



St. Patrick's NS Strangsmills

Music Plan

Revised: 2024

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Music Plan

Introduction

This policy outlines the teaching and organisation of Music at St. Patrick's NS Strangsmills. The original plan was formulated following two in-service training days and one in-school planning day for music in 2006. The plan was then reviewed by all staff in 2012, a subsequent review took place in December 2020 and it was again reviewed in October 2024. The planning process involved all the teaching staff of St. Patrick's NS.

Rationale

The rationale behind the formulation of this plan was:

- To benefit teaching and learning of music in our school
- To provide a coherent approach to the teaching of music across the whole school
- To review and update the existing plan for music

Vision:

We believe that Music education is part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the pupil's intelligences. We are committed to maintaining a wide-ranging curriculum in Music, which we believe is an essential part of the whole curriculum, contributing in a major way to the spiritual, moral, emotional, cultural, and intellectual development of all the pupils. Through Music education, we seek to provide opportunities for pupils to understand themselves and to relate to others, forging important links between the home, school, and the wider community.

Aims:

We endorse the aims of the Primary Curriculum for Music (p. 12 Curriculum Book), which are to:

- Enable the pupil to enjoy and understand Music and to appreciate it critically;
- Develop the pupil's openness to, awareness of, and response to, a wide range of musical genres, including Irish music;
- Develop the pupil's capacity to express ideas, feelings, and experiences through Music as an individual and in collaboration with others;
- Enable the pupil to develop his/her musical potential and to experience the excitement

and satisfaction of being actively engaged in musical creativity;

- Nurture the pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence through participation in musical performance;
- Foster higher-order thinking and life-long learning through the acquisition of musical knowledge, skills, concepts, and values;
- Enhance the quality of the pupil's life through aesthetic musical experiences.

Curriculum Planning:

1. Strands and strand units

The teachers of each class grouping will familiarise themselves with the strands / strand units and content objectives as outlined in the Curriculum for their class levels.

- o Infant classes pp. 14-25
- o First and second class pp. 26-40
- o Third and fourth class pp. 41-59
- o Fifth and sixth class pp. 60-79.

This familiarity will be maintained through consultation on a formal [staff meetings] and informal basis if or when teachers change classes or when new staff join the teaching team. Each teacher will be familiar with or seek assistance from those familiar with the necessary musical concepts: a sense of pulse, a sense of duration, a sense of tempo, a sense of pitch, a sense of dynamics, a sense of structure, a sense of timbre, a sense of texture and a sense of style.

The three strands:

- Listening and Responding
- Performing
- Composing

All strands are to be afforded equal importance in general but at various times emphasis may be placed on one or other of these.

At certain stages of the year a thematic approach may be adopted. These occasions are:

[a] Christmas performances

[b] Religious celebrations including First Communion and Confirmation

[c] Whole school assemblies

[d] Seachtain na Gaeilge

[e] Possible Concert or other public performance. (e.g. Peace proms, graduations, Music Generation jams)

2. Approaches and Methodologies:

[refer to Curriculum and Teacher Guidelines pp.52 to 127]

- All children will be actively engaged in music education in our school.
- All teachers will be actively involved in music education in our school.
- If external teachers are supporting specific aspects of the music curriculum, they need to be familiar with the music curriculum. Where possible they will be involved in the planning process for music.
- We aim to encourage a positive musical environment that aids and values the sharing of ideas, skills and resources. *(See Teacher Guidelines p. 29)*
- The approaches and methodologies used will foster active enjoyable participation in the music curriculum.
- All opportunities will be provided to enhance children's lives through music.

Strand: Listening and Responding:

This strand includes exploring sounds and responding to Music. Sounds include instruments, environmental sounds, body percussion, and vocal sounds. Children in our school are provided with opportunities to listen and respond to music by experiencing a wide range of musical styles, traditions, and cultures. Our teachers provide opportunities for active listening and responding by questioning, prompting, suggesting, listening to short examples repeatedly etc., in line with Teacher Guidelines p.55. Children are given opportunities to respond to music in a variety of ways which include: describing emotions, responding through dance, drama, art, or simply talking about the music, moving, listening for specific instruments and/or specific features, following/creating a pictorial score of music, writing in response to music, composing, singing or playing along with music, musical games and action songs. Children are provided with opportunities to work in different groupings: whole groups, small groups, pairs, and individually; children are especially encouraged to work collaboratively and co-operatively.

During these activities, children are provided with opportunities to offer varying and creative solutions to presented problems.

Listening Materials: A broad range of listening materials are available:

- Tuned and untuned percussion instruments;
- Recorded music on-line, You tube, spotify etc
- Environmental objects, e.g. assortments of metals, wood, fibres;
- Instruments of child/children in the class;
- Melodic instruments—tin whistles, keyboard, ukulele
- Instruments of teachers on staff

In both music and environmental recordings selected for listening, the focus is on discriminating between sounds and describing them in terms of their source, timbre, texture, structure, pitch, dynamics, tempo, duration, structure, and style. In selecting recorded music, a balance is maintained between music from Ireland and other countries, choral and instrumental, music for different occasions and purposes (e.g. religious ceremonies), solo and ensemble, classical and folk and other genres.

Strand: Performing:

This strand includes giving all children the opportunity to play an instrument, and to acquire basic music literacy skills. Opportunities for pupil performances are provided in class, at whole school celebrations, weekly assemblies, Christmas Concerts, external performance and other occasions.

In the Performing strand, the following are emphasised:

- Active enjoyable participation;
- Development of skills, understanding, and knowledge;
- Fostering of children's attitudes and interests;
- Development of creativity.

Song –Singing:

Song singing is seen by our teachers as an ideal way of engaging large groups in enjoyable and fulfilling music making. Our teachers are aware that the range of notes of a song should be within the range of the children's voices. Some of our teachers teach a song by ear—i.e. using their own voice. Others use a melodic instrument, which also works very well. Some teachers use a recording to teach songs.

In teaching song-singing, teachers keep in mind the recommendations of Teacher Guidelines pp.70-73, and 76-80. When teaching singing with the musical elements in mind, teachers refer to Teacher Guidelines pp.74-76. The following will be encouraged at all levels - part singing, teaching rounds, partner songs (duets) and part songs. See Teacher guidelines pp. 71-85.

Music literacy will begin at Infant level with Rhythm and pulse activities. Throughout the school the vocabulary used for the various beats will be as per pg. 93 of the Teacher guidelines. See Appendix 2. Rhythm notation will be taught as per the Music curriculum pg. 54 and 75.

Additional literacy in Music will be covered by the teaching of ukulele /tin whistle or another instrument to children from 3rd class upwards. Opportunities will be provided for playing instruments through ukulele/tin whistles from 3rd class upwards. (See appendix 2 for guidelines

for each class in the teaching of tin whistle) Informal playing of and with instruments in the younger classes will largely revolve around percussion. (*T.G pp. 104-109*)

Opportunities will be provided to perform for an audience at the occasions listed earlier in this plan and will include

- o Within class
- o Other classes
- o Parents
- o Wider community.

Strand: Composing:

Children are encouraged to improvise, discuss, evaluate, and record music as part of the Composing Strand. Opportunities are provided to improvise and/or compose in a variety of contexts—e.g. to accompany a rhyme, song, poem, cartoon or story; to explore the musical concepts/elements; to experiment with sound; to portray a character, mood or setting; to illustrate events; to convey an abstract concept; to explore melody etc. Children are given opportunities to compose/improvise using vocal sounds, body sounds, instruments, and environmental sounds.

Children are given opportunities to contribute to the setting of ground rules for creative music activity: when organising composing activities, teachers refer to pp.111-112 of Teacher Guidelines.

3. Linkage and integration:

Linkage: As far as possible the strands of the curriculum - Listening and responding, Performing, and Composing will be dealt with as being interrelated and interconnected.

Integration: Music can be easily integrated with another subject in a way that complements curriculum aims and objectives in both subjects e.g.

- Gaeilge (le amhráin, rannta, scéalta);
- English (oral language, new music vocabulary, stories);

- Mathematics (number songs and rhymes, note value and time relationships being linked to the study of fractions etc);
- History (development of music and instruments through the ages, lives of famous composers, different traditions, music related to periods of time in the past - Famine, 1798, French Revolution etc);
- Geography (origins of instruments, music from different countries, cultural links, national anthems);
- Science (Sound)
- P.E. (dance: appreciation of various genres of music and dance styles, musical concepts such as pulse and rhythm)
- Drama (Christmas concert)
- Visual Arts (Construction - making instruments)

Theme based activities used to support integration can be listed as part of each teachers class plan.

4. Assessment:

The main assessment tools used for music will be:

- teacher observation
- teacher-designed tasks and tests
- self-assessment
- recording of the children's work
- graphic/pictorial scores

The assessment will be used by teachers to inform their planning and the management of the learning activities. Teachers will report on the child's progress in Music at parent-teacher meetings and in the annual school report. When passing on their class at the beginning of the school year, each teacher (verbally) informs the new teacher of the children's ability and progress in Music over the previous year. When assessing the three strands, teachers refer to pp. 125-127 of the Teacher's Guidelines. Teachers are aware that assessment in Music may produce evidence of learning needs in other areas of the curriculum also.

5. Children with Different Needs:

Teachers in St. Patrick's NS strive to meet the needs of all children in the school. They will achieve this by varying the pace, content, and methodologies, in order to ensure learning and success for all children. Activities may be adapted and modified so that all children can participate meaningfully in classroom music. The special needs assistant (SNA) may have a wider role/responsibility during some music activities e.g. assuring safety of children during dance etc. The school will attempt to provide challenges for children of exceptional ability as the need becomes apparent. A specific provision will be made for any child with a disability. To help in this work, teachers refer to pp.40-41 of Teacher Guidelines.

6. Equality of Participation and Access:

All the children in our school will participate in all aspects of the Music curriculum. Girls and boys are provided with equal opportunities to participate in classes /activities. Boys and girls have equal *access* to and opportunities to experience all strands.

Organisational Planning:

7. Timetable

All classes will have a minimum of one hour per week of Music. This time allocation may be broken down at the discretion of the individual teacher. We recognise that in the junior classes, the time allotted will be of shorter duration on a more frequent basis, while senior classes may divide the hour into longer time spans, such as two thirty-minute sessions, or three twenty-minute sessions. Teachers may also choose to block times for music at particular times of the year. Timetables will all record the time allocation for Music. As we currently engage in the Music Generation programme, this takes place for 40minutes per week encompassing many of the learning outcomes for a class.

8. Resources and ICT:

See appendix 1 for a list of resources available in the school.

There are adequate resources for all classes. It is the responsibility of each teacher to ensure that these resources are correctly maintained and stored. The percussion instruments will be stored

in the press in the hall. There is a class set of Ukuleles that children may use during ukulele lessons. There is also a keyboard available for use.

ICT's are used on a regular basis in a variety of ways. The interactive whiteboard is regularly used as well as the internet to source music on-line, interactive instruments, composing music online, on-line Karaoke, interactive games, environmental sounds etc. The I-pads may also be used to record the children for assessment/self-assessment purposes, music appreciation, recording compositions etc. At present the online programme of Dabbledoo music is used by teachers to support the implementation of the music curriculum.

9. Health and Safety:

Teachers will at all times be mindful of the school's Health and Safety Policy. Children will be encouraged to safeguard their own well-being. Children will be encouraged to show respect for musical instruments, and to play them at an appropriate volume.

When planning for music, consideration will be given to the following:

- Hidden dangers if children are moving about the classroom;
- Storage facilities;
- Access to, and transport of, equipment/instruments;
- Amount of space for children to sit or stand when doing choral or instrumental work;
- Appropriate volume levels when using audio equipment and instruments.

10. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

In order to provide information and guidance for their long and short-term planning for Music, teachers will refer to the NCCA curriculum documents for Music and to this Whole-School Plan. Specific work to be covered will be laid out in teachers' long and short-term plans. The Cúntas Míósúil reflects work completed by each teacher.

11. Staff Development:

The staff will be notified of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses offered by the Waterford or Kilkenny education centres and/ or other parties through a face to face or online forum.

The skills and expertise of school personnel will be shared in Music as in other curricular areas, through input at staff meetings, as well as in an informal basis.

When outside teachers are engaged to teach an instrument, teachers are encouraged to also learn the instrument to be able to continue the teaching the instrument after the lessons have concluded.

12. Parental Involvement and Community Links:

Parents are encouraged to support their children's activities in Music by:

- Encouraging active listening
- Discussing attitudes towards, and taste in, music
- Allowing time and space to practice and improvise on an instrument
- Encouraging positive attitudes to Music in general and school-based activities in particular.
- Parents with musical skills and talents will be invited into the school to share their skills

Parents are sometimes invited to attend school or classroom music events, as supportive audience members for children's performances, and/or to assist in the supervision of children. At Christmas a carol service is usually held in the Marian Hall and parents are invited to attend the performance. The sixth class also perform at their graduation ceremony in June also.

At individual parent-teacher meetings, teachers will discuss the child's progress in Music with the parents.

Success Criteria:

The success of this plan will be measured by the following criteria:

- Implementation will be evident in teaching and learning in the classroom;
- Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers' planning and monthly reports;
- On-going evaluation will demonstrate that pupils are acquiring an understanding of the concepts in Music;
- Children will have a positive attitude and appreciation of Music;

- Children will have an interest in expression through Music;
- Children will have listened and responded to music from a wide range of genres and cultures;
- Children will be able to use their voice as an instrument and sing songs, appropriate to their vocal range, from a wide range of genres and cultures;
- Children will be able to play a variety of instruments;
- Children will experience a variety of ways of recording Music,
- Children will improvise and create music, using a variety of sound sources;
- Children will discuss, evaluate, and record their activities in Music.

Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan will be implemented and developed by the teachers in their own classes. We will monitor the implementation/ progress of the Music programme by formal and informal discussions amongst the teachers and by encouraging and accepting feedback on its implementation.

(b) Timeframe

Following ratification from the Board of Management, this policy will be implemented during term 2 of the school year 2024/2025.

Review

This plan will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the music curriculum in St. Patrick's NS. Teachers, pupils, parents, BOM and DES inspector may be involved in any future review. The policy will be reviewed again in 2028/2029 or when the new curriculum has been introduced.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on December 3rd 2024.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson BOM

Appendix 1

Classroom Resources

A variety of resources are available in individual classrooms, especially sing-along CD's and samples of various schemes. The Dabbledoo programme for music is purchased for all teachers to use to support the implementation of the music curriculum.

Musical Resources in the school

- 6 x Recorders
- 5 x Tin whistles
- 30 ukuleles
- 5 x Xylophones
- 2 x Bongo Drums
- 6 x Boom Whackers
- Claves
- 3 x Jingle Bells
- 7 x Wood Scrapers
- 6 x Small Shakers
- 2 x Large Shakers
- 2 x Cowbells
- 13 x Tambourines
- 25 x Triangles
- 1 x Resonator Bell

Christmas concert plays available in the school:

- Countdown to Christmas
- Children of the World
- The Nativity
- Celebrate Christmas – Easy Dramas, Speeches and Recitations for Children
- Practical Ways to Christmas Plays
- Easy Ways to Seasonal Plays
- Easy Ways to Christmas Plays
- Hosanna Rock
- The Twelve Plays of Christmas
- DIY Nativity
- Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh
- Are We Nearly There Yet?
- The Very Hopeless Camel
- Lights, Camel, Action!
- Stable Manners
- Simply Nativity
- The Advent Light
- This is Christmas

CDs for Christmas

- Karaoke Christmas
- 50 Very Best Christmas Songs
- Holy Joe x 2
- The Magical Christmas Jigsaw x 4
- Are we nearly there yet? X 2
- Nativity Play x 2
- Lights, Camel Action
- Stable Manners

Appendix 2

If Teaching Tin whistle

Notes taught at each class level when teaching tin whistle

3rd class: B, A, G, F#, E

4th class: D, C#, D', E', F'

5th class: C, G', F#, A'

6th class: All notes, rests