



Music House for Children
Celebrating 25 years of music making, learning and achievement.
1994-2019

A note from Emma, Founder of Music House for Children spoken at the 25th anniversary concert on Sunday 23rd June.

“25 years! Wow! Who’d have thought it? From early beginnings in 1994 with me zooming around on my motorbike to teach in homes and nursery settings, to creating a beautiful music school with several thousand children learning instruments, many more thousands enjoying baby music with their families, nursery settings and at festivals, teachers engaging in new skills, collaborative intervention projects and case studies, training for the early years sector, music and instrumental resources, delightful illustrative songs, and all still supported by a fantastic freelance team and full-time team of just three.

I wanted to provide high quality music learning combined with multi-sensory, playful experiences. By learning and performing music other skills could be mastered – language, reading, multi-tasking, confidence, creativity and the ability to adapt these skills throughout life.

Music House for Children’s journey reflected my longtime dream to establish a bricks and mortar charitable school for musical experiences, learning, training and performance that was accessible and inclusive for all. So in 2000 we did a secret hand-shake purchase of Bush Hall, saved up for a year (credit cards, loans, friends, family, bending the rules...) and finally walked in. Like a rocket we took off.

25 years later here we are, with all it’s bumps, cliff tops, tightrope moments, and now political unrest, with a beautiful concert space, musical storytelling workshops, shows, training for early years people, drop-in newborn, baby and toddler music, group instrumental lessons, music appreciation for those with additional need,s percussion and multi-arts for additional needs, extended special projects in nursery settings, children’s centres, early years SEND units; providing bespoke research and case studies to share the significance of music in early development, oh, and last but so not least, our wonderful Bush Hall as a platform for transatlantic, international and national grown artists and bands. Our illustrative music books, instruments and visuals continue to enchant young children and babies. Bush Hall’s dining rooms now provides a great supper and much needed tea for families after school.

Music House for Children has worked with some of the finest, most passionate educators in the field of music education. Here is a snapshot of some of our achievements with up to 60 freelance educators over the years:

- Employment for **946** musicians, workshop leaders, teachers, early years specialists, work placements, interns, volunteers.
- Early childhood music training for **1,145** musicians, educators, librarians, SEND leaders, childminders and early years teachers
- Music lessons, workshops, shows and tales for over **60,000** babies & toddlers
- Music lessons, workshops and concerts for over **70,000** children
- **79** special projects and case studies to nurture life, communicative and musical skills in babies, young children, children, children with additional and profound needs, children from pupil referral units and young people from vulnerable circumstances and backgrounds - reaching over **30,000** beneficiaries, their families and siblings.
- **70** annual concerts at Bush Hall and church halls
- Over **360** musical story-tales, workshops and shows performed
- Presented at **24** conferences and educational events
- Collaborated with, and supported **12** music services
- Worked with and supported training and work for **5** music conservatoires
- **69** funding support by brilliant organisations including Youth Music (**7**) and ACE
- Developed and established **6** early years teaching programmes
- **6** early years training courses for musicians and the early years sector
- Performed **9** Little Birdsong concerts for babies, toddlers and families
- Developed and commissioned **22** award-winning early years instruments
- Composed, designed and created **6** early years illustrative music books
- **3** Music House for Children staff weddings
- **12** Music House for Children staff babies with...
- **2** babies on the way

All with the incredible support, commitment, skill and energy of

- **3** dedicated full time staff with a special mention to Magda Skoczylas who has been with us since 2002.
- Up to 60 skilled, passionate and responsible freelance educators
- Continued support of the Bush Hall team of 10
- Our patrons, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Bill Bailey and Adam Ockelford

- Charlie Raworth who has endorsed and been a constant source of support and guidance

Former music educators and early years specialists continue to endorse our work in

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|-------------|------------|
| • Australia | • USA |
| • Canada | • Malaysia |
| • Italy | • LA |
| • Scotland | • Holland |
| • Greece | • China |
| • Hong Kong | • Cyprus |

All of whom remember Music House Children with affection and gratitude, and all of whom continue to fly the music flag as a right for all children.

As the founder I could be forgiven if I decided to call this a day. But I still have a vision of a more inclusive output, where we work collaboratively with skilful others to refine, develop and nurture child-initiated creative musical play, experiences and life-changing musical learning. This vision will only happen when like-minded people realise the richness and value of sharing skills more transparently, are more generous with pooling their skills and funds as we have done; and when we can focus on giving our children musical opportunities that does not have to be justified solely on it's academic, monetary or numerical value.

A defining comment was made by a mother who's three children benefited from music with my school over the years.

'Coming to your classes made me look at my children and be in awe of their wonder.'

Notable milestones

- Starting my first baby music and movement group in the then Peniel Chapel, Notting Hill, back in 1992, then meeting one of the babies 21 years later as a Music House intern
- Buying Bush Hall for the school only to be turfed out next door
- One of my musical storytales (Yoo Hoo and the Icy Wind) used for a Christmas show
- Presenting at The Hay festival back in 2008
- Producing and performing my musical storytales at Glastonbury – now in our 9th year

- Being told (I) was the inspiration behind my teachers subsequent teaching career
- Seeing my three boys develop a love, passion and skill for all music
- Training the staff at the Orphan Welfare Society in Saida, Lebanon
- Watching our pupils play because they love music
- A child being vocal for the first time during one of our case studies
- All Music House's concerts and seeing the children's responses to their achievement
- Receiving an award from Hammersmith & Fulham borough
- Still being here

Ongoing developments, plans and vision include

- Establish case study and research projects in Devon for SEND* groups
- Establish collaboration with new music organisations
- Secure investment to launch digital training courses and resources
- Better promote and market our beautiful teaching resources, instruments and books
- Cement new development with mental health groups in music for mothers and babies
- Develop practical and research mentoring for university students
- Consultation overseas in training the early years and SEND units
- Tighten up our ship in readiness for the next 25 years

* = Special Educational Needs & Disability

25 years old is a good time to reflect on achievements and to celebrate the support, energy, enthusiasm and commitment of so many teachers, educators, musicians, families, collaborators and of course, our brilliant patrons, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Bill Bailey and Adam Ockelford. Thank you to each and every one of you.

Thank you to all our pupils, families, partners, project funders, teachers, educators, music leaders, children's support units. Thank you to all the families who gave us your children to teach. Thank you to those who continue to help vocalise the significance of music as a rightful permanent place in supporting earliest development in pretty much everything in our children's lives.

Active musical experiences helps our children to be confident, communicative, and to creatively carve a personal and magnificent place in their world. This is achieved as a collaborative effort by all of us including the children themselves.

Our aim for the next 25 years? To carry on.

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