



Ballymore National School

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Under the Patronage of the Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe.

Music Plan

Introduction

This policy outlines the teaching and organisation of Music at Ballymore National School. The original plan was formulated following in-service training in 2005. The plan was initially reviewed by all staff in May 2015 and again in January 2022.

Rationale

The planning process involved all the teaching staff of Ballymore National School.

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 in light of the 1999 Primary School Curriculum.

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.
- To become proficient in a musical instrument (e.g. keyboard, ukulele, tin whistle etc.)
- All teachers are familiar with the musical concepts of pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, structure, timbre and style.

Content of the plan

Strand and strand units

- Teachers will familiarise themselves with the 3 strand units for their class level (listening and responding, performing and composing) and ensure the 3 strands are comprehensively covered and afforded equal importance. *
- (a) infant classes p14-25
- (b) first and second class p26-40
- (c) third and fourth class p41-59
- (d) Fifth and sixth p60-79.
- There will be continuity, progression and consistency between both classrooms. The teachers are familiar with the musical concepts; sense of; timbre, pulse, duration, tempo, texture, style, structure, dynamics and pitch (teacher guidelines 151-154)
- As Ballymore National School is a two-teacher school, the teachers will ensure they timetable music at different times in the week.
- The school will provide an array of musical instruments for pupils to utilise during lessons.
- Where possible the school will organise a whole school community event to take place prior to the Christmas break. This will consist of a variety of element including poetry, songs, playing musical instruments and sharing stories. **
- *At certain stages of the year an emphasis may be placed on one strand and a thematic approach may be adopted e.g. preparation for Christmas performances, Seachtain na Gaeilge, School celebrations etc.

**in the event that the school cannot host a whole school community event the school will make a video that will be shared with parents via email.

Approaches and Methodologies

[Refer to Curriculum and Teacher Guidelines p52-127]

- The approaches used will foster enjoyment in music making, seek to develop skills and attitude of the children and allow for musical growth and creativity.
- All children and teachers are actively engaged in music education in our school.
- The teachers will provide linkage between the three strands: listening and responding, performing and composing.
- In the case external teachers being utilised to support and deliver specific aspects of the music curriculum; they will be expected to be familiar with the 1999 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 p29.)

Strand: Listening and responding:

[refer to Curriculum p19-21 (infants), p32-34 (1st& 2nd), p48-51 (3rd & 4th), p66-70 (5th & 6th) and Teacher Guidelines 53-69]

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. Children will be afforded opportunities for live performances in class and during school occasions/ celebrations.

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

- Tuned and untuned percussion instruments;
- Recorded music on CDs, You tube, Spotify and the internet
- Environmental objects, e.g. assortments of metals, wood, fibres;
- Instruments of child/children in the class;
- Melodic instruments— ukulele, keyboard and tin whistle
- Instruments of teachers on staff—e.g. guitar
- Instruments of pupils/ parents/ members of the community.

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 celebrations), solo and ensemble, classical and folk and other genres.

School children will be afforded opportunities to experience live performances in class, school concerts and other occasions -e.g. school trip to the theatre.

Strand: Performing:

[refer to teacher curriculum pp22-23 infants, p35-38 1st & 2nd, p52-57 3rd & 4th, p 71-76 5th & 6th and Teacher Guidelines 70-88]

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, 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 teachers as an ideal way of engaging classes and groups in enjoyable and fulfilling music making. The teachers are aware that the range of notes of a song should be

within the range of the children's voices. Teachers may choose to teach a song by ear—i.e. using their own voice, using a melodic instrument or through the use of 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. 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.

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 and keyboard.

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 pupils in the school
- o Parents
- o Wider community.

Strand: Composing

[Refer to teacher guidelines pp24-25 infants, pp39-41 1st&2nd, pp58-59 3rd&4th, pp77-79 5th& 6th, teacher guidelines pp110-127]

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 or to accompany a 'Scratch' project (6th class). 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.

Linkage and integration

(Teacher guidelines pp19-24. 39)

As far as possible the strands of the curriculum - Listening and responding, Performing, and Composing will be dealt with as being interrelated and interconnected. The music curriculum will be delivered on theme-based activities which will be used to support integration. This can be listed as part of each teacher's class plan.

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

- Mathematics (number songs and rhymes, note value and time relationship being linked to the study of fractions etc.)
- History (development of music and instruments through the ages, lives of famous composers, different traditions);
- Geography (origins of instruments, music from different countries, cultural links)
- Science (sound)
- P.E. (dance; appreciation of various genres of music and dance styles)
- Visual arts (Construction-making instruments)
- Drama (role play, school performances)

Assessment and record keeping

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 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.

Children with different needs

Teachers in Ballymore National School 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 her charge 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 p.40-41 of Teacher Guidelines.

Equality of 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.

Where necessary, provisions will be made for children experiencing disadvantage, e.g. provision of instruments.

Organisational planning

Timetable:

- The recommended time for music, art and drama each week is 2hrs 30mins. As an integrated approach will be used, teachers will concentrate on the available periods on one aspect of arts education at a time.
- An external tutor will support the delivery of instruction for both classrooms for 30 minutes each week.
- Teachers may also choose to block times for music at particular times of the year. Timetables will all record the time allocation for Music.

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 both classroom teachers to ensure that these resources are correctly maintained and stored in either the store room or S.E.T room.

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 Ipad and tablets are also used to record the children for assessment/self-assessment purposes, music appreciation, recording compositions etc. Each child has their own personal ukulele for use during lessons.

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.
- Ventilation of the classrooms.

Individual teachers planning

- 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.
- Each teacher will outline song choices in their long -term plan as this is a personal choice.

Staff development

- The staff will be notified of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses offered by the Donegal Education Centre and/ or other parties.
- 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.
- Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, instruments and websites dealing with music.
- Whole school involvement will be encouraged at performance level during the school celebrations.

Parental involvement:

Parents are asked to support their children's music activities by:

- encouraging active listening
- discussing attitudes towards music, and taste in, music
- allowing time and space to practise or improvise on an instrument
- encouraging their child to learn to play an instrument proficiently
- encouraging positive attitudes to Music in general and school-based activities in particular
- attending school or classroom music events, as supportive audience members
- engage in discussions on their child's progress in Music at parent-teacher meetings

Community links:

- Musicians in the area are encouraged to perform and work with the children.
- Children are regularly brought to such places as The Millennium Forum to listen to and appreciate performances.

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:

This plan will be implemented and developed in both classrooms by the teachers. We will monitor the implementation/ progress of the Music programme by formal and informal discussions amongst the staff and by encouraging and accepting feedback on its implementation.

(b) Timeframe:

Following consultation with the Parents Association and ratification from the Board of Management, this policy will be implemented during term 3 of the school year 2021/22.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed in January 2025 or earlier if required.

Teachers, pupils, parents, Board of Management and Department of Education may be involved in any future review.

Ratification and Communication:

This plan was communicated to and ratified by the Board of Management in February 2022.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Principal

Review: 22/02/2022

Signed: W. George IRUM
Chairperson

Date: 22/02/2022

Signed: Est N. Chumera

Date: 23/2/22

Appendix 1

Instruments available to the school: