

Young Sounds Connect: Mentor Job Description – Supporting Information

About Young Sounds UK

Musical talent is everywhere, but opportunity isn't. Financial and social obstacles too often get in the way. Young Sounds UK is here to change this.

For 28 years, we've supported talented young people from low-income families, helping them to overcome these barriers. Whatever the genre, our four programmes help young musicians from across the UK to fulfil their musical potential:

- **Discover:** Training teachers in how to spot young people's musical potential.
- **Connect:** Targeting and sustaining young people's emerging talent through strategic support.
- **Thrive:** Funding young talent UK-wide through annual grants and tailor-made support for individual musicians.
- **Innovate:** Leading new thinking and action on talent development.

Connect: Programme Summary

Connect aims to effect significant change in how the musical potential of young people from low-income families is identified and supported.

Our programme focuses on three key outcomes:

- **Musical ownership:** Young people have an increased sense of ownership of their musical journey, experiencing the joy of becoming better musicians, discovering new music and playing with others.
- **Self-belief:** Young people develop increased confidence through playing an instrument or singing to the best of their ability and experiencing musical success.
- **Young person-centred practice:** Music leaders have an increased understanding of how to support personalised instrumental and vocal teaching and musical progression.

How Connect Works

From April 2023 to March 2028, thanks to significant support from Youth Music and Arts Council England, Connect will continue to support over 1,000 young people through partnerships with Music Hubs across England.

Working alongside our partner Music Hubs, we train instrumental and classroom teachers through our Discover programme to recognise musical potential and nominate young people who would benefit from additional support.

Each young person on Connect benefits from:

Instrumental or vocal tuition

Weekly tuition, either individually, in pairs or in small groups, funded by our Music Hub partners.

Personalised musical progression

Each young person works with their instrumental or vocal teacher to develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), setting three goals for their musical progression. These goals are reviewed and updated each term, wherever possible using our Online-ILP tool, developed in partnership with Charanga.

Individual support and opportunities

Each young person has access to a personal budget to help them achieve their musical goals, such as purchasing music or attending concerts. Local Connectors work with families and partner organisations to identify further opportunities and remove barriers to progression.

Other Key Elements of Connect

Musical Opportunities and Get Togethers

Many Connect participants are musically isolated, with limited opportunities to make music with others. We work closely with local, regional and national music organisations to broaden young people's musical horizons and introduce them to new experiences across a wide range of genres.

Each Hub holds at least one Get Together per term, bringing young musicians together to participate in musical activities, workshops and performances.

Previous activities have included iPad composition workshops, recording studio sessions, orchestral experiences and informal sharing concerts where young musicians perform to their peers, family and friends.

Parents, carers and family members are encouraged to attend, with support available for transport costs where needed.

Mentors play an important role in supporting the planning and coordination of Get Togethers, attending events and helping to collect evaluation and reporting information from participants.

Connectors

Each Hub has a Connector who plays a crucial role in the success of the programme.

Connectors work closely with young people, families, teachers and local partners to coordinate communication, identify opportunities for musical progression and help overcome barriers to participation.

They provide personalised, hands-on support and act as a key point of contact for young people and their families throughout their involvement in Connect.

Communities of Support

Connect aims to create a strong sense of belonging for young musicians, their families and the teachers who support them.

Get Togethers provide opportunities for young people to meet and make music with others who share their interests, while parents and carers can build relationships and share experiences with other families.

We also host termly Teachers' Forums in each Hub, providing paid opportunities for instrumental and vocal teachers to discuss students' progress, reflect on their practice and share ideas to support the development of the programme.

Workforce development remains central to Connect, with teachers also having access to Young Sounds' training and professional development opportunities.

The Connect Mentoring Programme

As part of the 2023–2028 programme phase, Young Sounds has developed its mentoring offer, recruiting and training a Mentor to work alongside the Connector in each Hub.

Mentors provide additional support to young musicians and their families, helping them to engage with the programme and make the most of the opportunities available.

Working closely with the Connector and the wider Young Sounds team, Mentors support the programme through:

- Communicating and building positive relationships with young people and their families.
- Supporting the planning and delivery of Get Togethers and other musical activities.
- Providing individual mentoring sessions for young people taking part in Connect.
- Encouraging young people to take ownership of their musical journeys and explore opportunities for progression.
- Supporting the collection of evidence, feedback and evaluation data to help us understand the impact of the programme.

Through this work, Mentors contribute to Connect's wider ambition: giving young people facing financial and social barriers the opportunity to develop their musical potential and enjoy a fulfilling musical life.