



Alabaré E Zone

Adviser: Chas Taylor

Level: Bronze

Alabaré E Zone is a young people's drop in centre in Andover, Hampshire. The young people supported at the centre are aged between 13 and 25 experiencing issues such as homelessness, drink and drug abuse and domestic violence. Many students have learning difficulties and autism. In their first year delivering Arts Award, the centre has taken three groups totalling over 50 young people through to Bronze moderation.

The Arts Award delivery team comprises of five teachers including a qualified art teacher and musician, a youth engagement worker and a service manager. The centre runs five sessions each week, projects are carefully structured to maximise the potential of the young people, many of whom have low levels of motivation.

The centre provides a number of creative opportunities for its students, in the past year these have included setting up a choir, bands, making a music video and most recently a music gig in partnership with Oxfam.

"Seeing my pupils improve musically is great but to see the positive impact that this has on their general confidence and well-being is amazing."

Chas Taylor, Arts Award Adviser.

Approach

As well as running the drop in centre, Alabaré E Zone works alongside Andover College to enable second year students from the college to mentor young people from Alabaré E Zone in music. Through this partnership, the centre also runs regular sessions for the Andover Education Centre for young people with behavioural difficulties who do not attend mainstream school.

This project was funded by Youth Music, with 19 students completing the Bronze Award. Below are some examples of how the young people took part in the Award:

Part A – experience the arts as a participant

Students wrote and recorded original songs in the studio and some learnt to play musical instruments. Others visited a local art studio and were inspired to create semi permanent art using sand, one young person made sculptures using wire.

Part B – experience the arts as an audience member

A range of opportunities were made available to the group. These included going to see comedians Omid Djalili and Rob Newman and the Fitzwilliam String Quartet. Students also visited the Tate Modern and the BBC Studios, others went to see local bands and DJ's.

Part C –arts inspiration

One student researched a band from America and started to correspond with the lead singer's parents via letters and e mail, she was sent badges, posters and hand written letters to use as evidence in her portfolio.

Part D – arts skills share

The group members have shared their skills with their peers in a range of ways including planning and delivering musical workshops, musical engineering sessions, juggling lessons, acoustic poetry, creative writing, dance, and visual art demonstrations.



Alabare E Zone

Creative Evidencing

The most popular method of evidencing work among the group initially was by using the Arts Award evidence templates. However they realised that some of the young people struggled with gathering and collating information so advisers began to video sessions and take audio interviews. Some young people with learning difficulties, autism and ADHD used Makaton picture boards to express themselves, some set up Tumblr accounts and recorded everything digitally and others used video recordings of themselves participating, sharing their work with others and being interviewed.

"Going to the studio was a completely new experience and inspired me in so many ways. I have learnt that I can do things on my own without anyone having to hold my hand. I am now happy to show people my work and accept constructive criticism. Working with arts professionals has allowed me to branch out and explore myself as an artist."

Arts Award participant

Hannah's Story

Shortly after moving into a local hostel Hannah visited the centre and expressed an interest in joining the Music Project. She had some basic musical skill on the keyboard but was not confident enough to play to others. In the first few sessions of song craft Hannah did not engage very well, she was not willing or able to read any of her poems or lyrics to tutors or other students. Some of Hannah's initial work showed great potential and as the weeks went by she began to become more confident in her work and herself.

Tutors worked closely with Hannah and set her goals such as writing a complete song with music, lyrics and melody; something that she had never attempted before. She organised practice sessions with other students and after some fine tuning went to Alabaré Place Studio to record her song. At the studio she took charge of the production of the song, she organized and inspired the other students and for the first time she sang in front of a group. The confidence and self belief she got from this was a joy to see.

Since her recording Hannah has revisited the studio and recorded more vocals on another track, she continues to write poems and short stories to a very high standard. She is the epitome of everything that can be achieved through participating in music and the arts both practically and personally.

"The thing I have learnt the most is self confidence, before I started this course I would never have sung in public but now I can."
Hannah.

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