

Awards for Young Musicians
**Furthering Talent
Programme Evaluation**
Partnership and Progression

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Executive Summary

Since 2009, the Furthering Talent programme, which is designed and delivered by Awards for Young Musicians (AYM), has been providing support to disadvantaged young people, enabling them to build on their potential and develop as musicians.

The context within which the Furthering Talent programme is being offered has changed significantly in the past three years. There has been a major economic downturn; a change of Government; a review of Music Education and the publication of a National Plan for Music Education, one of the core elements of which requires Music Education Hubs to *ensure that clear progression routes are available and affordable to all young people*.

It is within this background and context that AYM has commissioned this evaluation report.

Judgements on the effectiveness of the programme and recommendations for the future were formed following the analysis of questionnaires designed to evaluate the success of the programme against its desired outcomes, a desk review of files and documents, and interviews with key stakeholders including a representative sample of the young people, their families, tutors and mentors.

The overwhelming view of what the organisation is doing is extremely positive. In devising its Furthering Talent programme it is clear that AYM has focussed on the appropriate issues and is targeting its resources effectively. Documents, advice and follow up actions are all targeted at supporting the young learner. Systems are exemplary and focussed on supporting the young person and his or her family, with documents, advice and follow up actions targeted appropriately. The vast majority of young people, their families, tutors and mentors are all benefitting enormously from the programme.

The programme is targeting potentially talented young musicians. It is helping disadvantaged young people to develop as musicians and to progress as instrumentalists. The programme is broadening their outlook as musicians and enriching their lives. Families, tutors and mentors are all supported. Value for money is excellent.

Nevertheless, the evidence from this evaluation points to some significant variations in how well these systems and support work in practice. Whilst the general principles are sound and work excellently for most of the students, families, tutors and mentors, the evidence suggests that some refinement of existing practice and issues of capacity need to be addressed to enable more bespoke arrangements to be made so that all young people and their families can benefit most effectively. Some suggestions for changes are offered involving building on existing partnership working and supporting progression.

AYM is already fulfilling a key strategic role nationally. No other charity appears to have a comparable reach or similar breadth. Working in partnership with organisations such as the Musicians Benevolent Fund and Youth Music, AYM is supporting the progress of talented young people and the professional development of musicians and teachers, as well as influencing good practice through its hosting of a national network exploring how the sector can work together to support young people's musical progressions.

Building on the successes of the past four years of the Furthering Talent programme, AYM is uniquely placed to play a significant role in the new music education landscape as the National Plan for Music Education evolves over the next seven years.

Recommendations

1	Continue to implement this overwhelmingly successful programme with the minor modifications proposed below.
2	A key individual should be identified who will co-ordinate communications between all stakeholders.
3	A more bespoke programme of support should be arranged taking account of parental circumstances, knowledge and understanding; and the student's particular interests.
4	Annual 'Get Together' events should be arranged in each area.
5	Instrumental tutors should identify short term musical targets, which are shared with parent/carers on a half termly basis.
6	Communications should be co-ordinated on a half termly basis with reports to AYM.
8	Review meetings should be held at key points in the programme.
9	The administration and management of the programme should be reviewed to enable the above to happen effectively
10	Continue to develop the key strategic national role of AYM.

These recommendations are explained in further detail on pages 22 to 27.

Background and Context

As part of AYM's current business plan the charity is addressing what it identified as some of the major barriers to progression for musically talented young people from lower income families. One of these barriers is the limited sustainable provision for young people whose talent is only just emerging as a result of their involvement in whole class group instrumental tuition in school. Since 2009, the Furthering Talent programme has been providing further support to these young people, enabling them to build on their potential and develop as musicians.

AYM provides the following definition:

Musical Talent: AYM believes that a genuinely talented young musician displays a fundamental **need and ability to communicate through music**, regardless of their current technical skills or even what instrument they are playing. In addition to this they need to be **committed** to their playing and to music, showing a strong desire to continue to learn and develop as a musician.

The programme has three objectives and two strands:

Programme objectives

- To provide eligible young people with an inspiring and supportive musical opportunity, enabling them to build on their emerging talent;
- To enable these young people to make considerable progress in their instrumental playing, impacting positively on their confidence and motivation to continue to develop as musicians; and
- To enable these young people to have their musical knowledge and experience broadened and enriched through their relationship with a professional musician mentor

Programme strands

- **Tuition:** Each young person receives individual instrumental tuition for two years (the equivalent of six school terms or 60 weeks in total). The frequency and format of this teaching is shaped to their specific needs. Their progress is evaluated termly and also reviewed after two years at which point a decision will be made as to whether to continue to support them.
- **Mentoring:** Each young person also receives mentoring from another professional musician. This includes accompanying the young person to musical events, helping them access the resources of local musical organisations and providing them with

advice and networking opportunities. Again this is shaped to fit each young person's individual needs and interests.

In addition, AYM also organises regional 'Get Togethers' for the young people and their families. These have several aims:

- Evaluation: to use the meetings to assess how they are progressing so far and what else AYM can do to help them
- Networking: to enable the young people to informally meet each other and talk about their music making and to know that there are others like them in their area
- Involving and informing parents: to introduce AYM and their work in person and reaffirm that they're here to offer advice and assistance
- Access to a music event: to give the young people the opportunity to enjoy a musical experience they would not otherwise have had the chance to attend

These events take place in several areas of England and are intended to provide valuable opportunities for young people at a low cost thanks to the support of the partners with whom AYM collaborates.

AYM works closely with schools, local music services (most of which are now Music Education Hubs) and other partners to identify the young people who can benefit most from their help. Many live in challenging circumstances, which makes effective communication with them, their families and their schools even more crucial. For this reason, great care is taken over evaluation. There is a termly formal evaluation whereby instrumental teachers and mentors provide feedback as well as informal communication.

The intended programme impacts are:

- For the young people: Considerable improvement in their instrumental proficiency and musical development, enabling their talent to begin to flourish
- For their families: Confirming their child's ability and increased knowledge as to how to support that ability in the future
- For their schools and the wider community: The creation of positive role models of achievement for the young musicians' peers (this can be particularly important in environments where disadvantage can make success harder to come by)
- For the mentoring professional musician: Increased knowledge and experience in the musical mentoring of young people

The context within which the Furthering Talent programme is being offered has changed significantly in the past three years. There has been a major economic downturn; a change of Government; a review of Music Education and the publication of a National Plan for Music Education, one of the core elements of which requires Music Education Hubs to '*ensure that clear progression routes are available and affordable to all young people.*'

It is within this background and context that AYM has commissioned this evaluation report.

Methodology

An internet search was undertaken to explore which other charities offered support for potentially musically talented young people.

Expert sources relating to teaching and learning were examined.

Desk research was undertaken including an analysis of:

- Existing internal evaluation data: termly evaluations from instrumental teachers on the progress made by their students and identifying key emerging themes and impacts;
- Existing programme management information held on the management spreadsheet;
- The identification and support processes for participating young people from the initial nomination point onwards;
- Existing data from the Get Together interviews;
- Contract agreements with, and other information available for, parents, teachers and mentors.

Four questionnaires were devised using largely the same questions to get a 360° perspective on each student. Using a four point Likert scale, the students were asked for their views on a range of issues relating to their own musicality, confidence as a musician, motivation, progress and improvement; whether they were inspired and enriched by the programme; whether they felt the programme was helping their musical develop and broadening their outlook; and how important music is in their lives. Respondents were asked to agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly with the statements or to say 'don't know'. Students were given the opportunity to comment further in response to open questions regarding how the programme could be improved to help, students, their families, teachers and mentors. The views of parents/carers, teachers and mentors were also sought on the same questions and, in addition, whether the family knew how to help the child to progress and whether they felt the programme offered value for money. All those who had internet access were offered the opportunity to complete the questionnaire on line. A total of 122 questionnaires were posted and non-responders were followed up.

A representative sample of students was agreed with Awards for Young Musicians for further in depth interview. Table 1 shows the range of students. The student, the parent/carer, teacher and, where applicable the mentor were interviewed to obtain a 360° perspective on each student. 26 of these interviews were carried out in person and 10 were conducted by telephone.

Table 1 Students interviewed

	Gender	Age	Instrument	No. of years in programme
1	Male	16	Bassoon	3
2	Male	15	Guitar	3
3	Male	14	Drums	3
4	Female	14	Cornet	3
5	Female	13	Piano	2
6	Male	11	Keyboard	3
7	Female	11	Clarinet	1
8	Female	11	Clarinet	1
9	Female	9	Bassoon	1
10	Female	9	Violin	1
11	Male	9	Violin	1
12	Male	9	Violin	1
13	Male	9	Violin	1

Examples of the questionnaires can be found at:

Student survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TTMH8CQ>

Parent/carer survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T3J88G8>

Teacher survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/THT7F7Y>

Mentor survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TPCF2CN>

Further interviews were held with Hester Cockcroft, Director, Awards for Young Musicians and three music hub leaders.

Findings

Finance and strategic overview

Furthering Talent is a unique programme providing essential, bespoke support to potentially talented young people who wish to continue to learn following their first access to instrumental tuition, but who would not otherwise be able to afford to do so. The programme sets out to comprehensively support parent/carers and the young musicians through contact with schools, music hubs, teachers and mentors.

A number of other charities help with instrument purchase or with tuition for older students, and a few offer help with tuition fees or other music-making opportunities for disadvantaged young people. However, no other charity appears to have the reach or the breadth offered by AYM.

AYM works collaboratively with a range of partners to maximise the number of young people that are able to be helped and to focus resources most effectively.

83 students have received financial support over the four years of the Furthering Talent programme with individual amounts ranging from £309 to £4502. The total amount spent on the programme up to the end of 2012 was £87,000. On the basis of the questionnaires received and the interviews with young people, their parents/carers, teachers and mentors, this support is reaching needy young people and represents excellent value for money.

Furthering Talent Programme

Of the 83 students enrolled on the programme 10 have dropped out and a further 12 have moved on after their two-year programme has been completed. 61 students are currently being supported.

A total of 96 questionnaires were returned including 32 from students, 30 from parent/carers, 29 from teachers and 5 from mentors.

Communications and information flow

Documentation is thorough and largely complete. A significant amount of information is in note form following conversations between the AYM Director and the students, parents/carers, teachers and mentors, which is an efficient way of being able to trace events relating to particular students. However there is a capacity issue. Not all teachers and mentors respond to requests for information and chasing them up is extremely time consuming. Actions have to be prioritised. It is not always possible to follow up on every issue.

Information on the website is also thorough and briefing sheets for mentors and teachers are comprehensive and helpful.

Despite this and having signed the agreement at the beginning of the programme, most parents, students and teachers interviewed could not recall what they had 'agreed' to do as part of their commitment to the programme. This is particularly evident from the response rate to the questionnaires, as they had all 'agreed' to take part in any evaluations. Two of the hub leaders interviewed were relatively unaware of what the programme entailed, being mainly concerned with the fact that disadvantaged students were able to access funding enabling them to continue learning. In both cases, the space in their diaries created by being interviewed prompted the response 'perhaps there is more we could do to help'. The value of face-to-face interaction prompted in this instance by this evaluation cannot be overstated. One teacher said:

'I have been trying to make contact with the parents for a long time. It has only been as a result of this evaluation that we have finally managed to speak to each other.'

Students

32 students completed questionnaire responses. They either agreed or agreed strongly with all of the statements. Out of a total of 356 responses just 23 were 'don't know' and 5 disagreed. There were no 'disagreed strongly' responses. Two students did not feel confident. One student did not feel the programme had broadened their outlook as a musician; one was not inspired and one stated that music was not an important part of their life. All other responses were overwhelmingly positive (see Appendices) with students agreeing or agreeing strongly with all of the statements.

When asked how the programme could be improved to help students, the responses included:

It's amazing as it is!

To meet up with other musicians and perform with them

It's been really good actually. They helped with funding getting me a (instrument), I think the support for lessons and instruments is a good thing.

I don't think it needs improving

We could meet up more often with the other furthering talent programme students.

Similarly, when asked how the programme could be improved for mentors, responses included:

I think we should meet up more often

In general, when asked if they had any final comments not covered elsewhere, they responded:

It's been really useful and helpful for me to be on the programme because it's got me more involved and doing more with music so it is really helping me to improve.

My teachers are fabulous and positive

I am very pleased with the piano which the programme helped us to buy. It has helped me really improve and I love it!

I have been very motivated and inspired within the short time I have been on the programme, I think it's a great idea and should be offered to more families to inspire more young musicians to continue playing their instrument.

In personal interviews, the depth and complexity of student responses varied according to their age and the length of time they had been in the programme. Inevitably, their comments

were highly influenced by their own experiences. Nevertheless, all students interviewed were enthusiastic about the programme. A typical response was:

Everything we are doing at the minute is really good. I don't think there is anything that could be improved by it.

One student said how much the programme had helped her to become more confident:

At the beginning I was not confident at all but over time I got better and I liked music. The teacher helped by being patient and they don't mind if you get things wrong but keep teaching you.

Other responses from students' suggest that they are generally unaware of the respective roles played by different people and organisations. Their comments centre on making music, their lessons and their teachers.

Teachers help to motivate us by showing us what to do to get better. Also playing the right instrument, not too easy but not too difficult;

I like playing 'cos when I play I can get lost in the music and enjoy playing the piece;

When I first started I couldn't read anything but now I'm getting used to it.

More opportunities to play with others were mentioned as important by several students:

I play a lot at school and I belong to a jazz band;

Help with grades was also seen as important:

I've done grade 3 but I'd like to do higher. I'm doing grade 4 but I'm not sure about any more exams;

In response to how the charity could help more they commented:

I like improvising, more of that would be good;

Help other students who can't afford it;

Some students, who had their lessons in groups said:

I think 1:1 tuition could help for newcomers;

Despite the use of a programme agreement signed by student, parent/carer, teacher and AYM which includes making clear which instrument is being supported, several of the students who learned more than one instrument were unaware of which the charity supported and spoke in general terms about all of them.

Not all of the students had mentors; from those that did there was a range of responses:

He's great!

Quite good to have a mentor 'cos we don't just play, like he takes me out on gigs and things;

Parent/carers

30 questionnaires were returned by parent/carers. Of the 330 responses only 17 responses were 'don't know' and just 8 disagreed with the statements. There were no 'disagree strongly' responses. All other responses were 'agree' or 'agree strongly'. Of the 'disagree' statements, one parent did not feel the student was making good progress as a musician; one did not feel the programme was broadening the child's musical outlook; one did not feel the programme was helping their child's musical development and two disagreed that music was important in their children's lives. Three parent/carers (10%) did not feel Furthering Talent offered excellent value for money, but 46.7% agreed strongly and 26.7% agreed, (73.4% in total), whilst 5 parent/carers, (16.6%) said they didn't know.

Parent/carers were able to be more forthcoming in response to how the charity could help them further:

I am happy with the programme and feedback is very good from the teachers, which gives the family confidence

(Student's) tutors are fantastic; they keep us informed and involve us in decisions about (student's) progress. We are very grateful.

(Student) really enjoys her music but I feel she lacks confidence in playing to others. She has come on in leaps and bounds due to her mentors help and total interest in (student)

It is clear that the involvement, knowledge of and support for parents/carers varies. From the interview discussions it appears that this is largely dependent upon whether the student has private tuition or learns through a music service with lessons taking place at school. This affects the amount of contact they have with the instrumental teacher. Nevertheless, the overwhelming sense of what the charity was doing was extremely positive:

*I'm **so** pleased with what they've done for (student) and for me as a parent and us as a family – absolutely brilliant! They've helped out with the music theory, they've helped out with the exams and they've been very accommodating because they came up with the programme for (student) – that was a lot more money.*

We are very grateful for the terrific support that Furthering Talent has given to us and (student) in encouraging and supporting her musical development.

The level of communication also varied and there was not always a clear sense of, if there was a problem, whose responsibility it was to solve it or who should initiate contact. This was despite AYM's drawing up of a one page programme agreement setting out everyone's responsibilities in making the programme a success, a fully signed copy of which is sent by AYM to each parent/carer when their child starts on the programme.

In this respect the 'Get togethers' were seen as wonderful events but they did not take place sufficiently often:

The Royal Festival Hall concert [2011] and get together was a good motivating and enriching experience. Something like this on an annual basis would be good.

Another thing that has been really good has been the 'gatherings,' I can imagine it cost a lot of money [in fact it was almost entirely supported in kind via AYM's partnership with the Halle], it was the first time I had been at the Bridgewater Hall. It was a nice experience and it helped to widen (student's) experience.

Get Togethers – it was good, I actually enjoyed it. It was the first time I had heard all that going on. I was really shocked. I thought I was going to be bored, 'cos I'm not into anything like that, but it was brilliant.

Sometimes there was confusion between the 'Get Togethers' and other opportunities, perhaps arranged through the mentor

Parental/carer circumstances also differ enormously. Whilst they all have low incomes, other aspects of their situations vary. One student is looked after by relations who have some experience of what is involved in learning a musical instrument. They are extremely supportive, have confidence and know how to work within systems and go out of their way to enable the student to have every opportunity and to succeed:

He goes to a performing arts school but we had to complain – they had a music room and they didn't open it. They've opened it up now so that he can go somewhere to practise. There used to be a good music teacher but he left and hasn't been replaced.

Other parents would not have had the confidence to take such matters up with the school. One example is a single parent with no musical experience who sees the charity's support as simply enabling the child to continue to learn in a group with others and who, without that support, would have had to give up learning. Playing the instrument is just another thing the child does. Despite written and verbal communications from AYM to make this clear, there appeared to be no awareness of what this might lead to or that the child had been identified as particularly talented.

But for another single parent the availability of funds to support something her child to engage with something she clearly cared about was a massive relief:

It relaxes the parents to know that someone is helping with the money.

It's brilliant, if it wasn't for the help we are getting she wouldn't be able to carry it on.

Getting the right teacher was important for one single parent who also paid for lessons on two other instruments and for whose child music was enormously important following the death of her mother:

Encouragement from the teachers helps her confidence. Everybody's different (student) plays for 10 minutes then has a go on the piano and the guitar. I'd love her to do 30 mins on each but she'd get bored. She likes to move on quickly. I think she's doing grade 3 on piano. The only concern I have is that if anyone knocks her confidence she takes 10 steps back. She needs confidence and encouragement.

And another parent commented:

She wouldn't be where she is now if it wasn't for the tuition at school – she couldn't learn on her own to the same level.

I'm grateful for what they're doing. I think it's wonderful. Without the extra funding she would have stopped.

(Student) speaks very highly of (teacher). If he does discuss the (instrument) there is never anything negative about it. From my point of view, I'm happy for him 'cos he seems content and wants to carry on with it.

Some parents whose children were having small group tuition mentioned that individual tuition might help:

Maybe 1:1, but there's positives and negatives about learning with someone else.

On a 1:1 basis she is alright, but I know she needs a group as well.

The subject of mentoring also elicited a range of responses:

To see someone more advanced, where they're going with it and where she could be going with it.

What they did that was brilliant was to get some free tickets for us to go to the Bridgewater Hall to listen to some orchestral pieces, which for (student) who would love to be able to do that is good experience and it widens the outlook for us as a family. That was a wonderful experience.

He's [the mentor] so motivated. He sometimes asks me if there is anything he could be working on with him, which means he's actually thinking of (student) and then I'll perhaps run through the things he is struggling with. His teacher put Hester in touch with (mentor). He was only 17 when he first started with (student) and it took a little while for it all to get up and running. He's an excellent musician. He knew he was going in for a grade. He's so enthusiastic about music and the (instrument). He makes you interested. When he first walked in we thought, oh, he's a bit different' he had hair down to here, but within 10 minutes he had us all interested and we're all having a conversation about (the instrument) – the whole lot of us. He's got so much passion. He comes from a big family and he's so easy.

He's [mentor] great! It's really helped because you've got a second person. If you are struggling with something – he struggled a lot with timing and I put that down to the fact that he doesn't play with anybody else. He plays on his own, in his own room, so he plays to whatever's in his head and the timing can be, one minute speeding up, slowing down because he's obviously struggling a little with that bit, then he gets into the habit of doing it like that so timing has been quite difficult and he [mentor] gets him [student] to look at it in a different way.

A number of parents spoke warmly and with enormous gratitude for what the charity was doing for them:

We've got a really good teacher, he's fantastic, so dedicated.

She is spellbound by music. Music could be an important part of her life.

Charity helps putting us in touch with good teachers, they've been checked. Say his mentor was here and I had to go out, I could carry on and I would have no problem. Whereas if you are picking your own teacher you haven't got so many guarantees.

Didn't really know a great deal at the beginning – felt privileged to have been chosen.

Extra lessons – very proud to have been chosen, very excited. Asking questions about what it means to be a professional musician and what sort of difference it can make to their lives.

The programme has been very supportive in giving assistance to help purchase a piano. This made a big difference.

If he listens to music he really listens. It is opening up how he thinks about music.

(Student) has now looked into different types of (instrument), different groups, playing some of their pieces from YouTube, and (Student) wouldn't have done that had he not taken up the (instrument), he would have tried to, because he was self-teaching before, yes, it has enriched his life because he's experimenting with (name) your mentor, bringing different instruments. When you look at it, it has been really enriching.

Much of the success of the programme was attributed to personal contact:

I am sure that, through the programme, we could find out what we need to know. I can email Hester anytime, or (teacher). But at the moment, things just run so smoothly for us.

I normally ring Hester if I've got any issues. She's open.

I've known the teachers since primary school and they know the house phone number so if they want anything they can get in touch. They just look after us.

We've had help from the teacher, the music service and the school. Everybody's been really helpful.

Unfortunately, not all parents were so confident:

I wish I understood music to help (student) more – 'cos some of the kids, their parents play an instrument so they know more how to help.

The private teacher agreed, stating that the only performing this student did was in exams and that wasn't sufficient. However, the teacher had neither the time nor the contacts to do anything about this as he lived in a different town to the student.

When asked about wider impact on their child, parents mentioned confidence and perseverance, as the following quotes show:

He struggles generally with his confidence, he is quite a shy boy. He'll involve himself to a certain extent and then, because he's shy, he holds back a bit, he won't go that

extra step. I think playing the (instrument) will help him get more confident, I mean he has come out of himself a lot over the past eighteen months.

Over the past eighteen months, if he tried something once and couldn't do it, it was game over, whereas now he's getting a lot more confident and will try again. He is definitely progressing.

He knows that if he tries hard he can achieve it. It's all just clicking with him now. He can do it, if he wants to do it, if he tries hard enough.

Other parents were less aware of how they might help:

He prioritises it at school. But he doesn't do anything outside school.

The way he has progressed has been left to him, he has had the choice about whether he wants to carry on. That's been good.

Teachers

29 responses were received from teachers. Responses were even more positive than from parent/carers. Of the 319 responses, 17 'don't know' responses were given, 6 of which were in relation to value for money as they didn't know how much AYM contributed. Just 5 'disagreed' with statements, 3 of which were in relation to the students' confidence, one related to the programme broadening the student's musical outlook and one related to the student being inspired. There were no 'disagree strongly' statements. In all statements, 'agree strongly' responses were greater than 'agree' except for those relating to students' confidence and whether the mentor was helping the student. The most marked response was in relation to 'This student is musical' 72.4% agreed strongly and the remaining 27.6% agreed. This strongly suggests that AYM is supporting the 'right' students.

In response to how the programme could be improved to help students, teachers' responses included:

Everything is in place. It is excellent

By informing them of all the music and resources which are available and suitable for them.

Perhaps providing funding so that pupils could attend a local music centre (Saturday morning). This would allow for ensemble work.

I think an hour's lesson would improve the student's progress quicker.

It's helping him with his instrument and in giving him opportunities for outside experiences. He gets to see things and he went to a workshop recently that was really good. All sorts of extra-curricular really. He gets so many opportunities it's hard to see how that could be improved.

It would be useful if there was a student platform where they could access information about the program and events that are available.

We are currently discussing the best way to use a mentoring scheme for these students. I feel that a few inspirational visits such as watching part of a professional orchestra rehearsal or taking part in a suitable workshop together may be more valuable at this stage than traditional mentoring. I am conscious that these children continued violin from a wider opportunities programme and may at some stage feel more of an affinity with a different instrument.

From my own experience I feel my pupil has managed to continue with her music after the transition from primary to secondary school. So many pupils do not continue with their instrumental tuition after leaving primary school. The Furthering Talent Program has been efficient in organising the financial side of tuition. So for that reason I do not think the program could be improved.

I think the system works well as it is. Particularly for a student of this age 1/2 tuition is ideal.

An expected set of goals to be achieved at certain points and explaining to the student what a privileged position they are in and not to waste it.

He wasn't very confident as a person, there were a lot of family issues, and he has really gained confidence through doing this and as a musician he is really coming along now, getting more involved and he has various outlets now for his music. He practises regularly, he seems very keen to better himself and he will tackle any difficulties during the week.

Being involved in the programme is certainly inspiring.

The following responses include those comments relating to helping teachers:

As teachers we are both very happy with the provision of the programme.

The program is very much peripatetic teacher lead. When you are teaching in groups with a rapid turnover it can be hard to afford the time specifically to these pupils and not disadvantage others. If there were other ways to disseminate info it would take some of the responsibility away from the teacher.

Direct contact with the parents from Furthering Talent over this review has been very useful as they previously hadn't attended parent/teacher meetings. It made a noticeable and positive impression on the children.

Provide funding for courses and suggestions of events, concerts, workshops for all Furthering Talent students, so that pupils are more aware of their involvement in the scheme.

More liaison with AYM to share ideas and report on progress

Possibly a yearly reminder of the expected outcomes for the pupil to remind teachers of the levels they are hoped to achieve. Just to jog memories?

Despite information and contact details being shared between teachers and mentors this information is not always retained.

Teachers felt the charity could help mentors more in the following ways:

I think if the teacher meets with the family in the first instant and explains what it is, how it works and why their child have been selected. Along with, what is expected of the child and how the family can support?

I think this is an excellent programme as it gives talented young people confidence and gives them the opportunity to get the most out of their music.

I think it is an excellent programme because it encourages young talented people to do their best and get the most out of their music.

I find the programme a great way to get young talented people noticed. It also gives them great confidence to do their best and get the most out of their music.

Exceptional opportunity for pupils.

This is a wonderful scheme. I wish I had more time to put more children forward.

I think it's working well as it is!

I have only taught (student) on seven occasions so far this year since he came to the High School I teach at. So far I can see the benefits of having a 30-minute one to one lesson each week. The mentor area of the programme is something I am currently discussing with my line manager at work.

I think this a great gift to be able to offer children who are not only talented but who may not be able to afford lessons.

In the interviews teachers' comments again varied and there were individual differences as well as differences which could be attributed to whether the teacher was privately engaged by the parents or employed by a music service. Again, the overwhelming response to the charity's work was positive.

Even just the payment for lessons is massive value for money.

I think it's brilliant, it's superb, absolutely brilliant.

Good thing that it is not just for one year – there have been so many aspects that make this important.

All were able to speak about their students and clearly knew them as individuals:

I feel I have seen a big change in his confidence.

He is so much more able to have a go at things.

She's not really confident but we're working on it. There are outside issues and the transition to secondary school – it's hard to be confident when you know you are a bit different from everyone else.

We see her three times a week, once in the band, once in a group lesson and once on her own. We had a bit of a blip with her when she seemed to want to go to youth club more than practise but she's turned things around 100% now. She wants to be involved in a musical career now... She went off the cornet for a while but is back on track now. She wants to be a musician but plays lots of things...clarinet, steel pans, baritone for a while because she had a brace fitted.

In performance, he wasn't so keen to perform on stage but he stands up now and he does it

When asked what else the charity might be able to consider doing to help further comments were enlightening:

Planning things that will be motivational and inspirational – these need to be tailor made, giving insights into different aspects of music through workshops/concerts – whatever would be best.

Mentors

Five questionnaires were received from mentors. These were all extremely positive with no 'disagree' or 'disagree strongly' statements. Just five responses were 'don't know' and all of these were in relation to providing value for money, as they didn't know what help the charity was giving. Responses for improving the programme included:

Perhaps helping to set up situations for more group ensemble playing under the scheme, as well as the mentor and individual lessons.

Clearer guidelines for mentors

Perhaps an initial "meet session" over an informal musical setting might be good. Sometimes, there has been a little resistance towards some of the mentoring ideas, because of inconvenience of date/time. This may be helped if the parents, teachers and students could all sit down together and get to know each person?

One of the strongest issues to result from interviews and comments by mentors is the need to build in flexibility and ensure young people from different backgrounds, with differing needs, can be met.

At that age, as a young musician, one of the things I think that is quite challenging for any young person is to be given the opportunity to be put in a kind of real life musical context. Making music with others, because essentially it is a question of communication really, which is something as a musician you learn.

Leaning more from real life performance opportunities and having to rehearse for that – if there was some sort of showcase could be put on at a proper venue – we could bring musicians together in a group. I guess you can't get enough of that experience, especially within jazz – rehearsing, jamming, playing, it's all about communication.

Anything, from an early stage, that can put him into that context is a really good thing.
Mentor

I have only very briefly met (student's) mum and like, for example, a lot of the things I am organising for him fall on a Sunday afternoon, 'cos it's often difficult for him to do things in the evening, there are often gigs or sessions on Sunday afternoons that we are going to and I know this is difficult for them for them because they go to church every Sunday and it is a special day so she sometimes feels a bit uneasy about him doing things on a Sunday.

When asked how did the mentorship come about – how did you get involved? One mentor was a former student of the same teacher; another mentor replied:

I know (teacher) from (school) I'm in a band with a couple of her colleagues and have done some playing with a few people she knows so she started coming to some of our gigs 'cos they were friends of hers and she came to two or three of those and through that she found that we were local – we did a couple of projects with (school) separate to this programme and she kind of just contacted me. She was keen for me to be the mentor because I'm still quite young and I'm beginning my career having done sort of three years into it and things are beginning to happen but I's still learning myself, which I think she was hoping would be transmitted across to (student). I was bridging the gap between him and fully fledged professional musician.

Interviewer: *do you think one person needs to co-ordinate things, especially if the parent doesn't know their way round the musical scene?*

Yes, definitely, (school teacher) has been doing that and it's really, really helpful. Whenever I communicate with (student) she is always cc'd and then she makes sure that he turns up. She's (school teacher) been excellent and I know that he (student) gets lots of opportunities at school because she is helping.

I think the flexibility thing is really important because I know that when I was that age you are not hundred per cent sure what you are going to do and how you are going to go about - maybe feedback more. (Student) has also started (another instrument).

One of the mentors interviewed clearly knew the student very well and were able to talk in depth about all aspects of his tuition on his instrument, his general musicianship, the student's needs and the family situation.

The programme is broadening his experiences and introducing him to different genres. It is really beneficial. It is helping to pave the way for his future. (Student) is one of those people who does need a push in the right direction, but once he has been pushed in that direction he is happy to take the reins himself. So if the programme can really show him the limitless possibilities of a music career for him...it's all been fantastic.

The teachers and mentors interviewed were unaware of Continuing Professional Development opportunities or where they could go to for support and further training, for example, AYM's Spotting and Supporting Musical Talent and Potential programme, the latest phase of which has been funded under the Youth Music Spotlighting series.

Discussion and Recommendations

There are currently 123 music education hubs. Over the next 2 years up to 600,000 young people each year will be given the opportunity to have First Access to a musical instrument. A significant number of these young people will wish to continue and will be from disadvantaged families and will need a range of support if their potential is to be realised.

One of the core responsibilities placed by the Government on the new music education hubs in the National Plan for Music Education is to *‘ensure that clear progression routes are available and affordable to all young people.’*

In order to achieve this, hubs have to have their own remissions policies and will need to work with other partners in ensuring appropriate routes are available. AYM is perfectly placed to build on its recent past practice to support and develop this work nationally as one of these ‘other partners’ enabling many of the most talented young people to progress.

AYM is working nationwide, but currently has a particular focus in certain areas, for example, the South West, West Midlands and the North West. It would be relatively easy to build on these partnerships to develop an even more meaningful and manageable presence in a limited number of areas. Whilst obviously continuing its current commitment to individual young people who live outside these areas, it would be possible to adopt a new strategy for beginners which pilot the recommendations in this report. In 2015, when the current public funding arrangements will be reviewed, the lessons learned could also be reviewed and the programme expanded further to other areas.

AYM wishes to support potentially talented young musicians, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Those who donate funds to the charity wish to be secure in the knowledge that their support is having the maximum benefit. A major challenge exists therefore as to how to select those students who will benefit the most.

In *Music Education in the 21st Century in the United Kingdom*, the following statements are made:

“In the early and mid-twentieth century, there was an assumption that individuals were endowed with different levels of ‘musical ability’ that were genetically based, relatively immutable and unchanging... The concept of musical ability has been severely criticised in recent years and it has now been acknowledged that every child has the potential to develop musical skills¹.”

“If resources are limited and selection procedures are needed to allocate those resources, interest in music and motivation to engage with it are likely to be better determinants of success than traditional tests of musical ability².”

¹ **Music Education in the 21st Century in the United Kingdom**, Ed., Hallam, S. and Creech, A. Institute of Education, University of London, 2010. (Page 87).

² **Music Education in the 21st Century in the United Kingdom**, Ed., Hallam, S. and Creech, A. Institute of Education, University of London, 2010. (Pages 87/88).

How can 'interest in music and motivation to engage' be identified? This difficulty is further complicated by the following findings:

"There is no 'best' way to learn to play a musical instrument. Human beings are pre-programmed to learn. It is a natural process, and musical skills can be acquired in a variety of ways. The particular method selected needs to be appropriate for the particular context and the desired aims. It needs to be 'fit for purpose'. Combinations of methods may be the most effective³."

Each child needs to be considered individually and an appropriate support programme put in place.

"One of the difficulties for teachers is that it is impossible to make children learn. Nor can teachers learn for them. An important skill for teachers is to motivate children to want to learn. There is now general acknowledgement that human behaviour is motivated from within and without and that there are complex interactions between the two⁴."

If young people, particularly those from financially or socially disadvantaged backgrounds, are to be supported, teachers must consider the best ways of motivating these young people. This may well require a readjustment to their usual approach.

We are motivated because we desire approval, particularly from those we admire and respect. Cognition plays a role in the ways in which we attempt to enhance our self-esteem, leading us to attribute our success or failure to causes which will allow us to maintain a constant view of ourselves. When a learner has completed a task successfully, this will have an impact on self-esteem and motivation that will be carried forward to subsequent learning tasks. Conversely, when learning outcomes are negative, motivation is often impaired."

The recommendations take account of the information reported above and focus on improving partnership working through more effective communications between all stakeholders, shared responsibilities and on the musical progression of the young person.

Recommendation 1: Continue to implement this overwhelmingly successful programme with the minor modifications proposed below.

The overwhelming view of what the charity is doing is extremely positive. In devising its Furthering Talent programme it is clear that AYM has focussed on the appropriate issues and is targeting its resources effectively. The programme is targeting potentially talented young musicians. It is helping disadvantaged young people to develop as musicians and to

³ **Music Education in the 21st Century in the United Kingdom**, Ed., Hallam, S. and Creech, A. Institute of Education, University of London, 2010 (Page 94).

⁴ **Instrumental Teaching: A practical guide to better teaching and learning**. Hallam, S. Heinemann, London, 1998. (Pages 90/91).

progress as instrumentalists. The programme is broadening their outlook as musicians and enriching their lives. Families, tutors and mentors are all supported. Value for money is excellent. Systems are exemplary and documents, advice and follow up actions are all targeted at providing appropriate support and the vast majority of young people, their families, tutors and mentors are all benefitting enormously from the programme.

Nevertheless, the evidence from this evaluation points to some significant variations in how well these systems and support work in practice. Whilst the general principles are sound and work excellently for most of the students, families, tutors and mentors, the evidence suggests that some refinement of existing practice and issues of capacity need to be addressed to enable more bespoke arrangements to be made so that all young people and their families can benefit most effectively. By reducing the general requirements on all parties and adopting an even more flexible approach it should be possible to accommodate the needs of the individual more effectively. Systems should be reviewed to ensure essential information is used effectively and issues of capacity need to be addressed.

In a number of instances, carrying out the survey facilitated a conversation that had been looked for, but had not happened. It also transpired that school is often central to the process – the involvement of the head teacher at Primary school and the head of music at Secondary is an important factor in the overall effectiveness of the programme.

With a minimal amount of refinement, it should be possible to address the issues raised above and improve this excellent programme still further.

Recommendation 2: A key individual should be identified who will co-ordinate communications between all stakeholders.

Before a student is formally accepted into the programme, a provisional analysis of need should be undertaken and a key individual, who would be able to co-ordinate communications between all stakeholders, should be identified. This could be a parent/carer; the instrumental teacher; a school teacher; someone from the local music service; the mentor or (later) even the student as he or she matures and takes more responsibility for his/her own learning. If no suitable person can be found, the charity should fulfil this role.

Recommendation 3: A bespoke programme of support should be arranged taking account of parental circumstances, knowledge and understanding; and the student's particular interests.

After selection, but before the programme starts, a face-to-face 'Get Together' event should take place involving all stakeholders. At this event, a bespoke programme of support for each new student should be agreed that takes account of parental circumstances, knowledge and understanding; and the student's particular interests. This programme of support would be co-ordinated by the appropriate key individual (see Recommendation 2).

The bespoke programme of support should also identify an appropriate mentor taking account of the age and level of expertise of the student. This mentor may be an older student, the teacher or another professional musician at different times during the student's musical journey.

Meaningful links with the student's school and hub lead organisation should be established from the beginning. These should be followed up by personal contact between the charity, the school and the hub, in person, on an annual basis, usually at the 'Get Togethers' (See Recommendation 4 below). Communications should also ensure the Arts Council England's Relationship Manager and the Bridge Organisation for that area are fully informed through normal hub reporting mechanisms.

Similar links in regard to this particular programme with the Music and Dance Scheme, including the Centres for Advanced Training, should also be established at this time.

Recommendation 4: Annual 'Get Together' events should be arranged in each area.

'Get Togethers' should be arranged on an annual basis and should involve other students who have been part of the AYM's Furthering Talent and Awards programmes, together with their parent/carers, teachers and mentors

Existing students who have been part of the AYM's Furthering Talent and Awards programmes, together with their parent/carers, teachers and mentors should be invited to help and participate in annual, regional 'Get Together' events.

By arranging an Induction Session as part of these 'Get Togethers' for new students on the Furthering Talent programme at the beginning of their involvement with the programme parent/carers, teachers and the students will be able to meet with AYM key personnel, other families and teachers and be inspired by existing students.

Once the programme has commenced, communication between all stakeholders should be facilitated regularly as agreed when devising each bespoke programme. (See Recommendation 2).

Recommendation 5: Instrumental tutors should identify short-term musical targets, which are shared with parent/carers on a half-termly basis.

Effective communication is essential but can also be a challenge. People are busy. Good intentions and the best-laid plans do not always turn into successful action. Each individual needs a bespoke arrangement that takes account of his or her particular circumstances. For example, if tuition is via a private tutor who visits the child's home, communication with parents is relatively easy. If the tutor is employed by a music service with lessons taking place at the child's school, this can be more challenging. Equally, ensemble and performance opportunities are often easier for those tutors who are linked in to a local music education hub compared with those who teach privately.

Parent/carers also require different types of support. Although all parent/carers in the programme are financially disadvantaged and have talented young musicians, the level of family stability and the degree of understanding regarding music in the child's life can vary enormously. Their confidence in approaching schools or music services, seen as the 'establishment' can also vary enormously.

The young musicians themselves also require different types of mentor support at different stages of their playing. Initially a mentor might be an older, more advanced student or the child's own teacher. Later, a professional musician, familiar with the demands of entering a music conservatoire and the music profession may be more appropriate.

Recommendation 6: Communications should be co-ordinated on a half-termly basis with reports to AYM

The key individual responsible for co-ordinating communications should ensure all stakeholders have a brief 'catch up' on a half-termly basis to ensure all are fully up to date with all aspects of the students programme. These 'catch up' sessions should be reported to AYM in a simple form – either

1. All 'on track'; or
2. Action needed, together with appropriate details and timescales.

Recommendation 7: All students should have appropriate regular opportunities for playing with others and for performing.

All young people benefit from performing regularly and playing with others. This is equally important for talented young people who can be both inspired and motivated by their peers and older students and professionals. Annual 'Get Togethers' can augment the local opportunities.

Recommendation 8: Review meetings should be held at key points in the programme.

In order to ensure the administration and management of the programme is both flexible and rigorous ensuring maximum support for children, families and their professional tutors and mentors, whilst at the same time ensuring value for money, specific review meetings could be targeted more effectively at:

1. The end of the first term;
2. The end of term five;
3. Any other time, triggered by issues arising from the monthly/half termly meetings.

Recommendation 9: The administration and management of the charity should be reviewed to enable the above to happen effectively.

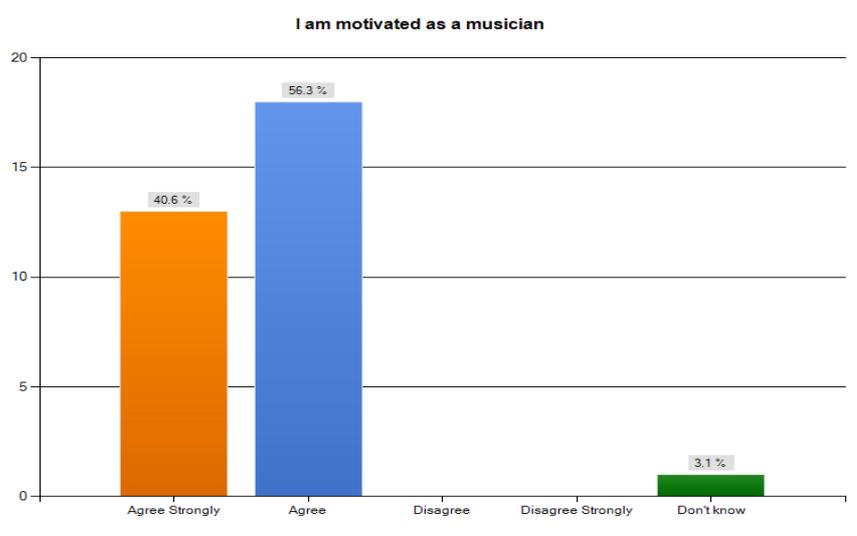
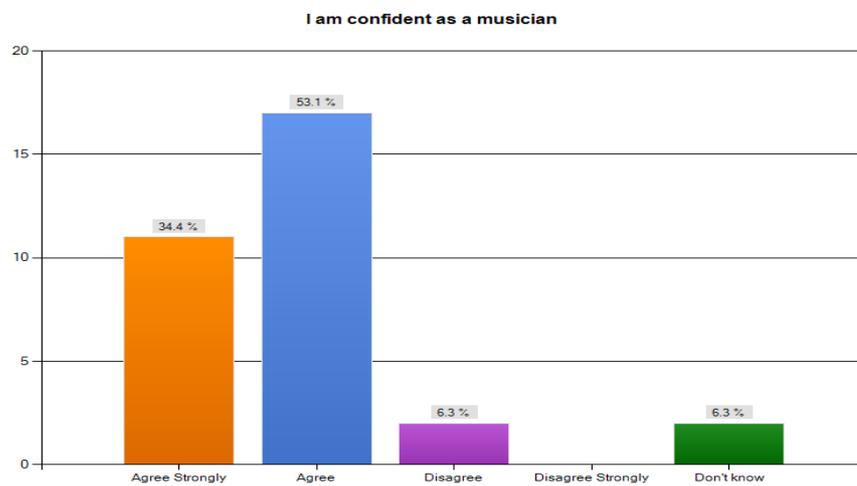
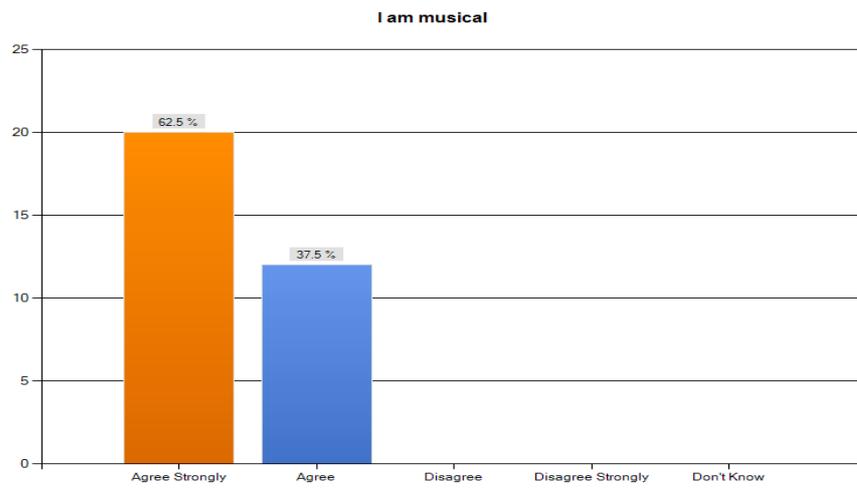
Current arrangements for effective management and administration work well in the vast majority of cases but the capacity does not always exist to follow up in a sufficiently timely manner where additional intervention is needed. The above proposals should enable greater responsibility to be taken locally in support of these talented young people and their families, freeing up AYM to fulfil a more strategic role. At the same time, it is essential that the detailed, personal knowledge and relationships with these families, teachers and mentors is not lost, particularly at a personal level. By rationalising the reporting times and level of detail and enabling 'Get Togethers' to take place annually, this should be possible to achieve with minimal cost implications.

Recommendation 10: Continue to develop the strategic national role of AYM

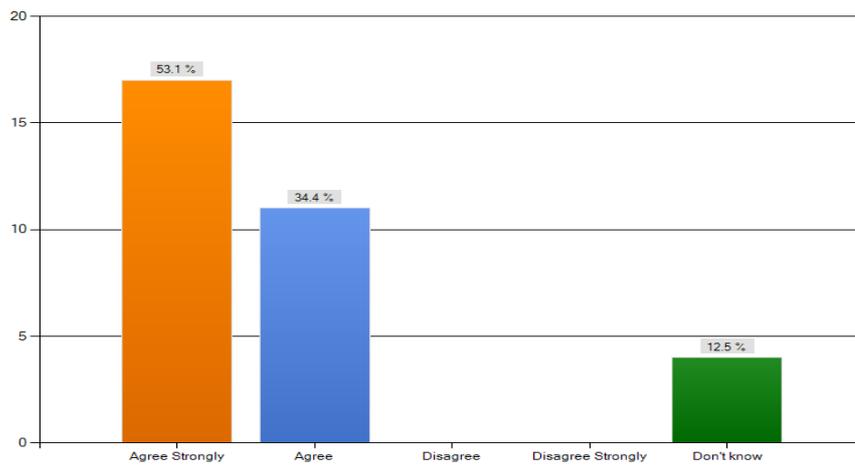
AYM is already fulfilling a key strategic role nationally. Working in partnership with organisations such as the Musicians Benevolent Fund and Youth Music, AYM is supporting the progress of talented young people and the professional development of musicians and teachers, as well as influencing good practice through its hosting of a national network exploring how the sector can work together to support young people's musical progressions.

Building on the successes of the past 4 years of the Furthering Talent programme, AYM is uniquely placed to play a significant role in the new music education landscape as the National Plan for Music Education evolves over the next 7 years.

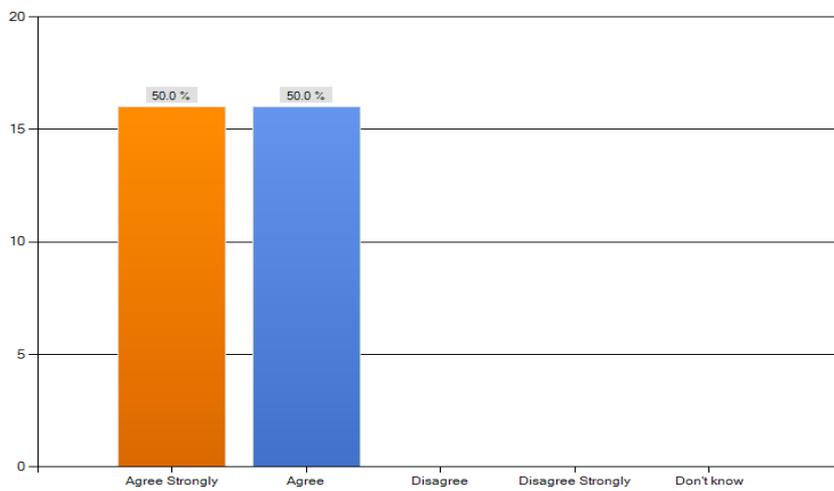
Appendix 1 Student charts



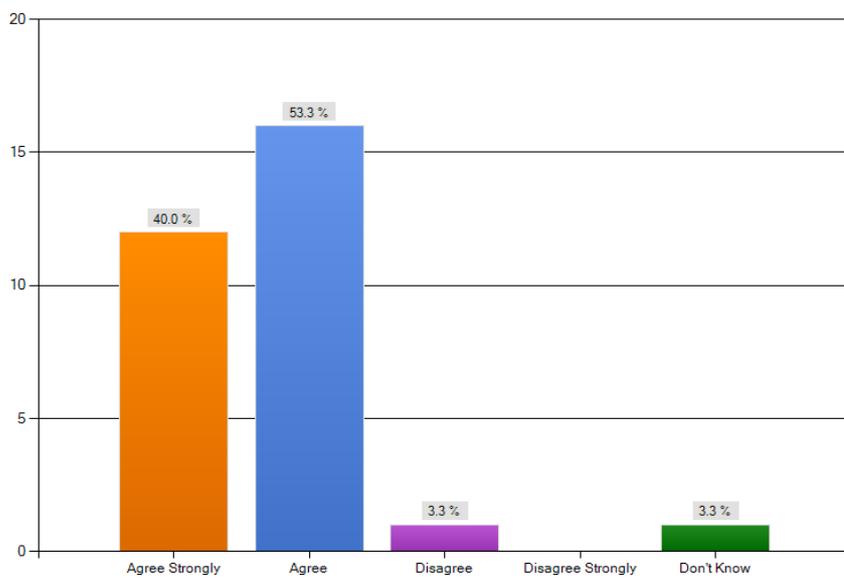
I am making good progress as a musician



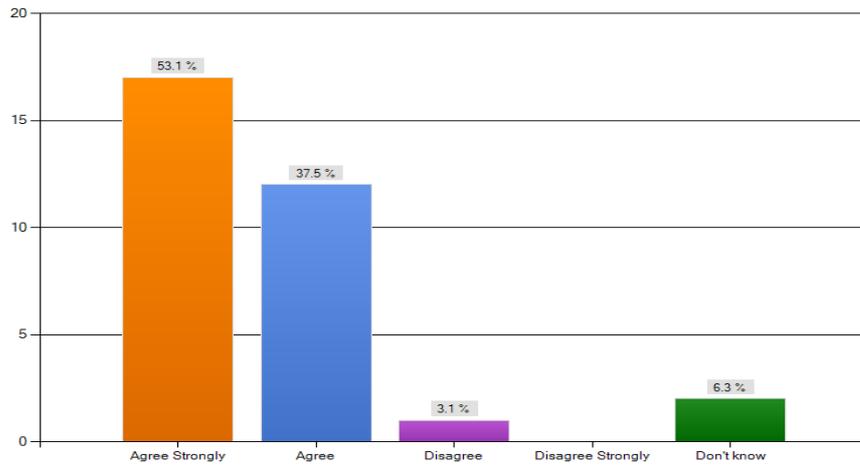
I am improving on my instrument



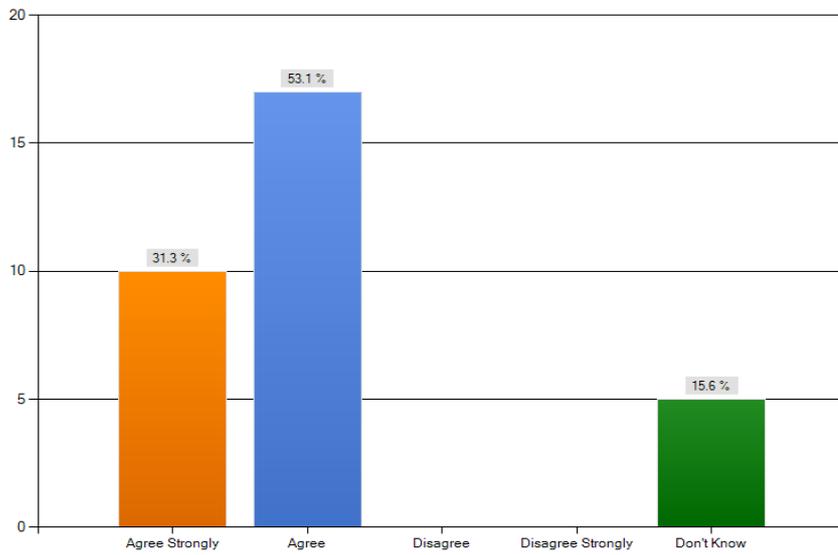
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is inspiring



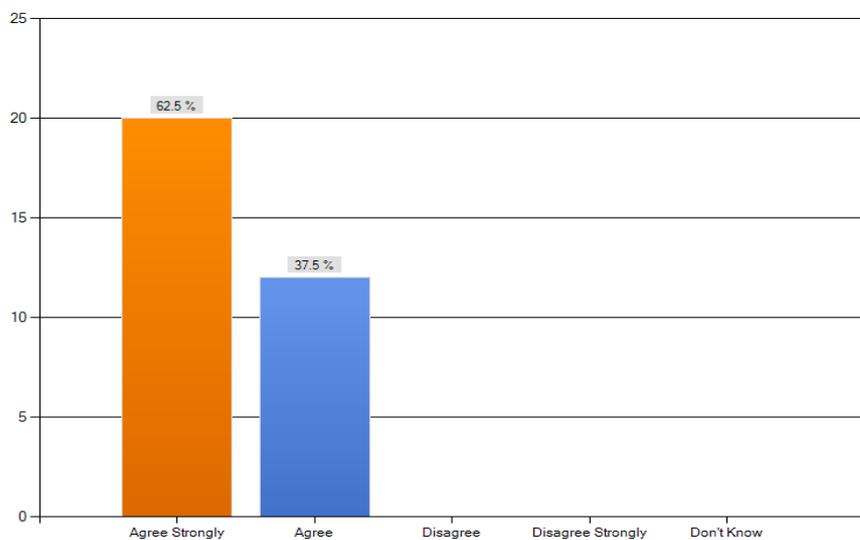
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme has broadened my outlook as a musician



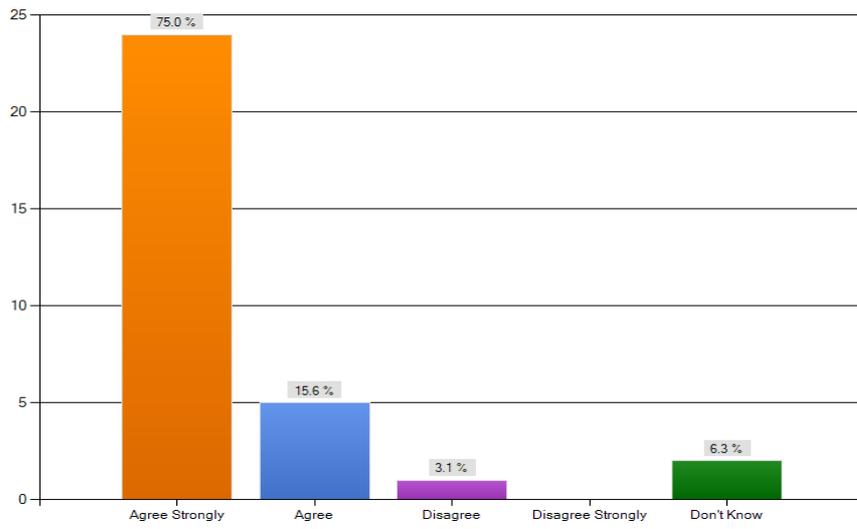
Being involved in the Furthering Talent Programme is enriching



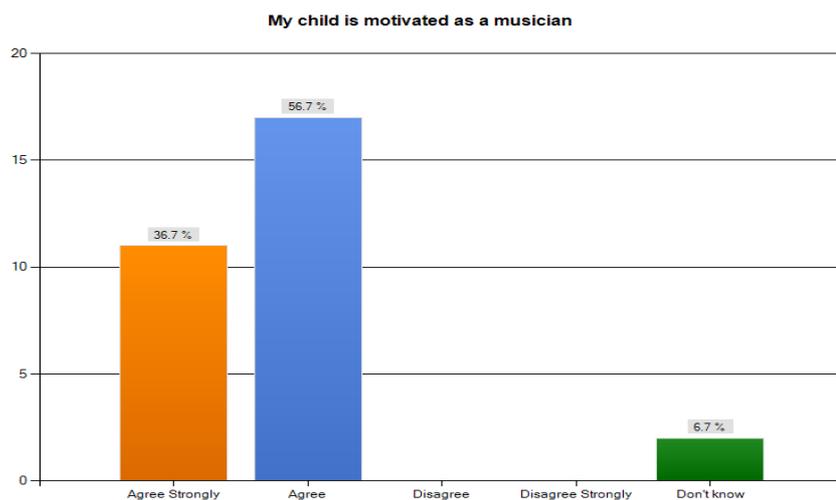
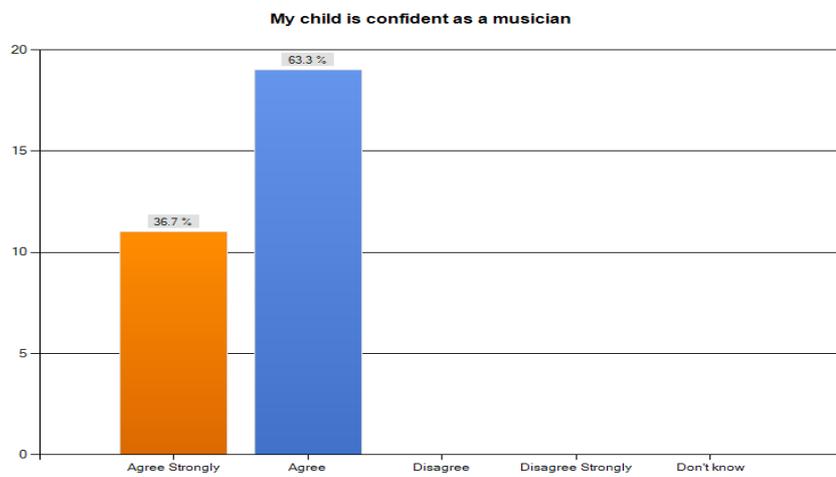
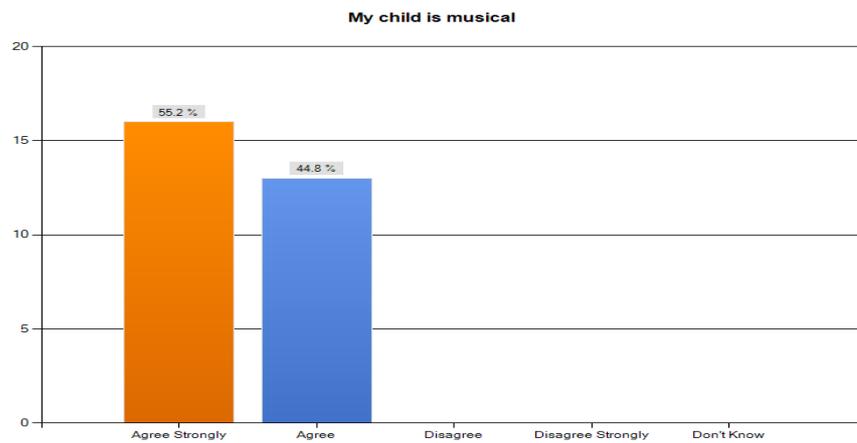
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is helping my musical development



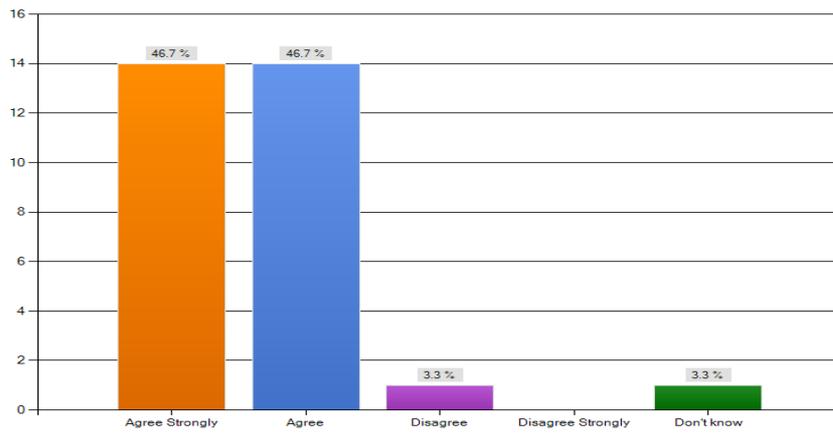
Music is important to me in my life



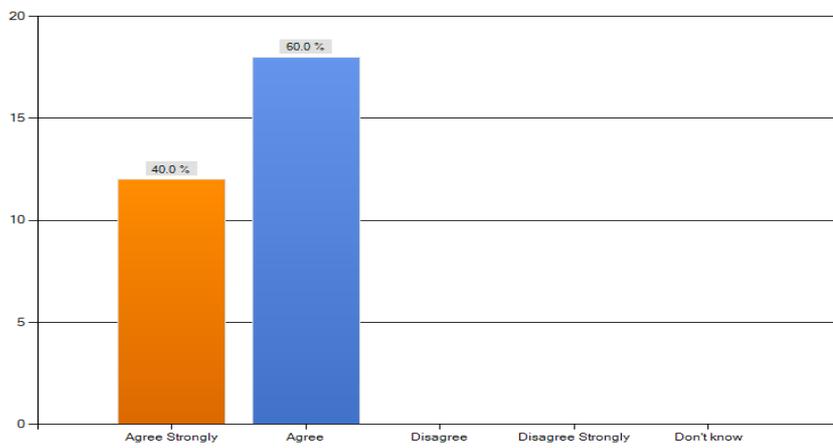
Appendix 2 Parent/carer charts



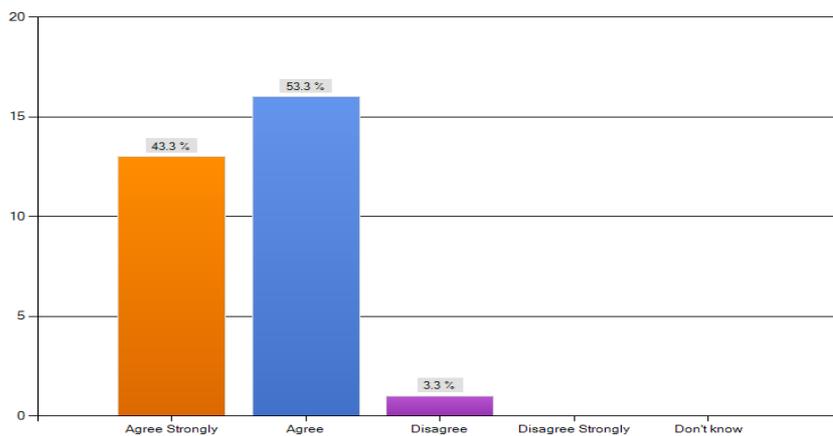
My child is making good progress as a musician



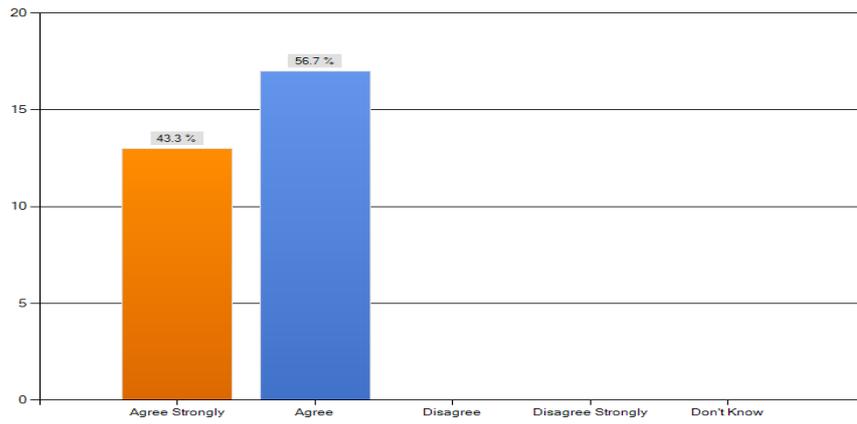
My child is improving on his/her instrument



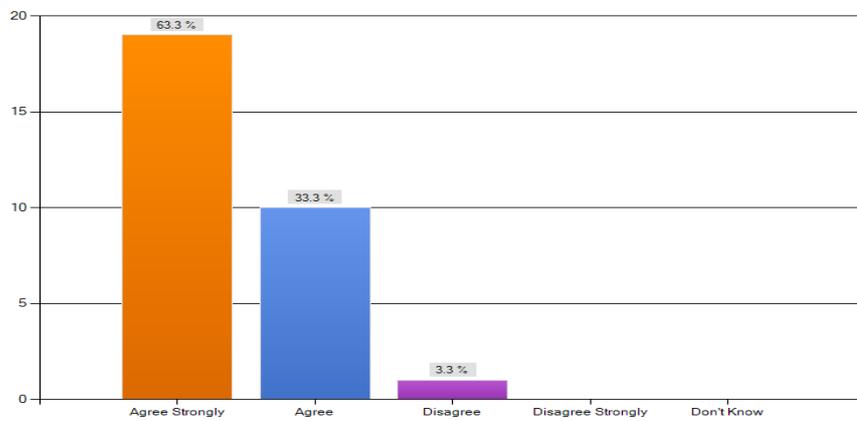
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme has broadened my child's outlook as a musician



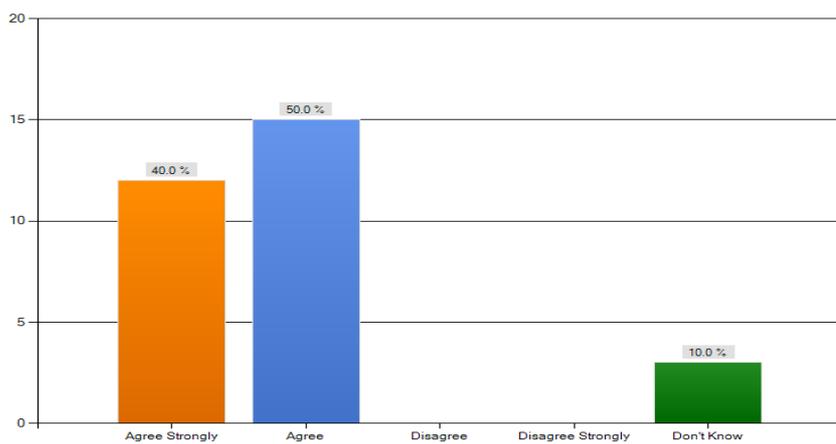
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is inspiring my child



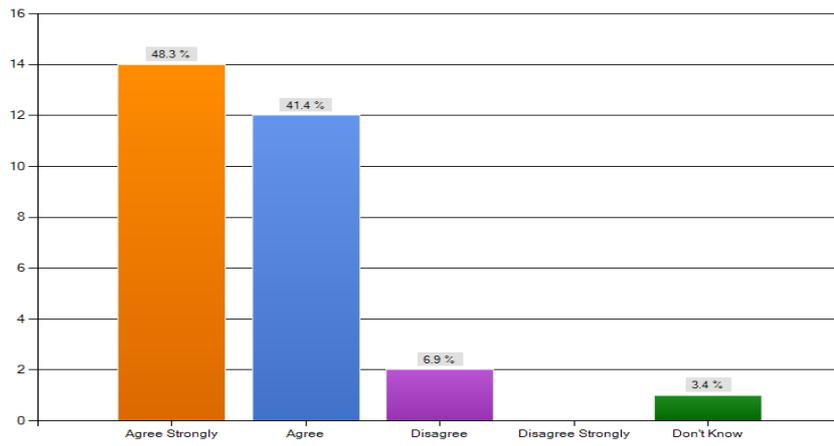
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is helping my child's musical development



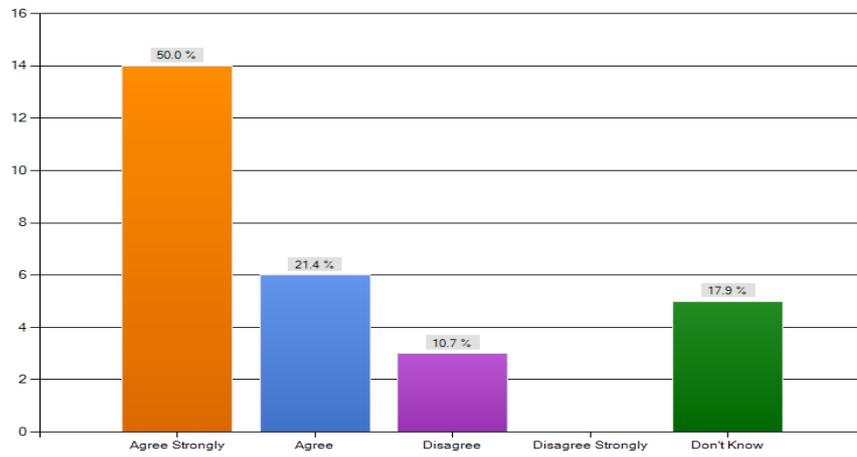
Being involved in the Furthering Talent Programme is enriching for my child



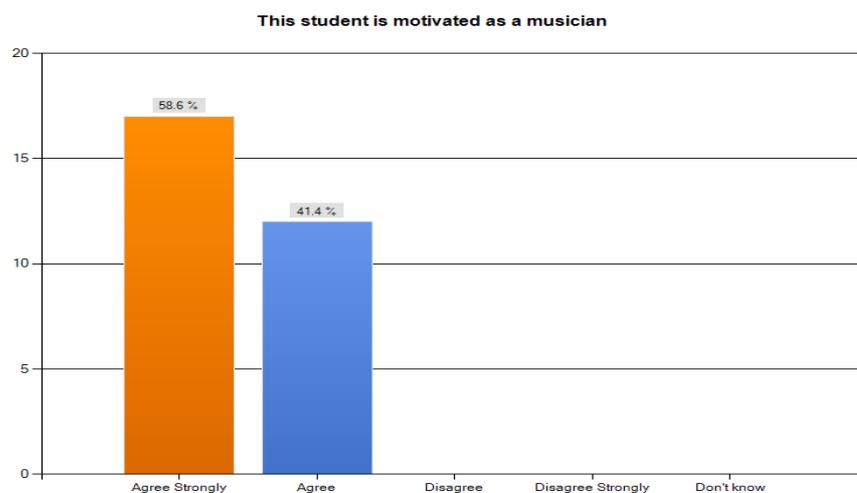
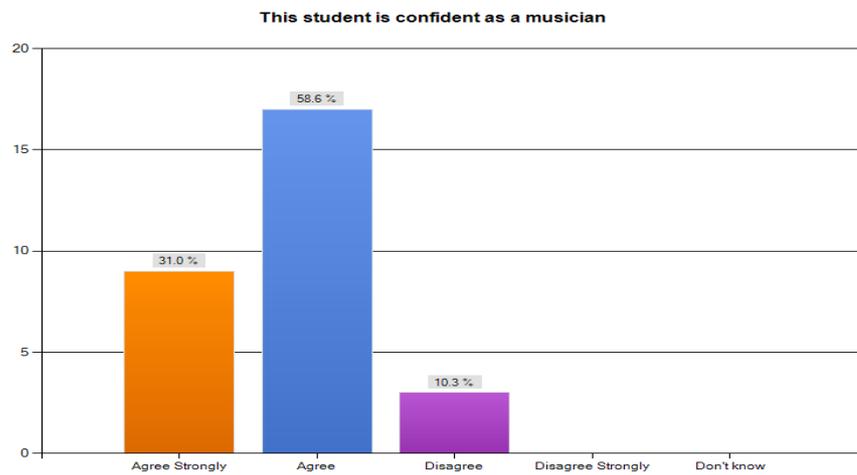
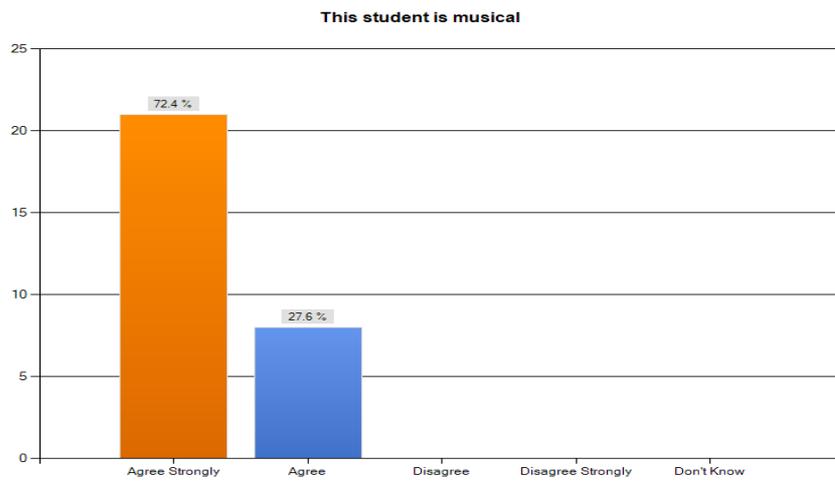
Music is important in my child's life



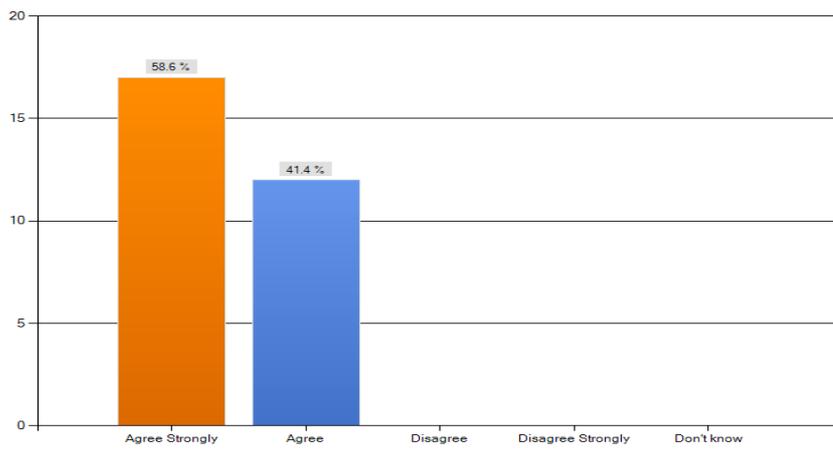
Furthering Talent offers excellent value for money



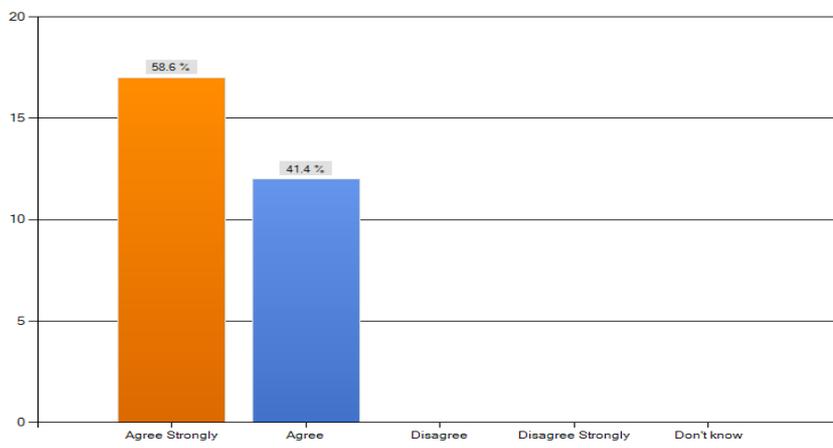
Appendix 3 Teacher charts



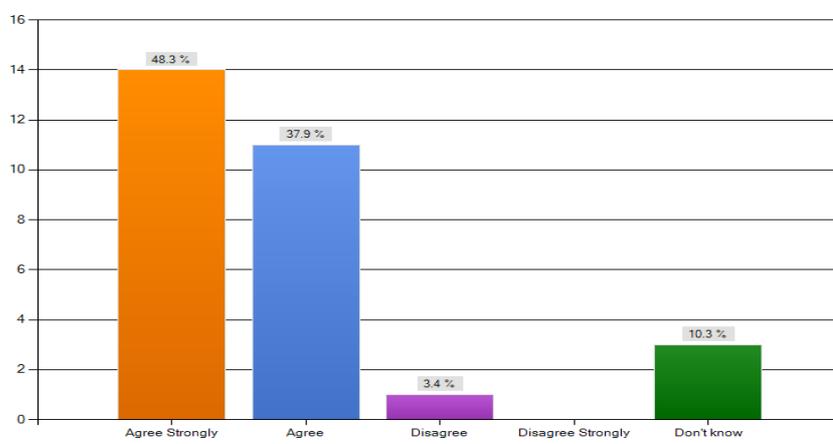
This student is making good progress as a musician



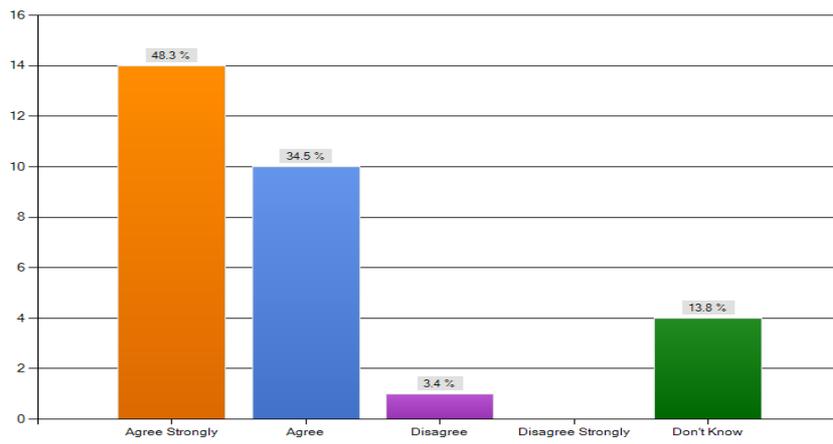
This student is improving on his/her instrument



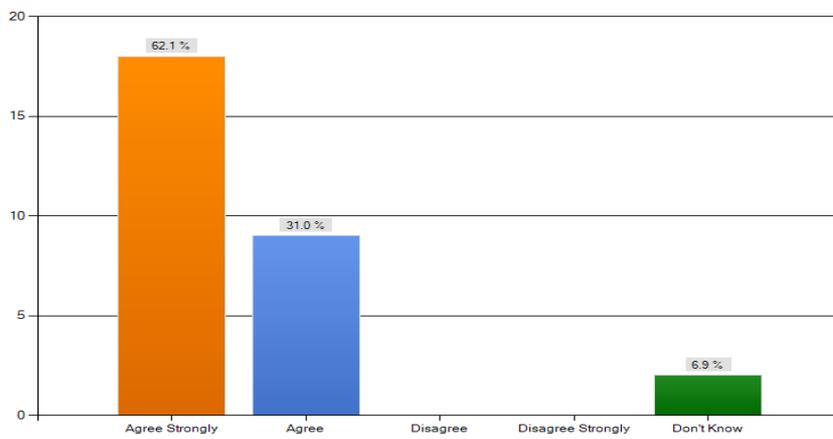
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme has broadened this student's outlook as a musician



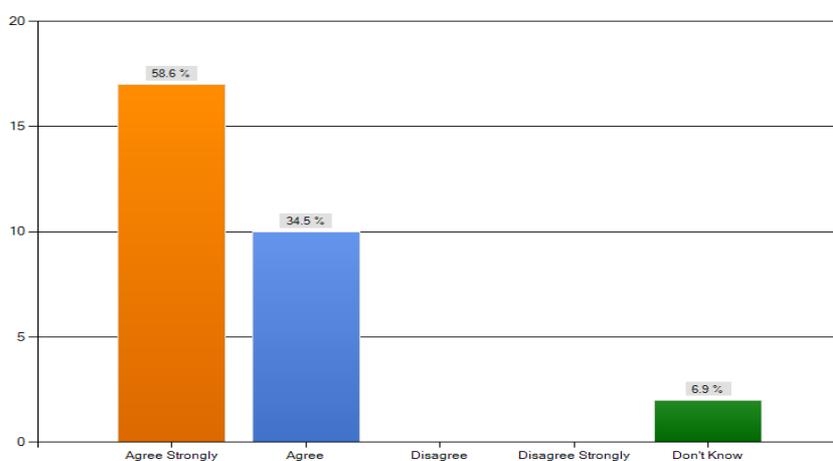
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is inspiring this student

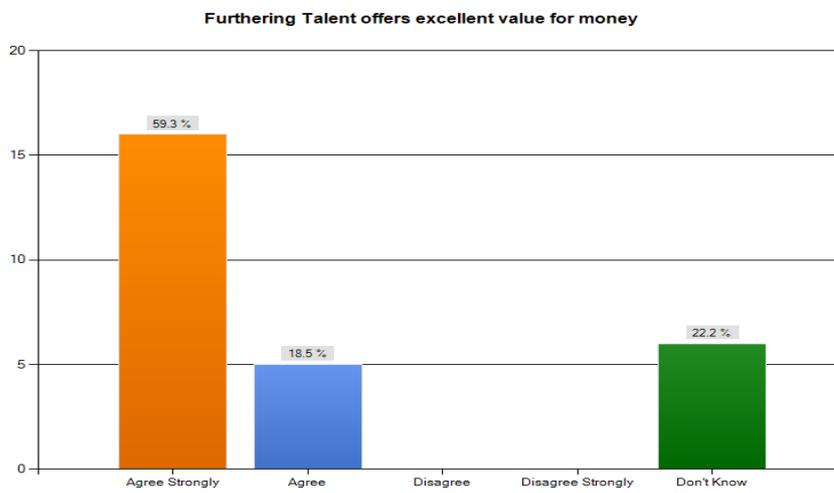
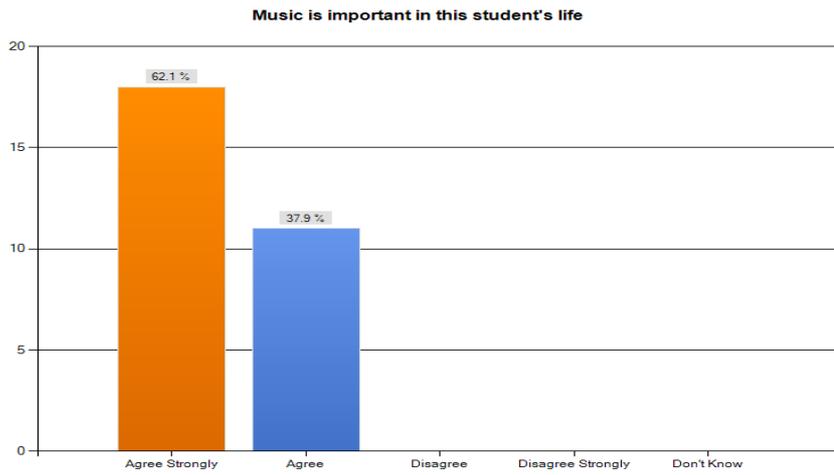


Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is helping this student's musical development

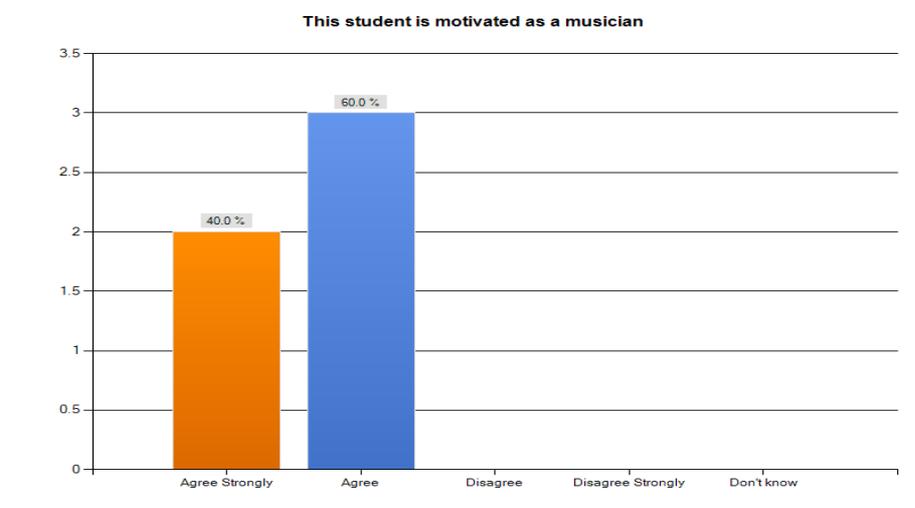
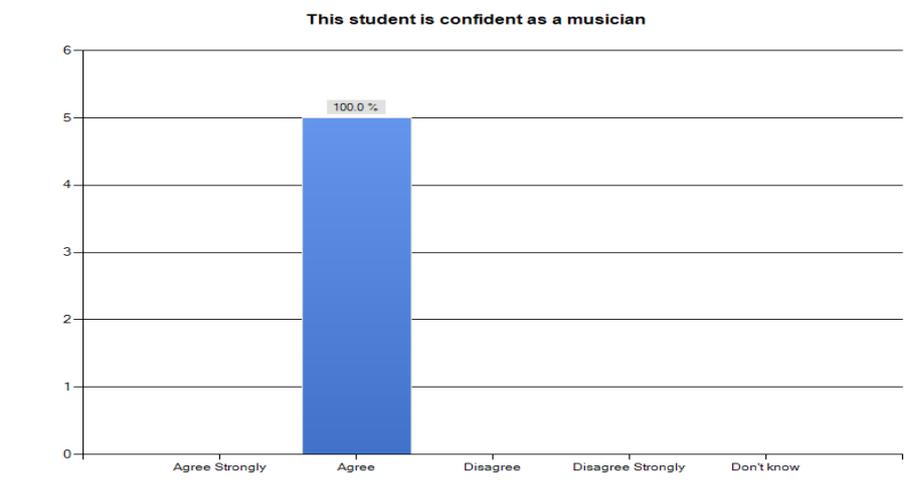
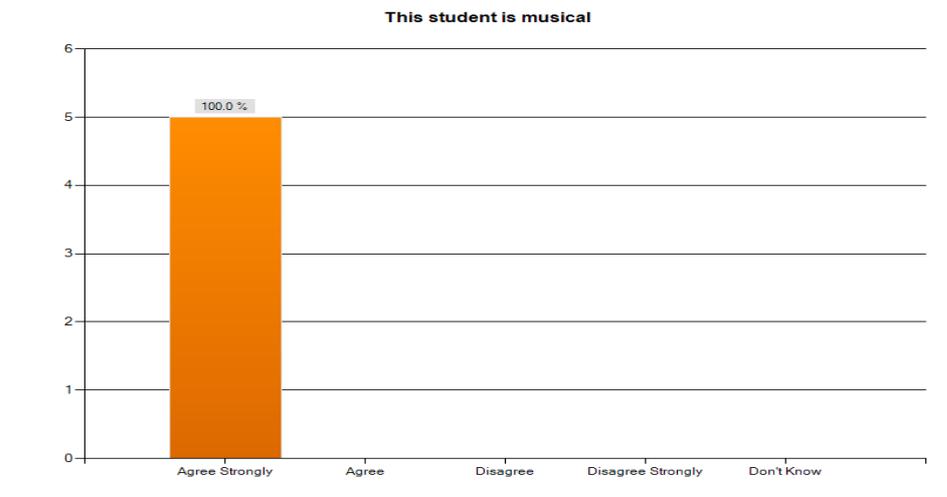


Being involved in the Furthering Talent Programme is enriching for this student

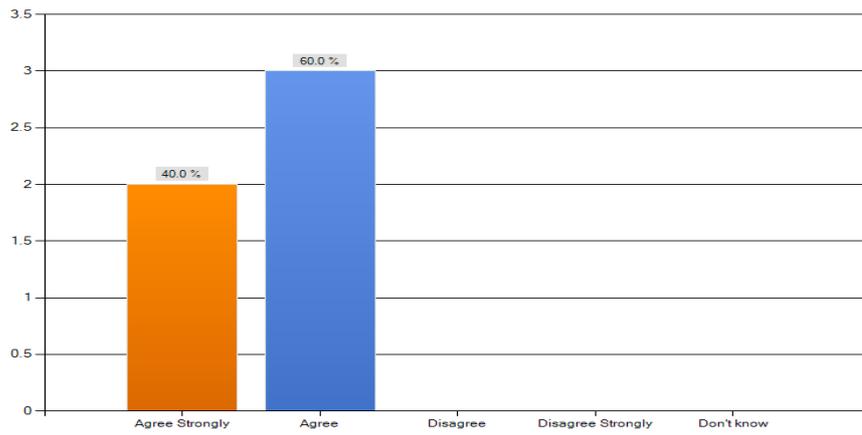




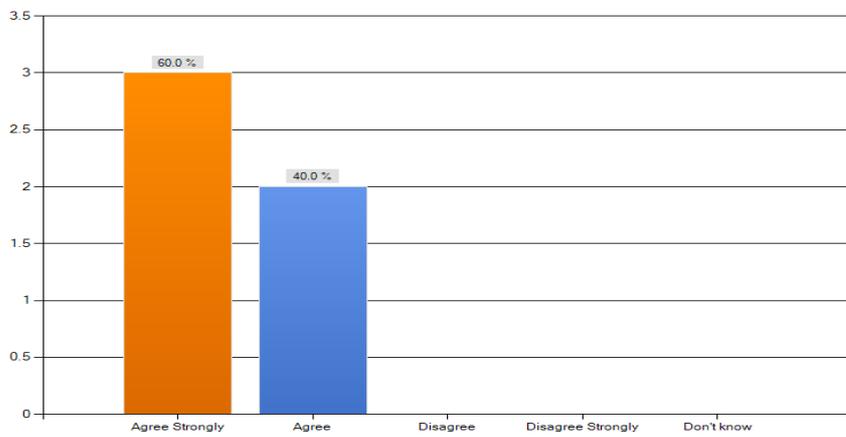
Appendix 4 Mentor responses



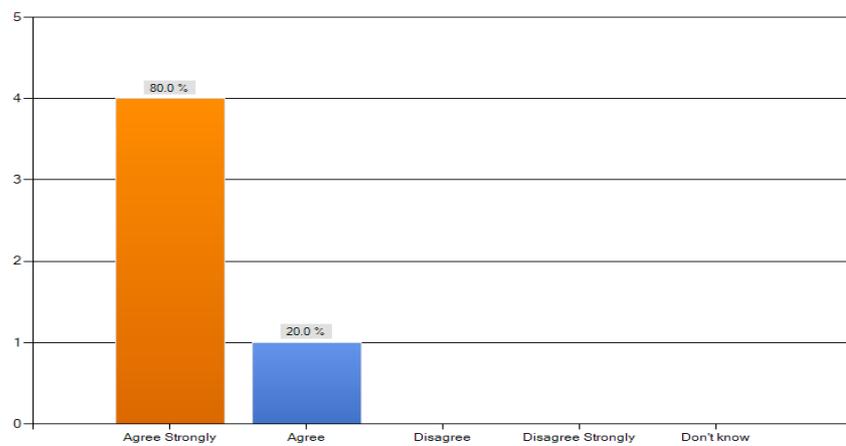
This student is making good progress as a musician



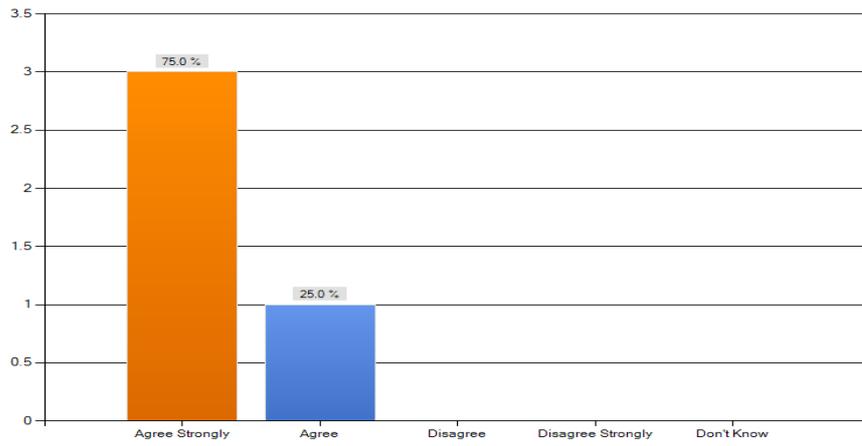
This student is improving on his/her instrument



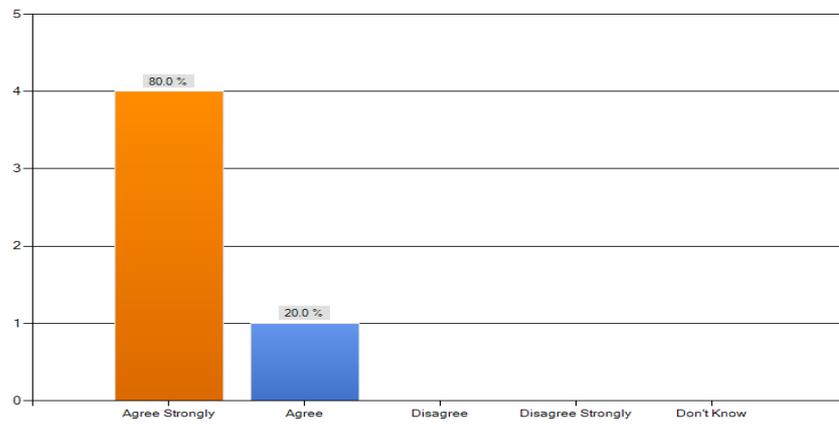
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme has broadened this student's outlook as a musician



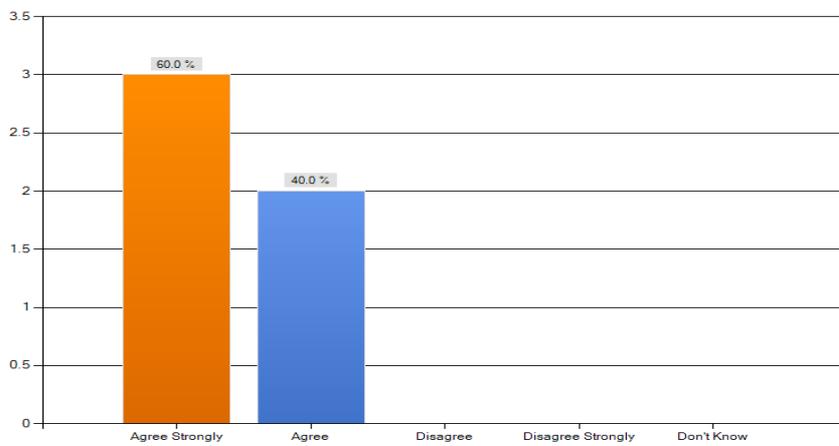
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is inspiring this student



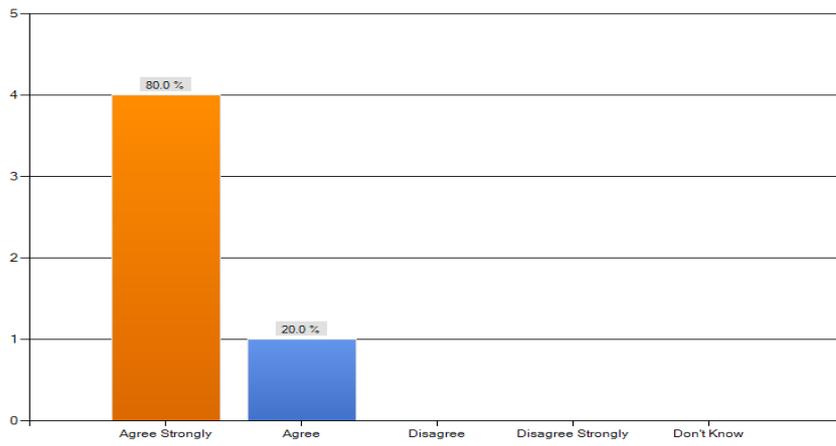
Being involved in the Furthering Talent programme is helping this student's musical development



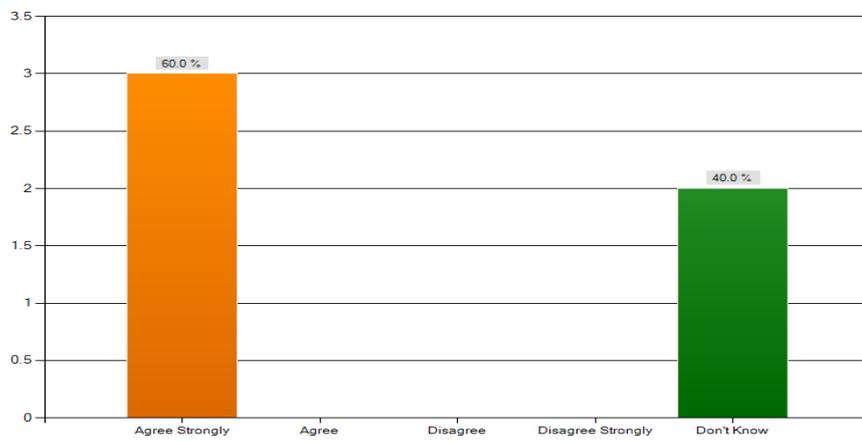
Being involved in the Furthering Talent Programme is enriching for this student



Music is important in this student's life



Furthering Talent offers excellent value for money



Giving talent
a chance



Awards for
Young Musicians

www.a-y-m.org.uk