



Excerpt from the Monitoring Report for the Breaking Beats Music Course

We delivered 2 Breaking Beats courses each for 5 weeks in May and July 2025 in different venues in the Dearne.

We were keen to reach young people who might not be especially interested in other kinds of provision, especially young men who are most at risk of suicide and self-harm. Out of the 28 people who attended the courses, 23 were male and almost all were under 20 years old so we were very happy with that.

All attendees completed registration forms and were given wellbeing packs containing a mixture of information and freebies. The packs went down very well and meant that there was no stigma attached to taking home leaflets from organisations such as Papyrus and the Samaritans.

For the length of the course, we displayed posters and leaflets from organisations encouraging young people to seek advice if feeling low or under pressure. It is difficult to fully assess the impact of this, but everyone was keen to take home a pack and they were happy to wear the wristbands supplied by Papyrus.

For 2 hours a week, young people were in a safe and supportive environment, mixing with different people including new adults. The atmosphere was relaxed and more than one person mentioned it was great to have a break from the stress of home and school life. Through the evaluation forms, we know that it was a huge boost in their confidence to be able to mix with a diverse range of people and pursue an interest not usually covered in school.

One of the lessons from this course is that young people prefer a more relaxed approach to activity outside of school; not many attended every session within the session times. It was more usual for people to drop in and out of provision.

Breaking Beats tutors were ideal for this course and age group; their knowledge about music and technical expertise was perfect and their ability to relate to all people attending was very impressive. Even when there was an influx of young people who just happened to be in the area, they dealt with them with confidence and there were no reported problems.

The equipment available to them and how quickly they could develop skills impressed attendees; a few reported they were keen to pursue their musical education beyond the scope of the course and even as a future career. One young person has offered to volunteer at any future courses.

To conclude we believe 'Breaking Beats' has been successful in targeting the people we wanted to reach and delivering something new and exciting for them. The course has almost certainly improved the confidence and mental health of attendees and contributed towards raising aspirations and promoting community cohesion in a challenging area of Barnsley.

Case Study

As soon as the course was advertised, we were contacted by the parents of Alex who were keen for him to attend as he wanted to find out more about how to play and record his own music. Although we had an age guideline of 12 and above, we agreed that Alex, who was only 10, could attend as long as a parent accompanied him. Alex came to every session and worked alongside other young people on the course, learning how to use decks, how to structure songs and record and manipulate electronic music. His dad Sam told me;

'It has been a really good course for Alex to get into and great to have something different running in the area. It has built up his confidence to do more with music and he has since asked to begin music lessons at school.'

<https://www.breakingbeats.co.uk/>