



Primary School  
Curriculum

Curaclam na  
Bunscoile

# Music

Arts Education

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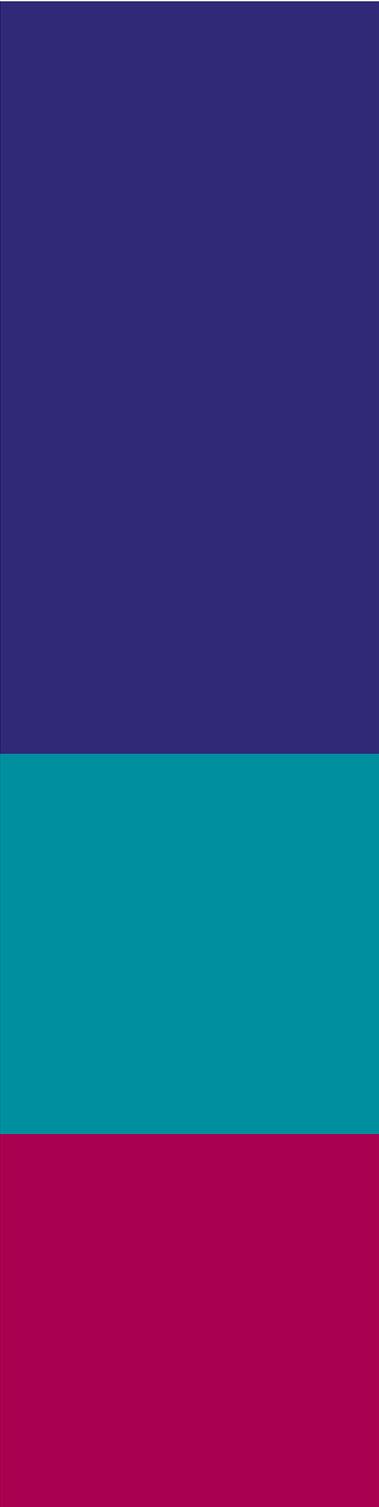


# Music

Arts Education

Curriculum

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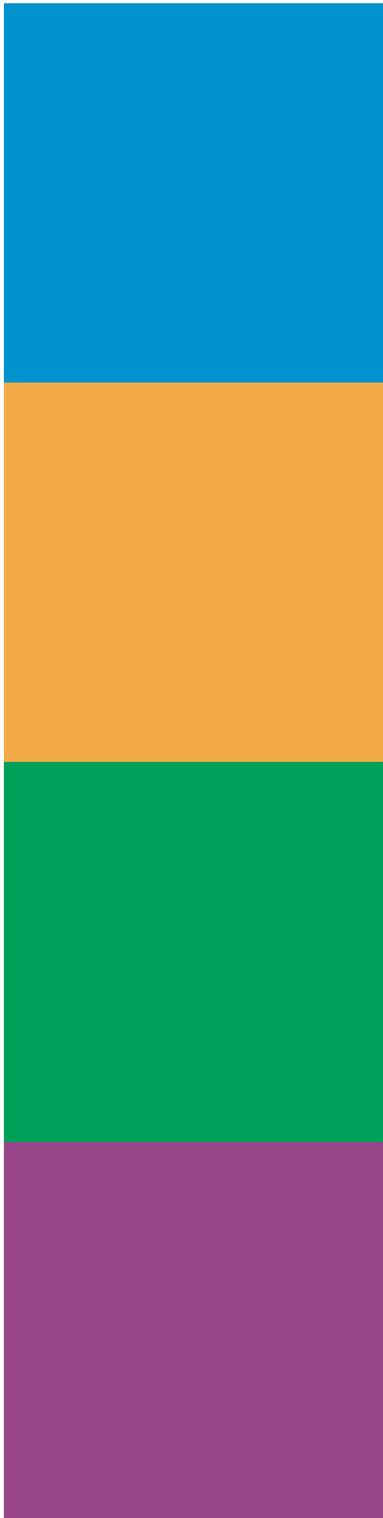
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# Introduction

the 1990s, the number of people with a tertiary education has increased in all countries, but the increase has been particularly rapid in the United Kingdom, where the number of tertiary graduates has increased by 100% since 1990 (OECD 2000).

There are several reasons for the increase in tertiary education. First, the demand for tertiary education has increased because of the increasing requirements for tertiary education in the labour market. Second, the increasing costs of tertiary education have led to a higher number of people attending tertiary education. Third, the increasing number of people attending tertiary education has led to a higher number of people with a tertiary education.

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# Arts education

The arts are organised expressions of ideas, feelings and experiences in images, in music, in language, in gesture and in movement. They provide for sensory, emotional, intellectual and creative enrichment and contribute to the child's holistic development. Much of what is finest in society is developed through a variety of art forms which contribute to cultural ethos and to a sense of well-being.

Arts education enables the child to explore alternative ways of communicating with others. It encourages ideas that are personal and inventive and makes a vital contribution to the development of a range of intelligences. A purposeful arts education at primary level is life-enhancing and is invaluable in stimulating creative thinking and in promoting capability and adaptability. It emphasises the creative process and so ensures that the child's work is personal and has quality. Attempts at artistic expression are valued, self-esteem is enhanced, spontaneity and risk-taking are encouraged and difference is celebrated. It is this affirming aspect of the creative arts that makes participation such a positive experience. Arts education is integral to primary education in helping to promote thinking, imagination and sensitivity, and arts activities can be a focus for social and cultural development and enjoyment in school.

Arts education encompasses a range of activities in the visual arts, in music, in drama, in dance and in literature. These activities and experiences help the child to make sense of the world; to question, to speculate and to find solutions; to deal with feelings and to respond to creative experience.

## The arts education curriculum

The arts education curriculum provides for a balance between expression and the child's need to experience and respond to the visual arts, to music and to drama. Dance is outlined within the physical education curriculum, and the contribution that literature makes to the emotional and imaginative development of the child is described within the language curricula.

The visual arts curriculum comprises interrelated activities in *making art* and in *looking at and responding to art*. It presents a range of activities in perceiving, exploring, responding to and appreciating the visual world. Perceiving involves looking with awareness and understanding of the visual elements and their interplay in the environment and in art works.

This awareness is fundamental to the development of visual expression and to the child's personal response to creative experience. Making art involves two and three-dimensional work in a range of media. Appreciating promotes understanding of the inherent qualities in art works and aesthetic enjoyment. In developing the programme, the expressive or making activities are balanced with opportunities to see and to make a personal response to visual art forms of different styles, periods and cultures. Regional craft traditions and their modern developments, as part of the national heritage.

The music curriculum comprises *listening and responding, performing and composing* activities. Focused listening is emphasised, both for its sheer enjoyment potential and for its essential role in composing and performing. The child is encouraged to listen with attention to sounds in the environment and gradually to become aware of how sound is organised in music. Performance incorporates a balance of singing and instrumental playing of his/her own work and the work of others. Ways of using sound are explored in composing, both with the voice and with a widening range of musical instruments. In developing the programme, performance is balanced with opportunities to hear and to make a personal response to music of different styles, periods and cultures, including the national repertoire in its varied national and regional forms. Interrelated activities for listening, performing and composing are suggested in the curriculum content.

The drama curriculum comprises interrelated activities which *explore feelings, knowledge and ideas leading to understanding*. It explores themes and issues, creates a safe context in which to do so, and provides for opportunities to reflect on the insights gained in the process. It draws on the knowledge, interests and enthusiasms of the child. In drama, the child explores the motivations and the relationships between people that exist in a real, imagined or historical context, to help him/her understand the world. The child is encouraged to make decisions and to take responsibility for those decisions within the safe context of the drama.

Dance provides the child with opportunities to organise and develop his/her natural enjoyment of expressive movement in dance form. Through dance, the child is encouraged to explore and experiment with a variety of body movements and to communicate a range of moods and feelings. The dance programme comprises activities in the exploration, creation and performance of dance and in developing understanding of dance forms.

Through literature, the child is guided to explore the world of the imagination and to discover how language brings it to life. Expressive language, both oral and written, is fostered for its enjoyment value and to help develop aesthetic awareness.

## Aims

The aims of arts education are

- to enable the child to explore, clarify and express ideas, feelings and experiences through a range of arts activities
- to provide for aesthetic experiences and to develop aesthetic awareness in the visual arts, in music, in drama, in dance and in literature
- to develop the child's awareness of, sensitivity to and enjoyment of visual, aural, tactile and spatial environments
- to enable the child to develop natural abilities and potential, to acquire techniques, and to practise the skills necessary for creative expression and for joyful participation in different art forms
- to enable the child to see and to solve problems creatively through imaginative thinking and so encourage individuality and enterprise
- to value the child's confidence and self-esteem through valuing self-expression
- to foster a sense of excellence in and appreciation of the arts in local, regional, national and global contexts, both past and present
- to foster a critical appreciation of the arts for personal fulfilment and enjoyment.

# Music

Music is an art form deeply rooted in human nature. It is a discrete body of knowledge, a unique form of communication and a means by which feelings and interests are organised and expressed. It is a profoundly satisfying area of individual and shared experience, fostering a deep sense of well-being. Music offers lifelong opportunities for the development of imagination, sensitivity, inventiveness, risk-taking and enjoyment.

Children of all ages and abilities have potential in music, and music education celebrates individual differences among them. The child's musical expression and responses to musical experience are valid, and his/her creations and innovations in musical compositions are fostered and valued. The ability to explore with guidance and to experiment and take risks with sound combinations is an essential aspect of musical growth. Music education also recognises similarities among children and the joy of shared experiences which demand collaboration, concentration and discipline. Musical activity, alone or with others, contributes to the child's developing creativity and self-esteem.

Music education is part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence. It involves learning in the major domains of knowledge, skills, attitudes and feelings, and the senses. It therefore contributes to the wider curriculum in a myriad of ways. For instance, while listening to music for pleasure or for specific elements and patterns, the child develops skills in discrimination, concentration and reflection that are necessary for understanding in all disciplines. Long and short-term memory is developed and spatial reasoning is enhanced as the child learns to form mental images of physical objects, to hear the sounds they make internally and to recognise differences between them. The ability to visualise and to think in abstract form enhances problem-solving skills in many areas of the curriculum. During the process of making music the child experiences satisfaction and a sense of achievement as he/she performs or creates, alone or as part of a group. The child develops technical and artistic skills, involving muscular co-ordination and sensitive movement, as well as skills of perseverance and self-discipline that are essential to self-expression.

Music education brings the child to an awareness and appreciation of his/her unique cultural environment and ethos. Irish music is one of our strongest living traditions and it represents the experience and aspirations of generations of musicians. Among the many purposes that

are embraced by Irish music are the pleasure of listening, the need to remember, the desire to celebrate and to enrich the energy of dance. All these purposes are implicit in musical activity for children, both in solo and in group work. In exposing children to the rich background of their native musical traditions as well as other musical genres, music education contributes to the children's knowledge and understanding of others, their times, their cultures and traditions.

## The music curriculum

The music curriculum comprises three strands:

- Listening and responding
- Performing
- Composing.

### *Listening and responding*

This strand emphasises the importance of purposeful, active listening in order to elicit physical, verbal, emotional and cognitive responses. It gradually builds on the experience of earlier classes by providing the child with opportunities to listen to a range of familiar and unfamiliar musical pieces, by focusing on a widening range of sound sources and by challenging the child to respond imaginatively with increasing precision and musical sensitivity.

### *Performing*

This strand dwells on the importance of using the voice, the first and most accessible instrument for the child, both for the sheer enjoyment of performance and as a means through which musical skills may be expanded. Song singing is a vital aspect of the child's early musical development. Children learn first to perform simple songs through listening to and imitating others. Young children also enjoy improvising their own chants and tunes on homemade instruments, musical toys or 'found' sound sources. These early compositions are valuable musical experiences and help the child to become sensitive to musical expression. As confidence grows, the child's repertoire should be expanded to include songs and tunes with a wider range of notes, Irish songs and songs of different cultures, styles and traditions. As independence and competence develop, the child will also enjoy the experience of simple part work, ranging from performing a simple ostinato (repeated pattern) or drone to the addition of a second part (higher or lower) towards the end of sixth class.

The development of musical literacy is closely linked with the song singing programme in the early stages and is expanded through playing simple melodic instruments. In the music curriculum, literacy is explored through its two main components, rhythm and pitch. It occurs in response to a need to record or recall a musical experience—a rhythm pattern, a melody or an entire song—rather than being considered as a set of isolated skills.

Opportunities to demonstrate growing confidence and understanding in making music using other music sources are afforded in the strand unit 'Playing instruments'. At first the child performs on tuned and untuned percussion instruments and later experiences melodic instruments (for example tin whistle or recorder). The child is encouraged to perform both from memory and from simple notation.

### *Composing*

This strand seeks to develop the child's creativity and uniqueness, first and foremost by providing an avenue for self-expression. In the strand unit 'Improvising and creating' the child selects and sequences material from the range of sound sources available. This involves the child in listening and in deciding which source best suits the purpose and best captures the essence of what he/she wants to communicate or portray. Finally, the child is given opportunities to evaluate the composing process and to record his/her work in the strand unit 'Talking about and recording compositions'.

### **The musical elements**

Musical activities are suggested within each strand unit that enable the child to develop an awareness of and sensitivity to the inter-related elements of music (pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, structure, timbre, texture and style) and to grow in musical understanding. Young children should not be expected to articulate these elements; rather they should be guided towards showing their understanding through singing and moving. As children mature and develop they may reach a more conscious understanding of musical concepts, at which point the teacher may introduce the terms.

## Active music-making

Active participation in musical games and in other pleasurable musical experiences is fundamental to the child's acquisition of musical knowledge, understanding and skill. The curriculum emphasises active responses and music-making at all levels. This enables the child to gain first-hand experience of what it means to be a listener, performer and composer in the world of music.

## Sequence, breadth and depth

Curriculum content is outlined for each of the four levels, and it is important that each strand unit and sub-unit is explored each year to ensure continuity, depth and breadth in the programme. The strands and strand units offer teachers a sequenced, comprehensive programme on which to base the teaching and learning of music in the classroom. The music curriculum is based on the philosophy of sound before symbol. Added to this is the belief that musical knowledge is best acquired through moving from the known (e.g. knowing the melody and words of a song) to the unknown (e.g. the isolation and naming of the rhythm patterns within the song), from the simple to the complex, and from an experience (e.g. clapping in time) to a conscious understanding of that experience (e.g. an understanding of pulse). In this respect simple tunes learned through imitation in the early stages, ranging from two notes to five notes (pentatonic), can be useful in exploring rhythmic and melodic features in later classes.

## Selection of content

Within the strand units and sub-units examples and suggestions of possible approaches are included in *italic type*. Teachers may choose from among these and similar suggestions from other sources to devise a plan of *Listening and responding*, *Performing* and *Composing* activities to match the needs of their pupils while preserving a balance between Irish music and music of other cultures, styles and times.

The choice of content will be determined by the previous musical experiences and needs of the children. At times, these may best be accommodated through attempting the content suggestions given for an earlier level, rather than those recommended for their particular age group. The pace at which the children move through these early stages will vary, but while older children may be able to understand the theory

more easily, it is important that an appropriate sequence of development is maintained. This is of vital importance in the area of musical literacy, where the translation of 'sticks' and 'blobs' on lines and spaces into musical rhythms and melodies is as important as the theoretical understanding.

### The school music programme

The school plan will cover the nature and extent of music in the school, recognising the social and cultural environment, the varying needs of the children and the available resources. Given that the music curriculum is closely linked with other arts subjects and integrated with other areas of the curriculum, the class teacher is the most appropriate person to teach the music programme. The school plan will acknowledge the many activities in the music curriculum that may be organised successfully without the need for specialist knowledge, while allowing for additional support from colleagues, parents, local music groups and audiovisual resources where these are appropriate.

### Assessment

Assessment, as in other areas of the curriculum, is an integral part of teaching and learning in music. The section on assessment outlines how a range of assessment techniques can enrich the learning experience of the child and provide useful information for teachers, parents and others.

### Integration

Integration is an important principle of the curriculum. Engaging children in activities that encompass a number of objectives from different strands or from different subject areas is an effective means of teaching. Integrated themes can be highly motivating and satisfying for children and are particularly useful in multi-class situations. In the music curriculum, links within music itself are referred to as linkage, while connections that occur between music and other subject areas are described as integration.

### Language

Language is such a universal influence in the teaching and learning process in music that particular examples of how various content objectives may be integrated with language are not signalled in the music curriculum. The teacher uses language, whether Irish, English or another

modern European language where appropriate, to present, to question, to guide, to suggest, to illustrate, to explain and to stimulate the child to think. It is in discussing and responding to music that the child clarifies ideas as he/she describes, speculates, explains and expresses thoughts, feelings and ideas, orally or in written form. Language is important, too, in helping the child to gain access to and to retrieve information about music. Language is developed through music, while in turn, musical knowledge can be developed through language. The extent, therefore, to which language is an integral part of the teaching and learning process should be a consistent concern in the planning and implementation of the music curriculum.

### Information and communication technologies

The child's understanding and experience of music can be broadened and enriched in various ways through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The music curriculum provides vast opportunities for the development and application of musical concepts and skills through the use of ICTs and likewise, many programs that encourage active listening, musical playing and meaningful composing can heighten the relationships between the *Listening and responding*, *Performing* and *Composing* strands.

Multimedia technology offers high-tech support for a range of graphic, textual and sound sources which can greatly enhance understanding in music. Through using CD-ROMs or the internet, children can have opportunities to see and hear various instruments, especially those which may not be readily accessible for them in their own environment, such as some orchestral instruments or traditional instruments from other countries. Children can experience the delight of exploring sound through electronic media, acquiring skills and concepts at their own rate, recording their improvisations and compositions, and reviewing their work alone or in collaboration with others.

Through the use of websites, schools, classes and individual children can share written, aural and visual accounts of their musical traditions, performances, compositions or preferences in music. Live performances can be received and transmitted to mutually interested audiences, thereby stimulating immediate, focused listening and purposeful, active responses. Many themes and topics of local, regional or global relevance can be prepared and presented in a variety of electronic media and communicated to a wider audience throughout Ireland, Europe or the world.

## Glossary

Terms used in this curriculum that may be unfamiliar are explained in the glossary on pages 92–94.

## Aims

The aims of the music curriculum are

- 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.

## Broad objectives

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the music curriculum should enable the child to

- explore the expressive possibilities of a variety of sound sources, including the voice and home-made and manufactured instruments
- listen to, enjoy and respond to a wide range of music, including various genres and styles from different periods, cultures and ethnic groups, both live and recorded
- develop sensitivity to music through making physical, verbal, emotional or cognitive responses
- demonstrate and describe differences between sounds and silences, showing a sense of pulse, tempo, duration, pitch, dynamics, structure, timbre, texture and style
- perform, vocally and instrumentally, from a range of musical styles and traditions relevant to the class level, with particular emphasis on Irish music
- acquire the musical skills that enrich musical understanding and are necessary for creative expression
- imitate with accuracy rhythmic and melodic patterns using the voice, gestures (hand signs), body percussion and manufactured and home-made instruments
- recall and perform expressively musical phrases and pieces, using tuned and untuned percussion or melodic instruments, from memory or from notation, as appropriate
- develop confidence and independence through taking the initiative, making decisions and accepting responsibility for learning, individually and as a member of a group, through composing activities
- select and structure sounds to create his/her musical ideas
- improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns in response to music, movement, ideas, poems, stories and art works
- talk about the appropriateness and effectiveness of his/her composed or improvised music
- devise and use a range of graphic and standard notations
- record compositions using electronic media.

# Infant classes

# Overview

infant classes

## *Concepts development*

---

### Musical concepts

- A sense of pulse (steady beat)
- A sense of duration (long/short, patterns, rhythm)
- A sense of tempo (fast/slow)
- A sense of pitch (high/low)
- A sense of dynamics (loud/soft)
- A sense of structure (same/different)
- A sense of timbre (tone colour)
- A sense of texture (one sound/several sounds)
- A sense of style

*The musical concepts above are based on the musical elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units of the curriculum outlined below.*

---

### *Strands*

### *Strand units*

#### Listening and responding

- Exploring sounds
  - Listening and responding to music
- 

#### Performing

- Song singing
  - Early literacy
  - Playing instruments
- 

#### Composing

- Improvising and creating
- Talking about and recording compositions

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the music programme in infant classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts development', which describes the musical concepts that the child should develop as he/she engages in musical activity
- three *strands*, which outline the content of the curriculum. The strands should be regarded as highly inter-related, in that understanding in one is dependent upon and supportive of understanding in another and an aspect of each may feature within a single lesson. Examples and suggestions are shown in italic type throughout the content sections.

## The strands in infant classes

In the *Listening and responding* strand the child listens to a variety of sounds in the immediate environment. These range from mechanical sounds to voices and classroom instruments and later to short excerpts from recorded music (no longer than thirty seconds in the early stages). The emphasis is placed on active rather than passive listening; the child is thereby encouraged to move physically, talk about, describe, imitate or illustrate in response to sound.

The child will enjoy the simple singing games and activities found in the *Performing* strand. Some games will require several repetitions before the child will be able to perform confidently and without the support of the teacher. Many musical skills, for example keeping a simple tune in pitch, are introduced and acquired through using the voice, the first and most accessible instrument for the child, while music literacy is prepared through seeing simple rhythms of familiar tunes represented in pictures or with symbols. Similarly, in playing simple percussion instruments the child experiences another music-making source through which skills (such as keeping a steady beat) and confidence may be demonstrated.

In the *Composing* strand the child is given opportunities to experiment and play with instruments, including home-made instruments, within limits decided by the teacher. In a classroom environment where the subtleties of sound are emphasised and valued in listening and singing games, active interest in the potential of instruments follows naturally. Some instruments may be selected to depict isolated sounds or sound effects. These instruments and their sounds may be discussed by the children and recalled through simple pictures or symbols, or by using a tape recorder.

### Sequence, breadth and depth

In selecting content it is recommended that each strand and strand unit should be covered each year to ensure variety, balance and continuity. In general the content objectives within the strand units should be explored through the sequence in which they are presented. A scheme of work spanning one school term should recognise the inter-relatedness of the strands, while the depth of treatment of each strand unit may be adjusted from term to term or from year to year.

### Linkage and integration

Within the content sections, notes below strand units suggest some of the instances where *linkage* (i.e. integration within the music curriculum) and *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular connections) are possible.

# Concepts development for infant classes

## Musical concepts

---

*Through completing the strand units of the music curriculum the child should be enabled to*

### A sense of pulse

- show a steady pulse or beat (e.g. marching, tapping, clapping)

### A sense of duration

- listen to and imitate patterns of long and short sounds

### A sense of tempo

- understand and differentiate between fast and slow rhythmic and melodic patterns

### A sense of pitch

- understand and differentiate between high and low sounds
- imitate melodies

### A sense of dynamics

- understand and differentiate between loud and soft sounds

### A sense of structure

- understand 'start' and 'stop'

### A sense of timbre

- play with and explore a variety of sound-making materials
- classify sounds by the way they are produced

### A sense of texture

- listen and respond to sounds from one source and from more than one source

### A sense of style

- listen and respond to music in different styles.

# Strand: Listening and responding

## Strand unit Exploring sounds

---

*The child should be enabled to*

### Environmental sounds

- listen to, identify and imitate familiar sounds in the immediate environment from varying sources

*rain falling, car horns blowing, dogs barking,  
babies crying, silence*

- describe sounds and classify them into sound families

*machines, weather, animals, people*

### Vocal sounds

- recognise the difference between the speaking voice and the singing voice and use these voices in different ways

*whispering, talking, shouting  
saying aaaahh, singing aaahh, oooh*

- recognise different voices

*distinguish child and adult voices  
voices in the school environment  
advertisements on radio*

- use sound words and word phrases to describe and imitate selected sounds

*vroom! vroom! (engine)  
clippity clop (horse)*

### Body percussion

- discover ways of making sounds using body percussion

*tapping, clapping, slapping*

### Instruments

- explore ways of making sounds using manufactured and home-made instruments

*manufactured  
triangle, tambourine, drum, chime bars, xylophone*

*home-made instruments  
shakers, metal or wooden objects*

- experiment with a variety of techniques using manufactured and home-made instruments

*different ways of making sounds with a drum: using a variety of beaters; striking loudly, softly; playing different parts of the drum (e.g. rim, centre, side).*

## Strand unit    Listening and responding to music

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- listen to a range of short pieces of music or excerpts
  - excerpts from classical music*
    - ‘Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy’ from the ‘Nutcracker Suite’ by Tchaikovsky*
    - ‘Sleigh Ride’ by Leroy Anderson*
    - extracts from ‘Carnival of the Animals’ by Saint-Saëns*
  - recordings of nursery rhymes and children’s songs by various artists*
    - Eric Nagler, Danny Kaye, Rolf Harris*
  - Irish music*
    - ‘Each Little Thing’ recorded by Sharon Shannon*
    - ‘Trup, Trup, a Chapailín’, ‘A Stór ’s a Stóirín’*
  - popular music*
    - ‘Yellow Submarine’ by Lennon and McCartney*
    - ‘Popcorn’ by Gershon Kingsley*
- respond imaginatively to short pieces of music through movement
  - clapping, skipping, marching, waving*
    - ‘Hello, Dolly’ performed by Louis Armstrong*
    - ‘Golliwog’s Cakewalk’ from ‘Children’s Corner Suite’ by Claude Debussy*
- talk about pieces of music, giving preferences, and illustrate responses in a variety of ways
  - this music is bouncy, scary, funny*
  - it makes me feel happy, frightened, like jumping*
  - drawing, painting*
- show the steady beat in listening to live or recorded music
  - marching, clapping, tapping the beat*
    - ‘Portsmouth’ by Mike Oldfield*
- recognise and show the difference between fast and slow tempos
  - running, walking, skipping*
  - reciting a rhyme quickly, slowly*
  - responding to fast or slow recorded music*
    - fast: ‘Flight of the Bumble Bee’ by Rimsky-Korsakov*
    - slow: ‘Morning’ from ‘Peer Gynt Suite’ by Grieg*

- recognise and show the difference between loud and soft sounds
  - slamming a door, gently closing a door*
  - loud voices, soft voices*
  - adjusting volume control on a tape recorder*
  - recorded music, loud or soft*
    - loud and soft:*
      - ‘Pomp and Circumstance’ March No. 1 by Elgar;*
      - ‘Over the Sea to Skye’, traditional Scottish song*
- recognise and show the difference between high and low sounds
  - vocal sounds, songs*
  - extreme notes on a keyboard instrument*
- listen and respond to patterns of long sounds and short sounds
  - echo clapping, tapping rhythm patterns.*

#### *Linkage*

Composing—Talking about and recording compositions

#### *Integration*

Visual arts: Drawing; Paint; Elements of art—An awareness of line, pattern, shape

PE: Dance—Exploration, creation and performance of dance

Science: Energy and forces—Sound

## Strand: Performing

### Strand unit    Song singing

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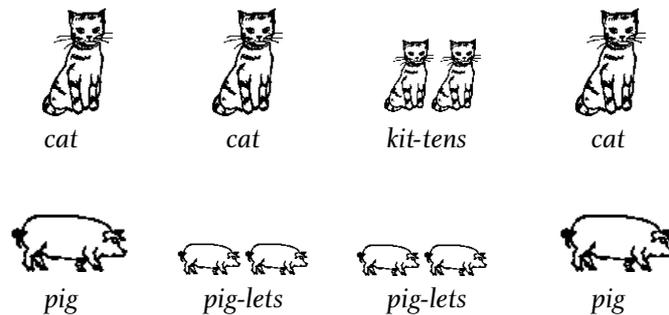
*The child should be enabled to*

- recognise and sing familiar songs and melodies from other sources
  - nursery rhymes and songs*
  - rainn Ghaeilge*
  - action songs*
  - playground or street games and songs*
  - popular tunes from television and radio*
- recognise and imitate short melodies in echoes, developing a sense of pitch
  - simple two-note or three-note tunes and singing games, learned through imitation, without awareness of the solfa names*
    - 'Suas, Síos', 'Cherry Pie' (s, m)*
    - 'See Saw, Marjorie Daw', 'Ring-a-Rosie' (l, s, m)*
    - 'Little Sally Saucer' (l, s, m)*
- show the steady beat in listening to or accompanying songs or rhythmic chants
  - marching, clapping, tapping the beat*
- show, while singing, whether sounds move from high to low or from low to high
  - crouching for low sound, stretching up for high sound*
  - demonstrating with arm movements*
- perform songs and rhymes with a sense of dynamic (loud/soft) control where appropriate
  - soft, gentle singing for a lullaby*
  - loud, energetic singing for a march or action song.*

## Strand unit Early literacy

*The child should be enabled to*

- match selected sounds with their pictured source  
*teacher hums 'Twinkle, Twinkle' or 'Pease Porridge Hot' and the child chooses a picture of a star or a picture of a porridge bowl as the appropriate matching symbol*
- recognise and perform simple rhythm patterns from pictorial symbols  
*teacher claps a simple rhythm pattern from a selection of known patterns comprising 'cats' (single beats) and 'kittens' (two half beats), which the child matches.*



## Strand unit Playing instruments

*The child should be enabled to*

- play simple percussion instruments  
*holding a suspended triangle and striking with a stick*  
*shaking a tambourine*  
*beating a drum*  
*taking turns, playing in ones and twos*
- use simple home-made and manufactured instruments to accompany songs, nursery rhymes or rhythmic chants  
*When singing a traditional tune (e.g. 'Five fat sausages sitting in the pan, One went pop! And the other went bang') the children may play a note on a melodic instrument for 'pop' and beat a drum on the word 'bang'.*

# Strand: Composing

## Strand unit Improvising and creating

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- select sounds from a variety of sources to create simple sound ideas, individually and in groups

*vocal sounds, body percussion, manufactured instruments, home-made instruments*

*representing a bear, a frog, a fairy*

*using sound effects to accompany games, stories, poems*

- invent and perform short, simple musical pieces with some control of musical elements

*fast/slow (tempo), loud/soft (dynamics), long/short (rhythm), knowing when to start and stop (structure)*

*soft, slow sounds on the drum*

*Old McDonald had a farm*

*... and on that farm he had a:*

*horse (coconut halves)—fast, short sounds*

*lamb (vocal sounds)—soft*

*duck (hand claps)—slow*

*cow (cow bell)—long sounds*

- improvise new answers to given melodic patterns

*singing conversations*

*'How are you?'—'Fine, thank you!'*

*'Céard is ainm duit?'—'Pád-raig'*

*new verses for familiar songs and rhymes*

*'Hickory dickory dock, the (cat) ran up the clock'*

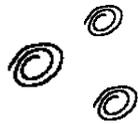
*'Let everyone (clap hands) with me.'*

## Strand unit Talking about and recording compositions

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - how the instruments were selected*
  - how the sounds were made*
  - how he/she enjoyed making them*
  - what he/she liked best*
- invent graphic symbols for single sounds and sound effects



*fairy music*



*duck sounds*

- record compositions on electronic media
  - using the school equipment or a child's basic tape recorder.*

### *Linkage*

Listening and responding—Exploring sounds

Performing—Playing instruments

### *Integration*

Visual arts: Drawing

First  
and second  
classes

# Overview

first and second classes

## *Concepts development*

---

### 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

*The musical concepts above are based on the musical elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units of the curriculum outlined below.*

---

### *Strands*

### *Strand units*

#### Listening and responding

- Exploring sounds
  - Listening and responding to music
- 

#### Performing

- Song singing
  - Literacy
  - Playing instruments
- 

#### Composing

- Improvising and creating
- Talking about and recording compositions

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the music programme in first and second classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts development', which describes the musical concepts that the child should develop as he/she engages in musical activity
- three *strands*, which outline the content of the curriculum. The strands should be regarded as highly inter-related in that understanding in one is dependent upon and supportive of understanding in another and an aspect of each may feature within a single lesson. Examples and suggestions are shown in italic type throughout the content sections.

## The strands in first and second classes

As the child matures, attention is focused in the *Listening and responding* strand on an increased range of sound sources in the environment. Active responses are encouraged through listening to rhythmic musical excerpts or sound patterns. These help the child differentiate between beat and rhythm. The child also enjoys music which is simple and melodic, or which includes a storyline, and discussion often extends into other subject areas. Gradually, the child becomes aware of broad groups of instruments, for example drums and stringed instruments.

The *Performing* strand dwells on the importance of using the voice, the first and most accessible instrument for the child, for the sheer enjoyment of performance and as a medium through which musical skills may be introduced. As the child's competence and confidence grow in song singing, attention is drawn to music literacy for the first time. This is presented in the form of a simplified representation of rhythm (stick notation) and pitch (a limited range of hand signs, solfa syllables and notes). The way these elements combine is explored from a foundation of familiar songs and tunes and is gradually understood by the child over the course of this two-year cycle. By performing with tuned and untuned percussion instruments the child is provided with musical experiences through which his/her growing confidence and understanding of music-making, for example keeping a steady beat throughout a piece, may be extended.

In the *Composing* strand the child is given opportunities to experiment and to gain control of instruments, including home-made instruments, and to develop a greater understanding of their sound-making potential. The range of instruments and techniques may be selected to illustrate a character or a sequence of events in a familiar story. The child is encouraged to talk about the process of his/her composition, to represent it in symbols or signs and to record it for future listening purposes.

### Sequence, breadth and depth

In selecting content it is recommended that each strand and strand unit should be covered each year to ensure variety, balance and continuity. In general the content objectives within the strand units should be explored through the sequence in which they are presented. A scheme of work spanning one school term should recognise the inter-relatedness of the strands, while the depth of treatment of each strand unit may be adjusted from term to term or from year to year.

### Linkage and integration

Within the content sections, notes below strand units suggest some of the instances where *linkage* (i.e. integration within the music curriculum) and *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular connections) are possible.

# Concepts development for first and second classes

## Musical concepts

---

*Through completing the strand units of the music curriculum the child should be enabled to*

### A sense of pulse

- show a steady pulse or beat (e.g. marching, clapping)
- understand and differentiate between music with a steady pulse or beat and music without a strong beat

### A sense of duration

- listen to, imitate and perform simple rhythm patterns which include silences

### A sense of tempo

- understand and differentiate between fast and slow rhythmic and melodic patterns, getting faster, getting slower

### A sense of pitch

- understand and differentiate between high and low sounds, same, different
- imitate melodies
- perceive the contour (shape) of melodies

### A sense of dynamics

- understand and differentiate between loud and soft sounds, getting louder, getting softer

### A sense of structure

- understand beginning, middle and end
- identify an obviously different or repeated section

### A sense of timbre

- explore a variety of sound-making materials
- classify instruments by the way the sound is produced
- differentiate between obviously different sounds and instruments

*triangle, drum*

### A sense of texture

- listen and respond to sounds from one source and from more than one source

### A sense of style

- listen and respond to music in different styles.

## Strand: Listening and responding

### Strand unit Exploring sounds

---

*The child should be enabled to*

#### Environmental sounds

- listen to, identify and describe sounds in the environment with increasing awareness

*ambulance, alarm clock, thunder, silence*

- recognise and classify sounds using differing criteria

*different types of mechanical sounds*

*lawnmower, pneumatic drill*

*different types of barking*

*howling, yapping, barking, growling*

- recognise and demonstrate pitch differences

*high, low and in-between sounds*

#### Vocal sounds

- identify pitch differences in different voices

*child, adult male, adult female*

- explore the natural speech rhythm of familiar words

*double-decker, tractor, skipping-rope*

*'home again, home again, jiggity jig'*

*Dublin, Cork, Tipperary, Sligo*

#### Body percussion

- discover ways of making sounds using body percussion

*tapping, clapping, slapping, clicking*

#### Instruments

- explore ways of making sounds using manufactured and home-made instruments

*manufactured*

*triangle, tambourine, drum, jingle stick*

*home-made*

*shakers, metal or wooden objects, fibres*

*striking or shaking in a variety of ways*

- explore how the sounds of different instruments can suggest various sounds and sound pictures

*rustling paper to represent leaves in the wind*

*coconut halves to represent galloping horses.*

## Strand unit    Listening and responding to music

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- listen to a range of short, familiar and unfamiliar pieces of music or excerpts

*excerpts from classical music*

*'Toby the Tuba' by G. Kleinsinger*

*'Peter and the Wolf' by Prokofiev*

*excerpts from the 'Nutcracker Suite' by Tchaikovsky*

*Irish music*

*'Riverdance' by Bill Whelan, 'Trad at Heart'*

*popular*

*'Walking in the Air' (theme from 'The Snowman', by Howard Blake)*

*'Grandad' by Flowers and Pickett*

*musicals*

*songs from 'Oliver!' by Lionel Bart*

- respond imaginatively to pieces of music through movement

*clapping, tapping, swaying, marching, dancing*

- talk about pieces of music, giving preferences, and illustrate responses in a variety of ways

*this music is exciting, sad, lively*

*it makes me feel happy, frightened, giddy*

*it reminds me of the circus, a storm, big crowds*

*writing, drawing, painting, humming*

- show the steady beat in listening to a variety of live or recorded music, accompanying songs or chants

*marching, clapping, skipping, dancing*

- differentiate between steady beat and music without a steady beat

*music with a steady beat*

*'Winter Bonfire' by Prokofiev*

*music without a steady beat*

*'Theme from Harry's Game' by Clannad*

- identify and show the tempo of the music as fast or slow, getting faster or getting slower

*drum beat, played quickly or slowly*

*dance music*

*getting faster: 'Shoe the Donkey'*

*slow: a short extract from Piano Concerto No. 21, second movement, by Mozart*

- differentiate between sounds at different dynamic levels (loud and soft, getting louder and getting softer)

*triangle, struck heavily to make a loud sound, struck gently to make a soft sound*

*music gradually getting louder*

*'Bolero' by Ravel*

- perceive the difference between long and short sounds

*a resonating instrument, such as a triangle or a bodhrán, makes a long sound once struck; if it is touched by hand, the sound is interrupted and hence shortened*

- identify obviously different instruments

*bodhrán, triangle.*

#### *Linkage*

Composing—Talking about and recording compositions

#### *Integration*

Visual arts: Drawing; Paint; Elements of art—An awareness of line, shape, pattern

PE: Dance—Exploration, creation and performance of dance

Science: Energy and forces—Sound

## Strand: Performing

### Strand unit Song singing

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- recognise and sing with increasing vocal control and confidence a growing range of songs and melodies

*playground songs and games*

*folk tunes*

*action songs*

*amhráin Ghaeilge*

*popular tunes*

*themes from television and radio*

*these should include:*

*pentatonic tunes (based on five notes: d, r, m, s, l)*

- recognise and imitate short melodies in echoes  
*'This Old Man', ' Féileacáin'*
- show the steady beat (pulse) when performing familiar songs, singing games or rhythmic chants  
*singing the tune while clapping or tapping the beat*  
*chanting*  
*'Who Stole the Cookie?'*
- understand the difference between beat and rhythm  
*marching to the beat while clapping the rhythm or words of a song*  
*one group keeps the beat, another taps the rhythm, another sings the song*
- perceive the shape of melodies as moving upwards, downwards or staying the same  
*melody moves downwards*  
*first line of 'Joy to the World'*
- select the dynamics (loud, soft) most suitable to a song  
*soft, gentle singing for a lullaby*  
*loud, energetic singing for a march or action song*
- notice obvious differences created between sections of songs in various forms  
*verse and refrain, call-and-response*  
*solo-chorus, question-and-answer.*

## Strand unit Literacy

The child should be enabled to

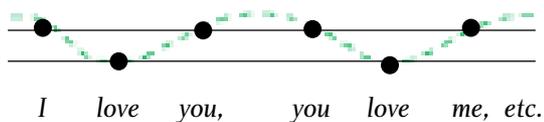
### Rhythm

- identify and perform familiar rhythm patterns from memory and from notation

			
cat	cat	kit-tens	cat
		┌	
Cork	Cork	Gal-way	Cork
4		┌	
ta	ta	ti ti	ta
or			
┌		┌	
ti ti	ta	ti ti	ta

### Pitch

- recognise the shape (contour) of a simple melody



I love you, you love me, etc.

For illustrative purposes only:

Note value	Note name	Rhythm syllable	Stick notation	Standard notation
1 beat	crotchet	ta		♪
$\frac{1}{2}$ beat	quaver	ti (or ti ti for two)	┌ (┌)	♪ (♪♪)
1 beat rest	crotchet rest	(gesture)	Z	♪

- recognise and sing familiar tunes and singing games within a range of two or three notes\*

*hummed*

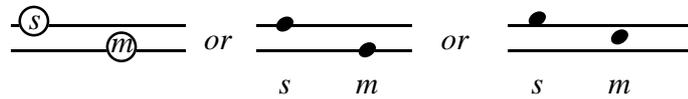
*sung to one syllable (e.g. da da da)*

*from hand signs*

*sung in tonic solfa (e.g. s, m or l, s, m)*

*'Rain, rain, go away' (s, m, s s, m), 'Olé, Olé' (m, s, m, s)*

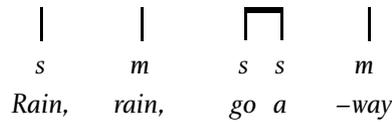
*from staff notation (two-lined stave)*



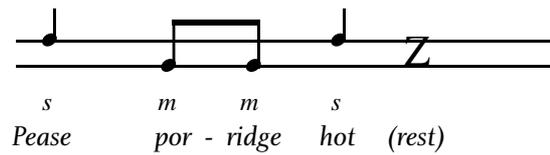
### Rhythm and pitch

- recognise and sing simple tunes, from simplified notation, combining rhythm and pitch

*stick notation*



*simplified staff notation*



\*Suggested melodic patterns and intervals based on the notes s, m, l:

s-m m-s l-s-m s-l l-s s-l-s-m ss-ll-ss-mm s-ml-s-m l-m m-l

## Strand unit **Playing instruments**

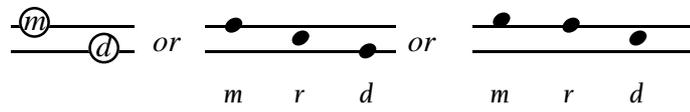
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*The child should be enabled to*

- play some percussion instruments with confidence  
*playing long and short notes on the triangle, tambourine or drum*  
*taking turns, alone or in small groups*
- use percussion instruments to show the beat or rhythm in accompanying songs or rhythmic chants
- identify and perform simple two-note or three-note tunes by ear or from simple notation

*using tuned percussion instruments (e.g. chime bars, glockenspiel), a tune such as 'Hot Cross Buns' may be played on the notes B, A, G*

*simplified staff notation (two lines):*



# Strand: Composing

## Strand unit Improvising and creating

*The child should be enabled to*

- select sounds from a variety of sources to illustrate a character or a sequence of events, individually and in groups

*representing characters*

*each of the seven dwarfs*

*the three bears*

*using sound effects to accompany games, poems, stories, pictures*

- invent and perform short musical pieces with increasing ease and control of musical elements

*high/low (pitch), fast/slow (tempo), loud/soft (dynamics), long/short (rhythm), beginning, middle and end (structure)*

*a high fast sound, a low fast sound, then a high, fast sound again*

*sequence of events illustrated in sound*

*story of a storm:*

*wind: vocal wind sounds (long)*

*rain: rattling sounds with shakers (fast)*

*thunder: booming drum (slow, loud)*

*rain ceases: shakers (played more quietly and slower)*

*sun shines: tinkling triangle sound (short, soft)*

- recall, answer and invent simple melodic and rhythmic patterns, using voices, body percussion and instruments

*singing conversations*

*‘Cá bhfuil do mhála?’—‘Faoin mbord’*

*‘What did you have for your breakfast?’—‘Toast and peanut butter!’*

*vocal improvisations*

*‘Vehicles’ (to underlying 4-beat pattern):*

*Volvo, Volvo, Volvo, roll*

*Volkswagen beetle Volkswagen beetle*

*Fo-----rd, Fo-----rd*

*tractor splutter splutter, tractor splutter splutter.*

Strand unit **Talking about and recording compositions**

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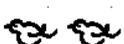
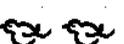
*The child should be enabled to*

- talk about his/her work and the work of other children
  - how the instruments were selected*
  - how the sounds were produced*
  - what they sounded like*
  - how easy or difficult they were to play*
  - how he/she enjoyed exploring them*
  - what he/she liked best*
- invent graphic symbols or use standard notation to represent selected sounds

*symbols that represent metal and wooden instruments*

metal:  wood: 

*simple rhythm notation with rhythm sound pattern*

			
duck	duck-lings	duck-lings	duck
	┌───┐	┌───┐	
ta	ti ti	ti ti	ta

- record compositions on electronic media

*using the school equipment*

*a child's basic tape recorder*

*keyboard*

*computer.*

*Linkage*

Listening and responding—Exploring sounds

Performing—Playing instruments

*Integration*

Visual arts: Drawing; Elements of art—An awareness of line

Third  
and fourth  
classes

# Overview

third and fourth classes

## *Concepts development*

---

### 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

*The musical concepts above are based on the musical elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units of the curriculum outlined below.*

---

### *Strands*

### *Strand units*

#### Listening and responding

- Exploring sounds
  - Listening and responding to music
- 

#### Performing

- Song singing
  - Literacy
  - Playing instruments
- 

#### Composing

- Improvising and creating
- Talking about and recording compositions

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the music programme in third and fourth classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts development', which describes the musical concepts that the child should develop as he/she engages in musical activity
- three *strands*, which outline the content of the curriculum. The strands should be regarded as highly inter-related, in that understanding in one is dependent upon and supportive of understanding in another and an aspect of each may feature within a single lesson. Examples and suggestions are shown in italic type throughout the content sections.

## The strands in third and fourth classes

While building on the experiences of previous levels, the *Listening and responding* strand expands the child's listening repertoire and includes awareness of sound sources from other cultures. Auditory perception is challenged by longer listening excerpts and more precise responses, which include recognition of some families of orchestral and Irish instruments. Physical responses link an understanding of beat, rhythm and melody with the introduction of melodic instrumental playing in the performing strand.

The *Performing* strand dwells on the importance of using the voice, the first and most accessible instrument for the child, for the sheer enjoyment of performance and as a means through which musical skills may be developed.

Through the medium of song singing, the child's attention is drawn to music literacy, at first in the form of simplified representation of rhythm (stick notation) and pitch (hand signs and solfa syllables) and at a later stage in the form of standard notation (the five-line stave). How these elements combine is explored from a foundation of familiar songs and tunes, thus unfolding the world of musical literacy both in a child-centred and in a musical fashion.

While continuing to perform with tuned and untuned percussion instruments, the child also experiences melodic instruments, for example tin whistle or recorder, through which his/her growing confidence and understanding in making music may be demonstrated.

In the *Composing* strand the child's creativity and uniqueness are given a means of self-expression through opportunities to experiment with and gain control of a variety of percussion and melodic instruments. Simple instruments and techniques may be selected and used with expressive devices such as dynamics and tempo to convey an atmosphere, a character or a sequence of ideas. The child is encouraged to evaluate his/her work, describing and discussing the composing process. The final composition may be represented in symbols or signs and recorded for future listening purposes.

### Sequence, breadth and depth

In selecting content it is recommended that each strand and strand unit should be covered each year to ensure variety, balance and continuity. In general the content objectives within the strand units should be explored through the sequence in which they are presented. A scheme of work spanning one school term should recognise the inter-relatedness of the strands, while the depth of treatment of each strand unit may be adjusted from term to term or from year to year.

### Linkage and integration

Within the content sections, notes below strand units suggest some of the instances where *linkage* (i.e. integration within the music curriculum) and *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular connections) are possible. Teachers can identify these opportunities when planning the programme.

# Concepts development for third and fourth classes

## Musical concepts

---

*Through completing the strand units of the music curriculum the child should be enabled to*

### A sense of pulse

- show a steady pulse or beat (keeping time to the music)
- understand and differentiate between music with a steady pulse or beat and music without a strong beat
- discover and recognise strong and weak beats
- discover two-beat time (like a march), three-beat time (like a waltz) and six-eight time (like a jig)

### A sense of duration

- listen to, imitate and perform patterns of long and short sounds and silences

### A sense of tempo

- understand and differentiate between fast and slow rhythmic and melodic patterns, getting faster, getting slower

### A sense of pitch

- understand and differentiate between high and low sounds, same, different, repeated
- imitate melodies
- perceive the contour (shape) of melodies (the general shape of a short, simple melody represented on a staff)

### A sense of dynamics

- understand and differentiate between loud and soft sounds, getting louder, getting softer
- select appropriate levels of loud and soft in performing

### A sense of structure

- understand beginning, middle and end
- identify a different or repeated section
- respond with a sense of phrase (observe the natural divisions in music)

### A sense of timbre

- explore, classify and differentiate between different sounds and instruments
- identify some families of instruments

### A sense of texture

- recognise differences between single sounds and combined sounds when listening

### A sense of style

- listen and respond to music in a wide range of styles.

## Strand: Listening and responding

### Strand unit Exploring sounds

---

*The child should be enabled to*

#### Environmental sounds

- listen to and describe a widening variety of sound from an increasing range of sources
  - a ticking watch on its own and one taped to a door (a hollow door acts as a resonating chamber and the sound is heightened)*
  - a rubber band stretched across a cardboard box*
  - marbles dropped onto a hard or soft surface*
  - a bottle that is full of water, half filled or empty*
- classify and describe sounds within a narrow range
  - bird sounds*  
*seagull, pigeon, jackdaw, starling*
  - car alarms*  
*house alarms*
- recognise and demonstrate pitch differences
  - high, low and in-between sounds, higher than, lower than, same, different, repeated*
  - notes on a keyboard instrument*
  - door bell, school bells, telephone rings*

#### Vocal sounds

- discover the different kinds of sounds that the singing voice and the speaking voice can make
  - comparing humming, whistling, 'opera singing'*
  - experimenting with voice changes to create different moods and meanings*
  - contrasting speaking conversations and singing conversations in the natural voice*
- imitate patterns of long or short sounds vocally
  - boomchicka, boomchicka, rockachicka, boom*

### Body percussion

- discover ways of making sounds using body percussion, in pairs and small groups

*tapping, clapping, slapping, clicking*

*creating slapping and clapping sequences*

### Instruments

- explore ways of making sounds using manufactured and home-made instruments

*manufactured untuned percussion instruments*

*drum, jingle stick, triangle*

*manufactured tuned percussion instruments*

*chime bar, xylophone*

*melodic instruments*

*tin whistle, recorder*

*home-made*

*shakers, metal or wooden objects, fibres, beads, pipes, comb-and-paper*

*kazoo*

*blowing, striking or shaking in a variety of ways*

- explore how the tone colours of suitable instruments can suggest various sounds and sound pictures

*tin whistle to depict twittering birds*

*swanee whistle to depict falling or sliding*

*tuned percussion, such as a glockenspiel, to represent raindrops.*

### Linkage

Composing—Talking about and recording compositions

### Integration

Science: Energy and forces—Sound

## Strand unit Listening and responding to music

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- listen to and describe music in various styles and genres, including familiar excerpts, recognising its function and historical context where appropriate

*music that tells a story*

*'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' by Dukas*

*descriptive music*

*'The Planets' by Holst*

*'Viennese Musical Clock' from 'Háry János Suite' by Kodály*

*Irish music*

*recordings by the Chieftains, Altan, Na Casaidigh, Mary Bergin*

*popular music*

*'A Spaceman Came Travelling' performed by Chris de Burgh*

*film music*

*'Theme from Superman' by J. Williams*

*sacred music*

*'Hallelujah Chorus' from 'Messiah' by G. F. Handel*

- describe initial reactions to, or feelings about, his/her compositions and the compositions of others (recordings or live performances), giving preferences

*this music reminds me of flying, cleaning my bedroom, Christmas*

- respond imaginatively to longer pieces of music in a variety of ways

*moving, dancing, creating a mime*

*writing a poem or story, illustrating through visual art*

- show the steady beat in listening to live or recorded music accompanying songs or chants

*marching, clapping, tapping, skipping, dancing*

*individually and in groups*

- differentiate between steady beat and music without a strong beat in music

*steady beat: 'Hennessey's' recorded by Arcady*

*without a steady beat: music for relaxation*

- recognise strong and weak beats, illustrating them through gestures

*clap for strong beat, tap knees for weak beat*

- identify and describe the tempo of the music as fast or slow, or getting faster or getting slower  
*fast: extracts from 'Carpathian Virtuosi', Romanian Folkloric Music recorded at the National Concert Hall*
- distinguish between sounds of different duration (long or short) while listening to music  
*long and short sounds in a bugle call*  
*long drum roll versus short, clipped drumming*
- identify some families of instruments  
*strings, brass, percussion (drums)*  
*traditional Irish instruments*
- respond appropriately to obviously different sections in a piece  
*changing movement sequences or patterns in recognition of a new section*  
*'The Nutcracker Suite' by Tchaikovsky*  
*'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' by Lennon and McCartney*
- discover two-beat time (like a march) and three-beat time (like a waltz) by using gestures to accompany music  
*listening and responding to marches with the walking motion: left, right, left, right*  
*'Stars and Stripes Forever' by Sousa*  
*'When the Saints Go Marching In'—traditional*  
*listening and responding to waltzes, with the dancing motion: one-two-three, one-two-three*  
*'The Marino Waltz' performed by M. Howard and J. Sheahan*  
*'The Blue Danube' by J. Strauss*
- experience six-eight time (like a jig)  
*'Saddle the Pony'*  
*'The Blackthorn Stick'*

#### Linkage

Composing—Talking about and recording compositions

#### Integration

Visual arts: Drawing; Paint; Elements of art—An awareness of line, shape, pattern

PE: Dance—Exploration, creation and performance of dance

History: Story; Early people and ancient societies; Continuity and change over time; Local studies; Feasts and festivals in the past

## Strand: Performing

### Strand unit Song singing

---

*The child should be enabled to*

#### Unison singing

- sing from memory a widening repertoire of songs with increasing vocal control, confidence and expression

*amhráin Ghaeilge*

*playground songs and games*

*folk tunes from other countries*

*action songs*

*simple rounds or canons*

*call-and-response type songs*

*simple hymns or carols*

*these should include:*

*pentatonic songs (based on five notes: d, r, m, s, l)*

*songs in major and minor keys*

- show greater control of pulse (steady beat) and tempo while singing well-known tunes

*singing the tune while clapping or tapping the beat and keeping the correct tempo*

- understand the difference between beat and rhythm

*in groups: keeping the beat, tapping the rhythm, singing the song*

*individually: marching to the beat, tapping the rhythm*

*and singing the song*

- perform familiar songs with increasing understanding and control of pitch (accurate intervals) and extended vocal range

*'The Cuckoo'—German folk song*

*'Bog Braon don Seandúine'*

*'Tzena, Tzena'—Israeli folk song*

- perform familiar songs with increasing awareness of dynamics, phrasing (appropriate breaks in the music) and expression

*suantraí*

*'Dún do Shúile', using breath support to perform expressively*

- notice differences created between the sections of songs in various forms

*verse and refrain*

*call-and-response*

*solo-chorus*

*question-and-answer*

*four-line song structure (as in poetry or verse)*

#### Simple part singing

- perform a rhythmic or melodic ostinato (a pattern that is repeated over and over) or a drone (long, held notes) to accompany a song

*rhythmic*

*tap or clap a pattern such as* | | □ |  
*while singing 'Frère Jacques'*

*melodic (in groups)*

*one group sings 'Pour on water—' (s f m m)*  
*while another sings 'London's burning'*

*one group sings 'Frère Jacques'*  
*while another holds the note 'doh'*

- perform, in groups, simple rounds in two or more parts

*'Three Blind Mice'*

*'Ceol Ars' an tAsal'*

*'Oh! How Lovely is the Evening.'*

Strand unit **Literacy**

*The child should be enabled to*

**Rhythm**

- identify and define the rhythm patterns of well-known songs and chants

$\frac{4}{4}$  | | | | |  $\sqcap$   $\sqcap$   $\text{J}$  |  
 ta ta ta ta | ti ti ti ti ta-aa |  
*Baa, baa black sheep, have you an - y wool?*

- recognise and use some standard symbols to notate metre (time) and rhythm

*one beat (crotchet)*

*half beat (quaver)*

*one-beat rest (crotchet rest)*

*two beats (minim) as rhythm patterns in stick notation*

*in  $\frac{2}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$  or  $\frac{4}{4}$  time.*

Note value	Note name	Rhythm syllable	Stick notation	Standard notation
1 beat	<i>crotchet</i>	<i>ta</i>		$\text{J}$
$\frac{1}{2}$ beat	<i>quaver</i>	<i>ti (or ti ti for two)</i>	$\uparrow$ ( $\sqcap$ )	$\text{J}$ ( $\text{JJ}$ )
1-beat rest	<i>crotchet rest</i>	<i>(gesture)</i>	Z	$\text{Z}$
2 beats	<i>minim</i>	<i>ta-aa</i>	$\text{J}$	$\text{J}$
3 beats	<i>dotted minim</i>	<i>ta-aa-aa</i>	$\text{J}.$	$\text{J}.$



Strand unit Literacy

The child should be enabled to

Rhythm and pitch

- use standard symbols to notate simple rhythm and pitch

stick notation with solfa names written underneath

'Rocky Mountain'—American folk song

$\frac{2}{4}$   $\overline{d d d m}$  |  $\overline{d d d m}$  |  $\overline{d d m s}$  | s

simplified staff notation (two or three lines)

$\overline{d d d m}$  |  $\overline{d d d m}$  |  $\overline{d d m s}$  | s

or at a higher pitch

$\overline{d d d m}$  |  $\overline{d d d m}$  |  $\overline{d d m s}$  | s

staff notation (five lines)

d

- discover how pentatonic tunes (based on five notes: d, r, m, s, l) can be read, sung and played in G doh, C doh, or F doh

familiar tune

'Liza Jane' in staff notation (F doh)

'Óró 'Sé Do Bheatha 'Bhaile' (G doh)

Ó - ró 'sé do bheath - a 'bhail - e Ó - ró 'sé do

## Strand unit    Playing instruments

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- discover different ways of playing percussion and melodic instruments
  - letting the stick bounce on the chime bar to create a long, vibrating sound*
  - clamping the sound on a triangle by placing a hand on it*
  - scraping or striking a drum*
  - covering a number of holes on a tin whistle to eliminate squeaky sounds*
- use percussion instruments to show the beat or rhythm in accompanying songs or rhythmic chants
  - play a rhythmic ostinato (a pattern that is repeated over and over) to accompany a familiar melody*
- identify and perform simple, familiar tunes from memory or from notation
  - using tuned percussion instruments, selected chime bars, or adjusted glockenspiel or xylophone*
  - using melodic instruments*
    - tin whistle or recorder*
  - playing pentatonic tunes (based on five notes: d, r, m, s, l) on the black keys of a keyboard instrument.*

# Strand: Composing

## Strand unit Improvising and creating

*The child should be enabled to*

- select different kinds of sounds (voice, body percussion, untuned and tuned percussion, simple melodic instruments, electronic instruments) to portray a character, a sequence of events or an atmosphere in sound stories

*characters*

*a clown, an old man, a spy*

*sequences of events including sound effects*

*a walk in the jungle*

*an accident*

*atmosphere in sound*

*space music*

*carnival music*

- invent and perform simple musical pieces that show a developing awareness of musical elements

*pulse, rhythm, melody, dynamics (loud/soft), structure (beginning, middle, end, repetition) and texture (sound combinations)*

*simple melody accompanied by a steady pulse as a first section, a contrasting middle section and then the melody repeated again*

*'All at Sea'*

*soft, high pitch, fast: plankton, little fish (small triangle)*

*medium pitch: dolphin (melodic instrument)*

*loud, short sound: shark (cymbal struck on the side)*

*soft, long sound: eels (chime bars or gong)*

- recall, answer and invent simple melodic and rhythmic patterns, using voice, body percussion and instruments

*singing conversations*

*teacher: 'l s m r ...'*

*child: 'm r d d'*

*or using melodic instruments*

*ostinato (a pattern that is repeated) to familiar songs*

*clap or tap*            Z            |  
*ti ti*      *rest*      *ti ti*      *ta*

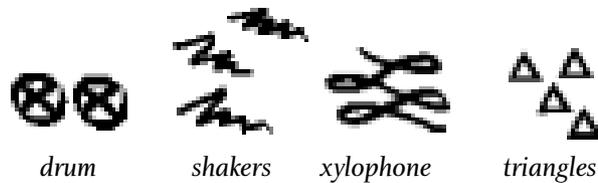
*while singing 'Train is a-coming'.*

## Strand unit Talking about and recording compositions

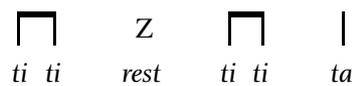
*The child should be enabled to*

- describe and discuss his/her work and the work of other children
  - how the instruments were selected*
  - how the sounds were produced*
  - what effects they produced*
  - whether he/she succeeded in his/her intentions*
  - what changes are necessary*
  - how he/she enjoyed exploring the sounds, alone or with others, and what he/she liked best*
- devise and use graphic symbols and/or use standard notation to record simple musical patterns and inventions

*graphic symbols*



*standard notation*



- record compositions on electronic media
  - using the school equipment, a child's basic tape recorder, keyboard, computer.*

### *Linkage*

Listening and responding—Exploring sound

Performing—Playing instruments (patterns explored in the literacy strand unit may be incorporated into the child's improvisations and compositions)

### *Integration*

Visual arts: Drawing; Paint; Elements of art—An awareness of line, shape, pattern

History: Story; Local studies—Feasts and festivals in the past

Fifth  
and sixth  
classes

# Overview

fifth and sixth classes

## *Concepts development*

---

### 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

*The musical concepts above are based on the musical elements and will be developed as work is completed on the strands and strand units of the curriculum outlined below.*

---

### *Strands*

### *Strand units*

### Listening and responding

- Exploring sounds
  - Listening and responding to music
- 

### Performing

- Song singing
  - Literacy
  - Playing instruments
- 

### Composing

- Improvising and creating
- Talking about and recording compositions

# Planning

## Structure and presentation

The content of the music programme in fifth and sixth classes is presented in two sections:

- a section entitled 'Concepts development', which describes the musical concepts that the child should develop as he/she engages in musical activity
- three *strands*, which outline the content of the curriculum. The strands should be regarded as highly inter-related, in that understanding in one is dependent upon and supportive of understanding in another and an aspect of each may feature within a single lesson. Examples and suggestions are shown in italic type throughout the content sections.

## The strands in fifth and sixth classes

While building on the experiences of previous levels, the *Listening and responding* strand continues to expand the child's listening repertoire and includes sound sources from other cultures and eras. Auditory perception is heightened and attention is focused not only on the structural and expressive qualities of the music but also on its purpose in various situations or societies. The recognition of individual instruments and simple melodies in selected listening excerpts is consolidated in the performing strand by the singing and playing of these melodies.

The *Performing* strand dwells on the importance of using the voice, the first and most accessible instrument for the child, for the sheer enjoyment of performance and as a means through which musical skills may be expanded. As independence and competence expand, the child will enjoy the experience of simple part singing, ranging from the singing of a simple ostinato (repeated pattern) or drone (held note) to the addition of a second part (upper or lower) towards the end of sixth class.

Through the medium of song singing the child's attention is drawn to music literacy, ranging from simplified representation of rhythm (stick notation) and pitch (hand signs and solfa syllables) to standard notation (the five-line stave). How these elements combine continues to be explored from a foundation of familiar songs and tunes, thus consolidating the world of musical literacy in a child-centred as well as in a musical fashion.

While continuing to perform with tuned and untuned percussion instruments, the child also experiences melodic instruments, for example tin whistle or recorder, through which his/her growing confidence and understanding in making music may be demonstrated. Children with skills on other instruments, for example violin, piano, keyboard or guitar, may be included in group activities to complement classroom music.

In the *Composing* strand the child's creativity and uniqueness are given a means of self-expression through the provision of opportunities to experiment and gain control of a range of musical materials. These include manufactured instruments and home-made percussion and melodic instruments as well as electronic media. Instruments and techniques may be selected and used with expressive devices such as dynamics and tempo for a range of purposes. Rhythmic or melodic patterns, or other features from listening and performing activities, may also be incorporated in the composition. The child is encouraged to reflect upon and evaluate his/her composition and the compositions of others, before revising the composition, where appropriate. The final work may be represented in symbols, signs or standard notation and recorded for future listening purposes and evaluation.

### Sequence, breadth and depth

In selecting content it is recommended that each strand and strand unit should be covered each year to ensure variety, balance and continuity. In general the content objectives within the strand units should be explored through the sequence in which they are presented. A scheme of work spanning one school term should recognise the inter-relatedness of the strands, while the depth of treatment of each strand unit may be adjusted from term to term or from year to year.

### Linkage and integration

Within the content sections, notes below strand units suggest some of the instances where *linkage* (i.e. integration within the music curriculum) and *integration* (i.e. cross-curricular connections) are possible.

# Concepts development for fifth and sixth classes

## Musical concepts

---

*Through completing the strand units of the music curriculum the child should be enabled to*

### A sense of pulse

- show a steady pulse/beat
- understand and differentiate between music with a steady pulse or beat and music without a strong beat
- recognise strong and weak beats
- identify two-beat time (like a march), three-beat time (like a waltz) and six-eight time (like a jig) in moving to music

### A sense of duration

- listen to, imitate and perform patterns of long and short sounds and silences

### A sense of tempo

- understand and differentiate between fast and slow rhythmic and melodic patterns, getting faster, getting slower

### A sense of pitch

- understand and differentiate between high and low sounds
- imitate melodies
- perceive the contour (shape) of melodies (general shape of a melody on a stave, movement by steps or by leaps)

### A sense of dynamics

- understand and differentiate between loud and soft sounds, getting louder, getting softer
- select appropriate levels of loud and soft in performing

### A sense of structure

- identify a contrasting or repeated section
- respond with a sense of phrase (observe the natural divisions)
- recognise simple form (e.g. ABA, where A represents the first section and B a second, contrasting section)

### A sense of timbre

- explore and differentiate between different sounds and instruments
- identify families of instruments

### A sense of texture

- recognise single sounds from combined sounds, visually (from graphic or standard notation) or aurally (when listening)

### A sense of style

- listen and respond to music in a wide range of styles
- differentiate between clearly contrasting styles (e.g. folk and flamenco guitar playing).

## Strand: Listening and responding

### Strand unit Exploring sounds

---

*The child should be enabled to*

#### Environmental sounds

- listen to sounds in the environment with an increased understanding of how sounds are produced and organised

*sound waves*

*echoes*

*resonance*

*vibrating air, string, metal*

*noise pollution*

#### Vocal sounds

- explore a range of sounds that the singing voice and the speaking voice can make

*short, sharp vocal sounds, spoken and sung*

*'hey! hey! hey!'*

*slowly descending or ascending singing sounds*

*nasal sounds, belly laughs, whistling, whispering, muttering, hissing*

- distinguish and describe vocal ranges and tone colours heard in a piece of music

*soprano, alto, tenor, bass*

*raspy, throaty, raw, true, pure, clear, thin, rich*

*boy soprano (treble), opera singer, rock singer*

#### Body percussion

- identify a variety of ways of making sounds using body percussion in pairs and in small and large groups

*tapping, clapping, slapping, clicking*

*creating more complex sequences involving slapping, clapping, clicking etc. and alternating left and right hands or feet*

### Instruments

- explore ways of making sounds using manufactured and home-made instruments

*manufactured untuned percussion instruments*

*drum, jingle stick, triangle*

*tuned percussion*

*chime bar, xylophone*

*melodic instruments*

*tin whistle, recorder, guitar, keyboard, violin*

*home-made instruments*

*shakers, metal or wooden objects, fibres, beads, pipes, comb-and-paper kazoos*

*wobble boards, drums made with rubber tyre tubing stretched over a tin stringed instruments made with rubber bands stretched over a box shape*

*blowing, plucking, striking or shaking in a variety of ways and with a variety of tools*

*releasing air slowly out of a balloon*

*striking or blowing across the top of a bottle partly filled with water, varying the amount*

*exploring the inside of a piano, guitar, violin, accordion*

- explore how the tone colours of suitable instruments can suggest various sounds and sound pictures

*wobble board to represent water or waves*

*shakers to represent hammering rain*

*glockenspiel to represent a dancing clown*

*violin to represent cats wailing*

*low notes on a piano to represent caves*

*keyboard or electronic sounds to represent moon walking.*

### Linkage

Composing—Talking about and recording compositions

### Integration

Science: Energy and forces—Sound

## Strand unit    Listening and responding to music

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- listen to and describe a broad range of musical styles and traditions, including familiar excerpts, recognising where appropriate its function and historical context

*excerpts from classical music*

*'Ah Vous Dirai-Je Maman' by Mozart*

*'Fantasia on Greensleeves' by Vaughan Williams*

*'The Moldau' from 'Má Vlast' by Smetana*

*'Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra' by Britten*

*Irish music, traditional and contemporary*

*'The Brendan Voyage' by Shaun Davey*

*'The Children of Lir' by Brian O'Reilly*

*'Swinging Tripes and Trilibubkins' from the album 'Nua Nós' by Gerald Barry*

*film*

*themes by Ennio Morricone, John Williams*

*jazz*

*'Chatanooga Choo Choo' recorded by Glen Miller*

*sacred music*

*'The Wexford Carol', recordings from Glenstal Abbey*

*opera*

*'Soldiers' Chorus' from 'Faust' by Gounod*

- listen to his/her own compositions and the compositions of others (recordings or live performances) and evaluate in terms of personal response, choice of instruments and expressive qualities

- respond imaginatively to music in a variety of ways
  - moving, dancing, creating a mime*
  - drawing a 'plan' of a composition*
  - writing a poem or story, illustrating through visual art*
- identify families of instruments
  - orchestral instruments*
    - strings, woodwind, brass, percussion*
  - traditional instruments*
    - Irish harp, tin whistle, uilleann pipes, Irish flute, bodhrán, accordion, concertina, Irish fiddle*
- examine the effects produced by different instruments
  - 'Silenzio della Terra' (Silence of the Earth) by Jane O'Leary*
  - 'Also Sprach Zarathustra' by Richard Strauss*
  - 'The Typewriter' by Leroy Anderson*
- distinguish the main instrument heard in a piece of music
  - cello in 'The Swan' from 'Carnival of the Animals' by Saint-Saëns*
  - French horn in 'Horn Concerto in E<sup>b</sup>' K447 by Mozart*
- recognise and understand how tempo and dynamic choices contribute to an expressive musical performance
  - slow, moderate, fast tempo, increases and decreases*
  - very soft, soft, moderate, loud, very loud*
  - 'The Seville Suite' by Bill Whelan*
  - 'Valse Triste' from 'Kuolema' Op. 44 by Sibelius*
- recognise strong and weak-beat patterns, illustrating them through gestures
  - clap for first beat, tap for second and subsequent beats*

- identify two-beat or three-beat time in moving to music
  - two-beat in marches*
  - three-beat in waltzes or country and western music*
  - familiar songs in three-beat time*  
*‘Daisy, Daisy’, ‘Báidín Fhéilimí’, ‘Edelweiss’*
- identify six-eight time in moving to music
  - ‘Planxty Irwin’*
  - ‘The Irish Washerwoman’*
- determine simple form and represent through gestures
  - recognise AB form (binary) and ABA form (ternary), where A represents the first section and B a second, contrasting section*
- experience dotted rhythms or syncopation (emphasis on normally weak beats) in familiar tunes through gestures and movement
  - syncopation in music from the Caribbean*  
*‘Yellow Bird’, ‘Junkanoo’, ‘Day-O’*
  - dotted rhythms*  
*‘John Brown’s Body’, ‘Phil the Fluter’s Ball’.*

#### *Linkage*

Composing—Talking about and recording

#### *Integration*

Visual arts: Drawing, Paint; Elements of art—An awareness of line, shape, tone, pattern

PE: Dance—Structure of a dance (binary or ternary)

History: Story; Early people and ancient societies; Continuity and change over time

## Strand: Performing

### Strand unit    Song singing

---

*The child should be enabled to*

#### Unison singing

- recognise and sing from memory a more demanding repertoire of songs with an awareness of the music's social, historical and cultural contexts

*amhráin Ghaeilge*

*folk tunes and dances from other countries*

*simple rounds or canons*

*call-and-response type songs*

*add-on songs*

*hymns and carols*

*ballads*

*songs from musicals*

*popular songs*

*art songs*

*these should include:*

*pentatonic songs (based on five notes: d, r, m, s, l)*

*songs with major, minor and modal keys*

- sing independently, with increasing awareness and control of pulse, tempo, pitch, diction and posture

*keeping a steady beat and tempo, singing in tune with an extended vocal range*

*'Amhráinín Siodraimín'*

- perform familiar songs with increased control of dynamics, phrasing and expression

*pronouncing words clearly with broad vowel sounds and crisp, clear consonants*

*breathing at the appropriate points*

*maintaining correct singing posture*

- relate words and mood of a song to style of performance

*choosing the appropriate dynamic level to emphasise phrases, bars or notes*

- notice the differences created between the sections of songs in different forms

*verse and refrain, call-and-response, solo-chorus, question-and-answer*

*add-on songs*

*'Twelve Days of Christmas', 'Hole in the Bottom of the Sea'*

- explore structural elements within familiar songs

*identify the direction of the melody in notation*

*state whether the tones of a melody move by steps, by leaps, or by repeats*

*recognise similar and contrasting melody patterns*

*AB form or ABA form*

*AB: 'Greensleeves', 'Tá na Báid'*

*ABA: 'A Shaighdiúirín, a Chroí', 'Cnocáinín Aerach Chill Mhuire'*

#### Simple part singing

- perform a rhythmic or melodic ostinato (a pattern that is repeated over and over) or drone (long, held notes) in accompanying a song

*rhythmic ostinato*

*tap a pattern such as* | ◻ | |

*while singing 'My Grandfather's Clock'*

*melodic ostinato or drone*

*chants from Taizé*

- distinguish individual parts in a round by singing, listening, moving, or by observing notational cues

*singing in unison 'Row Your Boat': the children walk in a circle, keeping time to the music*

*in groups: the children begin walking as their singing part begins and stop, in turn, as it finishes*

- performing a round in several different textures

*'Frère Jacques' performed with voices and recorders and/or glockenspiel*

- perform, as part of a group, two songs sung individually and as partner songs

*'This Old Man' and 'Michael Finnigin'*

*any pentatonic tunes (based on five notes: d, r, m, s, l) with an equal number of bars may be performed as partner songs*

*'Rocky Mountain' and 'Liza Jane'*

- perform, as part of a group, arrangements of songs that include simple countermelodies or harmony parts
- identify unison parts (playing or singing the same line) and harmony parts (two or more independent parts together) visually (from notation) and aurally.

## Strand unit Literacy

The child should be enabled to

### Rhythm

- recognise longer and more complex rhythm patterns of familiar songs and chants

		┌───┐		┌───┐		┌───┐		
ta	ta	ti ti	ta	ti ti	ta	ti ti	ta	
My grand-fath-er's clock was too tall for the shelf								
	.	↑			↑		↑	♪
Oh	E	li	za	L'l	Li	za	Jane	

- recognise, name and use some standard symbols to notate metre (time) and rhythm

one beat (crotchet)

half beat (quaver)

one-beat rest (crotchet rest)

two beats (minim)

four beats (semibreve)

three beats (dotted minim)

one-and-a-half beats (dotted crotchet)

as rhythm patterns in stick notation

in  $\frac{2}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$  or  $\frac{4}{4}$  time

Note value	Note name	Rhythm syllable	Stick notation	Staff notation
1 beat	crotchet	ta		♪
$\frac{1}{2}$ beat	quaver	ti (ti ti for two)	↑ (┌┐)	♪ (♫)
1-beat rest	crotchet rest	(gesture)	Z	⏏
2 beats	minim	ta-aa	♩	♩
4 beats	semibreve	ta-aa-aa-aa	♩	♩
3 beats	dotted minim	ta-aa-aa	♩.	♩.
$1\frac{1}{2}$ beats	dotted crotchet	ta-i	.	♪.

## Pitch

- recognise and sing familiar tunes in an increasing variety of ways

*hummed*

*sung to one syllable (e.g. da da da)*

*from hand signs*

*sung in tonic solfa*

*including full diatonic scale: d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'*

*sung from staff notation (five-line stave), following the general direction, shape and structure of the melody*

*'Ding Dong Dederó'*



- recognise the shape (contour) of a melody and movement by steps or by leaps, from a graphic score or from notation



- use standard symbols to read, sing and play simple melodies\* from sight

*from tonic solfa (pentatonic, e.g. r' d' l s m r d l, s,)*

*from hand signs*

*from rhythm—solfa (stick notation with solfa names)*

*from finger stave (each finger depicts a line on a stave)*

*from staff notation (five-line stave)*



\*Suggested melodic patterns and intervals based on the notes s, m, l, r, d, l, (low lah), s, (low soh)

s-m m-s l-s-m s-l l-s s-l-s-m ss-ll-ss-mm s-ml-s-m l-m m-l

s-d s-m-d d-m-s d-s m-r-d d-r-m d-r r-d

d-l, l-d l,-s, s,-l, d-s, s,-d m-r-d-l, m-r-d-l,-s, l,-d-r-m s,-l,-d-r-m

r-l, l,-r m-l, l,-m l-l, r-s, s,-r m-s, s,-m s-s, s,-s

s-l, l,-s s,-l l-s,

Other patterns to include semitones, e.g. s-f-m-r-d d-r-m-f-s d-t,-d

### Rhythm and pitch

- use standard symbols with increasing fluency and accuracy to notate simple rhythm and pitch

stick notation with solfa names underneath



staff notation



- recognise that melodies can be read, sung or played in different keys
- read, sing and play simple tunes from sight with C doh, G doh or F doh

pentatonic tunes (based on five notes: d, r, m, s, l)

'Here Comes a Bluebird'

'Ailiú Éanaí'

- understand the function of major key signatures as indicating the position of doh

some key signatures



C major (no sharps or flats)



G major (one sharp)



D major (two sharps)



F major (one flat).

'Beidh Aonach Amárach.'



## Strand unit    **Playing instruments**

---

*The child should be enabled to*

- perform a range of playing techniques on a wide selection of percussion and melodic instruments

*flicking, rolling, slapping or shaking a cabasa*

*playing a xylophone with one or two sticks*

*using various features on an electronic keyboard*

- use percussion instruments with increasing confidence and skill to accompany tunes, songs and chants

*playing a rhythmic ostinato (a pattern that is repeated over and over) or a drone (long, held note or notes) to accompany familiar tunes and songs*

- identify and perform familiar tunes from memory or from notation independently

*instruments may include*

*tuned percussion instruments (e.g. chime bars, glockenspiel, xylophone)*

*tin whistle, recorder, keyboard*

*repertoire may include*

*simple melodies of familiar songs learned in previous years*

*simple rounds*

*‘Frère Jacques’, ‘Codail, a Stóirín’*

*tunes from the listening programme*

*‘Shepherd’s Song’ from the Pastoral Symphony by Beethoven.*

# Strand: Composing

## Strand unit Improvising and creating

*The child should be enabled to*

- select from a wide variety of sound sources (voice, body percussion, untuned and tuned percussion, melodic instruments and technology) for a range of musical purposes

*to accompany a song, story, poem, riddle, joke, game*

*to illustrate characters or sequences of events*

*to convey mood or atmosphere*

*to illustrate an abstract concept*

*fire, beauty, earthquakes, machinery*

*for a particular occasion*

*a feast or festival, presenting a prize, saying goodbye, going to sleep*

- invent and perform pieces that show an increasing awareness and control of musical elements

*rhythm, melody, tempo, dynamics, texture (combinations of sounds) and simple structure*

*chime bar inventions, using notes C, D, E, G, A*

*creating a melody, with an underlying five-beat pulse, keeping a steady tempo, playing softly, loudly or with some contrast, playing some notes together and following a simple plan*

- recall, answer and invent melodic and rhythmic patterns, using voices, body percussion and instruments

*singing conversations*

*teacher: 'm l l s m r m—'*

*child: 'm l l s m r d—'*

*using melodic instruments*

*rhythmic ostinato (a pattern that is repeated over and over) for familiar songs*

*clap or tap*       $\begin{array}{cccc|cccc} | & | & | & | & \square & | & \square & | \\ ta & ta & ta & ta & ti & ti & ta & ti & ti & ta \end{array}$

*while singing the chorus of 'This Ole House'.*

## Strand unit Talking about and recording compositions

The child should be enabled to

- reflect upon and evaluate his/her work and the work of other children

*discussing and explaining:*

*the selection of instruments, the quality of the sounds*

*what effects they produced, the use of musical elements*

*whether he/she succeeded in his/her intentions, whether revisions are necessary*

*the satisfaction of improvising with sounds, alone or with others*

- devise and use graphic symbols and/or use standard notation to record different lines of musical patterns and inventions

*graphic notation*

*'Volcanoes'*

drums	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
shakers	///	///	///	///
keyboard				
chimes		★	★	★ ★ ★ ★
	<i>loud</i>	<i>louder</i>	<i>very loud</i>	

*rhythm notation*

*'Volcanoes'*

drums	z z z	z z z	z z z	
shakers	z ♩	z ♩	z ♩	o
keyboard	□ z □ z	□ z □ z	□ z □ z	□ □ □ □
chimes	z z z	z z z	z	ff
	<i>mf</i>	<i>f</i>		

- record compositions on electronic media

*school equipment*

*computer*

*keyboard*

*synthesiser.*

*Linkage*

Listening and responding—Exploring sound

Performing—Literacy, Playing instruments (patterns explored in the literacy strand unit may be incorporated into the child's improvisations and compositions)

*Integration*

Visual arts: Drawing, Paint; Elements of art—An awareness of line, shape, pattern

History: Story; Local studies—Feasts and festivals

# Assessment



# Assessment

## Assessment: an integral part of teaching and learning

Assessment is central to the effective teaching and learning of music. It encompasses the many and varied situations in which the teacher observes the child's participation in musical activity and in the application of knowledge, skills and understanding. Such opportunities for assessment arise when the child composes something new, plays an instrument or sings, listens to live or recorded music, or shares responses and ideas in a class discussion.

Assessment in music is related to the sequence in which musical knowledge and understanding are acquired. A new concept will not be grasped unless the previous concepts are understood: for example, the child needs to learn about note values before being asked to read a particular rhythm pattern from sight. By identifying the child's learning needs in music the teacher can adjust instruction and plan more appropriate activities.

## Roles of assessment: why assess?

Assessment can fulfil different purposes, which can be called upon at different stages of the teaching-learning process. In 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. However, since the optimum period for developing the child's capacity for music is early childhood, it is imperative that this potential is identified and built upon early in the child's primary school years. Assessment can also identify areas of weakness or gaps in pupils' learning and provide information on how instruction should be modified.

Reflection on day-to-day teaching and learning can help the teacher to form a precise picture of what the child needs to learn next. This type of continuous assessment, which 'feeds forward' to future work, can be described as formative assessment. It is effective in ongoing teaching in terms of meeting short-term goals and objectives.

Assessment that provides a synopsis of what the child has achieved so far in music can be described as summative assessment. It is usually used at prescribed intervals when a unit of work has been completed. Summative assessment is useful when the teacher needs to record information in a structured or systematic way, or to report on progress in music to parents or to other professionals.

In some circumstances the teacher may wish to identify specific help that a child may need in music. Objective assessment of this kind plays a diagnostic role and requires sensitive assessment tools.

Finally, assessment can play a planning and evaluative role when the effectiveness of the teaching and assessment techniques are reviewed by the teacher and when decisions are made about how the work in the classroom should proceed, within the context of a whole-school plan for teaching music in the school.

In rare instances a teacher may wish to confirm his/her belief that a child possesses exceptional musical talent, which should be carefully nurtured. This may be verified through seeking the opinion of a colleague and/or through administering a simple singing or listening test or a standardised test of musical ability or aptitude.

### Assessment in music: what should be assessed?

Assessment activities should reflect the typical musical processes and products outlined in the content statement. These encompass two broad dimensions: the inter-related strands of listening and responding, performing and composing, and the integrated musical elements.

#### *Strands and strand units*

The first aspect of assessment will be concerned with the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes within the strands—

*Listening and responding*

*Performing*

*Composing.*

In the *Listening and responding* strand, assessment will link the two strand units 'Exploring sounds' and 'Listening and responding to music' by addressing the range of responses the child makes to music. These include the use of vocal sounds, words, large or small movements and other media, to interpret musical elements. The development of sensitivity and openness towards music in various genres and styles, from different periods, cultures and ethnic groups may be observed as the child expresses his/her emotional reaction to music.

During the process of *Performing*, involving song singing and playing instruments, the child in infant classes will exhibit the skills and commitment required to demonstrate a sense of pulse, imitate simple rhythms and sing or play simple melodies. As confidence grows, dynamics and phrasing will bring meaning and expression to the child's singing and playing. In first to sixth classes the child's emerging understanding of invented or standard musical notation may also be noted. In senior-level classes in particular a distinction may be made between the child's solo performance and his/her performance as part of a group or class.

Assessment in the *Composing* strand will examine the process, i.e. the efforts of the child to illustrate new musical ideas by improvising, composing and arranging sounds, alone or with others, in ways that involve imagination, originality and risk-taking and that demonstrate control of musical materials and use of musical elements. Assessment will also address the product of composing, which encompasses the child's evaluation of the composing activity, knowledge of electronic media, and use of standard and non-standard notation to record ideas.

### *The musical elements*

The development of understanding of musical elements (pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, structure, timbre, texture and style) should form an equally important aspect of assessment, interwoven as they are with the strand units, as outlined in the content statement.

## Assessment tools: how to assess

Music learning is easiest to assess when children are actively involved in making music. Teachers and children frequently evaluate as they go along, as part of the learning process. For this reason assessment in music is more concerned with clarity of purpose than with complex procedures, additional time or resources. The most effective assessment occurs while the music is still 'in the air' and when the teacher invites the child to respond imaginatively in a variety of ways.

In this section, the use of teacher observation is discussed as the principal assessment tool in music. A number of other recommended approaches include:

*teacher-designed tasks and tests*  
*work samples and portfolios*  
*projects*  
*curriculum profiles.*

### *Teacher observation*

Observation and recording of the children engaging in musical activities will enable the teacher to form and articulate impressions of what characterises the children's work, to monitor their progress and to ensure that each child's needs are being fulfilled.

In using observations as an assessment tool the teacher should be clear about what aspect of musical behaviour he/she is expecting the pupils to demonstrate and should anticipate learning outcomes before making observations. Continuous informal questioning by the teacher and the use of class discussion enlighten teacher observation, while brief conferences help create dialogue about particular aspects of work and overall development of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Many observations will be made during collaborative group tasks, but the teacher may also encourage the children to perform in twos or threes to ensure that each child's engagement in musical activities is noted.

Pupils may be observed working in groups or as individuals in the following contexts:

- listening attentively to music
- talking about what has been heard as part of a class discussion
- illustrating or writing about what has been heard
- listening to the responses of others
- moving to music
- singing a favourite song
- playing an instrument
- reading a simple rhythmic or melodic pattern
- sharing ideas for a composing activity
- selecting and organising instruments
- rehearsing a performance
- attempting to record compositions, either on tape or through invented graphic notation, simplified notation or standard notation.

### *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*

A direct and efficient method of assessing groups of children in music is teacher-made tasks and tests. These range from written tasks, such as writing about a piece of music or taking a simple rhythm dictation, to performance tasks, such as playing a tune or singing a song from memory. Performance assessment allows for the assessment of products (for example a recording of a group composition), process (for example how the instruments were selected) and process and product combined (for example how the group selected, varied and arranged instruments and worked co-operatively to create a musical performance). Performance assessment does not require additional time or resources and it provides an authentic method of assessment that complements the objectives and pedagogy in the curriculum.

### *Work samples and portfolios*

In the compilation of work samples and portfolios as assessment tools the teacher can learn a great deal more about the child's development as a musician and can use the information gleaned in further instruction.

A portfolio that contains a child's work collected over time can vividly display the depth as well as the breadth of his/her learning in music. As an assessment tool, it can be used over a relatively short space of time, for example one school term, or over a longer time, such as a two-year period. The items contained in a portfolio should represent the range of activities throughout the three strands: *Listening and responding*, *Performing* and *Composing*, and may include items such as invented notation, drafts of compositions, details of a listening project, a tape of a performance of a composition, notes on self-assessment and comments from peers or from the teacher. Ultimately, the design of the portfolio is determined by the purpose to which it is put, whether as a repository for all music-related artefacts, as evidence of growth over time, or as a showcase of the child's best work.

Pupil self-assessment is an effective means of discerning the child's process of learning that is closely allied with portfolio and other forms of assessment. In the composing strand self-assessment plays a critical role in the creative process and this is emphasised in the strand unit 'Talking about and recording compositions'. It can be used to foster reflection, both verbal and non-verbal, and higher-level thinking, and it can also provide a fresh insight into the teaching and learning process in music.

A learning log can heighten the significance of the child's self-assessment and reflection on his/her work sample or portfolio collections. In addition, it may provide a record of the child's perceptions and a potential insight into his/her developing attitudes towards music and music-makers of different cultures and times.

Like teacher-designed tasks, portfolio assessment requires clarity of purpose rather than additional demands on resources or time, yet it is effective in managing and assessing the child's learning experiences in music over a specified period.

### *Projects*

While portfolios can serve to highlight the work of individual pupils, projects allow children to work collaboratively in a shared musical experience. In assigning tasks to various groups within the class the teacher should ensure that the purpose of the project, the expectations for each member of the group and the assessment criteria, both technical and artistic, are clarified in advance. Additionally, in the designation of responsibilities within groups it is important that, for assessment purposes, the workload be evenly distributed as far as possible. The following are examples of group projects:

- composing music to tell or accompany a story
- playing a tune from memory
- designing a musical instrument or family of instruments
- composing a song
- inventing a form of notation
- composing a dance sequence
- selecting and listening to a number of pieces of music to compare and contrast.

Work samples, portfolios and projects form part of summative assessments, since teachers can draw on these and on their own records in arriving at an overall grade or score for a student.

### *Curriculum profiles*

Curriculum profiles are records of achievement that are primarily based on teacher judgements of pupils' achievement with reference to key objectives in the curriculum. Profiles seem particularly suited to music, since other standardised measures are usually unavailable.

The main features associated with curriculum profiles are indicators of achievement, levels (or bands), and assessment tasks or contexts. Indicators are outcome statements that describe the achievement of an individual child and are generally linked to the objectives of a curriculum. Examples of indicators of achievement in music include 'recognises music as loud or soft' and 'plays a variety of tunes on a melodic instrument'. When grouped together, sets of indicators form levels (or bands). In rating a child's achievement the teacher may refer to his/her performance in various assessment tasks (such as those referred to in the section 'Teacher-designed tasks and tests'), to portfolio collections, to project work, to personal learning logs or to anecdotal evidence recorded during or following class lessons.

Curriculum profiles can assist the teacher in making an informal but valid and reliable assessment of the child's performance in music towards the end of a school year.

### A balanced approach to assessment

While a broad range of suitable assessment tools in music has been emphasised, it should be understood that it may not be desirable or practical to use all these tools continuously. As part of a whole-school approach, teachers and staff may give priority to certain tools to match particular approaches to music, adapting them for different learning situations or for varying time spans. The manageability of assessment is dependent on having a well-planned, consistent approach to teaching and envisaging clear learning objectives in the first instance. Assessment in music, being primarily based on learning in action, will not usually require any additional materials or absorb class time.

### Recording and communicating

The range of assessment tools, teacher observations, teacher-designed tasks and tests, work samples, portfolios, projects and curriculum profiles provides a comprehensive system of assessing and recording each child's level of participation, understanding, knowledge and skill in all aspects of the music curriculum. This wealth of information can be used in discussion with parents, teachers and other professionals to create a clear picture of the child's achievements as well as his/her future learning needs in music.

### *Pupil profile card*

A summary of each child's achievement in music should be recorded on the pupil profile card, which would be kept on file in the school. Essential information contained on this card should cover the three strands of the music curriculum and might outline in brief the child's range of listening experiences, proficiency in singing and playing instruments, attainment in musical literacy and a short summary of composing endeavours.

# Appendix



# Glossary

The definitions below are commonly understood working definitions for use with the primary curriculum and teacher guidelines.

accent	the emphasis on a selected beat or beats in a bar
beat	the steady, continuous pulse underlying the music
body percussion	using different parts of the body to create different sounds and rhythms, for example clap, stamp, slap, etc.
cabasa	a percussion instrument, cylindrical in shape and covered in strings of metal beads that rotate freely on the curved surface to produce a grating sound
descant	an added part above the melody line in the treble clef
diatonic	built on the notes <i>d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'</i>
drone	long, held note or notes
dynamics	the loudness and softness of a piece of music, for example lullaby—soft ( <i>p</i> ), march—loud ( <i>f</i> )
hand signs	gestures used to indicate pitch in solfa
harmony	two or more sounds played or sung together
interval	the distance between two notes of different pitch
key signature	indicates where <i>doh</i> lies at the beginning of a piece of music
major scale	a scale built on the notes <i>d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'</i> , also known as the diatonic scale
metre	the basic grouping of beats in each bar of music, as indicated by the time signature
minor scale	a scale built on the notes <i>l, t, d, r, m, f, si, l</i> , beginning on <i>lah</i> instead of <i>doh</i> , with a sharpened seventh note ( <i>si</i> )
modal scale	a scale built on the notes of the major scale but starting and finishing on notes other than <i>doh</i> ; for example the <i>re</i> mode: <i>r, m, f, s, l, t, d' r'</i>
mood	type of feeling created by music, for example happy, sad
octave	the distance between notes of the same name, eight letter notes higher or lower: for example D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D
ostinato	a constantly repeated musical pattern, rhythmic or melodic

pentatonic scale	a scale comprising five notes: <i>d, r, m, s, l</i> , widely used in folk music. Pentatonic scales can begin on any note: for example <i>mi</i> -pentatonic comprises the notes <i>m, s, l, d, r</i> . Pentatonic scales can be played on the black notes of a piano: for example, beginning on $F^\sharp$ the first three notes together are <i>d, r, m</i> , while the next two black notes are <i>s</i> and <i>l</i> .								
percussion instruments	instruments that are struck or shaken, for example tambourine, triangle; tuned percussion instruments are tuned to a specific note at concert pitch; untuned percussion instruments are not given specific tuning								
phrase	a natural division in the melodic line; similar to a sentence or part of a sentence								
pitch	a term referring to the high-low quality of a musical sound								
pulse	the underlying 'throb' in music								
rest	no sound for a specified length of time, according to the musical sign, for example:								
									
	<table> <tr> <td>semibreve rest</td> <td>minim rest</td> <td>crotchet rest</td> <td>quaver rest</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 beats</td> <td>2 beats</td> <td>1 beat</td> <td>half beat</td> </tr> </table>	semibreve rest	minim rest	crotchet rest	quaver rest	4 beats	2 beats	1 beat	half beat
semibreve rest	minim rest	crotchet rest	quaver rest						
4 beats	2 beats	1 beat	half beat						
rhythm	different durations of sounds, long and short								
rhythm syllables	words or syllables used to demonstrate duration in rhythm								
round	one melody strictly imitated in pitch and rhythm, any number of beats later; usually two, three or four parts, repeated any number of times								
staff notation	notes written on a five-line staff								
stick notation	a form of shorthand used for notating rhythm quickly and easily; for example a crotchet is represented as simply:  , a quaver as: †								
structure	overall plan of a composition, for example AB: two contrasting sections								
style	refers to the combination of tempo, timbre and dynamics								

syncopation	the occurrence of unexpected accents in metred music
tempo	speed or pace of the underlying beat
texture	refers to combinations of sounds: single sounds or sounds together
timbre	tone colour; refers to the characteristic sound produced by different instruments, for example trumpet, violin
time signature	the sign placed at the beginning of the music indicating the number of beats in each bar
tonic solfa	moveable pitch names, <i>d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'</i>
treble or G clef 	the fixed pitch sign placed at the beginning of the staff to identify the fixed pitch name G
tremelo	rapid iteration of a note, or alternation of two notes

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This curriculum has been prepared by the Curriculum Committee for Arts Education established by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

<b>Chairpersons</b>	Kieran Griffin	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
	Michael O'Reilly	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
<b>Committee members</b>	Eibhlín de Ceannt ( <i>from 1995</i> )	Department of Education and Science
	Evelyn Dunne-Lynch ( <i>to 1995</i> )	National Parents Council—Primary
	Emer Egan ( <i>to 1995</i> )	Department of Education and Science
	Pauline Egan	Catholic Primary School Managers' Association
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	Joy Shepherd	Church of Ireland General Synod Board of Education
	<b>Education officers</b>	Regina Murphy
Catherine Walsh		

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