
EVOJVE

LINCOLNSHIRE ONE VENUES



**SO, YOUR
STUDENTS
WANT TO PUT
ON A GIG?**



A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS TO SHOWCASE MUSIC AT PROFESSIONAL VENUES

AIMS

I want to offer my students a meaningful performance opportunity

I want them to understand the music and event industry better

I want to empower students to make their own decisions

I want to understand how events work more and how my local arts centre can support me

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
WORKING WITH YOUR LOCAL ARTS VENUE	6
PLANNING AN EVENT/PROJECT	8
A YOUTH-LED APPROACH TO CREATING CONTENT	11
BEST PRACTICE WHEN ADOPTING A YOUTH-LED MODEL	12
EVENT MANAGMENT	14
NON-PERFORMING ROLES	16
OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO CHECK	18
POST EVENT CONSIDERATIONS	19
BENEFITS OF A YOUTH-LED EVENT/PROJECT	20
AND FINALLY	22



INTRODUCTION

If you are reading this you are probably a wonderful and proactive teacher who is passionate about empowering your students as artists, wanting to motivate them and give them the best opportunity to thrive in their musical careers...

First of all, well done you. We at Lincolnshire One Venues have been fortunate to work with teachers just like you and have witnessed first-hand what a difference you make to the young people and students you teach. Secondly, we want to help by inspiring you, and developing your capacity to create truly life changing and important skill development opportunities for your students.

HOW MIGHT WE DO THIS?

We want to share with you some of our top tips that we've picked up while creating live music events where the key decisions are made by the young people themselves. We call this a youth-led model of working. It is sometimes seen to work in opposition to the national curriculum, however, this is not the case. A youth-led way of working can easily sit within and enhance the curriculum's aims. We know this because of our 3-year Youth Music funded programme – EVOLVE – which set out to do just that.

In this toolkit we take our learning from the EVOLVE programme and highlight how you might be able to create your own youth-led music event either in school timetabled hours or as part of your extracurricular offer.

“But, what could be more inspiring than giving your students a chance to showcase their talents in school...?”

...Of course, showcasing their talents on a professional stage. How amazing would it be for your students to have created their own live music event and for that to be showcased at a professional arts venue, with all the lights, mics and electric buzz that can only come from the theatre?

“It sounds too expensive

“I wouldn't know where to start

“...Well the other aim of this toolkit is to inform you as teachers how a professional venue runs, and how you and your local arts venue can team up to enrich the cultural offer for your students.

Venues believe in young people – in YOUR young people – just as much as schools do. They see their potential and know that some are the creatives and arts leaders of the future.

“ANY ARTS OR ENTERTAINMENT VENUE IS CONSTANTLY GOING THROUGH PERIODS OF EVOLUTION, IN THE WORK THEY PRESENT AND CRUCIALLY IN THE AUDIENCES THEY SEEK. WE'RE IN A TIME WHEN CONSUMPTION OF CULTURE IS CHANGING PERHAPS MORE RAPIDLY THAN EVER AND THEREFORE, YOUNG PEOPLE ARE CRUCIAL TO OUR EVOLUTION AS A VENUE. [...] A DIALOGUE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE, TO LEARN FROM THEM, IS IMPORTANT SO WE CONTINUE TO ADAPT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN ARTS ENGAGEMENT. THE SAME IS TRUE OF SCHOOLS. OUR ROLE TO HELP FILL VITAL GAPS IN PROVISION CURRENTLY MEANS THE SPEEDY CHANGES FACED WITHIN EDUCATION CAN BE SOMETHING THAT A VENUE CAN HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT UPON. IT CAN ENHANCE CURRICULUM TEACHING, IT CAN HELP US TO WIDEN OUR AUDIENCE AND HELP THE SCHOOL TO WIDEN THE ALL-ROUND EXPERIENCE THAT THEIR CHILDREN GET.

**CHRIS KIRKWOOD
CEO, LINCOLN DRILL HALL**

However, most young people are not brought up in an environment where their local arts centre feels like a place for them. This is where schools and arts venues can work together to support each other, but most importantly to instigate a lifelong passion for the arts in young people.

Our aim is to inspire you to work with your local arts centre and to share knowledge of best practice in music and event management activities that will help you guide your students while they create their own music event, using a youth-led approach. Whether you are an experienced teacher who has worked on performances like this before, or a relative newcomer driving towards a new way of engaging your students, if you teach at a primary, secondary or SEND school, we hope there will be something useful for you in this toolkit that you can take away and work into your teaching today.

WORKING WITH YOUR LOCAL ARTS VENUE

There are many ways that you can help get your students creating and working in their local arts centre – and all it takes to start the ball rolling is to ask and see what is possible and what would work best for your school.

1. PUTTING ON A SHOW

Perhaps you already have an annual school music concert housed in school and just want to elevate it to the next level, OR perhaps you don't currently have a bigger scale performance opportunity and would like one. Have you considered hiring your local arts venue?

“People don't realise how inexpensive it is to hire our venue for a performance or gig. At the South Holland Centre the minimum auditorium hire is for 7 hours access. We would usually charge schools the discounted 'community / charity' rate which is £385. Most music events would also need to pay for our sound package which is £185. An event can be a financially viable option. To sell tickets from our venue and make use of the marketing team here the ticket commission would be 10% of face value – this would include online booking through our website, as well as through the box office. The school could cover their costs by charging a small ticket price. If they were not worried about making lots of money, a £6 ticket price would probably cover their costs if they could get around 100 people in.

Sally Harrison
Venue Manager, South Holland Centre

2. OPEN MIC NIGHTS

Many arts venues hold open mic nights which often take place in the café or bar area. They're much smaller scale but are perfect opportunities for students to test out new material in a safe, intimate and yet still professional setting. If your venue currently doesn't run an open mic night, and you have students that want to perform and parents you know would come and see them, pitch organising one with your venue. They would help promote it for you and supply necessary equipment – you would just need to curate the content and help promote an audience. Better yet, give the young people the task of marketing and curating the show themselves. As these events take place in an open and public area of the arts centre they are open to anyone from the public to watch and if you anticipate a large audience wanting to attend you need to be mindful that this type of event is usually for a smaller audience. Plus, it doesn't quite have the same glitz and glam as performing in a professional auditorium or studio when putting on a main show concert. But it's a great way to increase young people's confidence in performing before taking on their first stride onto a big stage.

3. DISCOUNT TICKETS

Now we're certainly not saying that venues will be giving free tickets away – alas they are businesses too and need to be sustainable. Certainly, venues can provide generous discounts to school groups. Pantomime season is the time that most schools venture to the theatre, but venues have a year-round programme of activity that can really help to increase your students' understanding of the creative subjects.

“If a school wishes to bring a large group to a show, we will always look at offering a reduced rate. Sometimes we allow the staff to come free. Ticket prices for children range from £4 to £8 each.

Tracey Mackenzie
Theatre Manager, Louth Riverhead Theatre

Some venues also offer a 'Pay What You Decide' option for a selection of shows, which maybe a more affordable option for schools paying for a block booking.

When we talk to professional artists, time and time again their advice for people starting out is to go and see everything they can. Seeing what is possible is key to inspiring young people to make great work themselves and is an excellent opportunity to begin critically evaluating the work they see and understanding the expense and work that goes into making live arts events.

4. WORKSHOPS & TALKS

Arts venues can't operate without a skilled workforce behind them, and if your students are interested in the technical side of music making and working in events, many arts venues would be happy to deliver workshops or talks for your students. This might not be directly offered on their website but getting in touch with the venue and seeing what they can deliver is the first step. Venue managers are certainly busy, but they are passionate about engaging young people and many would be glad to come and talk at an assembly, for instance, providing you book them well in advance and you're bringing young people into their venue.

“Happy to arrange these. Can be bespoke to some extent if the school gives us a good lead in time. To give you an idea, staff rotas are usually fixed around 6 weeks in advance. For a venue manager a 2 month lead up would be needed.

Sally Harrison
Venue Manager, South Holland Centre

5. PROGRAMMING

Each venue works tirelessly on producing brochures each year which showcase all the events that are taking place at the venue each season.

“Live shows are booked between 6 and 12 months in advance. Cinema is booked between 2 and 4 months in advance. I would really welcome the opportunity to work with teaching staff who would like us to programme specific shows relating to the national curriculum. I have tried in the past to suggest this and contact schools with shows I think are particularly relevant. Sadly, I hardly ever get a response.

Sally Harrison
Venue Manager, South Holland Centre

If you know you will be studying a particular genre of music, or artist, or composer, it's worth contacting your local venue and explaining what you are teaching your students. Venues might be able to programme something that would be in line with your curriculum that you could bring your students to for a much richer learning experience.

The bottom line is that schools and venues both care very deeply about engaging young people. By taking some time to meet with and forge a relationship with your local arts venue, you can create significant benefits for your students.

“We have always believed children are the future, so programming involves many children's shows and workshops. The creativity the arts provides enhances the minds, talents and thriving potential of so many young people! Arts Centres and Schools work best together on joint projects, where participation can take place at school but children can still experience coming to the theatre/venue.

Graham Burley
Manager and Arts Programmer, Stamford Arts Centre and Guildhall Arts Centre



PLANNING AN EVENT/PROJECT

Hopefully, after you have received support or hired a space at your local arts venue you are now at the stage to begin planning your youth-led performance. Before you hand over the reins to your students its worth putting some logistics in place to get the ball rolling:

1. SELECT A GROUP

You need to select a group to work on the performance. Some popular options include:

- a class of Year 9 students who might be thinking of choosing music as a GCSE option
- a class that is struggling to engage with music in a traditional classroom setting
- an after-school group who have already proved a commitment to music and the performing arts.

You may choose to put the opportunity out as a call out to all students and see who chooses to take it on.

From producing music events with students on the EVOLVE programme we would recommend working with a group size of 10 to 30 students. Less than 10 means you put significant workload on the students involved to create content and more than 30 ends up being chaotic with only 1 or 2 teachers / facilitators. But that said, you might want to include a larger group that already exists, such as a school choir.

2. SELECT AN OUTCOME

Anything you embark on should have an end goal, and if you're creating a live music event maybe that in and of itself is the desired outcome – but what else? Why take your students to perform at a professional venue? What do they get out of it? What do you get out of it? All these outcomes are much more achievable if they are thought out and written down before starting. A good way of cementing your outcomes into your planning is by using a logic model.

A logic model is a visual depiction of a programme or project. By plotting the different stages in a plan – the actions and assumed consequences (outcomes) – logic models provide a simple but powerful way of interrogating the assumed successes of a plan. Logic models are usually read from left to right, but in this case, top to bottom:

YOUR PLANNED WORK

ACTIVITIES

10 x 1 hour music workshops, 5 x 1 hour event management planning sessions. Performance at local arts centre.



OUTPUTS

Participation of 10-30 young people. Facilitation by 1-2 teachers. Visit by venue member of staff.



YOUR INTENDED RESULTS

OUTCOMES

Students develop their skills in composition and performance and deepen their understanding of producing their own music events. Venues and schools working together.



IMPACT

Children and young people begin co-creating school performances with teachers. C&YP seeking more performance opportunities autonomously at their local arts centre.

3. CREATE A SCHEDULE

It is up to you to schedule how you're going to get your students to the end performance. With EVOLVE music events we managed to plan, create and produce an event in 8 x 2-hour sessions, the equivalent of 16 hours rehearsal time and we certainly wouldn't try and put on a professional show in any less time. Working backwards from the date of the live music event, schedule in times when your group are going to meet, set deadlines for what needs to be completed during each session. You can't necessarily plan to the last detail what each session will look like, because of course the content of each session should be dictated by the ideas that have come from your students. See an example schedule template.

LIVE MUSIC EVENT	BEFORE YOU START	MONTH ONE	MONTH TWO	MONTH THREE	MONTH FOUR
MEET WITH A VENUE					
PLAN A SCHOOL VENUE VISIT					
SELECT A GROUP					
PLAN OUTCOMES AND LOGIC MODEL					
SCHEDULE SESSIONS					
BOOK ROOMS FOR WEEKLY / MONTHLY SESSIONS					
WRITE UP CONSENT LETTER FOR PARENTS					
SESSION 1					
SESSION 2					
SESSION 3					
SESSION 4					
SESSION 5					
SESSION 6					
SESSION 7					
SESSION 8					
PROMOTE THE EVENT					
TECHNICAL PLANNING					
CONTACT THE VENUE					
ORGANISE TRANSPORT FOR LIVE MUSIC EVENT					
EVALUATION					

4. CONTACT ANY PARTNERS IN ADVANCE

As well as keeping your venue informed and up to date with your event as it begins to be created, it's also worth thinking about any other partners that could be involved.

For example, is it worth joining forces with another school to share the cost of the venue hire, and create a longer event with 2 acts? Do you want to use the opportunity to raise money for a charity, and think that they could get involved? Perhaps you want to borrow or hire props or costumes? Or get press coverage of the event?

Think about who else you can ask to be involved with your performance and make sure you contact them sooner rather than later.

A YOUTH-LED APPROACH TO CREATING CONTENT

The chances are that you have plenty of ideas for activities that can inspire students to create their own live music event. This is what you do best as teachers of course! But here are a few useful examples of the type of activity that works well in the context of producing content for a live event.

Lincolnshire One Venues has always been an advocate of the youth-led approach. The following examples are also youth-led activities which are designed to put the students' creative thinking at the core of the live music event and encourage them to make key decisions, guided by the teacher in terms of practicalities and logistics. For more ideas and inspiration on music making activities you can find many examples online.

Delivering youth-led activities can be challenging. You are relinquishing some of your control as a teacher and that can feel difficult, especially when working with a group. You might find that working in this way you have a clear start and end point to your journey in creating a live music event but that during the sessions plans change, overlap or even conflict – this is ok, so long as you are still making progress towards your finished event. It is fine for plans to change if it benefits and develops the young people as music producers.

“For me the most important impact was working with the young people. Even when it was challenging it was all the more worth it to watch them blossom and do something they both enjoyed and were proud of. I grew fond of them and felt there was a mutual exchanging of skills. I learnt from them as they learnt from me [...] Allowing the young people to own the event for themselves and to not feel like all the action should be dictated and created by myself was a joy.

Emerging Music Leader
EVOLVE Project

TIME	TASK	OUTLINE	RESOURCES
15 MINS	<p>Foley/music making.</p> <p>Ages: 7-18</p> <p>To explore the way that music can be used to convey a story.</p>	<p>1 min of a silent movie is played (muted) (something like Charlie Chaplin), and the group must work together to make the sound effects and music over the video.</p>	<p>Musical instruments</p> <p>A silent video clip</p>
40 MINS	<p>Mashups</p> <p>Ages: 11-18</p> <p>To increase awareness of song structure</p>	<p>Print off the lyrics of 2 songs that work on the same chord structure. You can find lots of examples of mashup songs online, such as Shake it Off by Taylor Swift and Hey Ya by Outkast. Present an example of how these songs can be mashed together to form a hybrid of the two. Put students in small groups to create their own mash up of those two songs and challenge them to integrate a third. After some time to rehearse, allow students to perform what they've created in front of each other.</p>	<p>Printed lyrics</p> <p>Access to musical instruments</p> <p>Break out space for different groups to rehearse</p>
30 MINS	<p>Group song writing</p> <p>Ages: 7-16</p> <p>To get the group working together and but still have individual input.</p> <p>To create original material</p>	<p>Split into groups of 5 or 6 and start them all off with an opening line. Each member of the smaller group will write their own line until they have a short paragraph. Then, once finished, one member of each group will read out what they have written. Without knowing it, the group will have then created two verses, a middle eight and a chorus that the group can then put a basic beat to it in the next session.</p>	<p>Four large pieces of paper</p> <p>Pens</p> <p>Flipchart and paper</p>



BEST PRACTICE WHEN ADOPTING A YOUTH-LED MODEL

In January 2020, Lincolnshire One Venues held a creative professional development workshop for teachers and music leaders and from that we created a 12-point manifesto of top tips when working to a youth-led model.

1. SESSION PLANS SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE BUT FIXED

Whenever you lead a session you should never lose sight of the intended outcome and when that's in jeopardy be sure to keep things moving forward towards that. But if you plan a certain activity but the group are engaging in a useful and relevant conversation, scrap your activity and go with the flow of the young people's conversation. It's at this point that the session truly empowers the youth voice and you can get some innovative and creative ideas.

2. RECOGNISE THAT THE INDIVIDUAL MERITS OF STUDENTS SHOULD BE HARNESSSED WITH OTHERS TO MAKE A STRONGER TEAM

This is about recognising the abilities and talents of the group you are working with. It's about looking at ways that you can strengthen the group by utilising the more capable in the group. Perhaps this is allowing more capable students to facilitate and lead some students in workshopping or rehearsing. Perhaps it's about giving more capable students their spot in the limelight with a solo performance in recognition for them also helping another student with their performance. Music is a great inclusive activity – and merit can be found in many roles while you create your performance.

3. GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE ACTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Allow young people to do the risk assessment, to plan the schedule, to book the transport for the event day, to create the tech rider for the show. As well as this share with them the essential nature of each of these jobs. Without a risk assessment the show wouldn't go ahead. If the schedule is wrong audiences might turn up late and miss the show etc. We've found young people thrive when they're given real-life responsibilities and grow the most in confidence and skill as a result.

4. UTILISE THEIR PASSION AND MAKE IT YOURS

If a contemporary reference or trend is a hot topic of conversation amongst your young people (a good example while we write this being TikTok) do some background research on it and suggest to the group ways that they could incorporate this trend into their event. Passion fuels creativity after all.

5. ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO DEVELOP SKILLS THAT HELP THEM TO PRODUCTIVELY COMPROMISE

This is a skill that is often very tricky to teach young people in any context but particularly in a case where you're working in a youth-led way. If you are making key decisions about the event – such as what is the concept for the event – the group will need to decide on one idea and this will make some young people feel as if their idea hasn't been listened to. Consider ways in which they can still contribute their idea whilst agreeing to the overall concept voted for by the majority.

6. DON'T ASK YOUNG PEOPLE TO DO SOMETHING IF YOU WOULDN'T DO IT YOURSELF

Young people are led by example and if you are asking them to sing or lose their inhibitions in a silly warm up game then it needs to be said that you might have to be the first one to do what you're asking of them, encouraging a safe space where you are all in the same boat; if your voice cracks whilst singing to your students, or if you literally fall on your bum during a warm up, it's not the end of the world. Being vulnerable instead of a perfect authority figure is a sure-fire way of getting young people to feel more comfortable being creative with you.

7. VARY LEARNING STYLES AND TECHNIQUES AND CELEBRATE VARIETY

If you have a group that has a wide range of interests and abilities and your event doesn't seem to have a natural overarching theme, embrace that. Package up your event as a variety show or cabaret.

8. RUN WITH WHAT STICKS – YOUNG PEOPLE TAILOR THEIR OWN LEARNING JOURNEY

You might find that you had planned all these exciting and interactive activities to help your group come up with ideas for the event, but these don't seem to engage them. If they have passionate whole group chats instead then go with that. Equally if all this time you are planning a music gig, but your young people seem more interested in designing artwork for the event then actual performing, then go with it. Talk to the venue about how your event might take the shape of an exhibition instead of a performance.

9. BE RELATABLE

Be honest and human with your group, especially if you are going through this creative process for the first time yourself. You don't need to have all the answers, you can get things wrong and make mistakes with your group. As long as you're upfront with your group they will respect you and help you along the process.

10. WELCOME THE WEIRDNESS AND DON'T BE FRIGHTENED OF IT

In a creative process weirdness is welcome, as it shows your young people are comfortable with you, the group and the task at hand, and so you will get the best work from them in this way. Just be sure that any goofy behaviour is channelled in a way that benefits the end outcome and doesn't put the young people in a position to be humiliated by peers.

11. MANAGE EXPECTATIONS TO MINIMISE DISAPPOINTMENT

It would be fair to say that young people in a context such as this can often let their imagination run away with them, or not properly understand the logistics of what they want to produce. And whilst it's important to try and make their ideas work, they obviously need to be practical. If a group want to do a gig with a live tiger for example... well that's probably not going to happen unless you're doing a gig at Yorkshire Wildlife Park. But how might the group be able to get as close to this as possible? Could they find filmed footage of a tiger? Could the group build a life-sized puppet instead?

12. BE AN ARTIST IN YOUR OWN RIGHT

This is an opportunity for you to get creative as much as the young people. Pitch in with painting the set or accompany a young person on stage. If you have a talent or a skill that could fit in with the group's ideas, then be sure to throw it in the mix. It's not about taking the spotlight from the young people, but it is about helping them learn from someone with skill and contributing to team effort. And maybe you get to play bass on Bohemian Rhapsody onstage, just like you always dreamed you would...



EVENT MANAGEMENT

It is important that you guide your students' process not just in creating music but also in making the show happen. Event management skills are rarely taught in schools but are incredibly valuable in the working world and essential to any student serious about engaging in a career in the arts and indeed across a host of public facing industries.

Here are some examples of some activities you can do in your early sessions to encourage your students to think about producing.

EXAMPLES OF YOUTH-LED ACTIVITIES:

TIME	TASK	SESSION PLAN	RESOURCES
S1 40 MINS	<p>Dream big: What could their event look like? The student producers will come up with some big ideas for their event and understand the restrictions they will face by working in a venue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start session by talking through some ideas around what their event could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How could it be presented? What could it include – ask the whole group to make broad suggestions & write them down on a whiteboard or flip chart Once the ideas have started to flow, split into smaller groups. Give each group 20 mins to come up with a dream music event for their venue Come back together and ask groups to share back one at a time Once all groups have shared work, everyone should choose the top 'possible' elements that they could include in their event. Welcome a whole-group conversation that looks at the logistics of each idea and manages group expectations Create a basic concept for their final event 	Flipcharts Markers Coloured pencils Paper Glue Scissors
S2 40 MINS	<p>What goes into creating an event? The student producers will understand all the elements that go into putting on an event and begin to understand the required roles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break into smaller groups and give each one a pile of coloured paper to explore what elements they think go into creating an event. Ask them to write down as many elements as they can think of – give examples Once their time is up ask them to share back, a group at a time When they share, they will be asked to add their paper to the washing line – one end will represent the present and the other the final event Ask them to attach their elements to the timeline where they think they will need to happen Once all are attached go through with the group to make sure they are happy – move things about if needed During this, talk through the various jobs that will need doing at each stage and which role is responsible for each job. 	Flipcharts Markers Coloured pencils Paper Glue Scissors Post-its Washing line and pegs
S3 20 MINS	<p>Roles The student producers will understand what the duties of each role is and choose the role they would like to work on.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher will have displayed job titles on posters around the room at the beginning of the session Now the group will be encouraged to do a 'quick fire' rotation in small groups to write down the responsibilities of each role. They will have two minutes per role then move on Feedback together and add anything missing Lead discussion on roles and ask group to think about the one that they would be most interested in Assign groups – stating that they can be flexible to encourage producers to embrace their roles 	Pens Paper Job title posters



NON-PERFORMING ROLES

Not all of the group must be on stage, and learning experiences go beyond performing. Three key 'behind the scenes' areas of work are: marketing – posters, tickets, advertising etc.; technical – with responsibilities around equipment; and stage management – ensuring everything runs smoothly on the day.

MARKETING CHECKLIST

- Name your event and come up with a tagline
- Begin a marketing campaign at least 2 months before the event
- Design a poster for the event
- Create a FB event (using school FB account)
- Write a blog on the school website
- Write copy and find an image for the show, for the venue to promote it*
- Create a programme to give out to the audience
- Social media (Twitter, Instagram posts) if event is open to the public
- Liaise with the venue about running time and general show information
- Write a press release and send to your local paper
- Contact a local radio station and see if you can get an interview about your show
- Draft a letter to parents and students at the school advertising the event

* A venue will print their brochure ages in advance and it may be that you miss their print deadline. But they will also have a website and social media channels, so a great image can really help to promote your performance.

TECHNICAL CHECKLIST

- Write up a list of all technical requirements for the show, song by song
- What equipment is the school bringing?
- What equipment is supplied by the venue?
- Enquire about borrowing or hiring any additional equipment needed
- Create a lighting plan for the show
- Download and acquire any backing tracks making sure you are adhering to PRS
- Create a tech script with all lighting, sound and projection cues
- Cue any backing tracks in rehearsal
- At the live music event assist the venue technicians in cueing the show

STAGE MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

- Time management during sessions
- Ensure each group/student has passed on their technical requirements
- Draft a running order for the show
- In rehearsals, and during the actual performance, ensure that upcoming acts are waiting in the wings with plenty of time
- Create a risk assessment for the event
- Collate all the information on performers to be included in programme
- Consider ways of fundraising for the show
- Research and find all props and costumes for the show
- Create background images to be projected during the show

When we run EVOLVE music events, we find that by the mid-way point of creating a music event, when the concept is cemented and each student knows what is expected of them, sessions tend to run themselves. Each student is doing their bit and working towards their common goal. It's wonderful to witness, and whilst you might find you have more time on your hands in session it's important that you are steering things in the right direction, and that you carry on relaying information to the venue and keeping them in the loop with your plans. As the teacher you will be the go-between for your students and the venue. Important information can easily get lost in translation so make sure you keep clear notes on the progress of each section and create an 'information sharing schedule' with the venue.

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO CHECK

PRS

PRS (Performing Rights Society) pays royalties to musicians whenever their work is played, performed, broadcast or recorded. In order to perform cover versions of songs you will need a music license. Luckily most arts venues will already have a PRS licence that will cover your gig, but it's worth double checking with the venue. You may have to obtain the rights to any cover songs if you decide to take your music to an alternative venue or in an outdoor setting. PRS also applies if you record the gig and decide to share it online...

Did you know that from January 2018 Facebook and Instagram signed for a core license with PRS so that you can post and share music on these channels without breaching any music rights? So, if you record your gig and decide to share it on your school Facebook account that would be fine. However other platforms such as YouTube do not have this agreement with PRS and if your gig features cover songs you won't be able to upload your gig without first buying the rights to any cover songs. PRS can be a really difficult thing to get your head around and even Google can give you different answers. When in doubt, do gigs in registered venues with a PRS license and buy licensed backing tracks for any covers that you do.

LICENSING FOR YOUNG PERFORMERS AND CHAPERONES

If you're taking students up to Year 11 out of school to perform then you need to think about licensing. (Strictly the rules are up to statutory leaving, so can include 15- and 16-year olds.)

By law every child that performs on stage needs a performance license if:

- They are earning money
- They are missing school (your activity counts as school activity and so technically they aren't missing school...)
- They are performing more than 4 days in any six-month period

Certainly, for a one-off school performance that probably isn't applicable to you. But will need to apply for a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA). A BOPA allows an organisation to have an overall license for the performance of all children involved. The details of these differ slightly based on your local governing authority. It is a relatively straight forward form, which just informs the council of a performance taking place that features children, but most councils will also want to ensure that each production has enough chaperones for the event. Important detail – the person named on the BOPA cannot be a named chaperone on the form too, so you may need to find additional teaching staff or volunteer chaperones to help you on the day of the event.

You can find out more about licensing and chaperones if you search your local authority's website for 'Children's Performance License'. It can seem daunting but the process is in place to ensure that children are safe and looked after, not to stop them having a rewarding educational experience.

POST EVENT CONSIDERATIONS

You've planned it, created it, made it happen logistically – there is only one thing left to do and that is to DO IT. Your students will take to the professional stage and put on the World Premiere of the show that they have created themselves.

Here are some things to take on board on the day, and after you have performed your live music event:

- Document the show – take lots of photos and videos to feature in your school newsletter and bulletin boards around the school. This will serve as a good marketing tool if you want to do this again with another group of students from your school and can be used as vital evidence for curricular activity. And the students that created the event will get a real kick from seeing their efforts celebrated in the school.
- Check ticket sales and budget – fingers crossed, you made a profit on your venue hire. If you did the profit could go towards new music equipment at the school or into making the next live music event. If not perhaps the group of students can put their event management skills to good work in organising fundraising events at school to make up the shortfall.
- Evaluate – have a session shortly after the event where your students can have time to reflect on their performances and also how successful they were at planning and marketing a good event. Get them to write up a list of lessons or actions if they were to create another event. Did you meet your intended outcomes from your logic model? If, further down the line you notice an increase in your student's confidence or if your students are spending more time at their local arts centre, then find a way to record that impact and boast about it! This change and impact will have come through you instigating a meaningful and exciting performance opportunity for them.
- Check in with the venue – were you good artists in the venue's eyes? Did the venue help you and make sure all your needs were met on the day? Communication and reflection with the venue is key if you're wanting to continue your collaborative relationship with them.
- Have you considered putting your students through Arts Award? An event like this is the perfect process to accompany an Arts Award which is a professional arts qualification for young people. There are various levels targeting at different ages (Discover and Explore for primary age and Bronze, Silver and Gold for secondary and college age) Some of the awards for older children carry UCAS points. For more information check out the Arts Award website.



BENEFITS OF A YOUTH-LED EVENT/PROJECT

We hope this toolkit has at least inspired you to begin thinking about what might be possible for you and your students when embarking on the journey of creating music for and with your local arts venue. But if you needed any further encouragement as to why working on an event or project like this is beneficial then have a read about the impact we've made using this way of working with the EVOLVE project:

STUDENTS WILL:

- Increase their interest in music
- Realise the improved quality of music-making achieved from working together
- Feel more confident
- Develop new leadership skills

“It made me feel indestructible and I think we all had a voice.”

Student
St Peter at Gowts Primary School

“I really liked learning about how a music event is put together. I found that I was more a leader than I initially thought.”

Student
Welland Academy

TEACHERS WILL:

- Learn new approaches to music teaching
- Increase their confidence in working creatively with students
- See the benefits of working in a youth-led way
- Notice growth and impact in the work they do with students
- Increase a team-working ethic in school

“The year 10 students learned how to tolerate each other and involve students that they felt they didn’t get on with at the beginning of the project. They now plan to all work together and are much more inclusive.”

Teacher
Branston Academy

“I enjoyed being able to step back and observe how students interact with one another and manage their learning when they are given more responsibility, rather than being guided constantly by staff.”

Alistair Cowie
Holbeach Primary Academy

SCHOOLS WILL:

- Make the arts a higher priority and see the value in doing so
- Forge meaningful and continuing relationships with local arts venues
- Be on the path to Artsmark and significant Arts Award recognition
- Meet key learning criteria in the national curriculum in a more creative and student driven way. See below an example session plan for a primary school group and points on the national curriculum that the session meets.

There are dozens of other ways that this type of a project impacts on National Curriculum targets – but you know what those might be much better than us.

	EXAMPLE SESSION	NATIONAL CURRICULUM
1	<p>Introduction: Warm up game/set some ground rules. 10 minutes</p> <p>Exploring Music: Post it notes and discussion about music participants like. Listen to different genres of music and ask how it makes them feel. 15 minutes</p> <p>Song writing: Re writing the lyrics to Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. Participants show back their creations. 35 minutes</p>	<p>Learning Objective (L.O.): To explore music composition techniques using lyrics and sounds. To encourage the children to have confidence in their own work.</p> <p>Speaking and listening: Children are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.</p> <p>Writing: Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader</p>
2	<p>Body percussion and drumming video: Show them the examples of body percussion and set the group off to rehearse their own percussion compositions in small groups. Participants to show back their work and get feedback. 30 minutes</p> <p>Planning a gig: Making a spider diagram of what the class thinks should be at a live music event. Planning how to spend a budget in small groups. 25 minutes</p> <p>Recap/check for learning 10 minutes.</p>	<p>L.O.: To begin creating content for their live music event. To understand what goes in to putting together a live music event.</p> <p>Music: Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression</p> <p>Music: Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the inter-related dimensions of music</p> <p>Music: Appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music</p> <p>Speaking and listening: Children are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.</p>
3	<p>Introduction: Rain making (making sounds with the body) Rub hands together, clicking, tapping on legs, jumping (storm effect). 10 minutes</p> <p>Rehearse: Practise the drumming compositions from last week. 15 minutes</p> <p>Elevate to a performance: Get the group playing their drum patterns one after another to create a whole group original ensemble. 15 minutes</p> <p>Interactive PowerPoint: Get the participants to pick the songs involved in the Live Music Event. 2 Original compositions and 3 covers. 20 minutes</p>	<p>L.O.: To develop our percussion music for the final performance. To begin working on a cover song to sing for the final performance.</p> <p>Music: Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression.</p> <p>Music: Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory</p> <p>Art: To create sketch books to record their observations</p> <p>English: Use discussion in order to learn</p>



AND FINALLY

Be prepared... be prepared to be proud, and be prepared to have your students coming to you for more opportunities to get on stage, because nothing will quite fuel the young artistic flame like their first gig on a professional stage.

If you've read this toolkit and have embraced some of this advice, then you are either about to start, are part way through, or have completed an event with your students in partnership with a local venue. No matter what stage you're at, you should take a moment to give yourself a pat on the back. We are fully aware that all these suggestions in this toolkit are additional work for you in your teaching role, and we at Lincolnshire One Venues know and respect just how stretched you are for time and capacity. We hope that by starting a collaboration with your local arts venue and by investing in a more youth-led model of working, with a bit of extra effort from yourself you will soon have students organising their own gigs both in school and in venues, you will have your local arts centre programming shows that compliment your teaching modules, and you will have inspired confidence and leadership in your students, giving them real insight into the arts sector and real pathways for them to continue their work outside of the classroom.

We're a friendly bunch here at Lincolnshire One Venues and if you have any questions about this toolkit or would like some further advice or even just a friendly natter, then do get in touch with us. And if this toolkit does inspire you to create a gig then please share your pictures and videos with us, or even let us know of an upcoming event; we'd love to see more young people making work for their local arts centre... and any excuse to get out of the office!

We believe that putting on your own event with your students will be a really enriching experience... so, what are you waiting for? Get in touch with your local venue, speak to your SLT, get planning with your students and HAVE FUN.

