

A Child like Marshall

Although six-year-old Marshall was born blind, he has always been fascinated by music, which, with AMBER's help, he now explores to the full. His regular sessions with his early years music specialist, Laura, has allowed him to channel his innate musicality, helping him to develop personally, physically and socially. Participating in group music sessions has helped Marshall to involve himself with other children and he is now the most popular member of the group - the one to whom everyone looks to start singing and to remember song lyrics. He really feels a part of the group and sings and plays with the other children, listening to their contributions and taking turns with them.

{mp3}Marshall{/mp3}Listen to Marshall taking part in his group music session

Prior to AMBER's funding, Marshall was a rather self-centred child with few communication skills. His behaviour was obsessive and almost entirely self-related. He took no interest in other children and they found him difficult to interact or communicate with. This awkward, rocking, self-centred, obsessive boy is now developing into a happy, gregarious, accepted member of his social group, and music is the key to helping him to create these vital links to his peer group and to relate to the outside world. Marshall's mother Michelle says:

Marshall has always been attracted to sounds and music from an early age. We have encouraged this with enthusiasm on all available levels. With AMBER's support we have been able to take his interest much, much further. He loves his music lessons with Laura, which have helped him to make new friends while learning about his favourite subject.

Thanks to AMBER, Marshall is making good progress on his keyboard, learning to use his perfect pitch to relate to it. He enjoys composing his own music and loves to write short songs about his experiences. He now has a repertoire of pieces about hairdryers, pizzas and riding a bike, as well as a "Hello" song for the group. He has a lovely singing voice and an excellent memory for song lyrics and melodies. He also enjoys playing his violin and loves to play duets with his music teacher.

What might be Marshall's future Musical Goals or Ambitions

Marshall has enormous musical potential and a great love for music. He has benefitted hugely from his music group and hopes to become an important member of the school choir as well as performing on an instrument. He takes great delight in experimenting with different sounds on his keyboard and narrating stories around these sounds. He enjoys listening to recordings of songs or stories that the group have worked on together. It is very possible that one day, Marshall might be a great song writer and sound engineer.