

“As a children's centre, IMM means that can offer targeted support, early intervention and prevention. It ticks all the boxes as far as we're concerned and we can see children & parents thoroughly enjoying it!”

Children's Centre Manager

“I worked with one little girl who had social issues - issues at home, she was very introverted and not getting any support. She really grew in confidence and now she'll come and find me and ask to do music.”

Early Years Practitioner

“We've seen some clear progress e.g. in concentration and social interaction – in at least one area always. For example, one child who had high end autistic spectrum and behavioural difficulties, this was the first time we found an intervention that really engaged him and that his parents committed to.”

Nursery Manager



What is Interactive Music-Making?



Shortlisted for AHA Awards in 2012 and 2013:
Achieving Excellence in Training & Development
Supporting the Future Workforce



Interactive Music-Making is a child-centred approach to music-making, which establishes positive relationships and fosters the child's individual potential.

Who is it for?

Interactive Music-Making has an inclusive approach when working with the under 5's and has benefits for young children who may or may not have additional needs affecting their development.

There was a boy with social and communication needs in one of my groups... He came out with his first word ever and kept going from there! I was able to get him referred on to Music Therapy, music was clearly making an impact."

Early Years' Practitioner/Interactive Music-Maker

How does it work?

High-quality play is nationally documented as being essential to establishing healthy social and emotional foundations in the early years.

Music can provide a unique, stimulating play environment. Encouraging children to become actively involved in making music can offer an opportunity for them to respond spontaneously in ways which are directly linked to the development of their general skills.

Interactive Music-Making is designed to make music a more integral part of all children's early development opportunities. Interactive Music-Making is designed to promote skills associated with developing social communication, including:

- Attention and listening
- Non-verbal expression
- Vocal responses
- Communication skills
- Turn-taking and sharing
- Social understanding and confidence



"I had no idea how musical instruments were going to help improve my son's balance, co-ordination and motor skills, let alone his speech and social skills. The paediatrician said how sociable he is for an autistic child, something I would never have expected her to say before he started Interactive Music-Making."

Parent of a child who attended Interactive Music-Making sessions

Is this Music Therapy?

No. Music therapy services have a psychological focus and very clear referral criteria. Therapists typically work with children and young people (up to 19) or adults who have been identified as experiencing complex psycho-social and emotional challenges which could impact on their life chances. Interactive Music-Makers are trained to recognise if a child accessing an Interactive Music-Making programme displays a level of need that would be more appropriately addressed through Music Therapy. In this instance a referral to Oxleas Music Therapy Service, or other local Music Therapy Service, would be discussed.

"For those children for whom enhanced services in their nurseries are not sufficient, the Interactive Music-Making course enables quick and informed onward referrals. I really do see this model as best practice for early intervention."

Lisa Thompson (Head of Therapy and Integration,
Children & Young People's Services, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust)

Interactive Music-Making for Practice: A Learning Opportunity

Interactive Music-Making for Practice is a practice-based academic module, so what is learnt in the teaching sessions is designed to be directly applied in the workplace. The course comprises 12 weeks teaching and 8 weeks supervised practice. The teaching component covers the following areas of study:

- Child development
- Attachment theory & mother/infant interaction
- Musical resources
- Interactive Music-Making in the workplace
- When to make a referral to a music therapy service
- Child-centred play
- How Interactive Music-Making facilitates early child development
- Developing relationships and social communication through Interactive Music-Making

To find out more about training as an Interactive Music-Maker:
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or visit www.interactivemusicmaking.org