



Using music to create
a more inclusive society

Welcome!

What is Electric Umbrella?

Where Music Unites People and
Creates a More Inclusive Society



Watch the video...



Watch the video with your class/ group. The discussion task is on the next slide.

Let's discuss...

- What does Electric Umbrella use to **help people express themselves?**
- Why do you think it's important for someone to feel **seen, heard and valued?**
- Do you think **it's harder for some people in society to feel like this?** If so, why?
- What did Tom mean when he said, **"You can change the piano, not the pianist"?**



Suggested Discussion Prompts/ Answers:

- What does Electric Umbrella use to unite people and help people express themselves? (Music - performances, instruments, songwriting, community, friendship, acceptance)
- Why do you think it's important for a person to feel "seen, heard and valued"? (so that they feel that they belong, to have self worth, to increase self esteem, to feel happy, included and accepted, to feel part of a community, not outside from it. How do you make society feel more inclusive if you don't give a voice to everyone?)
- Do you think it's harder for some people to feel like that and, if so, why? (communication difficulties, feeling "different", not everyone has access to the same opportunities, through socio economic circumstances, disability, geography, people assume that learning disabled people don't have the same wants, needs and opinions as others, people can be discriminated against due to their race, culture, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and so not given the same opportunities as others)
- Tom said, "You can change the piano, not the pianist." What do you think he means? (Finding out how to meet people's needs

and creating adapted instruments that are more accessible to everyone. Thinking about things differently and considering people as individuals, in order to make changes that could benefit lots of people. This is based on the social model of disability and equity, rather than equality. In practical terms, why not build a ramp up to a stage, instead of a staircase?)

- Who do you think is responsible for making sure that everyone feels included in society? (Everyone. We can each make small changes to help people feel valued and part of society. It can be as simple as smiling at someone and letting them know that they are seen)

William is a member of Electric Umbrella

This video tells his story:



William's story



William, pictured on BGT.

Watch the video with your class/ group. The discussion task is on the next slide.

Let's discuss...

Pair up and write your ideas on your worksheet and then share them with the group:

- What **challenges** do you think William might face in order to do what he loves (not just physical challenges)?
- Do you think people might make **assumptions** about William because of his disabilities? Give examples
- **How** does **Electric Umbrella** help William, and **why is it important?**
- William performed on **Britain's Got Talent** with Electric Umbrella. **Why was it important** for them to appear on a **primetime TV show?**



Suggested Discussion Prompts/ Answers:

- What challenges do you think William might face in order to do what he loves? (Williams communicates in a way that needs patience and understanding, so it might not be easy for him to explain what he wants to do. William is a wheelchair user and so may have trouble accessing certain buildings, facilities and activities. William does not have the physical dexterity to play some traditional instruments, even though he wants to. William needs to use specialist transport to travel to activities and venues. William needs support in order to eat, drink, and use the toilet. He relies on the kindness and professionalism of others in order to do what he wants.)
- Do you think people might make assumptions about William because of his disabilities? Give examples. (Because William doesn't have the physical dexterity to play certain instruments, some might assume that he doesn't want to play them. Because William doesn't communicate in the same way as other people, some might assume that he doesn't understand what's going

on, can't make decisions for himself or have anything important, funny, creative to say. Because William is a wheelchair user, some might assume that William isn't interested in attending the same events as those that are not. Because William is physically and learning disabled, people might assume that he doesn't have the same hopes, dreams and desires as other people.)

- How does Electric Umbrella help and why do you think that's important? (Creates a welcoming environment where people give him time and space to communicate, creates adapted instruments that he can play, so that he can explore his creative potential, encourages him to take part in performances that not only bring joy for William but also encourage people to consider accessibility. It's important for William because it helps him to find friendship, community and creative activities. He feels like he belongs, which makes his life happier)
- William performed on BGT with Electric Umbrella. Why was it important for William, and Electric Umbrella, to appear on a primetime TV show like BGT? (It showed people what can be achieved with humans work together to support each other, it was aspirational for other disabled people who may have been watching (the importance of representation), it gave a voice to a group of people who often don't get to feature on TV in a positive, creative way, it was great fun for everyone involved!!, the conversations that had to happen behind the scenes were really important in terms of accessibility and challenging perceptions of the learning disabled community.)

Who am I and who are you?

Pair up and use your worksheet:

- **Write down 8 things that make “you, you”** (examples - hobbies, number of siblings, favourite sports team/ musical artist/ food/religion/cultural heritage...)
- **Compare your list with your partner and discuss with the group:** Are there any differences? Any similarities? Which do you think are the most important or interesting?
- Why do you think it's **important to find out about what makes us different, as well as what makes us similar?**



• This exercise is designed to help the children discuss their own identities, what they think are the most important jigsaw pieces that make them “them”. It will highlight that we have lots of similarities with those in our immediate community, but also differences that need to be noticed too.

• The differences aren't to be ignored, but recognised and understood, to promote tolerance and understanding.

- By finding out about different cultures, religions, identities and needs we can start to value people as individuals and break down prejudices that are born from fear and the dehumanisation of those that are seen as different to us. Difference is to be acknowledged, accepted and celebrated. When we do this, we can start to think about what people need in order to feel part of a genuinely diverse and respectful society.

At Electric Umbrella, we believe:

- At Electric Umbrella, we believe that **difference is to be acknowledged and celebrated.**
- Yes, we're all humans, but we're all **individuals** too.
- Every individual deserves to be treated with **kindness and respect.**
- **Prejudice** (making unfair assumptions and judgements about someone based on their race, culture, religion, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation) is **born from fear and ignorance** surrounding those that seem different to us.



Why is it important to celebrate difference?

- Our Electric Umbrella member, **Gavin**, works at a supermarket. He was **targeted by a group of teenagers and badly beaten up, because of his disability.**
- Members of the learning disabled and neurodiverse community are often the **victims of abuse and crimes, just for being themselves.**
- No-one should have to face violence, intimidation or unfair treatment just because they are **seen to be "different".**



Further Discussion Topics:

- What is a Hate Crime? *"Any crime can be prosecuted as a Hate Crime if the offender has either: demonstrated hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity. Or been motivated by hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity. Someone can be a victim of more than one type of hate crime."*
- A Hate Incident doesn't have to include a criminal act. It is an act of abuse (name calling, bullying) based on prejudice. People can (and should) still report hate incidents to the police as they can show a pattern of behaviour/ victimisation and perpetrators of hate incidents may go on to commit Hate Crimes.
- Emergencies should be reported through 999, non emergencies through 101 or report online through True Vision: https://www.report-it.org.uk/your_police_force

Watch Gavin's Story...

Trigger warning: this video is a first hand account of Gavin's experience of getting beaten up.



This session includes a first hand account from a victim of hate crime, describing how he was beaten up; we advise that teachers watch the video in advance before deciding whether it is appropriate for their students.

Watch the video with your class/ group. The discussion task is on the next slide.

“It’s Not a Crime to be Different!”

- Following Gavin's experience, we wrote the song, “It’s not a crime to be different”, with **Hertfordshire Constabulary**, as part of the **National Hate Crime Awareness Week Campaign**.
- The official video features **Hate Crime Officers** alongside members of the **Electric Umbrella community**.



Watch the video...



Extra Discussion Points:

- Do you think sometimes people are scared to talk about difference, in case they say the “wrong” thing? What problems might this lead to?
- Would life be easier if we were all the same?
- Do you think people consider all forms of discrimination equally, or is some seen as worse than others? If so, why?

Exploring the lyrics...

Using your worksheet:

- **Underline** the lyrics that name different **characteristics that may lead to a person experiencing hatred or prejudice.**
- **Circle** the lyrics that explain **what you should do if you experience, or witness, prejudicial language or behaviour.**
- Highlight what you think are the **most powerful lyrics** and make a note of **why** you think that.



Extended Discussion Prompts:

- What would you do if you heard discriminatory language being used in your school/ friendship group/ family?
- Is it easy to be inclusive?
- Is it worth it to be inclusive?
- What do you think the qualities of a "good leader" are?

What can we do to make our community more welcoming and inclusive? Be **BRAVE.**

Be tolerant and accepting of others.

Report hate incidents and hate crimes.

Advocate for those who may find it harder to speak up.

Voice concerns about the use of prejudicial language or behaviour in your school.

Educate yourself, and others around you, about diversity and acceptance



Discuss the 5 points on this slide. Think about your own school community and ask the children how they may put these points into practice. Who should they go to in school to voice any concerns? How are they going to educate themselves individually about diversity? What will the school do? Can you create a pledge/plan for your school going forward? What about in the wider community - can the children bring some of these discussions into their own homes? It isn't easy to do, but by everyone taking small steps and eradicating hate, we may get there!



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