



Whole School Music Plan

2024

Underlying Principles

The guiding principles which inform the teaching and learning of Music in our school are:

1. *Music is for all teachers and all children*
2. *The three strands are equally important – (i) Listening and Responding (ii) Performing and (iii) Composing*
3. *Active enjoyable participation is fundamental to the Music curriculum*
4. *Music enhances and enriches the child's life*

Introductory Statement and Rationale:

a) Introductory Statement: This plan has been formulated by the staff of LMNS during the school year 2024/2025. It will guide and inform teachers in their preparation and planning for music. It will provide information for staff, parents, Board of Management and others on the teaching and learning of Music in this school

b) Rationale: As music is a diverse and lifelong activity, enjoyed by people of all ages, we at LMNS consider music to be an indispensable part of the child centred curriculum. It is a discrete body of knowledge, another form of communication and means that assists in the development of the child's imagination and listening skills. It assists in the personal, social, mental and physical development of the child. Music offers lifelong opportunities for the development of imagination, sensitivity, creativity, risk taking and enjoyment.

Vision and Aims

a) Vision: Music is a key curricular area in the holistic development of the child. It involves learning in the major domains of knowledge, skills, attitudes, feelings and the senses. Our vision for music education is to encourage children to appreciate and enjoy the hugely positive benefits that music can have on their lives. We also seek to develop the child's aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, creative and cultural development through engagement in positive musical experiences.

b) Aims: We endorse the aims of the primary music curriculum:

- 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 activity
- To nurture the child's self-esteem through participation in musical performance

- To foster higher-order thinking skills and lifelong learning through acquisition of musical knowledge, skills, concepts and values
- To enhance the quality of the child's life through aesthetic musical experience.

This Music plan will be addressed under “Curriculum Planning” and “Organisational Planning”:

Curriculum Planning:

Strands and strand units
 Approaches and methodologies
 Linkage and integration
 Assessment and record keeping
 Children with different needs

Organisational Planning:

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

Curriculum Planning:

Strands and Strand Units:

There are three strands in the music curriculum:

Listening and responding, performing and composing. All teachers are familiar with the strands and strand units and content objectives of the curriculum. Each strand has equal importance. Each class level will cover all three strands of the Music Curriculum. Teachers are also familiar with the 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
- a sense of style

All classes from JI- 6th class currently engage with the music education website www.dabledoo.com as a framework and guiding resource to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are taught and to ensure continuity, progression and consistency from class to class.

We teach each class level in rotation to ensure that each child will engage in each class level of the music curriculum throughout their eight years in primary school.

As a school we recognise the integrated nature of these strands and that they are not discrete categories but are interrelated concepts which will be reflected in our teaching of music. A thematic approach will be adopted at certain stages of the year, e.g., Christmas, Halloween, Seachtain na Gaeilge. We may also have outside workshops and classes in music during the year and it is the responsibility of the class teacher to work with the facilitator of these classes/workshops, and to adapt their individual plans, to ensure that all the strands and strand units are covered as recommended.

All teachers are actively involved in music education in our school. In some cases, provision may also be made for teachers who may have a particular interest in music to teach music in other classes while that teacher teaches another curricular area (e.g. PE), which, along with teachers sharing ideas, skills and resources, creates a positive musical environment. This may be arranged by mutual agreement between the relevant teachers and should be reflected in both teacher's planning and timetabling of music. It is considered best practice to inform the principal when such an arrangement has been agreed upon.

Approaches and Methodologies:

Listening and Responding: This strand includes exploring sounds and responding to Music.

- o Sounds include instruments, environmental sounds, body percussion, and vocal sounds.
- o 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.
- o Children are given opportunities to respond to music in a variety of ways which include moving, talking about it, 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 action songs.
- o 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 cooperatively.
- o 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.

Performing:

- o This strand includes giving all children the opportunity to play an instrument, acquire basic music literacy skills and sing a range of songs.
- o Opportunities for pupil performances are provided in class, at School Assembly, Church Services, School Concerts, and other occasions.

In the Performing strand, the following are emphasised:

- o Active enjoyable participation;
- o Development of skills, understanding, and knowledge;
- o Fostering of children's attitudes and interests;
- o Development of creativity.
- o Song –Singing: Because the voice is everyone's first instrument, it forms the key to access to music education in the classroom. Our teachers are aware that the range of notes of a song should be within the range of the children's voices. Songs may be taught by ear, using a melodic instrument or using a recording. 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.
- o All students from Junior Infants to 6th class are included in the school choir and they will perform for some church services, school events and in the locality .
- o All children are given the opportunity to use the percussion and melodic instruments which are available in the school.
- o Tin whistle: Tin whistle can be taught by the class teacher or visiting teacher. Children will play a range of simple and traditional tunes, increasing in difficulty according to ability.
- o The school will link with outside groups such as Music Generation, Sing Ireland and Peace Proms to provide additional lessons in singing and playing instruments and opportunities to perform. See also community links for further performance opportunities.

Composing

- o Children are encouraged to improvise, discuss, evaluate, and record music as part of the Composing Strand.
- o Opportunities are provided to improvise and/or compose in a variety of contexts—e.g., to accompany a 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 are given opportunities to compose/improvise using vocal sounds, body sounds, instruments, and environmental sounds.
- o 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.

Linkage and Integration

We recognise that there is a natural linkage across the strands of the music curriculum e.g., while pupils are engaged in a Performing and Composing lesson, they will also be Listening and Responding. Music is a subject which lends itself easily to integration across the curriculum e.g.:

- PE - dance/action songs
- Language - through sounds and symbols
- History - musical history and folk music • Irish - Amhráin Gaeilge
- Science - instrument making and performance
- Drama – performing Action songs/attending musicals
- Geography – music from different countries
- Visual Arts – responding to music through art
- Mathematics – number songs and rhymes

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment informs the teaching and learning of music by determining the skills the children already have and enabling teachers to identify what needs to be reinforced, consolidated or the next skill to be taught Children's overall musical ability, interest and participation level is assessed as well as individual aspects of each strand. Teacher observation is the main assessment tool. Self-assessment tools, Teacher-designed tasks and Recordings of the children's work can also be used. Assessment is communicated to parents in the end-of-year report or at parent teacher meetings.

Children with Different Needs

It is the policy of our school that all pupils will participate in music activities. Teachers will, when required, vary the pace, content and methodologies to ensure learning and success for all pupils. Every effort will be made to simplify language for EAL children. Where a teacher recognises that a child displays a particular ability in Music, this will be nurtured as far as possible and this will be communicated to the parents, so that they may nurture the talent.

We recognise that some children in our school may learn musical instruments. Teachers will encourage such children to play for their classmates, so that the other children will have opportunities to listen and respond to live music.

All children are treated equally and will be given equal opportunity to participate in music at LMNS.

Organisational Planning

Timetable

Time is allocated per week as per the guidelines for the Arts curriculum. In keeping with the recommendations in the Primary School Curriculum 2023, a minimum of two and 26 minutes

per week is devoted to arts education from Junior Infants to 2nd class and a minimum of two hours per week for classes for 3rd to 6th. This time allocation may be broken down at the discretion of the individual teacher. In the Junior Classes, the time may be shorter and more frequent and in the Senior classes the time may be divided into longer sessions. Music may be integrated with other subjects. This will be reflected in the teacher's planning. Teachers may choose to block times at particular occasions during the year. Teachers should ensure that pupils who attend SET are included for as much of the music curriculum as possible.

Resources:

There are many resources which a teacher can consider when planning the music curriculum for a class. Some examples are:

- Recorded music (online videos/streaming/websites)
- Available instruments (See Appendix)
- Music books
- A child in the class who plays an instrument
- A musician within the school community
- Technology in the classroom

There is an inventory of Musical Instruments and Resources (Appendix A) attached to this document. These are all available to the classroom teachers from the staff room. Each teacher is responsible for maintaining the resources.

Health and Safety

Teachers are constantly aware of health and safety when conducting lessons. When planning and during Music lessons, consideration will be given to the following:

- o Hidden dangers when pupils are moving around the classroom
 - o Storage facilities
 - o Access to, and transport of, equipment and instruments
 - o Ventilation of the classrooms
 - o Amount of space for pupils to sit/stand when doing choral or instrumental work
- Appropriate volume levels when using audio equipment and instruments.

Individual Teacher's Planning and Reporting

The whole-school plan, core curriculum and the curriculum documents for music provide information and guidance to individual teachers for their long and short-term planning. Each teacher will have a long term and short-term plan for music. Teacher's plan using the objectives as laid out in the strands and strand units and assess ability using assessment documents, as outlined by the NCCA. 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 in the Junior Classes and seasonally thematic in the Senior classes to integrate with the other subjects. Cuntas Míosúil will assist in recording work covered in evaluating progress in music and in informing future teaching.

Staff Development

Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, instruments, equipment and websites dealing with music. Staff are consulted about the purchasing of instruments and materials for music. Information about in-service courses, school visits, musical events are communicated to all by the school principal or through the staff notice board in the staff room or through email. Teachers are encouraged to attend in-service courses. We are always looking at opportunities for staff with expertise in the areas of music to share their ideas with other staff members. Time is allocated at staff meetings to discuss aspects of the music curriculum, when needed. There are opportunities for team-teaching in music e.g. Peace Proms. There are opportunities for whole school engagement with particular strands e.g. Christmas Carol Service, Christmas/Nativity Play, Trip to the Panto/Musicals.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to support their children's activities in music by encouraging active listening, discussing music, allowing time and space to practice an instrument and encouraging positive attitudes to music. Any parents who have a skill or interest in music may be invited to showcase this skill to the pupils where possible. Progress in the music curriculum will be discussed with parents/guardians at the annual Parent Teacher meetings and in the end of year report. Parents are sometimes invited to attend school or classroom music events, as supportive audience members for children's performances.

Community Links

Children from the school are often involved in musical activities in the parish and locality – e.g. carol-singing, singing at St. Carthage's House or fundraising events. The school will also engage in musical initiatives such as Music Generation. The local library invites us to attend music workshops that it organises from time to time. We as a school are open to a member of the local community who wishes to share their musical talent/skill with the pupils and will facilitate this where possible.

We may attend musicals in the local secondary school.. Where possible the school organises music workshops e.g. drumming workshop.

Success Criteria

The success of this whole school plan will be monitored and assessed, through the following means:

- o Staff/pupils/parent feedback
- o Cuntas Míósúil and Individual Plans
- o Inspector's Reports

We will know if the plans have enhanced pupil learning if:

- o Children have a positive attitude and appreciation of music.
- o Children have an interest in expression through music.

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

Implementation Roles and Responsibilities

The post holder (Ms. Cronin) with responsibility for Music supports the implementation of the Music programme. She will encourage feedback on its implementation and report to staff on findings at staff meetings. The post holder will coordinate the progress of the plan through interaction with staff. The post holder is also responsible for monitoring resources.

Timeframe

This plan has been reviewed in the school year 2024/25 and is currently being implemented.

Review

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

Roles and Responsibilities

Those involved in the review are:

- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- BOM/DES/Others

Ratification:

This revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____ (date)

Signed: _____

Ciara McGrath (School Principal)

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Dean Paul Draper (Chairperson B.O.M.)

Date: _____

Appendix A:

Music Resources • Large Percussion Box (stored in cabin)

- Violins (stored in cabin)
- Drum (stored in cabin)
- Microphones and audio system (available from Ms. Cronin on request)
- Guitar (Ms. Cronin's classroom)
- Dabledoo Programme (in all classes as a guiding resource)