



Northumberland Cluster Training Project

Kay Summers, Northumberland Early Years Advisor, Northumberland County Council:

I joined Northumberland Early Years Advisory team in 2015 and have been involved in a project to support settings with developing children's pre-phonics skills. Many children are introduced to phonics too soon, before they have the foundations needed. Music provision in the local settings was mostly limited to traditional songs and nursery rhymes with no structure or progression to the sessions.

I remembered the Boogie Mites Programme from my time in Hampshire early Years team and thought that this could be the answer. We recommended that the cost involved for each setting to attend the training and purchase the pack and license to use the programme in the setting, could be funded from EYPP funding. I contacted Sue and we put a proposal together for 2 days of training for Northumberland settings. The Local Authority had to approve the proposal as there was a cost involved if we did not get enough settings buying into the project.

Both training sessions were fully booked and hence fully funded by the settings. Three Early Years Advisors and two childcare development workers attended the training so that they could support the settings with implementation following the training. Of the 50 practitioners attending across both training workshops, more than 95% felt that they had gained a better understanding of how music support Letters and Sounds Phase 1, foundations for phonics, more than 90% felt confident to deliver the programme in their settings and 100% felt that the training had been valuable. The Early Years Team will monitor the implementation and the gathering of evidence of impact on children's development – for reporting the EYPP spend impact. Boogie Mites were a professional and efficient team to work with and we hope to continue working with them in the future.

Summary of feedback from training workshops:

40 participants completed feedback forms:

	Very Much	A little	Not at all
Have you understood how each of the songs are led, and how they support Letters & Sound Phase 1 and development in EYFS?	99%	1%	0%
Do you feel confident and motivated to lead the songs and linked activities for children at your setting?	98%	2%	0%
Has the training been valuable? Please comment as to why or why not.	99%	1%	0%



Comments made:

"It has been really good being part of this training and I can't wait to share it with the team and children." Ruth Adamson, Amble First School Nursery.

"Great training and will definitely be used to support upcoming phonological awareness restructuring taking place." Gemma Davison, Fern Hollow Day Nursery.

"Thoroughly enjoyed this training! As an NQT, I have been looking for ways to support phonics and this has been incredibly useful. I will be implementing straight away! Thank you." Rachel Mowat, Prudhoe West First School.

"Fantastic training course! Great ideas put into practice." Michele Turner, Mickley Pre-School.

"Very inspiring. Good to see a systematic music programme to support letters and sounds. So good to draw in phonological awareness as so many schemes miss this out or do a very small demo" Liz Somerville, Early Years Consultant, Northumberland.

"Great fun! Loved learning and joining in with new songs. Has given me some great ideas on implementing them in our setting. Also, a start to help with getting parents involved." Amanda Brown, Rascals.

"Very interesting insight on how to use different songs other than traditional nursery rhymes to help children learn letters and sounds". Nicholas Palmer, Rascals.

"Excellent resource, lovely session." Diane Williamson, NCC.

"Very motivated and knowledgeable session. I was made very aware of the importance of music session every day" Jade Regan, Blyth Central Pre-School.

"Really motivated by the session- will definitely introduce straight away." Alison Smith, Humshaugh Pre-School.

"A brilliant training session, that I will put into my everyday practice." Melanie Errington, Broomhaugh Squirrels.

"A super morning. Lots of new ideas and a great way of cross-curricular- singing and phonics! Looking forwards to implementing the ideas with children." Jill Jeffery, Early Years Unit.

"Lots of really good ideas to support letters and sounds – pleased there is a CD to use to help me remember. Will use ideas daily." Wendy Walker, Bedlington Station Primary School.

"Lots of great ideas to support practitioners embedding phonological awareness. Great fun!" Claire Johnson, NCC.

"A great course. Enjoyed it very much, will be applying to my daily play and education with the



children.” Nicola Rutherford, Shilbottle Friendly Frogs Ltd.

“Very valuable. It has given me the ideas and confidence to carry it [the songs and linked activities] out.” Sharon Borrie, Seghill First School.

“Very beneficial and can’t wait to get started.” Helen Alder, Mickley First School Nursery.

“Very inspirational, lots of practical ideas that I’m sure I will use. Thank you.” Katie Carrick, Broomhill

“Great range of new songs. Useful to link with Letters and Sounds – more structure to some of the things we are already doing on an ad-hoc basis.” Emma Bacon, Wylam Pre-School.

“Had a fab time in this training session, really enjoyed it, can’t wait to use this across all of our early years unit.” Claire Hornsby, Swansfield Park Primary School.

“I love singing with the children, I know this will ensure our music sessions are progressive and challenging. Very happy with how training was delivered.” Carol Pass, Belsay Pre-School.

“I have really enjoyed the training, I am looking forward to going to my setting tomorrow and starting with the ‘Hello’ song. I also need a trip to B&Q to buy some doweling to make sticks, thank you.” Carolyn Strangeways, Lowick C of E First School.

“Lots of ideas for phonological awareness activities for circle time as well as a general music session, thank you.” Gillian Stenhouse, Blyth West Children Centre.

“Easy to follow, fun training, linked to letters and sounds phase 1. Going to use in pre-school and nursery.” Julie Duff, New Delaval Primary School.

“Easy to follow, will definitely enjoy singing and out the activities with my children. Lots of lovely ideas, thank you.” Helen Ralph, New Delaval Primary School.

“I think this will be a fantastic addition to our letters and sounds programme. I really enjoyed it and know the children will too.” Hayley Stewart, Holywell Village First School.

“Really enjoyable, very easy to learn with catchy songs.” Kath Dickinson, SEND to Learn.

“Great ideas to add to songs and activities. Good for intervention and the whole class.” Diane Pearson, Stobhillgate First School.

“Fantastic, interactive, great programme. Think this will be great to keep motivation of all children.” Ariene Bowes, Henshaw Nursery.

“Really enthusiastic and helps to be motivated to engage in ideas. Good variety of ideas and how to adapt to keep songs fresh and usable for all different aspects in letters and sounds.” Catherine Borrows, Henshaw Nursery.



"Great programme and fantastic sounds. I just need to practice!" Sarah Dickinson, SEND to Learn.

"I think there is a wealth of valuable activities and songs to be used in a focused way, which will benefit children in our setting, particularly those with attention, listening, speech, and language difficulties. Fab! Thank you." Carolyn Shovlin, North Tynies.

"This will be very fun and will help phonological awareness for my children." Michelle Gardiner, Wylam Playgroup.

"Enjoyable. Have new ideas for Nursery." Kerry Wallace, Swansfield Park Primary School.

"We need a new sound system! Like the structure- more likely to use it. Like the set-up resources, both for interest and justifying why to do it." Siobhan Stephenson, Stampers Pre-School.