

# MUSIC POLICY



## **TITLE OF POLICY**

---

Music

## **INTRODUCTION**

---

The following were consulted in drawing up this policy:

- Teachers
- Board of Management
- External Music Teachers
- Ancillary and support staff

## **RATIONALE**

---

We decided to focus on Music in order

- to benefit teaching and learning of music in our school
- to conform to the principles outlined in the Primary School Curriculum
- to coordinate the good work already being done in the school
- to inform teachers when preparing long term and short term plans.
- to inform new teachers / temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school
- To provide a coherent approach to the teaching of music across the whole school

## **RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL'S MISSION**

---

Our mission statement

1. Scoil na mBuachaillí, Cloich na Coillte has a Catholic Ethos, promotes Irish language and culture, is caring-centred and respects different colours, creeds and intellect.
2. Every pupil is encouraged to achieve his full potential – socially, personally and intellectually – in a happy, secure learning environment.
3. The discipline in our school encourages and fosters respect and self-esteem

among the pupils.

4. We endeavour to develop supportive and open communication among pupils, teachers, parents, Board of Management and the community.
  5. We aim to have a staff that will continue to be committed, progressive and creative.
- Our policy has an understanding of the characteristic spirit of the school and reflects the school's ethos.

## **AIMS**

---

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for Music

- 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-skills 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

## **POLICY CONTENT**

---

The Music Plan will be addressed under the following headings:

### **Curriculum planning**

- Strands and strand units
- Approaches and methodologies

- Linkage and integration
- Assessment and record keeping
- Children with different needs
- Equality of participation and access

### Organisational planning

- Timetable
- Resources and ICT
- Health and Safety
- Individual teachers' planning and reporting
- Staff development
- Parental involvement
- Community links

## CURRICULUM PLANNING

### 1. Strands and strand Units

Teachers are familiar with the strands/strand units/content objectives for their class level(s) - these can be found in the Curriculum handbook

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

To maintain this familiarity all teachers are given a copy of this policy. Mrs. Elaine Connolly (Post of Responsibility Holder for Music) will liaise with new teachers and teachers who change classes if necessary.

When long term planning teachers will liaise with each other to ensure that there is continuity, progression and consistency from class to class. Mrs. Connolly will be able to help with this area also.

When planning teachers will include experience of the following musical concepts:

- a sense of pulse,
- a sense of duration,

Mrs. Elaine Connolly has responsibility for co-ordinating the review.

The plan will be reviewed at staff meetings or at inservice planning days.

### (b) Timeframe

Ratification and Communication

Ratification by Board of Management at the next Board of Management meeting..

## Reference Section

Primary School Curriculum: Music (1999)

Primary School Curriculum. Your Child's Learning: Guidelines for Parents

Websites:

PCSP [www.pcsp.ie](http://www.pcsp.ie)

SDPS [www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie)

NCCA [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)

DES [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

INTO [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie)

IPPN [www.ippn.ie](http://www.ippn.ie)

NPC Primary [www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie)

Other sites:

[www.teachnet.ie](http://www.teachnet.ie)

[www.mudcat.org](http://www.mudcat.org)

[www.kidsloveclassics.com](http://www.kidsloveclassics.com)

[www.vanbasco.com](http://www.vanbasco.com)

[www.playmusic.org](http://www.playmusic.org)

[www.thirteen.org](http://www.thirteen.org)

[www.bbc.uk](http://www.bbc.uk)

Drawn up in November 2005  
Review in June 2006  
Review in February 2007, August 2009

- Children have a positive attitude and appreciation of music
- Children have an interest in expression through music
- Children engage in listening and responding, performing and composing music
- Children have explored sound including vocal sound, body percussion, instruments and environmental sounds
- Children have listened and responded to music from a wide variety of genres and cultures in a variety of ways
- Children sing songs appropriate to their vocal range from a wide variety of genres and cultures
- Children play a variety of instruments
- Children experience a variety of ways of recording music which may include graphic, pictorial, ICT and traditional music notation
- Children improvise and create music using a variety of sound sources
- Children talk about, evaluate and record their work.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### (a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan be supported, developed and implemented by the staff, pupils, Board of Management and parents of Scoil na mBuachaillí.

Mrs. Elaine Connolly will co-ordinate and evaluate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report to staff on findings.

### (b) Timeframe

The plan will be implemented in March 2007.

## REVIEW

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the music curriculum in the school.

### (a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan will be reviewed by the following:

*Teachers*

*Pupils*

*Parents*

*Post holders/plan co-ordinator*

*BoM/DES/Others.*

- a sense of tempo,
- a sense of pitch,
- a sense of dynamics,
- a sense of structure,
- a sense of timbre,
- a sense of texture,
- a sense of style.

The three strands –

- Listening and responding,
- Performing and
- Composing,

will be comprehensively covered and afforded equal importance.

Occasionally the school will adopt a thematic approach at certain stages of the year - this will be decided by the POR holder (or any other teacher if he/she wishes).

*Refer to Curriculum pp. 14-79 for more details*

### 2. Approaches and Methodologies

By the adoption of this plan it is hoped that all children will actively engage in music education in our school.

All teachers are actively involved in music education in our school - to the best of their ability. It is also open to any teacher to ask Mrs. Elaine Connolly (POR Holder for Music) for help and advice.

We have at present three external teachers support the teaching of musical instruments

- Brass instruments
- Keyboard, tin whistle, guitar, accordion
- Drums

Each of these teachers will be given a copy of this policy and have been consulted in the drawing up of this policy.

At staff meetings and School Development Planning meetings teachers are encouraged to share ideas, skills and resources

*See Teacher Guidelines p. 29*

The approaches and methodologies used in our school foster active enjoyable participation in the music curriculum.

Music is central to the life of the school -

- During Art Lessons or PE lessons music is used as a background

- At Christmas concerts music is central to all the performances and participation and enjoyment is actively encouraged.
- A school musical is produced every second year and every child who expresses an interest is involved.
- The school recently purchased a recording studio and when time allows compositions are recorded.

We feel that all the above enhance children's lives through music.

*Refer to Curriculum and Teacher Guidelines pp. 52 – 127*

### **Listening and responding**

We have an extensive CD library which we are always updating and this enables the children to experience a wide range of musical styles, traditions and cultures.

The teacher provides opportunities for active listening and responding by for example

- questioning,
- prompting
- suggesting,
- listening to short examples repeatedly

*See Teacher Guidelines p. 55*

The children are given opportunities to respond to music in a variety of ways which may include:

- Moving
- Talking about ...
- Listening for specific instruments and/or specific features
- Drawing and painting
- Following/creating a pictorial score of music
- Writing in response to music
- Composing
- Singing or playing along with music
- Musical games and/or action songs.

The children are provided with opportunities to work in different groupings, for example

- whole group,
- small groups,
- pairs,
- individually.

*See Teacher Guidelines p. 29*

- Colleagues, who may need assistance, given help or advice on the preparation and implementation of the music curriculum are encouraged to speak to Mrs. Elaine Connolly (Post of Responsibility Holder) or the Principal.

## **12. Parental involvement**

Parents can support their child in fostering an interest in music - by encouraging their son to become involved in the many musical activities held in the school throughout the year, encourage their child to take up an instrument, attend performances that their child is involved in, encourage the child to practice the instrument at home, bring their child to music performances / musicals, watch musical performances on the television with their child or listen to music on the radio etc etc

*(Refer to Teacher Guidelines pp. 30-34, Primary School Curriculum, Your child's learning, Guidelines for Parents)*

## **13. Community links**

- Members of the community could be involved in supporting the music programme e.g. *Composer in the Classroom, local music organisations and societies etc.*
- Local musicians work with the children, perform for the children and may in the future upskill staff e.g. Drum teacher, past pupil John Fitzgerald owns a studio and the boys have recorded songs there etc.
- Occasionally the children are brought to listen to and appreciate music in the Community College (where visiting bands play), in the City Hall in Cork etc.

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

### **How will we know that the plan has been implemented?**

- Teachers' preparation will be based on this plan.
- Procedures outlined in this plan consistently followed.

### **Has the plan achieved its aims?**

Means of assessing the outcomes of the plan include

- Teacher/parent/pupil/community feedback
- Inspectors' suggestions/report

### **Has the plan enhanced pupil learning?**

Signs to look out for:

*(Refer to Curriculum p.10, Teacher Guidelines pp. 122-123, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Teachers)*

## 9. Health and safety

Consideration is given to the following when planning for music:

- 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.

*(Refer to Teacher Guidelines p. 18)*

## 10. Individual teachers' planning and reporting

- Individual teachers will refer to the school policy when preparing their long and short-term plans.
- Teachers will plan using a variety of approaches - e.g. using the strands and strand units, using a thematic approach etc.
- The Cuntas Míósúil will be used to review and develop the whole school plan/individual preparation for following years. This will be organised by Mrs. Elaine (Special Duties Teacher for Music)

## 11. Staff Development

- Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, instruments, equipment and websites dealing with music.
- Mrs. Elaine Connolly (Post of Responsibility Holder) will take responsibility for monitoring developments, research new methodologies, arrange for demonstrations, create opportunities to try out materials/instruments and assess whether or not they should be purchased.
- Information about in-service courses, school visits, musical events are communicated to all.
- All teachers are encouraged to attend in-service courses and there is an opportunity at staff meetings to share the expertise acquired at these courses.

They are provided with opportunities to work collaboratively/co-operatively. They are provided with opportunities to offer varying and creative solutions to presented problems

*See Teacher Guidelines p.69*

As mentioned earlier children are given ample opportunities for **live performance e.g.:**

- in the classroom with their peers
- in the hall at the Christmas Concert
- at the biennial ScoilaVision concert
- in the Church at First Friday masses, start of year mass, end of year mass, Communion Masses, Confirmation masses, Carol Services, Children's masses in the local parish church
- playing with the newly formed school band
- in the hall for the biennial Musical
- for the boys who take musical instrument lessons there are numerous occasions throughout the year when they perform - Christmas Concerts, end of Year Concerts

We are very fortunate to have a broad range of materials to enable the children to experience different kinds of music for example we have:

- Listening Materials: a broad range of materials are provided and constantly added to.
- Recorded music on video, audio tape, CD or music technology
- Tuned and untuned percussion instruments
- Environmental objects, such as assortments of metals, wood or fibres
- Instruments of child/children in the class
- Melodic instruments – recorder, tin whistle, piano, guitar, etc.
- Drums, keyboards

Occasionally some of the classes travel to hear the performance of a group, ensemble, band, choir, orchestra.

### **Selecting listening materials:**

Materials are selected for listening to and discriminating between environmental sounds and describing them in terms of their source, pitch, dynamics, duration and tempo.

*See List of Music CDs in Inventory*

Selecting recorded music: The following types of pieces are selected e.g. music from written and unwritten traditions, classical and folk, music from Ireland and other coun-

tries, choral and instrumental, solo and ensemble, music for different occasions and purposes.

*See List of Music CDs in Inventory*

### **Performing**

In the Performing strand the following are emphasised:

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

When teaching songs the following issues are considered:

- Using voice, recording, instrument, sheet music
- Teaching by ear
- Selecting the song
- Matching the vocal range of the children
- Resources

When developing effective singing skills the following issues are considered:

- Methodology of teaching
- Conducting
- Improving vocal quality
- Vocal exercises

*See Teacher Guidelines pp. 76-81*

Depending on the ability and skills of the teacher the following are encouraged -

- part singing,
- teaching rounds,
- partner songs (duet) and
- part songs?

*See Teacher Guidelines pp. 84-85*

### **Overcoming Singing Difficulties?**

Singing difficulties could be divided into several categories, and the following suggestions may be of use to teachers attempting to remedy individual problems:

Working with individuals

- The child should be encouraged to attempt a range of vocal responses that transcend his normal production. These might include vocal play, such as animal or bird impressions, foreign accents, cartoon voices or imitations of engine noises or sirens.

Rang 5 / Rang 6: 1 hour

A **new Music Room** has been built and will be timetabled for use on Monday, Thursdays and Fridays.

*(See Teacher Guidelines p.17)*

*(See Primary School Curriculum Introduction p. 70, Teacher Guidelines p. 17,39)*

## **8. Resources and ICT**

There is an inventory of resources, equipment and instruments available to all teachers for music. This is updated on a yearly basis by all members of staff. Each teacher has a copy in their classroom.

The resources for music are centrally stored - for percussion, CD Writers etc, though some teachers have equipment in their own classrooms.

Mrs. Connolly (Post of Responsibility Holder) is responsible for the maintenance and update of music equipment. However all staff may request equipment at any time. The purchase of additional CD Players is of the highest priority at the moment.

*(See Teacher Guidelines p. 130-131, pp.139-147)*

## **8. ICT**

ICT will play a major role in the music plan: for example - the use of CD ROMs, Videos, DVDs, Apple IMac (including Garage Band), Digital Recording Studio, Opus Pro XE (Multimedia Authoring Software)

*What appropriate software is currently available in the school?*

Garage Band  
Opus Pro XE  
Acoustic Lab Mixer  
Van Basco  
etc

The Internet can be used to access websites. Children's work e.g. music single can be downloaded from the website, Fifth class film can be downloaded from our website (featuring music composing by 3 boys in Rang 5) and other children's work and photographs are available to one and all on [www.snbclonakilty.com](http://www.snbclonakilty.com)

We have an Acceptable Usage Policy to ensure safe Internet usage.

acy and rhythm.

The following assessment tools may be used:

Teacher-designed tests and tasks

- Projects
- Curriculum profiles
- Curriculum portfolios
- Recordings of the children's work
- Progress is recorded in the Cúntas Míósúil.
- Progress is communicated to parents at the Parent/Teacher Meetings, in the Summer Report and of course progress can be seen at the various concerts, masses, carol services etc.

*(Refer to Curriculum pp.82-89, Teacher Guidelines pp. 25-27,124-127)*

## 5. Children with different needs

Activities are adapted and modified so that all children can participate meaningfully in classroom music. If necessary the child's SNA will play a wider role/responsibility during some music activities to enable the child to fully participate in the lessons.

The school provides challenges for children of exceptional ability - through involvement in School Musicals, School Concerts, Forming a band (often composing their own material), performing at ScoilaVision etc

*(Refer to Teacher Guidelines pp. 40-41)*

## 6. Equality of participation and access

The music class may be used as an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils e.g. international pupils.

*(Refer to school's Equality Policy, Teacher Guidelines p. 41)*

## ORGANISATIONAL PLANNING

### 7. Timetable

The time is allocated at each level for music as follows:

Junior Infants / Senior Infants: 1 hour

Rang 1 / Rang 2: 1 hour

Rang 3 / Rang 4: 1 hour

- The child should be encouraged to develop an expanded range through moving in small, smooth steps away from the basic range they can produce. This may be tried also in pairs: moving from an agreed pitch upwards or downwards in turn.
- In cases of underpitching, male teachers may find that individual children respond more accurately to the teacher's falsetto range than to his normal tenor-bass range.
- The teacher may help the child to discover that sound is vibration (in instruments as well as in voice) and hums so that he/she discovers lips, vocal cords, nose cavities and chest cavities all vibrating when sound is made.

Working with groups or whole class

- Underpitching or overpitching can also occur for some children when trying to match the sounds produced on an instrument, such as a guitar or piano. Encouraging the children to sing in response to the teacher's voice can remedy this problem.
- For the singing lesson the class could be regrouped so that weaker singers are in front of more capable singers. This reorganisation must be done under some other guise, so that no child feels musically inadequate. Otherwise this would defeat the very purpose of regrouping.
- As a class activity all children should hum their own sound, listening around the room until everyone's is the same.

*See Teacher Guidelines p. 88*

### Music Literacy

Music reading and writing will be preceded and succeeded by

- extensive experience of listening and responding,
- performing and composing without notation.

Children at all levels will encounter rich and enjoyable musical experiences throughout the strands of the curriculum, and with the teacher's facilitation, should come in contact with

- cards,
- posters or
- books with notation in them.

As a result, the children themselves will become enthusiastic about making music and will be aware of the possibilities of recording music in different ways.

The key to successful music literacy in the classroom lies in **long-term planning**, co-ordination and follow-up in which the school policy plays a crucial role.

A number of useful techniques that may be used for teaching music literacy in an integrated, musical way are outlined in the following pages. Teachers may choose from

among these and other methods in developing an approach that best suits their needs. They range from the representation of musical concepts in pictures (graphic notation) to a number of tools that enable the child to gain an understanding of the concepts of rhythm and pitch. These are the foundation stones that gradually lead the child to reading music with understanding, confidence and fluency from the full five-line stave.

*See Teacher Guidelines p. 89*

#### **Opportunities are provided for playing instruments in all classes:**

There is a huge variety of Percussion Instruments available to all classes in the school. There are also two drum kits and three keyboards. A small selection of tin whistles are also available. The teacher in Rang 6 teaches tin whistle to the boys in his class. Mrs. Connolly has formed a school band (with a variety of instruments) and they meet once a fortnight.

Three part-time teachers also serve the school as follows:

*Kay O'Flynn:* teaches tin whistle, accordion, guitar and keyboard

*Anto Noonan:* teaches drums to the boys from Rang 3 - Rang 6

*Gerard Condn:* teaches brass instruments to the boys in Rang 5 and Rang 6.

*(See Teacher Guidelines pp. 104-109)*

#### **Opportunities are provided to perform for an audience:**

##### **Within Class**

The boys are given opportunities throughout the year to perform for their classmates and other classes (usually at First Friday Masses / Christmas Concerts / Musical / ScoilaVision etc)

##### **Parents and the Wider Community**

- in the hall at the Christmas Concert
- at the biennial ScoilaVision concert
- in the Church at First Friday masses, start of year mass, end of year mass, Communion Masses, Confirmation masses, Carol Services, Children's masses in the local parish church
- playing with the newly formed school band
- in the hall for the biennial Musical
- for the boys who take musical instrument lessons there are numerous occasions throughout the year when they perform - Christmas Concerts, end of Year Concerts

*Refer to Curriculum pp. 22-23 (Infants); pp. 35-38 (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>); pp. 52-57 (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>); pp. 71-76 (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>), Teacher Guidelines pp.70-88*

## **Composing**

Opportunities are provided for children to develop their creativity in music in a variety of ways. Children encouraged to improvise, discuss, evaluate and record music as part of the Composing strand. This can be done on:

- Garage Band on the Apple I Mac
- Recordable CD Players
- Studio

Opportunities are provided to improvise and/or compose in a variety of contexts for example:

- To accompany a nursery rhyme, song, poem 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.

Children will be given opportunities to compose/improvise using vocal sounds, body sounds, instruments and environmental sounds.

*(See Teacher Guidelines pp.111-112)*

## **3. Linkage and Integration**

### **Linkage:**

How the strands of the curriculum – Listening and responding, Performing, and Composing interrelated and interconnected.

### **Integration:**

How music is integrated with another subject in a way that complements curriculum aims and objectives in both subjects.

Theme based activities used to support integration.

*(Refer to Teacher Guidelines pp. 19-24, 39)*

## **4. Assessment and record keeping**

Assessment informs the teaching and learning of music - especially when involved in school and classroom planning.

What should be assessed: Enthusiasm, participation and noting the child's ability, liter-