

1 INTRODUCTION

The following evaluation reports on a pilot project run by Music Network, the national music agency of Ireland, as a component of the development of a national music education programme. Four primary schools and two post-primary schools were selected from the Dingle Peninsula region of Co Kerry in South-West Ireland to participate in this phase of the programme. Some revisions and adjustments were made to the design of the project on foot of recommendations made after an evaluation process of earlier pilot projects which took place in six Dublin schools in May and June of 2000.

In introducing the programme, Music Network have explained that they have set out to test a hypothetical model focusing on using live music in the classroom situation (at both primary and secondary levels) in such a way as to add value to overall educational provision.

The decision by Music Network to implement this pilot programme has come about due to the perceived inconsistency and inadequacy in provision for music within the formal education system on a national level. A series of recent developments have succeeded in generating a fresh sense of urgency into a familiar problem. This has included the recent introductions of new curricula at both Junior Certificate/Leaving Certificate and at primary levels, with new emphases being placed on inclusion and participation in music education.

Music Network feels, therefore, that now is an appropriate time to explore the role that a professional arts/music organisation can play in the schools based education system. More specifically, a music education programme is being developed which will involve measuring what value the specialist expertise of professional musicians can add to the formal education system.

Music Education Outline Document, Music Network, October 2000

Essentially, the hypothetical model involves a team of musicians collaborating with regular classroom teachers over a 6-week period in the planning and delivery of 45-minute workshops leading to a final performance. The team consists of a facilitator, responsible for planning and co-ordination with the schools, a key musician and a supporting musician. Significantly, the regular classroom teachers are also invited to take part in after-school inservice training workshops designed to complement the work undertaken in the classrooms and run with the support of the In-Career Development Unit of the Department of Education and Science. The essential model was implemented without major modification in the Dingle project, one slight variation being the number of musicians available for individual workshops.

Prior to the pilot projects taking place, two teams of musicians were offered specialist training in the Continuing Professional Development initiative run by Music Network. Each team was assigned three schools, with each school receiving a series of 6 weekly visits. In the Dingle project, issues of location, timetabling and school closures due to industrial action resulted in some difficulties for the visiting musicians (the time period here was November and December 2000) but not to the extent that the overall integrity of the programme was affected.

A number of key elements informed the pilot projects:

- access to music: projects will adopt a non-specialist, inclusive and highly participative approach to using music in a school setting.
- the use of music as an educational "tool" to unlock children's creativity.
- the recognition of two key sets of professionals working in collaboration: musicians and teachers.
- the recognition that there is a need to develop and explore the interface between these two sets of professionals.
- the use of six-week modules as a frame-work structure for each project.

Further aims which refer both specifically to the pilot and generally to the whole initiative are outlined in appendix D of this report and serve to provide a context for the following discussion. Part 2 describes the setting for this project and explains the background to music-making in this region of Ireland. Part 3 provides a narrative description of the context of the school visits while part 4 describes the evaluation "tools" of observation, interview and survey used for the evaluation. (A sample description of the content of the school visits is included in appendices F and G.) Part 5 analyses of findings of the survey and interview results and includes observations made by both participants and non-participants.

A general discussion of the three experiences, Post-Primary, Primary and Teacher Training takes place under different headings in Part 6. A summative discussion within the context of the general aims outlined in Appendix D takes place in the final section, Part 7.

2 BACKGROUND OF DINGLE EDUCATION PROJECT

The setting for this project was the remote and picturesque region known as the Dingle Peninsula in the south-west of Ireland, about six hours drive from Dublin. While isolated geographically and sparsely populated, the area is a popular tourist destination within the county of Kerry and is served well by coach from nearby towns of Tralee and Killarney, and from Farranfore airport, all within 90 minutes drive.

The area's economy is driven mainly by tourism with farming concerns still featuring importantly. Many people looking for a quiet alternative lifestyle have chosen Dingle for its scenic beauty and sedate pace of living although residents find all modern conveniences available in the town of Dingle itself. An internet café sits next to a pub with nightly music sessions, accommodation houses and supermarkets are found throughout the town.

Music is found in many pubs all year round but especially in summer months. Traditional musicians travel from around the country to play with each other in sessions, informal gatherings of anything between 2 and 10 instrumentalists and singers, sharing songs and stories in the time-honoured way. Local families take part as well, and children learn the old ways by listening to their parents and taking part in local music lessons offered within their community.

The area is one of the Gaeltacht areas of Ireland where the Irish language and culture features strongly. Irish is the first language of many families and is heard spoken freely in shops and public places; it is the main mode of instruction in schools and colleges although English is readily used also. Dingle town itself is the headquarters of the Gaeltacht movement with *Údarás na Gaeltachta* having a prominent site in the centre of the town.

Of the many primary schools in the area, four were selected for this project. Pupils who attend come from the background described above, many availing of the rich opportunities on offer from the community and in some cases from their own school teachers. Music is a recognised part of the curriculum in these schools, and is covered in a variety of ways, such as lessons on tin whistle, directed listening sessions and ensemble singing.

Secondary schooling is offered in Dingle on two different sites, one for boys and the other for girls. Neither has a full-time music teacher and many students discontinue their music-making on leaving primary school.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE VISITS

Selection of pupils

The primary schools in the Dingle project are small by national standards although typical for this type of demographic spread. With rolls of between 90 and 150, only one class grouping is possible at each level and there are many cases of composite classes, where a staff member teaches two levels in one room. In consultation with Music Network staff at planning meetings before the project commenced, the different schools selected which groups of pupils would take part. Due to the anticipated benefits to be gained from taking part in an innovative and refreshing series of visits, all schools provided the maximum number of pupils, deciding that the most appropriate age group to work with was children between the ages of 7 and 11. Recent changes in the national curriculum for Arts Education also influenced the level of interest in the visits, as it was anticipated by teachers that the activities in both the classroom work and the teacher training sessions would have a direct reference to the content of the new curriculum.

In the secondary schools, again after consultation, a specific age group was identified. This was done not from the basis that students of this particular age would be more suitable to work with than others, rather that in the absence of a formal music curriculum and specialist music teacher in the school, timetable issues were considered more important. Therefore, the Transition Year groups in both schools were invited to take part.

Positioned immediately after the three year Junior Cycle, Transition Year is considered the first year of the three year Senior Cycle which for most students culminates in a national examination. Although continuing with and preparing for study in the usual academic subjects, Transition Year is by design less formal and more exploratory than the years on either side. It incorporates work experience, overseas language trips, special school projects, etc., and is therefore well suited in terms of its curriculum to a visiting Music Project. Students have a more flexible timetable and a greater level of cross-curricular study is expected in the year.

The Musicians

For the purposes of this report, the two sets of schools visits, while being informed by the same hypothetical model, are mainly treated separately. References to Programme One concern the Post-Primary school visits by a team of three musicians, using instruments found in Traditional music making, accordion, fiddle and banjo. Percussion instruments were also used, provided by Music Network. As the model allowed for three schools to be visited by each team and there being only two secondary schools in the locality, a primary school was also included in this teams' itinerary.

Programme Two refers to visits to three Primary schools, all located outside the town of Dingle, in rural settings. The team of musicians used violin, viola and cello in the workshops, and a bank of tuned and untuned percussion instrument supplied by Music Network.

It is important to note that in referring to Programmes One and Two, this report at times draws a general distinction between Post-Primary and Primary experiences. The reader should be aware that comments made about the Post-Primary experience under the heading "Programme One", include at times references to the Primary school visits by this team. These could not be included with the Programme Two discussion due to the totally different approaches made by the two teams of musicians. While the report, therefore, uses "Programme One" in general terms to describe Post-Primary experiences, and "Programme Two" while referring to Primary experiences, the reader should be aware that Programme One experiences were influenced by the inclusion of some Primary school visits.

Programme One

The facilitator for Programme One was required to tailor the approach to two quite different age groups. In the both cases, but especially in the case of the Post-Primary groups of Transition Year students, an inclusive, interactive style was adopted in order to engage the age group. Students were invited to use their own instruments and to take part in dance and movement patterns.

Programme One school visits were thoroughly planned to make most use of the time available in each school. With the number of visits limited to 6 for each school, and with each visit limited to a certain length of time, the facilitator had strict parameters within which to work. Warm-up sessions were used at all visits, and especially in the early sessions where ground rules were being established by the facilitator.

The theme "Sounds of the World" was selected, utilizing the range of instruments available and offering an approach which could be effectively adapted for both levels. An extract from the facilitator's own scheme follows: (for a full account, read appendix F)

"Session One. Introduction: Performance of Irish traditional music leading into participation by students, starting with various warm-up activities. Class to be broken into four main groups- drums, wooden instruments, metal instruments & shakers/voice. Performance of class with all three musicians. The secondary classes will take this a little further, possibly dividing into groups to come up with 8-bar breaks. They will also be introduced to the 12-bar blues model which will be developed over the coming weeks."

"Session Two. Africa: Begin with warm-ups, leading into rhythm work with clapping & body rhythm, incorporating three distinct patterns that interweave. Transfer these onto percussion instruments. Then introduce song, "MalesewÉ.." with harmony if possible. Again the secondary classes will develop this a little further & will continue with the blues model for the last 1/2 hour or so."

(Facilitator, Programme One)

Care and attention to detail was evident in the planning for these workshops. Equally, a readiness to change course and adapt strategies was apparent to the non-participant observer.

"I've never been so impressed with a course of facilitator. The content was interesting and was delivered in a very active, professional manner. Seventeen boys took part and although they had to be persuaded to take part, I soon had other class members approaching me to become involved. The facilitator was excellent in his delivery of the programme. His energy, enthusiasm and patience are to be admired and he is a major asset. His was an unenviable task in a school of all boys where music is not a subject but he rose to the occasion. Any person who manages to get any few boys, never mind 17 of them, to sing on a Wednesday morning deserves a medal."

(Teacher)

Programme Two

As with Programme One, the Programme Two visits used the distribution of instruments, rhythm games requiring accurate response, exercises which demanded total concentration, as tools to lay down guidelines and give parameters of appropriate behaviour. The facilitator selected a well-known story on which to base the musical experience, inserting musical events at key points of the story to illustrate an action or theme.

A typical primary school session allowed activities to flow easily from one to the other with no introduction needed for the pupils. Each activity essentially grew out of the previous one and, although the children were not aware of it, the activities were building skills needed for the final performance. The children were often asked to imitate rhythms on their knees or in the air before being introduced to the instruments, which was done with great respect and care. Other ground rules were reinforced by engaging the children in exploring different dynamic levels, thereby involving them in setting up their own parameters of appropriate workshop behaviour.

The final performance captured all these skills developed over the course of the six sessions, skills of responding to others, following a lead, playing an instrument correctly, playing with force and with sensitivity, and so on. By using a well-known story from Irish history as a framework, appropriate musical activities, some static, some requiring movement, were interspersed at appropriate points to illustrate the storyline. Significantly, the musical compositions were developed from the children's own ideas and were reinforced by the full team of musicians adding what could be described as an "envelope" of sound around the percussion sounds.

The story of “St Brigid’s Cloak” is an example of the approach taken. (For the full text, see Appendix G). Here, the storyline is well known, with colourful characters and an interesting narrative. Four key parts of the story were selected for illustration, chosen for their scope in providing a range musical events. Some simple movement was incorporated, and a sense of wholeness was achieved by a reprise of the first composition to conclude.

A typical school visit

In both programmes, school visits lasted between 90 and 120 minutes, the time in Primary schools being divided equally between two groups of pupils. The musicians therefore were required to repeat the workshop in each school. This was planned so as to involve as many children as possible, with both groups in a school coming together for a final workshop and performance. The workshops in Primary schools took place in classrooms with furniture stacked away to create a large working space. In the two Secondary schools, a single workshop was given with a combined performance on the final visit. Open spaces were again provided for both workshop and performance.

In line with models of workshop practice, participants were arranged in a large circle to allow for total participation and opportunities for all children to have access to the activity. No one could feel excluded because of the seating arrangement and all students had a direct contact with the musicians. The spaces were generally large enough for group work to occur as well, although there were limitations in the Primary school setting. Where it was possible to set up smaller groups, the musicians were able to direct their attention to the needs of the various groups when necessary

The musicians worked from a central location, sometimes as a group of three seated together as part of the circle, sometimes distributed amongst the children. When required by the activity, the musicians moved freely around the large group, leading from various positions.

The working environment arranged in this way also allowed for controlled distribution and collection of instruments. A typical session may start with a rhythmic activity, referring to previous work or introducing new ideas, leading on to a development of the theme taken for that particular workshop. There was invariably an atmosphere of creativity, with students having every opportunity to engage in the activity selected at any one time.

4 METHODS OF EVALUATION

Within the relevant terms of this independent evaluation, the following partners were identified: children, classroom teachers (primary), co-ordinating teachers (secondary), facilitators, key musicians, Principals. The following evaluation modes were utilised - interview, questionnaire, observation, survey.

Children

All children in both programmes, post-primary and primary, were asked to complete a questionnaire / survey form. (see Appendix A). For comparative purposes, this questionnaire similar to that which was used in the South Dublin project, some extra questions being added at the request of *Údarás na Gaeltachta*. Children were given 5-10 minutes to complete the questions during the final session, with some guidance given by classroom teachers in some observed instances.

Teachers

Survey

Teachers in both programmes, were invited to complete a guided-response questionnaire aimed at revealing a general response under several headings: organisation, benefit to students and school, relevance to school and Department programmes (see Appendix C). The questionnaire was either distributed at the school or posted to the individual teachers. In both cases, a stamped addressed envelope was supplied to encourage the completion of the questionnaire and to facilitate its return.

The questionnaire was designed to generate feedback using two forms of evaluation: a 5-point scale of agreement with a statement, and comments on that statement. Responses were generally positive although comments on the whole were brief.

Interview

In every school visited, interviews were held with the teachers. These took place informally prior to the issuing of questionnaires, serving both to gain the teachers' confidence before asking them to fill out a questionnaire and also to gauge a general reaction to the project through anecdotal observation. In some cases, return visits were made to the schools for more formal interviews.

Principals

The same questionnaire as that used by teachers (Appendix C) was distributed to Principals of all the schools. The same interview strategy was employed for Principals also, with a greater availability of time from Primary Principals resulting in a better response. Due to timetabling issues, the teachers and Principal of the boys' post-primary school were not interviewed.

Musicians

Each team of musicians was invited to offer feedback through a response questionnaire (Appendix B) and through interview. The same general headings were used for both teams - location, school environment, musician's role etc., in an effort to invite broad comments of value to an evaluation process. Supplementary questions were included to direct their responses, but general comments were invited also. All musicians were also asked to suggest ways of improving this model in the future.

The interview process took the form of a general discussion with all musicians and detailed discussions with both facilitators. Other opportunities also arose at various times when it was possible to get views of various parts of the project.

In summary, all partners were given the opportunity to contribute feedback comments through interview and questionnaire.

5 SURVEY RESULTS

The survey forms used for this evaluation appear in Appendices A, B, and C. The full results of the pupils' survey are presented in percentage terms in Appendix E. Significant findings from the surveys and interviews of each programme appear below, together with a selection of comments, under the headings of Children, Teacher, and Musician.

Programme One (Post-Primary)

Children

The multi-national theme adopted for these workshops proved very popular with the participants, many of them expressing this in written responses:

- *“I enjoyed the different music from other countries the most”*
- *“The best part was putting together all the different instruments and the African songs”*

While there was general support for this approach, some children however saw it as secondary to other outcomes.

- *“Composing our own pieces was the best part, and learning the songs from other countries like Brazil”*
- *“I enjoyed learning how to set dance and learning the foreign songs from Brazil and India”*
- *“I did like the African music, but there was too much African music. I would have enjoyed other types also”*
- *“I enjoyed all the different types of music but I preferred the traditional music”*

In terms of a general response from the children generated by asking them two questions specifically about the musicians, an overwhelmingly positive result was revealed. Eighty-eight per cent responded that they enjoyed the visits, while even more, 90% thought they had learnt something new.

Specific comments from individuals confirm that the new activities that were included in the workshops were very appealing:

- *“The new things I learnt and playing new instruments and watching other people play”*
- *“The part I most enjoyed was playing new instruments”*

Asked whether or not they would like more visits, there was no significant desire expressed to have the same musicians to return. Ninety per cent would like the same musicians to return, while 85% said they would enjoy other musicians as well.

Live music in the classroom certainly figured strongly with some children;

- *“I enjoyed it most when they played the music – especially the Star of the County Down”*
- *“The best part was when we were in Ireland playing the Polka”*

while advice was offered from others for future workshops:

- *“I didn't enjoy standing up and clapping and stamping my feet”*
- *“I was embarrassed when the other class came into the room”*

Although an isolated response, one pupil perhaps summed up the enjoyment factor in an innocent but perhaps most revealing manner,

- *“I enjoyed some of it because you really didn't have to do work”*
- confirming perhaps that while “work” was being done, the fun element was dominant.

Teachers and Principals

A hugely enthusiastic response was recorded from the Post-Primary project. Backed up by questionnaire, principals and teachers felt the visits

were well introduced

- *“From the beginning, I found Music Network to be very professional and very positive in their approach”*
- *“The musicians explained their aim and plan at the first session and this gave the children a goal to aim for”*
- *“Each step was so well explained, the children knew what to do and were so much at ease.”*
- *“The musicians got the students ‘on-side’ and actively participating even though some of them weren’t totally convinced of the value of the visits at the start”.*

had little impact on timetable issues:

- *“The visits caused no disruption because of the flexible nature of transition year”*
- *“Transition Year is the ideal grouping, and as we try to have great flexibility with the year, it had no negative impact on the timetable”*

were of benefit to the school

- *“I think children have a much broader understanding and ‘feel’ for other traditions after the programme”*
- *“I hope it can be a catalyst to a greater emphasis on music in our school”*
- *“The emphasis on co-operation was excellent. The co-operation element was of particular benefit to a student with special needs in building his confidence”*

were well received by the students

- *“The girls seemed hugely enthusiastic about the programme and looked forward each week with great anticipation”*
- *“It was certainly the high point of the year to date. They loved the variation of music – African, Indonesian, Brazilian, Irish – they wanted the programme to continue”*
- *“The students genuinely enjoyed the classes and I think they learnt a lot about beats and rhythms of different musics”*
- *“The students were introduced to a wide range of musical instruments which they had never seen or heard of before”*

Musicians

In terms of working within a school environment, these musicians commented:

- *“I was made very welcome and found the schools eager, helpful and encouraging.”*

Musicians generally found the work stimulating.

- *“This project has taught me a lot about dealing with groups of young people with varying musical abilities. I found it challenging and at times difficult to keep everyone happy and to bring the most out of each individual in the group.”*
- *“I was happy with certain workshops that took on lives of their own and went a completely different direction to the plan, as the students’ creativity and music-making was guiding the path of the workshop.”*

Asked whether the school visits achieved what they set out to do, the musicians commented:

- *“The students were eager and willing to try anything I suggested. My aims from the outset were to introduce new sounds from around the world and to encourage improvisation on the part of the students. Overall, I was very happy with the outcome of the visits.”*

Programme Two (Primary)

Children

As with the responses from Programme One, Primary pupils expressed a very high level of enjoyment with the visits. Fewer than ten percent expressed any uncertainty about their level of enjoyment, while 88% considered that they had learnt something new from the visits.

When asked what parts of the visit they enjoyed the most, the majority of children responded that they enjoyed it all, with a few highlights. The merits of inclusive circle work were identified:

- *“I enjoyed the circle game the best”*
- *“The best parts were the noise, the clapping, and using the instruments”*

while others saw the final performance (in terms of a ‘play’) as the highlight.

- *“The best part was being in the play”*

Once armed with new skills and knowledge of the instruments, the creative side of the workshops was affirmed by many who enjoyed:

- *“Coming up with a rhythm and playing it on an instrument”*
- *“Learning how to play instruments and listening to the sounds”*

Access to a variety of interesting and colourful percussion instruments featured highly in many responses which suggested that the best part was:

- *“When we got to play the instruments”*
- *“Having fun with musical instruments”*
- *“Playing with the new instruments that I never knew existed”*

while some indicated a preference to hear the team play as a trio, enjoying most:

- *“When the musicians played for us”*

Slightly more Primary pupils indicated a preference for the same musicians to return rather than a different team, not unexpected for this age group, eighty-eight percent as opposed to 82%.

Teachers and Principals

In the case of the Primary schools, interviews with school principals and teachers revealed an overwhelming support for the school visits. Backed up by questionnaire, they felt the visits:

were of benefit to the students

- *“The students were introduced to a different aspect of music, especially rhythm, which developed their concentration and sense of beat.”*
- *“There was an atmosphere where the children enjoyed and learned and were actively involved in the experience.”*
- *“The children really enjoyed the programme and another world of music and rhythm was opened up to them”*

fitted in with the school curriculum.

- *“Definitely – we hope to include this work as part of a stage production in the future”*
- *“It not only involved music – the children were taken on an imaginary tour around the globe. They got a taste of different music, languages, practices, customs in other countries”*

were of benefit to the school

- *“As we decided to introduce classes 1-6, I feel they had a wonderful opportunity to explore rhythm in a new way”*

had little if any impact on timetable issues:

- *“We had already allocated a minimum of 1.5 hours a week to music so it had no negative impact.”*
- *“Subjects had to be re-scheduled to accommodate the music lessons”*
- *“There was no problem devoting an hour to it”*

Musicians

In terms of working within a school environment, the Primary team members commented:

- *“The schools were very friendly and helpful.”*
- *“The staff in all the schools were very helpful, even to phoning around other schools when a change of venue was necessary”*

Musicians working in the primary classrooms generally found the work stimulating.

- *“It was very interesting to see the methods of getting children to make music”*
- *“While not learning new skills, I developed my ability to work in different situations and with different musicians.”*
- *“Working with a trio gave me more opportunities to play the viola, which I enjoyed immensely”*

Asked whether the school visits achieved what they set out to do, the musicians commented:

- *“I personally would have liked to have been to more of the sessions. I only attended week one and week six, the performances, which meant I couldn't be entirely involved with the programme. The aims and goals were very clear – an impressive amount achieved.”*
- *“I feel that the project was a success, and achieved the aims which, I believe, were clear from the outset”*

6 GENERAL DISCUSSION

Training provided by Music Network for musicians prior to beginning the school visits encouraged facilitators to keep several behavioural aims in focus while planning and delivering their music programme.

Programme One

Much success was achieved in the Post-Primary programme in meeting the general aims of having *a positive experience of music* and *unlocking children's creativity*. Within a short time frame of only six weeks, many barriers were removed for the students allowing them to be creative in a workshop situation. While for some this release may develop only during future musical experiences, there is no doubt that this team of musicians did significant groundwork.

The vibrant dimension of *presenting live music* in the classroom situation added much value to overall educational provision of these children in general. The unusual combination of instruments added extra colour; feedback would indicate that those parts of the visits which allowed for the students to simply enjoy listening to the ensemble were much appreciated.

The *level of inclusion and participation* by the students was very high throughout, the programme taking different talents and skills into account as the module developed. Validation of students' own skills and interests occurred when they were invited to include their own instruments in the general ensemble. Not only therefore was everyone required to play an active part in whatever way they felt comfortable, the wide range of musical talent unique to this particular constituency was well catered for and skilfully integrated into the workshop programme.

“Certain workshops took on lives of their own and went a completely different direction to the way I had planned, as the students' creativity and music-making was guiding the path of the workshop.”
(Facilitator)

The use of a *common conceptual core* was most successful and served to form a unifying theme within the *definite time frame and structure* of the module. While challenging at the secondary level, this and other aims tested in the hypothetical model have proved to be realistic and achievable.

Referring specifically to the Post-Primary situation, it would appear appropriate to recommend the continuation of using Transition Year as the best target group for such an intervention model. While both Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate syllabi require for creative, hands-on activities, within the context of this project's stated aims of *redressing perceived inconsistencies and inadequacy of provision within the formal education system*, the flexibility and expectations of the Transition Year curriculum deems it most suitable. Students are open-minded and enthusiastic, teachers and Principals encouraging.

The issue of training was raised a number of times in interviews with the musician team of this programme. It was felt that even more could have been achieved with exposure to more comprehensive workshop techniques for all members.

“Having only received six days training before this project, I felt somewhat limited in my options and ability to direct a workshop”
(Facilitator)

Nevertheless, children and teachers alike appreciated the skills of the musicians applied to the workshop situation.

“I think it is essential that children experience music under the guidance of an expert. They become totally involved and have no inhibitions whatsoever. They learn correct techniques – music is brought to life by them – for them.”
(Teacher)

The interface between *two key sets of professionals; teachers and musicians* was developed well in this course of visits. As mentioned elsewhere, attendance at the Teacher Training sessions as well as observation and participation in the workshops allowed for this to occur. It is possible that an even stronger relationship could develop with more contact before the school visits begin, with more time spent on

planning and skill development of the teacher. In such a way, participating teachers would be better positioned to *shadow the facilitator from the start with a gradual change of role* during the course of the visits.

“I feel that it is important that the pre-project meetings should also include the facilitator of the project in question, as a personal relationship can be built up with the school immediately. I would also like the facilitator to meet all the staff to let them know what is happening and the proposed content of the visits.”
(Facilitator)

Programme Two

Like the Post-Primary programme, enjoyment and *positive experience* of music were paramount in Programme Two. *Using music as an educational tool to unlock children's creativity* was observed in workshop situations as preparation for the final performances, and in the performances themselves.

“The children had a wonderful opportunity to explore rhythm in a new way.”

“The children enjoyed it immensely and looked forward to each session.”

(Teachers)

Exceptional planning and delivery meant that the degree of *inclusion and participation by students* was at the highest level. The insistence on circle work, the use of small groups and distribution of roles among the musicians were key elements here. Not only did this enable the involvement of other musicians in leadership roles, but it also introduced the children to the concept of structure in their work. Each child was required to respond on a variety of levels, as an individual, as a contribution to a small group of classmates, not always friends, and significantly as a member of that group to the whole event.

“In a Gaeltacht school it is often very difficult to introduce new programmes- communication difficulties etc. With this in mind, I feel the organisation of everything in the classroom was exceptional. An atmosphere was created where the children enjoyed and learned and were actively involved in the experience.”
(Teacher)

This sense of contributing to the whole, reinforced throughout with circle work that excluded no-one, was manifestly present in the final performance. Teachers also remarked that *in line with curricular requirements*, the content of the workshops was very comprehensive and highly relevant.

“The students benefited from the activities as they were introduced to a different aspect of music, especially rhythm, which developed their concentration and sense of beat.”

“The activity fitted in well with the school curriculum and hopefully will become part of a stage production in the future.”
(Teachers)

Many teachers commented on the value of *live music in the classroom situation*, the combination of instruments lending themselves well to a wide repertoire. Mini-recitals were enjoyed also by the children, adding a unique dimension to the workshops.

A strong and productive relationship developed between the *two key sets of professionals; teachers and musicians* during the course of the school visits and in the context of the teacher training sessions. Teachers commented that they grew in confidence as a result of trying out new ideas in the security of their peer group.

“We started with very basic exercises and from there progressed to more complex.”

Opportunities were created to allow teachers to *shadow the facilitator* as part of the training approach.

“Teachers and pupils alike were motivated by this approach and we hope to continue along the same lines.”

“The musicians gave us a new insight into music in the classroom and her approach was most refreshing.”
(Teachers)

The extent of the planning was evident to any observer of the final performance. Observers were genuinely astonished at how such a large group of children had been brought to this new level of creative and expressive performance in such a short space of time. Skilful use of available time was certainly an important factor contributing to this success.

That careful consideration of the presence of two other musicians in these workshops had been made was also evident. This series of workshops confirmed that the long-term progression from ensemble musician to facilitator could certainly be enhanced by sensitive and skilful involvement at key points. Similarly, the augmenting of regular teachers' existing musical skills, in many cases already substantial, can also occur when a positive environment of support and collaboration is developed.

Teacher Training

Of the key elements identified by Music Network in testing the hypothetical model, two in particular are of significance within the context of the Teacher Training sessions:

- the recognition of two key sets of professionals working in collaboration: musicians and teachers.
- the recognition that there is a need to develop and explore the interface between these two sets of professionals.

Training sessions were well supported and were intentionally planned to introduce teachers to the approaches and techniques that they were already observing in workshops. Circle work was used, with rhythm and vocal exercises developed to create confidence and break down barriers. Opportunities were then introduced for a more creative response from participants to emerge, each new step growing organically from the previous one in a seamless journey towards the facilitator's goal of empowering participants with new skills for the classroom.

"We started with very basic exercises and from there progressed to more complex"

"The workshops were quite intensive. For someone who has absolutely no background in music, I found difficult at times but well worth the effort."

(Teachers)

While not all teachers involved in the school visits availed of these training workshops, those that did found them to be of great benefit. The opportunity to become familiar with new instruments, to learn correct techniques and most importantly to observe how best to distribute and utilise them in group situations was a major feature of the workshop.

"Teachers were motivated by this approach and hope to continue along the same lines"

"At all times I was made welcome and encouraged along"

Training workshops are a familiar source of skill acquisition in many forms of professional development, teaching being no exception. That the opportunity to take part in after-school workshops was so highly appreciated is testament both to the level of dedication of the regular classroom teachers involved and to the standard of delivery from the facilitator.

Music Network's long term aim aspires to develop a mentoring relationship between regular classroom teachers and facilitator in order that within a climate of trust and confidence, the roles can in some ways be reversed. By the end of a two-year period of visits and training workshops where teachers "shadow" facilitators, it is hoped that regular teachers themselves would have built on existing skills to enhance their teaching to the extent that they would be able to make better use of "music as an educational tool to unlock children's creativity".

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a general partnership model for redressing perceived inadequacies in the provision of Music Education in schools, this programme confirmed that on many measures the engaging of a team of musicians in the planning and delivery of a course of workshops scores very highly. The six-week time frame; thorough pre-planning with regular teachers at which roles are clearly defined; choice of an age-appropriate, curricular-based theme; creative use of classroom percussion instruments; and the use of a key person in the form of a facilitator are all confirmed as key features of a successful programme.

Also key is the readiness for facilitators to be flexible and adapt plans when necessary in response to the internal dynamic of a workshop. Both facilitators in the present project stressed the merits of having three musicians in each team at all sessions.

Shortcomings in training opportunities for musicians were identified as potentially affecting the overall outcome of the programme, although high levels of energy and imagination in the main made up for any deficiency in the programmes observed. For such a model to be sustainable, practical and realistic in the long term, issues of training may have to be considered more closely. It may, for example, prove difficult in the future to recruit interested musicians unless appropriate and adequate professional support is provided. Workshop experience with children is valuable but not sufficient in itself to sustain the interest and commitment of practising musicians. As an integral feature of the overall model, CPD of participating musicians has a status equal at least with pupils enjoyment and curricular achievements.

Stability of the client group in terms of commitment and continuity was evident in all schools. Indications from the earlier pilot project suggested that progress towards achieving programme objectives was hindered when the composition of the post-primary groups constantly changed. This project confirmed that Transition Year not only has obvious benefits in terms of openness of curriculum and flexibility of timetable, but when well managed, issues of attendance need not affect potential success.

Many teachers involved expressed an interest in acquiring a bank of percussion instruments for their own schools, although access to suppliers appears to be a barrier. Interestingly, unlike the earlier Music Network pilot programme, no suggestion was made by either team or by any of the schools for access to recording equipment. Previous requests had pointed out the potential value of immediate feedback such a resource can provide; in this programme, active participants seemed content with the process of the workshops as they progressed.

Personal and professional development of participating musicians is correctly regarded as an equal and parallel objective of the programme. Advancement from supporting musician through key musician to facilitator, is as vital a component of this model as is the reversal of roles between facilitator and classroom teacher. A musician with little classroom experience can learn, under this model, as much from the classroom teacher about workshop management as the teacher can learn from the musician about creative music making. When the right conditions are created through fruitful partnerships and directed with skilful stewardship, the enormous potential of this XXX combination of resources, many times greater than the sum of its parts, can be released for the benefit of all children in our schools.

Undoubtedly, the success of this programme confirms that national agencies with the wherewithal and expertise to draw together partnerships have a vital role in educational provision within the formal education system. A level of involvement and commitment in any way less than that observed in this programme would seriously affect the outcome.

In conclusion, there can be no doubt that the projects in Dingle have made an extremely significant contribution in the development of the objectives towards which the Music Network programme aspires. Considerations of long-term sustainability in relation to the provision of resources both fiscal and physical are beyond the parameters of this report. It cannot be denied, however, that in the ideal conditions where similar projects were able to be implemented in all Primary and Post-Primary schools, curricular requirements would be generously enhanced.

PROGRAMME ONE

POST-PRIMARY

	Yes			No			Don't know		
	A	B	Mean	A	B	Mean	A	B	Mean
Is Irish your main language?	34	60	47	66	40	53			
Did you enjoy working with the musicians?	66	100	83	0	0	0	34	0	17
Working with the musicians helped me:									
try things I haven't tried before	88	100	94	0	0	0	12	0	6
make new friends	20	65	43	66	25	46	13	10	12
feel happier	52	80	66	28	0	14	20	20	20
learn from people from different backgrounds	13	60	37	47	15	31	40	25	33
pass on my new skills to others	47	45	46	40	30	35	13	25	19
decide to go to other workshops	7	45	26	66	10	38	26	45	36
Did you learn anything new from the musicians?	86	90	88	6	10	8	8	0	4
Did you improve your language skills?	0	25	13	80	25	53	20	50	35
Would you like these musicians to visit again?	80	100	90	8	0	4	12	0	6
Would you like other musicians to visit?	73	96	85	7	0	4	20	4	12

PRIMARY

	Yes	No	Don't know
Is Irish your main language?	39	61	
Did you enjoy working with the musicians?	70	2	28
Working with the musicians helped me:			
try things I haven't tried before	77	9	14
make new friends	49	45	6
feel happier	72	6	22
learn from people from different backgrounds	49	10	41
pass on my new skills to others	56	33	11
decide to go to other workshops	44	30	26
Did you learn anything new from the musicians?	88	9	3
Did you improve your language skills?	35	47	18
Would you like these musicians to visit again?	98	0	2
Would you like other musicians to visit?	67	10	23

PROGRAMME TWO

	Yes				No				Don't Know			
	A	B	C	Mean	A	B	C	Mean	A	B	C	Mean
Is Irish your main language?	33	54	76	54	67	46	24	46				
Did you enjoy working with the musicians?	93	92	86	90	0	2	6	3	7	6	8	7
Working with the musicians helped me:												
try things I haven't tried before	83	92	86	87	10	4	8	7	7	4	6	6
make new friends	51	66	60	59	42	26	36	35	7	8	4	6
feel happier	40	84	78	67	50	2	8	20	10	14	14	13
learn from people from different backgrounds	26	34	76	45	35	44	18	32	39	22	6	22
pass on my new skills to others	40	28	56	41	39	48	22	36	21	24	22	22
decide to go to other workshops	39	20	46	35	46	16	34	32	15	64	20	33
Did you learn anything new from the musicians?	78	92	94	88	13	4	6	8	9	4	0	4
Did you improve your language skills?	19	28	22	23	60	28	70	53	21	44	8	24
Would you like these musicians to visit again?	83	96	86	88	4	0	8	4	13	4	8	8

Would you like other musicians to visit?

61 94 90 82 13 4 6 8 26 2 4 11

Sounds of the World

Session 1;

Introduction: Performance of Irish traditional music leading into participation by students, starting with various warm-up activities. Class to be broken into four main groups- drums, wooden instruments, metal instruments & shakers/voice. Performance of class with all three musicians.

The secondary classes will take this a little further, possibly dividing into groups to come up with 8-bar breaks. They will also be introduced to the 12-bar blues model which will be developed over the coming weeks.

Session 2;

Africa: Begin with warm-ups, leading into rhythm work with clapping & body rhythm, incorporating three distinct patterns that interweave. Transfer these onto percussion instruments. Then introduce song, "MalesewÈ.." with harmony if possible.

Again the secondary classes will develop this a little further & will continue with the blues model for the last 1/2 hour or so.

Session 3;

Music of the East: Warm-ups again to start, leading into manipulation of the notes D, F#, G, A, C(natural), giving a taste of Javanese Gamelan. This is dependant on a number of students having tuned instruments with them (tin whistles, flutes, accordians etc.).

Also the option of introducing another pentatonic scale D, E, F#, A, B, giving a more Chinese feel to the music. I would like to encourage the secondary students to compose short pieces incorporating this pentatonic scale.

Session 4;

South America: Warm-ups again to start. Introduction of a Brazilian rain-forest song also incorporating percussion, including the Brazilian tamborim, caxixi, and various shakers. Harmony also to be used if possible. Continue working on the Blues model with the secondary schools with more emphasis on input from them re. composition, lyric writing etc.

Session 5 & 6;

These workshops will aim to bring all the work of the past four weeks together with a view to a final performance on the last day. By using a story such as a journey around the world but with the ultimate aim of coming home again, (possibly for someone's birthday) we can travel on a musical journey from Ireland, via Africa, the East, Brazil and returning to Ireland. The final performance will then give a glimpse of the music of each of these areas of the world and will at the end, show that they can all be fused together to show the harmony that is possible in the world through musical contact. The piece will finish on a high note (excuse the pun) with a celebratory feeling.

The secondary schools may use their own compositions/lyrics for the final performance if this aspect of the workshops has been a success.

Saint Bríd's Cloak

1. Brid's father was a rich farmer. Every day, Brid did the cooking and cleaning and fed the animals on her father's farm. She never complained.

1 Working Music

2. Brid grew up in the time of St Patrick. She listened to him and became a Christian. Her father wanted her to settle down but she preferred to devote her life to God. She decided to take care of the poor, hungry and sick. Other girls heard about Bríd and wanted to help her in her good work. They joined her to work on her father's farm.
3. Mother: *Brid, how will you feed all these girls?*
4. Bríd: *Don't worry, Mother, God will provide food for them.*
5. Father: *You will need land for this, but all the land belongs to the meanest man around, the King of Leinster.*
6. Brid went to see the King and asked for some land.

1 Journey Music

7. Bríd: *Please dear King – can I have some land to build a house. There some good land over near the woods, with plenty of fuel for the fire and a lake for fishing.*
8. King: *Land! Ha! I'm not a fool. No – you can't have any land.*
9. So Brid prayed

1 Religious Music

10. Next she said to the King – *Will you not even give me land that my cloak will cover?*
11. The King thought she was joking, but he let her do it all the same. She took off her cloak and she asked four of her friends to take each corner and walk away from each other. One went north, one south, one east and one west.

1 Magic Music

12. The cloak kept on going until there were many acres covered. The King was amazed. Then the people realized that Brid had divine power. The King went on his knees in front of Brid.
13. King: *Anything you want from now on, you can have.*
14. The King became a Christian and Bríd was able to do whatever she wanted from then on.

1 Working Music