

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 5 SEPTEMBER 2022
REPORT ON: BIG NOISE DOUGLAS – PROGRESS UPDATE
REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE
REPORT NO: 228-2022

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Children and Families Services Committee with an update on the progress of Sistema Scotland Big Noise Douglas programme in Douglas.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that members of the Children and Families Services Committee note the contents of this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Dundee City Council committed £350,000 to Big Noise Douglas for session 2021/22 and has committed further funding of £623,353 for session 2022-23. There is no recurring provision for the project in the Councils Revenue Estimates. Shared efforts will be made to work with partners to secure the funding required to maintain the programme long term.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Big Noise Douglas is an open and inclusive programme, proactively seeking to engage with as many children and young people as possible from babies, currently up to 12 years old (First year, Secondary School) who live, are primarily cared for, or who attend the two local primary schools (Claypotts Castle and St Pius), within the Douglas community. The programme grows each year to retain the involvement of the oldest young people and welcome the next generation of children. By 2026/27, the oldest participants in Big Noise Douglas will be 16/17 years old (further details are provided in the next section).

The programme is place-based, and is specifically designed in a way that children and community members can be involved in many ways across the week, and in special events throughout the year. Many families in the community have multiple siblings that are involved in the programme, and family events are ongoing, fostering and building a sense of community and collective endeavour and achievement as the children progress through the programme.

4.2 The Big Noise Programme forms part of a range of work across the expressive arts that support young people's learning and development. This includes the Instrumental Music Service, ASPIRE DUNDEE, and other projects with specific partners such as the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Drake Music Scotland and the Benedetti Foundation. All of these programmes are working together through the expressive arts medium to improve outcomes for young people and target the attainment gap by ensuring a greater equality of opportunity for children and families across the city. The organisation of these various projects is co-ordinated to ensure that learning and good practice is shared across the projects and subsequently with all the schools in the city to maximise the benefits of all programmes.

4.3 Big Noise Staffing Levels

Big Noise Douglas has a staff of 21 (13.6FTE) including a Team Leader.

4.4 Programme Overview

During 2021/22 Big Noise Douglas has worked regularly with over 550 out of 10,000 children.

- **Baby Noise** continues to run at the Douglas Community Centre on a Wednesday morning, with between 8 and 10 families attending each week. delivery continues at Baluniefield, Claypotts Castle and St Pius, with each group receiving a weekly 20-minute session.
- **Primary 1-4 sessions** continue at both primary schools (Claypotts and St Pius), with each class receiving a weekly 30- or 45-minute lesson. Children in P1-4 at both St Pius and Claypotts Castle primary schools have a weekly **in-school** Big Noise session (30 minutes for P1 and P4, 45 minutes for P2 and P3). P1s learn musical skills including pitch, beat and rhythm through signing and games, as well as non-musical skills like self-confidence and turn-taking. These skills are developed in P2 when the children choose and learn a string instrument (violin, viola, 'cello and double bass). This continues in P3, with the children learning a combination of instrumental and general musicianship skills. P3 children are invited to join the after-school club after the spring holiday. In P4, all children at both primary schools have a weekly 30-minute general musicianship lesson. Approximately **290 children** access the daytime programme at both schools (P1-4).
- Instrumental lessons in small groups (during the school day) are now being offered to most after-school club participants in P6 and 7, and some younger children who would benefit the most. As well as developing instrumental and musical skills, these lessons will help to build strong relationships between the children / young people and Big Noise staff.
- P3s were invited to join the after-school programme in May, and over 50 have signed-up so far. The children are now organised into 5 groups: Emperor Penguin Orchestra (P6 and 7), King Penguin Orchestra (P5 and 6), Rockhopper Penguin Orchestra (P4), Macaroni Penguin Orchestra (P3), Snares Penguin Sections (Percussion band for deaf children) and Percussion Band.
- After School Club continues to run 4 nights a week, Monday to Thursday. The plan is to reunite the children from both schools this term; therefore, some of the delivery is being moved to the community centre. As of June 2022, there are over 170 children participating in the after-school programme.
 - Big Noise Douglas run **holiday clubs** during the October, Spring and Summer school holidays. All after-school club participants are invited and are offered a range of musical and non-musical activities (including sports, arts and crafts etc). With the support of Dundee Bairns, all the children / young people are provided a lunch and a snack.
- The Optimistic Orchestra, a group for adults who live or work in the Douglas community, continues to meet weekly at the community centre. Average attendance is currently 5 member per week. It is hoped that this is relaunched in the new school year, now that restrictions have eased.

4.5 Events and Trips

- Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) Side-by-Side: On Thursday 24 March 2022, over 20 young people performed in a side-by-side concert with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO), performing Rondo by Purcell at the Caird Hall. Members of the RSNO also travelled to Douglas for a rehearsal a few weeks before the concert. This is the first time Big Noise young people have performed with a professional orchestra as part of a series concert; discussions are ongoing to repeat this in 2023.
- Easter Residential Trip: 23 P7s from Big Noise Douglas travelled to Dounans Camp, near Aberfoyle, for a 2-night residential trip during the Easter holiday. This group were joined with P7s from Big Noise Torry to form a large orchestra. As well as musical sessions, the young people also took part in activities including archery and tree-climbing. Due to Covid restrictions, this was the first trip that many of the young people had been on away from their families / carers.

- Summer Sharing Sessions: as restrictions have eased, Big Noise Douglas is able to invite parents and carers into the schools for sharing events again (for the first time since December 2019). There is no longer enough space for all the children to perform at one event, so this year Big Noise Douglas will be hosting 5 smaller sharing events across the course of a week.
- West-Fest and Douglas Park opening: Children from the King Penguin Orchestra and the Percussion Band performed at West-Fest on Sunday 12th June, and pop-up groups from across the after-school programme performed at the opening of the refurbished Douglas Park on Saturday 18th June.

4.6 Areas of Development

- Curriculum for deaf children: Big Noise Douglas will continue to work with deaf children who attend Claypotts Castle school, working in partnership with the Children and Families Service inclusion team. Big Noise Douglas staff will work with Ruth Montgomery, a deaf musician and teacher, over the next year in order to develop our curriculum further, particularly as our oldest deaf participants move into high school.
- Our oldest young people will be moving to high school in August 2022. We have been working with the instrumental service to discuss and develop a programme for these young people.
- Wind and brass expansion: Big Noise Douglas is still planning on introducing wind and brass in 2022/23, and have been working with the instrumental service to develop a plan that compliments the work already underway at Claypotts Castle.

4.7 Future Plans

- Supporting young people with their transition to secondary school (Ongoing)
- Expansion of Big Noise after-school club to include woodwind and brass instruments (throughout 2022/23)
- Continued development of the youth voice and youth leadership strands of Big Noise curriculum
- Continued development of the community representative strand of the Big Noise programme
- Continued support of the children as they progress through secondary school in the coming years

5.0 EVALUATION -UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE – NOVEMBER 2021

- 5.1 Big Noise Douglas (BND) was launched in September 2017 and works with children from the Douglas community who generally attend the two local primary schools, St Pius X RC and Claypotts Castle Primary. At the time the evaluation fieldwork was completed in winter 2020, BND was engaging with all P1-P3 children (around 250) during the school day, and 92 P3-P6 children through a voluntary after-school club. BND also has Baby Noise, Nursery and Community orchestra provision and by the end of 2021 was engaging regularly with over 500 children from the community. This evaluation included in-school (P1-3) and after-school (P3-6) programmes and Baby Noise.

Sistema Scotland's first three Big Noise programmes were evaluated by a partnership led by Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH). The GCPH evaluation showed that outcomes in all Big Noise programmes were consistent and could be modelled along seven pathways to impact. The purpose of this evaluation was to check if the impacts in Big Noise Douglas were also consistent.

- 5.2 The Evaluation was led by Professor Divya Jindal-Snape in the School of Education and Social Work at The University of Dundee.

The evaluation investigated the impact of BND on children, parents and the community. To do this, data were collected from multiple sources (children, parents, school professionals and BND staff) and multiple data collection methods were used (observations, visual methods, interviews, focus groups and online questionnaires). Data collection was done between October 2020 and February 2021, a period of significant COVID restrictions. This meant that feedback was about both the period before and during adapted COVID delivery.

In late 2021, following the easing of many COVID restrictions, Research Scotland compiled a number of case studies from families involved with Big Noise Douglas. The purpose of the case studies was to provide feedback about participation in Big Noise from a family perspective.

5.3 Key findings:

BND is having positive impacts on children, families and the community.

- Pathways and impact indicators found in the previous GCPH research remain relevant.
- Within three years, BND has had an impact on these impact pathways.
- During COVID restrictions BND was creative, adaptable, resilient, and ensured participation of all children.
- BND is on track for further impacts in the future.
- Areas for further development include building on already strong relationships between BND staff and school colleagues to draw clearer curricular links and demonstrate progress and continuing to broaden awareness across the wider community.

5.4 Additional findings:

In the case studies, parents reported that there were wider benefits for the family. These were around:

- improved structure, routine and time management for the whole family;
- sense of pride, seeing children learning and achieving;
- older children modelling positive behaviour for young siblings; and
- family and community engagement, through Big Noise concerts and excursions.

Some quotes from parents illustrate this:

- “It's given him a sense of confidence in himself, that he's good at something” (Mum, Big Noise Douglas)
 - “It's opened that door for new friends” (Mum, Big Noise Douglas).
 - “The change in her is phenomenal” (Mum, Big Noise Douglas)
 - “They're easy to talk to [Big Noise staff] ...it's good to know she has people to come to” (Mum, Big Noise Douglas).
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- Most participants in the evaluation said that BND had an impact on parents' involvement in their child's development. The case studies are an illustration of this engagement.
 - BND was creating community spirit and cohesiveness, with a sense of ownership and pride in children's achievements.
 - The impact of BND was seen to be due to children having opportunities to express themselves, learn new skills in a fun and safe environment, creativity, enjoyment, access to resources and the positive relationships with BND staff.
 - BND played a special role in supporting children and families during the pandemic, often providing the only normality in their lives.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Council Leadership Team, Children and Families Service Senior Leadership Team and Sistema Scotland Big Noise Douglas were consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

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