



Music Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was developed by the staff of Navan Educate Together NS during the 2021/2022 school year. It was further developed and ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on 23rd November 2022.

This plan will form the basis of each teacher's long and short-term planning in Music and so will influence teaching and learning in individual classrooms. It will inform new or temporary teachers of our approaches and methodologies in this subject area.

This plan is for the information of teachers, our partners in learning, the Board of Management and the Department of Education and Science.

Rationale

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 the existing plan for music considering the 1999 Primary School Curriculum.

Vision

Music is a non –verbal form of communication that can convey ideas, images and feelings through selected sounds and symbols. Music involves people in both making music and listening to music.

Music is an art that combines many concepts and techniques and uses them to inspire, to imagine, to invent and to express feeling.

Music education is part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence. Engagement with Music enhances creative expression and imagination and

develops natural ability and potential, sensitivity and individuality. It also provides fulfilment, while enhancing self-esteem.

Aims

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for Music with particular emphasis on enhancing the quality of a child's life through aesthetic musical experience, as outlined in the Music Curriculum document pg. 12.

- to enable the child to enjoy and understand music and to appreciate it critically
- to develop the child's openness to, awareness of and response to a wide range of musical genres, including Irish music
- to develop the child's capacity to express ideas, feelings and experiences through music as an individual and in collaboration with others
- to enable the child to develop his/her musical potential and to experience the excitement and satisfaction of being actively engaged in musical creativity
- to nurture the child's self-esteem and self-confidence through participation in musical performance
- to foster higher-order thinking and lifelong learning through the acquisition of musical knowledge, skills, concepts and values
- to enhance the quality of the child's life through aesthetic musical experience.

Curriculum Planning

1. Strands and Strand Units

The content is presented into three Strands at each level:

- Listening and responding
- Performing
- Composing

Within each strand the content is organised into Strand Units, which provide a means of listening and responding to music, singing and playing music, reading and writing music and making new music.

Each teacher is familiar with the strand and strand units, content objectives for his/her class level and indeed for each other's class levels. This is to ensure a coherent programme throughout the school.

The strand and all strand units must be covered each year as must all content objectives.

Planning

Each teacher will prepare a long term yearly plan for Music which will be informed by this plan and the Dabble Doo yearly plan specific to their class level.

Each teacher will ensure that the music content for their class will be covered during the school year and will be recorded in their fortnightly plans and Cuntas Míosúil.

Planning content as found in the Music Curriculum:

- Infants p. 14-25
- 1st & 2nd p. 26-40
- 3rd & 4th p. 41-59
- 5th & 6th p. 60-79

2. Approaches and Methodologies

We will ensure that the approaches and methodologies used will:

- Foster enjoyment in music making
- Seek to develop the skills, understanding, knowledge and attitudes of the child
- Allow for musical growth and the development of creativity in the child

Strand: Listening and Responding

Strand Units:

- Exploring sound
- Listening and responding to music

Children will be encouraged to listen actively and to focus on what happens in the music by experiencing enjoyable and varied music. This is important for the children's musical development as performers, as composers and as members of an audience.

Listening to music repeatedly allows for development of the imagination, insight and during problem-solving.

It is important that the children are exposed to a variety of musical experiences, which will prompt active listening through questioning, prompting and suggestion.

Teachers will endeavour to include the following in the music material:

- Recorded music
- Tuned and untuned percussion instruments
- Environmental objects – metals, wools and fibres
- A child in the class studying an instrument privately
- School instruments – Music Generation instruments, piano, tin-whistles
- A visiting musician
- Live music group, band or choir

Strand: Performing

Strand Units:

- Song singing
- Unison singing
- Simple part singing
- Literacy
- Playing instruments

Teachers will adopt the approaches as outlined in Teacher Guidelines (TG) pg 70 – 88 for Performing-Song Singing and pg. 104 – 109 for Performing – playing instruments.

The performance strand emphasises the importance of active music making, beginning with the voice and later including instruments.

There are regular opportunities for the children to make music as individuals, groups or as a whole class through assemblies, school concerts, outside performances such as Peach Proms and visits to the local nursing home and other local events.

All children in Junior infants to 1st class and the Rainbow Rooms take part in early music lessons provided by Music Generation.

All children from 2nd to 6th class receive tuition in the ukulele provided by Music generation.

Strand: Composing

Strand Units:

- Improvising and creating
- Talking about and recording compositions

Teachers will adopt the approaches as outlined in the TG pg 110 – 119 for the Composing Strand.

In infant classes, improvising rhythmic or melodic answers to given questions can take place as a natural extension of song singing, while selecting appropriate instruments to create a sound effect can also link successfully with familiar songs and games. Listening to a wide variety of musical styles and traditions, singing and playing will extend naturally into composing activity. Graphic notation, invented notation, simplified notation may be used to record ideas in addition to electronic recording.

3. Linkage and Integration

Music can be linked and integrated with all the other curricular areas. It may also be used as a starting point in itself when presenting content from another curricular area, where the objectives are primarily drawn from other curricular areas (i.e. Music is used as a methodology).

It is recognised that at NETNS we are lucky to have pupils from many different cultures and languages. Children will be provided with the opportunities to explore and learn from a number of musical traditions reflecting our vibrant student population.

A sample list of when integration occurs:

Visual arts:

- Drawing, Paint
- Construction (musical instruments)
- Elements of art: an awareness of line, pattern, shape (and tone in 5th and 6th class)

P.E.:

- Dance:
 - Exploration, creation and performance of dance.
 - Structure of dance (binary or ternary) in 5th & 6th class.

Science:

- Energy and forces: Sound

History:

- Story: early people and ancient societies
 - Continuity and change over time
 - Local studies
 - Feasts and festivals in the past

Ethical Education:

- Music and Celebrations from other cultures and traditions as part of our Learn Together curriculum

Drama:

- Music to accompany, enhance story

Oral Language:

- Discussion and response

Gaeilge:

- Amhráin Gaeilge

Integration may also be planned on a thematic basis.

4. Assessment and Record Keeping:

As in all subject areas, assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning of Music. Assessment ensures that the activities provided by the teacher meet the needs of the pupils, building on their growing expertise and understanding. Used effectively, assessment can identify the potential in children of all ages and abilities.

We as a staff have a common understanding of its purpose and the ways in which the progress of children in Music will be assessed, documented and reported.

Assessment in Music in our school will fulfil the following roles:

- Formative assessment- to reflect on the day-to-day teaching and learning so the teacher can identify where the child needs to learn next
- A diagnostic role – to identify areas of difficulty in the child's development of Music concepts in order to respond to the needs of the child.
- A summative role – to establish the outcomes of learning after completing a unit of music.
- An evaluative role – to assist teachers in assessing their own practice, methodologies, approaches and resources.

As music is an activity-based area, much of our assessment is carried out within and as part of the lesson by observing, listening and asking the pupils questions. We will ensure that pupils receive feedback regarding their ongoing achievements, areas of high achievement are recognised and the progress of each child is recorded and communicated to the child and parents through parent teacher meetings and the end of school report.

We will assess

- Willingness and readiness to participate in activities

- Level of competence and confidence of child in performing a skill/activity
- Ability to cooperate in individual, group or pair activities.

5. Children with Additional Needs

It is policy of our school to ensure that all children will participate in music activities.

Children with differing needs must be presented with an environment which allows for the development of the knowledge, skills and understanding in music so that they will experience the musical elements and in doing so, realise their creative energy in a structured and meaningful way. Teachers will need to be flexible in planning and preparation and may need to approach the same material in a variety of ways to present it to different children.

Music will contribute to every child's self-esteem and allow each child, including those with differing needs, scope for self-expression and self-realisation.

6. Equality of Participation and Access

Teachers promote equal access to music-making among boys and girls during the planning and implementing of the music programme. This is completed through choosing a balanced singing programme to represent interests of both boys and girls, providing equal opportunities for both boys and girls to play various instruments and encouraging children with skills on particular instruments to accompany the class during music lessons.

Participation in all music groups, singing groups, school choir activities etc is encouraged for all children and emphasis is placed on enjoyment and achievement rather than on performance targets.

Organisational Planning

7. Timetable

Time allocated to Music in every class will be as outlined in the Introduction to the Curriculum. (2 ½ hours per week is devoted to Arts Education in infant classes and a minimum of three hours per week for 1st – 6th class).

Some discretionary time may also be allocated periodically for Music, particularly in the context of integrated project work or occasions of celebration.

The music curriculum is complemented by additional lessons in early years music and ukulele provided by Music Generation.

8. Resources and ICT

Our school is well-resourced with musical instruments which are made available to all teachers including:

- 2 percussion boxes
- 8 violins
- 6 guitars
- 30 ukuleles
- 1 digital piano, stand and speaker
- 3 traditional flutes
- Tin-whistles (for individual use only and to be purchased by parents)

ICT is integrated with the music curriculum through the use of the Dabble Doo programme, interactive panels and class tablets.

The pupils in our school are afforded the opportunity to play a variety of musical instruments and to manipulate and construct materials to make music and rhythm.

There is a selection of age-appropriate music books available to children which are stored in the school library and in other locations around the school. These will have a variety of stimuli, including information about musical instruments and some information on composers and various musical genres. The non-fiction section of the library houses a variety of books for project work. A selection of relevant music videos, recordings and digital resources are available on the school's shared drive.

Musicians living locally, local arts centres and education officers, concert halls, galleries, local musical events and national support structures are external resources to support the Music Curriculum. Grants from the DES allocated for the music curriculum and from Meath County Council will be used specifically for this subject.

9. Health and Safety

During the delivery of the music curriculum, care and attention will be given to the following:

- Hidden dangers if children are moving around the classroom
- Storage facilities
- Access to, and transport of, equipment/instruments
- Ventilation of the classrooms
- Amount of space for children to sit or stand when doing choral or instrumental work
- Appropriate volume levels when using audio equipment and instruments
- Hygiene with use of Tin Whistle

10. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

- Teachers will consult this whole school plan, the curriculum documents for Music and the relevant Dabble Doo Music scheme when they are drawing up their long and short-term plans.
- Each teacher will have a long-term plan for the year.
- Music will be a regular and evident element of the child's classroom experience.
- Where it is meaningful and suitable, music will be taught in a thematic way to integrate with the other subjects.
- School concerts and assemblies will be held regularly and will provide opportunities for classes to perform for the school community.
- Cuntais míosúil will assist in recording work covered, in evaluating progress in music and in informing future teaching.
- Parents are informed of children's progress in music at parent teacher meetings and in end of year report cards.

11. Staff Development

- Teachers will have access to reference books, resource materials and websites dealing with music.
- Staff will be encouraged to research and try out new approaches and methodologies.

- The In-School Management Team will oversee responsibility for keeping resources material up to date and will arrange for opportunities for resources to be assessed for purchase and for new approaches to be piloted in the school.
- Teachers will be encouraged to attend in-service workshops and courses in music provided by Department of Education and Science and Summer In-Service Courses. They will up-skill other staff members and share their expertise, good experience and practice with other teachers.
- Provision for staff development in musical skills and music scheme knowledge is set out as part of the staff's Croke Park hours.
- Staff who play a musical instrument are encouraged to participate in the school staff band.
- Staff social outings may sometimes include attendance at musical events and performances.

12. Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to support their children's music activities by encouraging active listening, discussing attitudes towards and taste in music, allowing time and space to practise or improvise on an instrument, and by encouraging positive attitudes to music in general and to school-based activities in particular. Parents are sometimes invited to attend school or classroom music events, playing the role of critical listeners or supportive audience members for children's performance, or assisting in the supervision of movements of children. At times, the skills of parent-musicians will be included when planning for live performances or when creating a class composition.

13. Community Links

There are musicians in the locality who can work with the children and/or perform for the children, and, on special occasions, they are invited to do so, as observed in our annual concert to celebrate Seachtain na Gaeilge.

The following local community services, outreach programmes and national support structures have been identified and are considered as valuable resources to support the Music Curriculum:

- Music Generation
- Peace Proms Cross Border Choir and Orchestra
- Navan Silver Band
- Navan Library
- The Solstice Theatre
- Draíocht Theatre Blanchardstown
- The Ark
- The National Concert Hall
- The Music Network
- Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann
- Meath County Council
- Millbury Nursing Home

Success Criteria

We believe this plan can make a difference to the teaching and learning of Music in our school.

We will review this plan under the following headings:

How will we know that the plan has been implemented?

- Are individual teachers preparing planning and teaching according to this plan?
- Are we using a variety of methodologies?
- How are the children's music skills progressing?
- How well is music knowledge being learned by the children?
- Are we assessing our music as outlined in the plan?
- Have we acquired the resources we needed?

How will we know that the plan has achieved its aims? What are the indicators?

- Feedback from teachers/parents/pupils/community
- Inspectors' suggestions/report
- Feedback from second level schools

How might the plan enhance pupil learning?

- Children have a positive attitude to and appreciation of music
- Children have an interest in and have an ability to engage in performance-based activities
- Children have confidence and competence in listening and responding to a variety of music genres
- Children are engaging with a variety of music genres
- Children's emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development is enhanced through music experiences

Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan will be supported, developed and implemented by all staff members.

All staff will be responsible for the implementation of whole school approaches in musical literacy along with maintaining and storing resources appropriately.

A designated member of staff will oversee cataloguing and purchasing of instruments, when deemed necessary.

(b) Timeframe

This plan will be implemented in September 2022.

Review**(a) Roles and Responsibilities**

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the music curriculum. During the review we will refer to the tasks in our action plan and check that they have been completed in accordance with the agreed timeframe.

The plan will be reviewed informally at curriculum/ band planning meetings each year.

During the formal review, consultation with the following groups will occur:

- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- Post holders/plan co-ordinators
- The Board of Management

(b) Timeframe

We aim to review this plan during the 2025/2026 school year.

Ratification and Communication

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management on 23rd November 2022.

It will be posted on the school website, the school's shared drive and a hard copy will be made available in the staffroom and in the Principal's office.

Chairperson: Anthony Mackey

Principal: Eleanor Barker