



Corpus Christi Primary School

Music – Plean Scoile

Introduction

This document outlines the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Music in Corpus Christi Primary School. It forms the basis for long-term and short-term planning in Music across all class levels and supports consistency, progression and coherence in practice throughout the school.

This plan is aligned with the Primary Curriculum Framework (2023) and the Arts Education Specification (NCCA, 2024), within which Music is situated as a core component of Arts Education. Children are encouraged to take creative risks, develop their musical identity, and express ideas and emotions through music.

Under the new Arts Education Specification, Music is no longer treated as a standalone subject policy only. It must now clearly show alignment with:

- Arts Education as an integrated learning area
- Creative processes
- Agency, voice, identity and wellbeing
- Cultural responsiveness & inclusion
- Progression across phases Infant classes → Senior classes)
- Assessment as learning, not just of learning

The implementation of this plan is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The plan informs classroom practice, whole-school planning and professional collaboration. It was reviewed by staff, parents and pupils between February and May 2026 and will be reviewed on a cyclical basis in line with school self-evaluation and the Creative Schools Framework.

Rationale

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



Vision

As a subject, music is unique in its range and scope across the three domains of learning: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. It has been proven to benefit cross curricular learning, particularly with literacy. Most importantly, music is something that all students will be surrounded by for the rest of their lives.



Our school vision for music education is to encourage children to appreciate and enjoy the hugely positive benefits that music can have on their lives and their relationship with the world around them.

We understand that music has the potential to develop a child's individual self-esteem and creativity as well as enabling them to share profound experience with others that fosters empathy, communication and collaboration.

Aims

The primary aim of Music education in Corpus Christi Primary School is to foster appreciation, respect and engagement with the creative arts process.

In line with the Primary School Curriculum Framework 2023 and the Arts Education Specification, Music aims to:

- Enable the child to enjoy and understand music and to appreciate it critically
- Develop the child's openness to, awareness of and response to a wide range of musical genres, including Irish music
- Develop the child's capacity to express ideas, feelings and experiences through music as an individual and in collaboration with others
- Enable the child to develop his/her musical potential and to experience the excitement and satisfaction of being actively engaged in musical creativity
- Nurture the child's self-esteem and self-confidence through participation in musical performance
- Foster higher-order thinking and lifelong learning through the acquisition of musical knowledge, skills, concepts and values
- Enhance the quality of the child's life through aesthetic musical experience

Learning Outcomes

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, temp, 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



- 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 homemade 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.



Curriculum Planning

The strands of the Music curriculum are:

- Listening and Responding
- Performance
- Composing

These strands align with the Arts Education creative processes of imagining, creating, collaborating, performing, responding and reflecting.

Teachers will plan using the whole school Music plan and the curriculum objectives suited to each class level. Dabbledoo Music can be used as a support resource to facilitate learning outcomes within the Primary Arts Curriculum. Strands and strand units will be used to create termly schemes of work. Strand units and objectives planned will be listed in fortnightly schemes and those achieved recorded in the Cuntas Míosúil. Integration with other subjects will be taken into account while planning.

- Planning for Music is done on a long & short term basis.
- Teachers plan according to year group and share responsibilities amongst themselves in advance of lessons.
- Strands/ Strand Units/ Skills Development and Teaching Methodologies should be recorded on the monthly Cuntas Míosúil.

The following headings are necessary when planning for Music:

Long-Term Planning

Short-Term Planning

Strands	Strands and Strand Units
Strand Units	Content Objectives • How they will be achieved
Content Objectives	Skills Development • How they will be achieved

Skills Development	New Vocabulary
Methodologies	Differentiation
Integration/Linked Themes	Assessment • Teacher Observation/ Teacher Designed Tasks and Tests • Student Self-Evaluation

Strands and Artistic Processes Listening and Performing

a) Listening and Responding

Through the listening and responding strand, the children are encouraged to explore a wide variety of different sounds. These include everything from the sounds we hear in nature to basic percussion and melody instruments.

An important part of this section is for children to be exposed to lots of different genres of music with a particular emphasis being placed on Irish traditional music. There is also a focus on the importance of moving to music which includes dancing or simply clapping along.

To achieve the delivery of this strand, recorded music whether through CD or an online streaming or video website will be used. Experiencing live music whenever possible will be encouraged.

To summarise, the child will be enabled to:

- Listen to, identify and imitate familiar sounds in the immediate environment from varying sources.
- Recognising the range and versatility of the voice for exploring and imitating sounds.
- Recognise a range of sounds using body percussion.
- Explore ways of making sounds using manufactured and home-made instruments.
- Listen to a range of short pieces of music or excerpts and discuss in terms of musical concepts (loud, soft, fast, slow, etc.).

b) Performance

Through the performance strand, the importance of active music-making is emphasised firstly by using the voice and then through the use of instruments. Children should be able to perform music without having to read music. This means that while musical literacy is important and beneficial, particularly in the earlier years, it is not a requirement.

The children will also be encouraged to perform in different settings; both as an individual and as part of a group within the class. Again this can be achieved firstly, by using the voice through song-singing and then by introducing melodic and percussive instruments.

Exploring ways of varying performances through dynamics, tempo, instrumentation etc. will also be encouraged.

To summarise, the child will be enabled to:

- Explore the use of vocal sounds for making musical sounds.
- Show the steady beat in listening to and accompanying songs or rhythmic pieces.
- Recognise and imitate short melodies in echoes to help them develop a sense of pitch.
- Play a range of simple percussion instruments.

c) Composition

Finally, through the composition strand, a child will be able to develop their creative abilities even further. Here a child gets to make the decisions on the direction and form of the music they want to produce. They'll have to decide everything from the rhythm and melody to the instruments they want to use in their piece.

We understand that the more the children practice their composition skills the greater confidence they will have to add in additional elements and complexities. The listening and performing of relevant pieces will also help to inspire the composition process.

Graphic notation, invented notation, simplified notation, or standard notation may all be used to record ideas, in addition to electronic recording.

To summarise, the child will be enabled to:

- Select sounds from a variety of sources to create simple sound ideas, individually and in groups.
- Explore the use of graphic notation to organise sequences of sounds.
- Select sounds and distribute them in a group performance setting.
- Invent and perform short, simple musical pieces with some control of musical elements.

Approaches and Methodologies

The musical concepts, as prescribed in the curriculum, are the same for all ages. These are laid out fully in the schemes of work for each class group and include the following:

- A sense of pulse - performing at a steady pulse or beat.
- A sense of duration - exploring long and short sounds.
- A sense of tempo - understand and differentiate between fast and slow.
- A sense of pitch - understand and differentiate between high and low sounds.
- A sense of dynamics - understand and differentiate between loud and soft sounds.
- A sense of structure - understand 'start' and 'stop' in terms of group performance.
- A sense of timbre - play with and explore a variety of sound-making materials and classify sounds by the way they are produced.
- A sense of texture - listen and respond to sounds from both one source and multiple sources.
- A sense of style - listen and respond to music in different styles.

The development of the students through each year is assessed by their progress in understanding and implementation of these musical concepts. For example:

- An infant class would be encouraged to listen to a march rhythm and clap or march in time.
- A first or second class would use instruments to play this march rhythm and display confidence in keeping time.
- A third or fourth class would develop the idea of weak and strong beats in a march (1 2 3 4) and play with increased confidence and awareness of weak and strong beats.
- Fifth and sixth class students would show confidence in performing and identifying music in 4 time and use both weak and strong beats in performance and composition.

This progress is achieved through practical and accessible activities that encourage the child to learn through active participation. These include:

- Group Performances
 - Instrumental and vocal performances
 - Combination of full class performances and smaller group work.

- Group Compositions
 - The class will undertake regular composition exercises to reinforce musical concepts and explore creativity and collaboration.
 - Individual and small group work.
- Class Discussions
 - Critical appraisal of music with the opportunity to verbalise their understanding of musical concepts.
 - Discussions will help the teacher assess student engagement and progress.
- Teacher-Led Activities
 - Teachers will lead all performance, listening and composition activities through a combination of presenting starter material and helping class develop musical concepts throughout activities.
 - All activities will encourage the students to explore through critical and creative means with the teacher providing focus and guidance throughout.

Children's needs

In Corpus Christi Primary School, we place children's ideas at the heart of a whole-school music policy. We embody learner agency and engagement – where children actively contribute to what and how they learn. Prioritising children's musical ideas recognises that learners bring cultural, emotional, and creative resources into the classroom. By listening to what children want to explore, music lessons become active, joyful inclusive spaces where children's ideas shape learning and every child experiences success. When children's ideas lead, music learning becomes meaningful, inclusive, creative and truly reflective of the Primary Education Curriculum Framework 2023.

Linkage and Integration

We recognise that there is a natural linkage across the strands of the music curriculum. For example, when pupils are engaged in a performing and composing lesson, they will also be listening and responding.

Music is a subject that also lends itself easily to integration across the Arts and other curriculum subjects including the following:

- PE - dance/action songs
- Language - through sounds and symbols
- History - musical history and folk music
- RE – Sacraments, Liturgical events
- Irish - Amhráin Gaeilge, Seachtain na Gaeilge
- Science - instrument making and performance
- Music and Drama (soundscapes, storytelling)
- Music and Visual Art (graphic scores, responding through art)

Individual teachers link and integrate topics as they see fit and document this in their schemes.

Differentiation

At our school all pupils participate in music within the classroom. Teachers will, if required, vary the pace, content, and methodologies to ensure learning and success for all pupils. Every effort will be made to simplify the language and technology for non-Irish pupils. Equally, where a teacher recognises a musical talent within a pupil, this will be nurtured as far as possible and the teacher will communicate this with the parents/guardians so that they may nurture the talent e.g. after school class.

Teachers will use a mixture of whole-class teaching and group work, with different groups being set tasks of various complexities. Teachers will be conscious of any physical and/or emotional restrictions that may inhibit any pupil from partaking in the experience.

Teachers are familiar with the NCCA guidelines for teachers of students with General Learning Disabilities and those for Children with Exceptional Ability and our Teachers support and ensure the participation of children with special needs through:

- Making an effort to create opportunities for hands on practical activities
- Using a mixture of whole class teaching, group work or paired work,
- Employing a variety of methodologies in the classroom
- Offer a variety of recording methods using assistance of SNA

Equality of participation and access

In Corpus Christi Primary School Music education is accessible and relevant to every learner, respecting and representing diverse voices and experiences. Equal opportunities are given to all pupils regardless of gender, ethnic background or socio-economic status across all strands and activities.

Assessment and Record Keeping

The purpose of assessment in music is being able to point out areas a class or individual can improve to help them with their overall skills and enjoyment of the subject. It is also important so that the children are adequately prepared as they move from year to year.

There are a number of ways the school will assess a child's progress with music:

- Teacher observation - assess the development through performance, composition and group discussions.
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests - these may involve performances with instruments or the voice or could be based on the task of composing within a specific theme.
- Questioning the class - this helps assess musical concept development and identify weak or strong areas within each lesson.
- Collaborative learning - assessment will be made through the response to group exercises and activities.
- Formative assessment
- Children talking about their creative choices

Timetable

Time will be allocated in blocks for specific aspects of arts education according to the Primary Curriculum Framework (2023). Time can be blocked for project work when relevant. Discrete time can also be used for Music. We aim to cover the three strands as equally as possible throughout the year. This is not over-restrictive allowing for flexibility of individual teachers', classes or project needs.

Resources and ICT

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

- Recorded music - online streaming websites to access music recordings.

- Available instruments - use of different types of tuned and untuned instruments for group performances in the classroom.
- A child in the class who plays an instrument - encourage the child to bring in the instrument to demonstrate it and, if possible, play along or accompany the class during a performance.
- Musician within the school community - if there is a member of staff or a parent who is a proficient musician, this can be a great opportunity for a live performance in the classroom.
- Technology in the classroom - use of online resources via ipads and interactive whiteboard, speakers and recording devices, creating soundscapes, digital composition apps.

Health and Safety

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

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

Staff Development

- The Music curriculum is implemented by the individual class teachers. There is frequent co-operation and sharing of ideas, approaches, methodologies and resources amongst the staff.
- Teachers are encouraged to attend in-service courses.
- Our school is always looking for opportunities for staff with expertise in the areas of music to share their ideas with other staff members e.g. co-operative teaching.
- Time is allocated at staff meetings to discuss aspects of the music curriculum

Parental involvement

- Parents are encouraged to foster an interest in music as well as attending events and enrolling their child in after school activities.
- Parents and community members are invited to attend and assist with musical events throughout the year.
- Any parents who have a skill or interest in music are invited to showcase this skill to the pupils and set up workshops where possible.
- All progress in the music curriculum will be discussed with parents/guardians at the annual PT meetings and in the end of year report.

Community Links

We, as a school, have a very successful school choir. Participation in the choir is a very positive and valuable experience for the children and provides opportunities to encourage talents and support initiatives while developing

self-esteem and self-confidence. The choir performs at liturgical occasions and also on a semi-formal basis throughout the year; in school assemblies, Christmas concerts, Community and National gatherings.

We are committed to finding new and innovative ways to provide young people with the best possible experiences in music, in the form of onsite Music Generation classes, after school tin whistle and drumming and access to music therapy. Our Community choir plays an integral role in our school community where parents, teachers and past pupils are actively engaged in music in a joyful way. We are open to any member of the community who wishes to share their musical talent/skill with the pupils, and will facilitate this where possible.

Community links include the Hunt Museum, Limerick City and County Council, TUS, MIC, UL, Humanli, EI Electronics, Music Generation, The Learning Hub, and Moyross Youth Academy, who all actively support the Creative Arts Framework in Corpus Christi Primary School.

Success Criteria

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

- Staff/pupils/parent feedback.
- Cuntas Míosúil and Individual Plans – teachers will have used this plan as a guide for planning.
- Inspectors Reports – procedures in the plan have been followed consistently.

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

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

Implementation

All teachers are responsible for the implementation of the music curriculum in their own classrooms. Teachers will be encouraged to present feedback during reviews of the Music whole school plan. The plan will be monitored on an ongoing basis by all staff. The Arts Education Focus group will oversee the development and implementation of the music curriculum.

Timeframe, Monitoring and Review

This plan has been reviewed between February and May 2026 where updates and revisions were made as necessary to reflect the new Primary Curriculum Framework (2023) and the Arts Education Specification (NCCA, 2024). All staff was involved in the review of this policy. A Children's Advisory Panel, the Parents' representatives on the Parents' Association and the Board of Management will be involved in its continued development and review. All staff will be involved in monitoring this Music Policy. A further review will take place during the school year of 2028/2029.

Ratification and Communication

A copy of this Music policy will be posted in the curricular policy section on the school website.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on June 8th, 2026

Signed:  Date: June 8th, 2026
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed:  Date: June 8th, 2026

