachers together at our termly Teachers' Forums to talk about good practice, share ideas and offer each other support.
- The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) continues to be the very heart of Furthering Talent and our partnership with music education platform Charanga has brought the ILP to life in an online format which is now available to thousands of music teachers across the country.



However, there's no denying that the last year was one like no other. The pandemic and subsequent school closures, along with the uncertainty around planning and the switching between face to face and online delivery has been a huge challenge for everyone.

I'm immensely proud of how the Furthering Talent team has risen to the challenge of Covid-19. We're very lucky to have such great Local Coordinators running Furthering Talent in our partner Music Education Hubs. They've all demonstrated amazing levels of positivity, creativity and passion, enabling the best musical experiences and holistic support for our students as possible.



Neil Phillips

Programme Manager, Furthering Talent

Regions

1. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
2. Bradford
3. Brighton and Hove
4. Hull
5. Leicestershire
6. Lewisham
7. Liverpool
8. Manchester (City)
9. Manchester (Greater)
10. Midlands (North West)
11. Nottinghamshire
12. Sheffield
13. Sunderland
14. Wiltshire
15. Worcestershire



Over 40
Teachers' Forums



Over 15,000
lessons



543 Young
Musicians



32 Get Together
events



Some statistics

- We worked with young people of over 20 different ethnicities
- 27 students had English as an additional language
- 8 were looked after children
- 2 were refugee children
- 15 had special educational needs
- 2 were young carers
- Around 60 young people faced additional barriers beyond financial ones
- 187 instrumental teaching staff received training through FT
- 58 young people achieved accreditation such as ABRSM, Rockschoool and Arts Award.

Get Togethers

Every term our team of Local Coordinators organise a 'Get Together' event for the students in their Hub. These are high-quality musical opportunities of any genre and are a chance for the young people to explore the wide world of music and find some inspiration for their own music making. The aim is to make the experiences as exciting and broad as possible so we've seen everything from beatboxing and opera to jazz and composition.

Spring

In the spring we once again found ourselves in lockdown. However that didn't stop Local Coordinators getting their thinking caps on and coming up with some really creative and interesting ways to bring their students together online. Several Hubs hosted sessions by South Asian Arts UK, where young people learned about South Asian countries, their cultures, languages, food and of course their music, including how to play some special scales to accompany the professional musicians.



Summer

By the time summer arrived some events were thankfully starting to take place in person once again and we were able to offer a huge range of music making opportunities across our partner Hubs. Birmingham Contemporary Music Group worked with students in Nottinghamshire, the A4 Brass Band were in Bradford, composer James Redwood worked with students in Brighton and Lewisham students visited the amazing Horniman Museum where they learned how to play gamelan.



Autumn

Things got quite noisy for some Hubs in the autumn term. Sunderland students went to see the School of Rock musical, students in Staffordshire learned how to beatbox, and Brighton students explored samba with the fantastic Beat Goes On. We also had our big joint Get Together at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester, and Hull students had the chance to play taiko drums and gamelan.





Bradford

I have the privilege of conducting the Junior Brass Band in Bradford in which there are 8 FT pupils. We went back to face to face rehearsals in April and the look on their faces when the band played their first note together was amazing!

It was as if they were thinking, “so this is what it sounds like!” I think we all now treasure live making music together so much more as it has been one thing that has been so difficult to replicate on Zoom.

Helen Borg, Bradford Coordinator

Highlights of the Year: Grow Wild



In early 2021 FT students were invited to perform at the Music for Youth Festival in Birmingham, their first opportunity to make music in a group since the pandemic. To celebrate the return of live music, a piece was composed especially for the event with young musicians from six of our partner Hubs in Bradford, Brighton, Hull, Leicestershire, Manchester and Wiltshire participating in online composing sessions on Zoom.

Led by multi-disciplinary musicians Yshani Perinpanayagam and Tom Lawrence, the piece uses recordings of students from the six FT Hubs. The previous year had seen a massive increase in the use of Zoom to continue music tuition. FT teachers had been keeping their lessons running once a week via the platform. To overcome the technical difficulties Tom and Yshani decided to embrace them, using the distortions and accidents in the creative process.



I love the amount of dissonance in it, I think it really summed up how everyone was at the time. We all got a lot of pleasure out of just making sound, making chaotic sound, knowing that other people were doing that with us.

Yshani Perinpanayagam

Co-composer, Grow Wild

Highlights of the Year: Grow Wild



After months of workshops, recordings and rehearsals, the young people were ready to perform at the Music for Youth Festival in July. Sadly, due to the ongoing pandemic, the live event had to be cancelled. While the project didn't make it to the stage as intended, it was still an enormous achievement and a valuable learning experience.

Despite this, Grow Wild continued. The festival moved online and the piece was premiered on YouTube. In December a short film documenting the process debuted at the Music Mark conference, shown both in person and online as part of the virtual event.

Since then the participating children have continued to practice their parts and have been meeting in person to rehearse. AYM are working with our six Hub partners to bring all the young people together in 2022 to finally perform Grow Wild live, together!



Despite the ongoing impact of the pandemic in 2021 on children and young people's ability to access music lessons, and the 'stop-start' nature of opportunities to play together, it was so exciting to see the way in which pupils involved were able to not only develop their own skills but also come together musically through the Grow Wild project.

Bridget Whyte
CEO, Music Mark

Highlights of the Year: Chetham's



In November 2021 Furthering Talent students from Manchester, Bolton and Bradford came together at the prestigious Chetham's School of Music for our biggest Get Together yet. Chetham's Outreach team had worked with the individual Hubs before on a variety of projects, but never at the same time! The day provided an opportunity for young musicians to make new friends and progress in their musical learning.

The event began with an introduction from Radio 3 presenter and Joint Principal Tom Redmond, who gave an inspiring speech about his particular musical journey and the importance of exploration. The students then broke off into four workshops exploring rhythm, practice, composition and wellbeing. At the end of the day they put their new skills and ideas to good use in a huge musical collaboration.



It was lovely to have the Furthering Talent students with us and to be able to contribute to the programme. It was a busy, creative day which the students really seemed to enjoy. Playing an instrument should be about joy and fun - we certainly experienced both of those things.

Emma Cunliffe

Outreach Programme Manager, Chetham's School of Music

Our students

One of the real highlights of the last year has been the resilience of the young people in making Furthering Talent happen; they have turned up week after week to their instrumental lessons, whether online or in person, and given their all to the musical opportunities offered to them.



Through lockdown I enjoyed playing. AYM was a great help as they were able to make sure I could keep learning and improving even though most places weren't doing lessons. Thanks to them I have improved so much over the past year. **Ben, 12**

When Codi first started trumpet, she didn't know how to read music, let alone play an instrument and it's clearly had a positive effect on her grades at school now. It's helped her to find herself a little bit as well - she is far more confident than she was prior to having music lessons. I think that's because she has realised that you haven't got to be perfect in life and mistakes happen! **Codi's mother**



Millie is on the Furthering Talent programme and it has changed her life! She was the most quiet and shy little girl but now she is blossoming. Mam sends pictures into school of lessons and gives updates whenever she comes to pick Millie and her brother up. She is just thriving - she is a changed little girl!

Emma Mapplebeck,
Sunderland Project Producer

Teachers' Forums

We knew that so often music teachers were working in isolation and sometimes felt they lacked support from their peers. Our termly Teachers' Forums are an opportunity to sit around the real or virtual table and share good news, ideas and updates about their students. There's also the chance to get tips in areas where they are struggling, share good practice, learn about other developments and opportunities and just feel part of a team.



Emma Mapplebeck

Sunderland Project Producer

It was interesting to hear about the positive side of our online lesson set up. Teachers commented on how it helped create a relationship with the parent as well as the student as parents were often helping the younger ones log into lessons. As this was our first Teachers' Forum many people commented on how valuable the discussion between teachers can be.



Abimaro Gunnell

Lewisham Project Producer

It was great just to hear how people are finding the ILPs and to hear about the creativity needed to navigate around the challenges of online lessons. One of the trumpet teachers discussed how to help a student in achieving the correct embouchure when the child has lost their front teeth!



Becky Woodcock

Worcestershire Coordinator

The main areas of discussion have been supporting the staff in the first months of the programme to establish good systems and processes and get their feedback on what has been successful and what needs improvement. Getting further staff on board to use the Charanga platform for ILPs will be a key focus for future forums.

2022 and beyond



We're now looking forward to another exciting year of Furthering Talent. We will soon have over 600 young people on the programme, and we are always looking for more opportunities to help them progress and flourish as musicians.

We are about to begin a pilot project in partnership with the BBC Symphony Orchestra which will see five Furthering Talent students mentored by BBCSO musicians over the course of the year. They'll also be invited to BBC events including attending the Proms. We are hoping that this pilot will be a real success so that we can make the offer to more students next year. AYM also continue to organise a regular series of online events for young musicians to attend, ranging from instrumental masterclasses to expert panel discussions on a wide range of subjects.

Our partnership with Charanga will continue to grow. The Online ILP we have developed together will be made available for Charanga users across the country, enabling our personalised learning approach to be accessed by tens of thousands of teachers and young people.

We've also secured a strategic grant from Arts Council England to further develop and expand our Identifying Musical Talent and Potential Training model. The training helps teachers spot musical potential in individual young people when working with groups and encourages teachers to reflect on their own practice. We produced some updated films to accompany the training last year and we are looking forward to meeting many more great music leaders as we deliver the training across England over the next 12 months.



Get in touch

For more information about Furthering Talent and for details of your Local Coordinator please contact:

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