



Muslim National School

Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave

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MUSIC POLICY

Introductory Statement

Through a process of consultation and collaboration with all the Staff, a music policy was devised at the Muslim National School. This policy has been reviewed since, with the latest review taking place in the first term of 2021/22. In December 2021 the under-review policy was shared with all school stakeholders for a two-month consultation. Opinions, thoughts, insights were welcomed by either verbal or written communication. This has informed the current policy.

We aim through this plan to set out our approach to the teaching and learning of music. The plan will form the basis for teachers' long and short-term planning. It will also inform new and temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school. We concluded that pupils would benefit from the development and implementation of a coordinated programme of learning.

Rationale

The staff and Board of Management of the Muslim National School are very aware of the sensitivities surrounding music within Islam. As a result, it has become necessary for a plan to be implemented that is sensitive to the Muslim ethos of the school, while still fulfilling the requirements of the curriculum. We also recognise that music can be a learning support to our pupils in other subject areas in the Primary School Curriculum as a means of learning, developing self-confidence and encouraging engagement.

There are many opportunities to cover the music curriculum whilst taking into account the ethos of our school. Within Islamic communities there are differing opinions about the use of music and we need to be aware of and sensitive towards these opinions. The aim of this policy is to underline the aspects of the music curriculum that can be administered in this school.

It is important for us to try, as far as we can, to cover all strands and strand units of the curriculum, as well as exposing the children to, and teaching them about, the nine elements of music.

Vision

We emphasize the importance of music as part of the primary school curriculum, while being mindful of the school ethos. We employ various age-appropriate approaches and methodologies, in keeping with the ethos, to enable children to enhance their skills and their enjoyment of musical theory. The school ethos is fostered through the use of Nasheed. Through developing children's musical abilities, we aim to develop their language and communication skills, as well as improving children's confidence and self-esteem.

Aims

We in the Muslim National School endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for music:

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

After due account was taken of intrinsic abilities and the ethos of the school, this music plan will enable the child to:

- explore the expressive possibilities of a variety of sound sources, including the voice.
- listen to, enjoy and respond to a wide range of vocal 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 from a range of musical styles and traditions relevant to the class level, with particular emphasis on Irish music and Islamic 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) and body percussion.
- 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.

After consultation with staff and Board of Management the following has been agreed:

- Incidental music will be incorporated into other subjects within the school. This will be beneficial for learning and allows us to use a wealth of resources within all classes.
- Percussion instruments will be used to help with rhythm and notation in music lessons.
- When pupils are learning about a musical instrument, the class teacher may allow the pupils to listen to the sound that the instrument makes.
- Classes will include one Islamic based song/nasheed/drama during their assembly performance.

Music in the Primary School Curriculum

Music is one of 11 required subjects of the Revised Primary School Curriculum (1999). It is part of the arts education curriculum, which also includes visual art and drama. In conjunction with our time allocation, Visual Arts is allocated two hours and 30 minutes per week for infant classes, and three hours per week for First Class – Sixth Class. Music has been

proven to improve a child's language development and is also very connected to mathematics. The teacher's guidelines to the music curriculum states:

Music is an indispensable part of the child-centred curriculum as one of the range of intelligences and as a special way of knowing and learning. Musical activity challenges the child to act in unique ways to listen discerningly to his/her own music and the music of others, to sing, play or read sensitively and accurately, and to evaluate critically. In posing these challenges, music contributes to the development of artistic awareness, self-expression, self-growth, self-esteem and multicultural sensitivity and, therefore, to the development of the whole child.

The nine elements/concepts of music

1. **Pulse:** This refers to the beat of any song or piece of music. It is important for a child to learn to keep a beat and feel the beat in songs/music. It is difficult for a group to sing together if all are not able to recognize the beat of the song being sung. Until a child is familiar and confident in keeping a beat, he/she will find it difficult to relate to some of the other elements, particularly duration. Keeping a beat can be achieved through clapping or any other form of body percussion.
2. **Duration:** This element refers to rhythm in music. When you keep a beat, each sound made is of equal duration, but a rhythm is a combination of sounds of short durations and long durations. There is a strong connection to Maths here, with durations being fractions of each other. Through music lessons a child should be taught to imitate rhythmic patterns as well as recognize them and compose some of their own. In older classes children should learn about the notation that musicians use to represent different durations. This can be taught through singing / chanting / speech or body percussion.
3. **Tempo:** The tempo of a piece of music is how fast or slow the music is. Very often the tempo of a song or a piece of music is determined by the emotion it wants to convey. It is important when learning music to follow instruction (both verbal and non-verbal) regarding the tempo being fast / slow / getting faster / getting slower. This is one of the functions of a conductor of an orchestra and children need to learn to follow a teacher's instructions as an orchestra follow the conductor's. Tempo can be covered in the classroom by singing songs of varying tempos, or by asking children to perform songs or rhythm tasks at a faster or slower tempo.
4. **Pitch:** Pitch refers to high and low sounds. For a melody to be a melody, it has to have a combination of higher and lower sounds. When learning music, children are asked to recognize when a melody gets higher or lower and also if that happens gradually, step by step, or if it is with sudden leaps. Some teachers may use specific hand signals to show children changes in pitch. Pitch can be covered through song.

5. **Dynamics:** This is how loud or soft a song or a piece of music is. Again, very often this is connected to the emotion the music wishes to convey. For example, a lullaby would always be sung or played at a soft dynamic. Loud and soft sounds are all around us and it is important for a child to recognize the difference between the two. Children are also expected to recognize and control a sound getting louder / getting softer. When performing a song, children are taught to control the dynamics, often following non-verbal instructions from the teacher.
6. **Structure:** This refers to how a particular song or piece of music is organized. In the same way that there is structure to poetry, most music will follow a particular structure. For example, many of the songs taught to children in primary school follow a “verse – chorus – verse – chorus” structure. For a child to learn about structure, it is important that they are exposed to a variety of songs / pieces of music with differing structures.
7. **Timbre:** The timbre of a piece of music refers to the sound quality of that piece of music. Very often, this is directly connected to the instruments or combination of instruments used in the piece of music, however vocal music can have differing timbre. Timbre can be taught through song and vocal music.
8. **Texture:** Different textures are achieved in music by the adding of different layers, for example, different vocal parts being performed at the same time. In younger classes texture in singing can be achieved by simple clapping along to the song, or by singing a song in rounds. In older classes, vocal harmony can be used to change the texture of a song.
9. **Style:** Style refers to the different genres in music. It is important for children to hear the different styles in music and to recognize that, for example, a traditional Irish song has a different style to a traditional African song. Understanding of this element can be achieved by singing songs of varying styles with the children. To celebrate the multi-cultural aspect of the school, songs from different traditions can be taught.

Strands and Strand Units

The music curriculum comprises of three strands:

- Listening and responding
- Performing
- Composing

Strands and Strand Units for each class level are outlined in following tables of content

Table of Content Junior/Senior Infants

Month	Strand	Strand Units
September	Performing	Song singing
October	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
November	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
		Listening and responding to music
	Composing	Improvising and creating
	Performing	Song singing
December	Performing	Song singing
		Early literacy
January	Performing	Song singing
		Playing instruments
	Composing	Improving and creating
	Performing	Playing instruments
February	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Song singing
March	Performing	Song singing
		Playing instruments
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
April	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Song singing
	Composing	Improvising and creating
		Talking about and recording compositions
May	Composing	Improvising and creating
		Talking about and recording compositions
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
June	Performing	Song singing
		Early Literacy
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds (integrated with science)

Table of Contents 1st and 2nd Class

Month	Strands	Strand Units
September	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Song Singing
October	Performing	Song Singing
	Composing	Improvising and creating
November	Performing	Song Singing
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
December	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Song Singing
January	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
	Performing	Song Singing
	Performing	Playing instruments
February	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about compositions
March	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about compositions
	Performing	Song singing
April	Performing	Literacy
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
May	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Playing instruments
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds

June	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Playing instruments
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music

Table Of Content Third and Fourth Class		
Month	Strands	Strand Units
September 4 weeks	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Song Singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
October 3 weeks	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
November 4 weeks	Performing	Song Singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
December 3 weeks	Performing	Song Singing
January 4 weeks	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
	Performing	Song Singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
February 3 weeks	Performing	Playing percussion instruments
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
March 4 weeks	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Literacy
	Performing	Playing instruments
	Performing	Song singing

April 2 weeks	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
May 4 weeks	Performing	Song singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
June 4 weeks	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Literacy
	Performing	Literacy

Table of Content Music 5th and 6th Class

Month	Strands	Strand Units
September 4 weeks	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Song Singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
October 3 weeks	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
November 4 weeks	Performing	Song Singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
December 3 weeks	Performing	Song Singing
January 4 weeks	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
	Performing	Song Singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
February	Performing	Playing instruments

3 weeks	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
	Composing	Improvising and creating Talking about and recording compositions
March & April 6 weeks – When content will be covered depends on when Spring break falls	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
	Performing	Literacy
	Performing	Playing instruments
	Performing	Song singing
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
May 4 weeks	Listening and responding	Exploring sounds
	Performing	Song singing
	Performing	Literacy
	Listening and responding	Listening and responding to music
June 4 weeks	Listening and responding	Exploring Sounds
	Performing	Literacy

Approaches and Methodologies

It is recommended that a variety of approaches are used when teaching music. Teachers in the Muslim National School make use of different approaches to aid children’s learning and to make music lessons enjoyable. These approaches include:

Listening and Responding:

Short, simple listening activities will benefit the children and enhance their enjoyment. Use of a variety of recorded vocal music, both songs from Ireland and from other cultures.

Respond to vocal music in a variety of ways.

Performing: Song Singing:

- Teacher using the voice to teach a song.
- Using a recording of the song (unaccompanied).
- Teachers keeping the range of the song in mind.
- Keeping the elements of music in mind when teaching any song.

- Teacher conducting to keep the children together.
- Use of vocal exercises to improve vocal ability.
- Songs sung in rounds.
- Adding a drone or an ostinato to a song to add to colour.
- Children performing songs in public at assemblies.

Music Literacy:

- Use of graphic notation.
- Use of ta, ti-ti etc. is useful when teaching rhythmic notation.
- Use of stick notation, before using full notation.
- Use of games when learning rhythm notation.
- Use of tonic solfa when learning about pitch.
- Use of hand signs or finger stave.

Composing:

- Composing for a range of purposes, integration with other subjects.
- Keeping the musical elements in mind when composing.

Assessment

All strands of the music programme-listening and responding, performing and composing will be assessed. It is vital in informing the teaching and learning of music. Assessment tools will include:

- Teacher-designated tasks
- Work samples
- Graphic/pictorial scores

Timetable

Visual Arts is allocated to two hours and fifteen minutes per week for infant classes, and three hours per week for First Class - Sixth Class.

Individual teachers' planning and reporting

Teachers plan and prepare their work mindful of the school plan for the three strands of the Music Curriculum. Teachers are also mindful of the ethos of the school when planning music lessons. Plans are prepared termly or yearly. A monthly report is handed into the office at the end of each month.

Staff Development

- Teachers are encouraged to keep abreast of curriculum developments by attending summercourses, on-line courses, in service seminars etc.
- Notices of upcoming courses are displayed in the staff room.
- Teacher expertise is shared.

Parental Involvement

Parental support will help foster the child's interest in music. Parents will be invited to view the children's performances in Music which form part of our school assembly. In addition, the children undertake a Ramadan concert for the Islamic Community.

Community Links

Members of the community will be invited to the school/classroom who have particular expertise in music e.g., composes in the classroom. The Arc Cultural Centre, the theatres etc. are venues to where the children could be brought to, listen to and appreciate music.

Success Criteria

It will be evident that this plan is successful if:

- Teacher are enabled to prepare high quality long-term and lesson plans/.
- Procedures outlined in this plan are carefully followed.
- Schemes show progression from year to year.

The indicators that the plan has achieved its aims will be:

- Assessment of pupils
- Pupil enjoyment
- Inspectors' reports.

Ratification and Communication

The plan is available to view on the Aladdin



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This Policy was approved by the Board of Management at its meeting on 30th January, 2025

Signed: 221 Tawashi

Date: 30/01/2025

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: John O'Donnell

Date: 30/01/2025

School Principal